

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD JULY 13, 2026**

A duly called Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Great Falls Public Schools was held at the District Offices Building, 1100 4th Street South, on the 13th day of July 2026.

At 5:30 pm, Director of Business Operations, Luke Diekhans, called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Luke Diekhans reported that, per Board Policy 1420, all Board meetings are recorded and posted on the District website for one (1) year.

ROLL CALL: Superintendent Hoyer took roll call.

Trustees Present: Bill Bronson
Paige Henning
Marlee Sunchild
Amie Thompson

Trustee Excused: Gordon Johnson - Chairperson
Kim Skornogoski – Vice Chairperson
Craig Duff

Others Present: Heather Hoyer, Superintendent; Luke Diekhans, Director of Business Operations; Jackie Mainwaring, Executive Director of Student Achievement; Jeff Williams, Director of Information Technology; Heather Spurzem, Director of Human Resources; and Katelyn Marsik, Director of the Great Falls Public Schools Foundation. Also present was Tom Cubbage, Great Falls Education Association President.

Director of Business Operations, Luke Diekhans, asked everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Diekhans reported that since Chairperson Johnson and Vice-Chairperson Skornogoski were excused from this Board meeting, the remaining Trustees needed to appoint a Chair pro tem.

Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to appoint Trustee Bronson as Chair pro tem for the Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Great Falls Public Schools on July 13, 2026.

ADOPT AGENDA

1 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to adopt
2 the agenda as presented.
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5 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

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7 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to approve
8 the Consent Agenda, as presented.
9

10 **A. Minutes of the June 22, 2026, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board approved the
11 minutes of the June 22, 2026, Regular Board Meeting as presented.
12

13 **B. Personnel Actions** – The Board approved the Personnel Actions as presented.
14

15 **C. Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) TR-35 School Bus Driver Certificates**
16 – The Board approved the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) TR-35 School Bus
17 Driver Certificates for the individuals listed in the agenda.
18

19 **D. Incoming Student Attendance Agreements for the 2026-2027 School Year** – The
20 Board approved the incoming student attendance agreements for the 2026-2027 school
21 year for the students listed in the agenda. Tuitions will be paid for by the District of
22 Residence.
23

24 **E. Centerville Public Schools Bus Stop Request Within the Great Falls Public**
25 **School Boundaries** – The Board approved the request for Centerville Public Schools to
26 enter the District with two bus routes, allowing one to stop within the Great Falls Public
27 School District boundaries for the 2026-2027 school year.
28

29 **F. Belt Public School District Bus Stop Request Within Great Falls Public School**
30 **District Boundaries** – The Board approved the request to allow Belt Public Schools to
31 enter the District with a route to pick up students at the Foothills Ranch subdivision
32 within Great Falls Public School District boundaries for the 2026-2027 school year.
33

34 **G. Sun River Valley District Bus Stop Request Within the Great Falls Public**
35 **School District Boundaries** – The Board approved the request to allow Sun River
36 School District a bus stop within the Great Falls Public School District boundaries for the
37 2026-2027 school year.
38

39 **H. Vaughn School District Bus Stop Request Within the Great Falls Public School**
40 **District Boundaries** – The Board approved the request to allow Vaughn School District
41 bus stops within the Great Falls Public School District boundaries for the 2026-2027
42 school year.
43

44 **I. Therapy Dog at Lewis and Clark Elementary School** – The Board approved the
45 presence of a therapy dog at Lewis and Clark Elementary School and acknowledged
46 that the certifications and requirements of Board Policy 8426F have been met.

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3 **COMMUNICATION**
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5 **A. Superintendent Report**

6 Superintendent Hoyer stated that when all data from summer school is collected and
7 compiled, there will be a comprehensive report presented on achievement.

8 Thank you to Lance and Hadlee Boyd and Jackie Mainwaring who placed cones and
9 signs at every school stating that fireworks were not allowed to be set off on District
10 property, ensuring the safety of our buildings.

11 Superintendent Hoyer updated the Board on construction projects in progress at Chief
12 Joseph Elementary School, Lewis and Clark Elementary School, Valley View
13 Elementary School, West Elementary School, East Middle School, C.M. Russell High
14 School, and the District Offices Building.

15 Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the requirements of Policy 8451 - *Naming of Building*
16 *and Grounds*. A standing committee consisting of staff members, parents, students,
17 community members, and Trustees will be appointed. The District is considering naming
18 a space in the District Offices Building in honor of former Board Chairperson, Jan Cahill,
19 and a space at East Middle School in honor of former teacher, Ken Maddox.

