

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD AUGUST 3, 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 3rd day of August 2026.

At 5:30 pm, Chairperson Johnson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees and informed the participants and audience that the meeting was being recorded per Board Policy 1420.

ROLL CALL: Luke Diekhans took roll call.

Trustees Present: Gordon Johnson, Chairperson
Kim Skornogoski, Vice Chairperson
Bill Bronson
Craig Duff
Paige Henning
Amie Thompson

Trustee Excused: Marlee Sunchild

Others Present: Heather Hoyer, Superintendent; Luke Diekhans, Director of Business Operations; Lance Boyd, Executive Director for Student Achievement; Heather Spurzem, Director of Human Resources; Lane McGrath, Data Center Lead Technician; and Katelyn Marsik, Director of the Great Falls Public Schools Foundation.

Also present was Tom Cubbage, Great Falls Education Association President.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Trustee Thompson.

ADOPT AGENDA

Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Paige Henning, passed unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

A. Minutes of the July 13, 2026, Regular Board Meeting – The Board approved the minutes of the July 13, 2026, Regular Board Meeting as presented.

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

2
3 **C. Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) TR-35 School Bus Driver Certificates**

4 The Board approved the Montana OPI TR-35 School Bus Driver Certificates for the
5 individuals listed in the agenda.

6
7 **D. Incoming Student Attendance Agreement for the 2026-2027 School Year** – The
8 Board approved the incoming student attendance agreement for the 2026-2027 school
9 year the student listed in the agenda. Tuition will be paid for by the District of
10 Residence.

11
12 **E. Request for Records Disposal – Business Office** – The Board approved the
13 request for disposal of the Business Office and Student records listed in the agenda that
14 are in compliance with the approved State, Local Government Records Committee
15 Retention Schedule.

16
17
18 **COMMUNICATION**

19
20 **A. Superintendent Report** – Superintendent Hoyer initiated her report with an
21 invitation to the final presentations of the 2026 Summer Interns at the Weissman Hood
22 Institute on August 7th, encouraging everyone to attend. She provided an overview of
23 the District's three-year Strategic Plan framework and outlined the comprehensive
24 planning process scheduled to begin in September, noting that District administration
25 can develop a strong plan without the significant cost of outside consultation.
26 Appreciation was extended to Great Falls City Commissioner, Shannon Wilson, for
27 sharing her personal experiences and promoting motorcycle awareness safety through
28 a recent Driver's Education presentation that received positive student feedback.
29 Superintendent Hoyer stated several representatives from Great Falls Public Schools
30 (GFPS) attended *Headquarters for a Day* at the Montana Air National Guard.
31 Attendees participated in several briefings and roundtable discussions and then had an
32 opportunity to ride in a helicopter. Buildings and Grounds are continuing summer
33 projects and Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the status of the projects that are
34 underway at Mountain View, Sunnyside, Sacajawea, Riverview, and Lincoln Elementary
35 Schools, as well as North Middle School and Great Falls High School. She recognized
36 the dedicated employees who are working to prepare facilities for the upcoming school
37 year. As part of Data for the Day, Superintendent Hoyer highlighted the Good Apples
38 program, which recognized 116 individuals during the 2025-2026 school year, and
39 honored Mike Martyn for his response to a school bus accident in May. Superintendent
40 Hoyer introduced C.M. Russell High School junior, Lily Raslich. Lily gave a short
41 presentation on her growing interest in science and shared her experiences
42 participating in a two-week Harvard summer program focused on neurobiology, college
43 preparation, and sleep deprivation research. Lily noted that the variety of courses
44 offered by GFPS has supported her educational interests and future goal of pursuing
45 forensic science.

46
47 **B. Audience Communication** – None
48

1
2 **ACTION ITEMS**
3

4 **A. Second Reading of the New Family and Consumer Science Textbook –**
5 Secondary Curriculum Director Beckie Frisbee reviewed the process of how the new
6 Family and Consumer Science textbook was selected. She stated there have been no
7 requests for review or public comments submitted from staff or the community regarding
8 the purchase of the new textbook since the first reading at the July 13, 2026 board
9 meeting. Ms. Frisbee reviewed the costs associated with the purchase.

10
11 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to
12 approve the new *Goodheart-Wilcox, Child Development: Early Stages Through*
13 *Adolescence, 10th Edition* textbooks, in the amount of \$8,244.28, for the Great Falls
14 Public Schools Family and Consumer Science Department.
15

16 **B. Loy Elementary Gym Area Earthquake Repair –** Director of Business Operations,
17 Luke Diekhans reviewed the emergency repair project for the Loy Elementary School
18 gymnasium following the January 29, 2026, earthquake and subsequent aftershocks.
19 District administrators, Buildings and Grounds staff, and building engineers assessed
20 damage throughout the District, with structural concerns identified around the Loy
21 Elementary gymnasium. Cushing Terrell Architects (CTA) evaluated the damage initially
22 and determined that the building did not present an immediate safety threat, allowing
23 continued occupancy. During the past six months, CTA and its engineering team have
24 continued to complete additional soil testing and conducted a more extensive evaluation
25 of the damage. The proposed repair projection of \$176,825, which Mr. Diekhans noted
26 had just been received prior to this board meeting, came back higher than the initial
27 estimate of \$120,000 due to damage being evaluated on all four walls rather than the
28 two walls initially observed. These repairs represent the first and most critical phase of
29 the process to help ensure the building remains safe for continued occupancy. Due to
30 the proximity of the start of the school year, timely completion is necessary. CTA
31 recommended utilizing Guy Tabacco Construction, who recently completed other work
32 at Loy Elementary School and has been involved in the project throughout the
33 evaluation process. Because the damage resulted from an unforeseen emergency, the
34 project is exempt from the standard bid/procurement process under MCA 20-9-204(3).
35 Upon answering questions received from the Board, Mr. Diekhans stated the project
36 would start immediately, and progress updates and any cost adjustments would be
37 reviewed promptly with the Board.
38

39 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Paige Henning, passed unanimously to approve the
40 first phase of Loy Elementary gym area earthquake repairs to be completed by Guy
41 Tabacco Construction in the amount of \$176,825.
42

43 In response to a community member's question, Mr. Diekhans explained that the
44 earthquake-related damage is currently expected to be covered at 100%, subject to a
45 \$5,000 deductible. Secondary insurance is available if maximum limits on primary
46 insurance are exceeded.
47

1 **C. Second Reading of Board Policies 1401 (Revised) – *Records Available to***
2 ***Public*; 2151 (Revised) – *Interscholastic Activities*; and 5324 (New) – *Civic Duty*.**

3 Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the policies above and stated the only input received
4 was from Great Falls Education Association President, Tom Cabbage, to add Policy
5 5321 to the cross-reference section of Policy 5324. No other comments or
6 recommendations for changes were received since the first reading of the policies at the
7 July 13, 2026 Board Meeting.

8
9 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve
10 Board Policies 1401 (Revised) – *Records Available to Public*; 2151 (Revised) –
11 *Interscholastic Activities*; and 5324 (New) – *Civic Duty*, with the cross-reference of
12 Policy 5321 added.

13
14
15 **ACTION: OTHER**

16
17 There were no items extracted from the Consent Agenda to discuss.
18

19
20 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**

21
22 **A. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments**

23 Trustee Duff stated he attended a delightful presentation from the C.M. Russell High
24 School HOSA club on their trip to Ghana Africa this summer.

25 Trustee Skornogoski reminded meeting attendees of the upcoming *Stuff the Bus* and
26 *Back-to-School Blast* events and stated there are still several volunteer opportunities
27 available.

28 Trustee Henning stated the new fire alarm system installed at Valley View Elementary
29 School is a great improvement. She commended the custodians for their great work in
30 getting the schools ready for the students returning on August 26th.

31 Trustee Bronson commented he has already signed up to volunteer at the *Back-to-*
32 *School Blast* event.

33 Chairperson Johnson reported that he had the opportunity to work with an excellent
34 group of youth symphony musicians at Carroll College last week, the same location
35 where the School Administrators of Montana conference was being held. Six (6) of the
36 performers were from Great Falls Public Schools.

37
38
39 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

40
41 Chairperson Johnson referenced the upcoming events on the agenda.
42

43
44 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

45
46 With no further comments or items to be discussed, motion by Chairperson Johnson
47 and seconded by Trustee Skornogoski to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of
48 Trustees at 6:13 p.m.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

Luke Diekhans, Clerk

Gordon Johnson, Chairperson