20 Superintendent Hoyer concluded her report by reviewing the open job positions within
21 the District.
22

23 **Audience Communication** – None
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26 **ACTION ITEMS**
27

28 **A. Transfer of Budgeted Funds – Elementary General Fund Budget (101) to the**
29 **Elementary Compensated Absences Fund Budget (121) and High School General**
30 **Fund Budget (201) to the High School Compensated Absence Fund Budget (221)**

31 – Director of Business Operations, Luke Diekhans, explained this is an annual transfer
32 for the purpose of financing the accumulated sick leave and vacation pay that a non-
33 teaching or administrative school district employee is entitled to upon termination of
34 employment. The transfer is limited to 30% of the sick and vacation leave payout for
35 non-teaching and administrative employees.
36

37 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to approve
38 the transfer of \$234,689.48 from the Elementary General Fund (101) to the Elementary
39 Compensated Absences Fund Budget (121) and \$101,501.71 from the High School
40 General Fund Budget (201) to the High School Compensated Absences Fund (221) as
41 presented.
42

43 **B. Second Reading of the New *Introduction to Automotive Know-Understand-Do***
44 **(KUD)** – Secondary Curriculum Coordinator, Beckie Frisbee, stated that she has not
45 received any questions, comments, or concerns since the first reading of the new
46 *Introduction to Automotive KUDS* at the June 22, 2026 Board meeting.
47

1 Motion – Amie Thompson, Seconded – Marlee Sunchild, passed unanimously to
2 approve the *Introduction to Automotive Know-Understand-Do* (KUDs) as posted and
3 presented at the June 22, 2026 regular Board meeting.

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5 **C. 2026-2027 School Calendar Amendment** – Director of Human Resources, Heather
6 Spurzem, reported that throughout the 2024-2025 school and throughout that summer,
7 the District and Great Falls Education Association (GFEA) worked through the process
8 of modifying the contract minutes over the course of the year to have non-student
9 contact days at the end of quarters one, two, and three in order to provide time for
10 teachers in their classrooms for record keeping and professional development across all
11 employee groups. The District and GFEA believe that the end of quarter non-student
12 contact days for the 2025-2026 were beneficial for staff and students. The non-student
13 contact days will be provided in the same format as agreed to for previous years and
14 incorporates building level leadership teams being more involved identifying topics in
15 the future. There will be three hours of professional development, three hours of record
16 keeping for teachers in their classrooms, and a one-hour lunch.

17
18 GFEA President, Tom Cubbage, noted that there was no physical amendment to the
19 school calendar. This was written into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
20 between Great Falls Public Schools and GFEA.

21
22 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to approve
23 the amended 2026-2027 Great Falls Public Schools School Calendar to provide for end-
24 of-quarter non-student contact days for quarters one, two, and three, as presented.

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26 **D. Electronic Vote on Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) Business** –
27 Chair pro tem Bronson explained that the MTSBA annual meeting was held in June.
28 The meeting provided members with the opportunity to review and discuss the matters
29 that have been advanced by the MTSBA Board of Directors that require action by the
30 membership. Members in attendance were asked to take these matters back to their
31 respective memberships to discuss and vote upon and then send the results to MTSBA
32 by July 31, 2026.

33
34 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to approve
35 the items discussed in the agenda: MTSBA's Principles & Guidelines; Foundational
36 Elements of MTSBA's Organizations DNA; Fiscal Year 2028 Dues Revenue Estimate;
37 MTSBA's proposed bylaw amendments; MTSBA's GAP Analysis Resolution for 2027
38 Interim and 2027 Legislative Session; Nomination of Iris KillEagle as MTSBA
39 Representative on the Montana High School Association (MHSA) Board of Directors;
40 Nomination of Jennifer Hoffman as MTSBA President-Elect; and Nomination of
41 Stephanie Esch as MTSBA Vice-President. The results will be sent to the MTSBA.

42 43 **ACTION: OTHER**

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46 There were no items extracted from the Consent Agenda to discuss.

REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES

A. First Reading of the New Family and Consumer Science Textbook – Secondary Curriculum Coordinator, Beckie Frisbee, reported that Family and Consumer Science (FCS) teams have met throughout the last two years to update their Know-Understand-Do (KUDs) and select new textbooks for use in the classroom. After reviewing several options, the FCS teachers have selected *Goodheart-Wilcox, Child Development: Early Stages Through Adolescence, 10th Edition*. Beckie stated that this book has resources, language, and information that is relevant and up to date. She stated that the KUDs are posted on the District website and a hard copy is available in the Curriculum Office for review prior to the request for Board approval that will take place at the next regular Board meeting.

B. First Reading of New and Revised Board Policies 1401 – Records Available to Public; 2151 – Interscholastic Activities; and 5324 (New) – Civic Duty

Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the recommended language revisions from the Board Policy Committee to each of the Board policies listed. Language proposed brings policies into alignment with legislative directives and/or cleans up confusing language. She asked if anyone had questions or concerns regarding any of the new policies or revisions to contact her prior to the next regular Board meeting.

B. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments

Trustee Thompson thanked everyone involved in the possible honoring of Jan Cahill and Ken Maddox. She also thanked those who are talking with legislators about keeping school as safe as possible.

Trustee Henning reported on the upgraded fire alarm system at Valley View Elementary School. She stated that engineers are working hard cleaning and getting the school ready for the upcoming year. Trustee Henning said that she attended the Janicki ground breaking event and is excited to see the new industry will have on the District.

Trustee Sunchild thanked Superintendent Hoyer for the construction projects updates. Chair pro tem Bronson reported that Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) is sending emails looking at the funding formula for schools. The MTSBA board strongly feels that legislators need to hear from school Trustees, not just the MTSBA Board. He also thanked Tom Cubbage for his continued attendance at Great Falls Public Schools' Board meetings.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chair pro tem Bronson said the next Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 3, 2026.

ACTION TO ADJOURN

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2 Chair pro tem Bronson adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 6:12
3 p.m.
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8 Bill Bronson, Chair pro tem

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10 Luke Diekhans, Clerk
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