

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
ORONO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON AUGUST 17, 2026

Present: Sarah Borchers, Todd Madson, Wendy Lundsgaard, Laura Wallander, Gavin Tempero,
Timothy Usset, Kristine Flesher

Absent: none

Community Members Questions and Comments

No members of the community addressed the board.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, August 17, 2026, and called to order by Board Chair Sarah Borchers at 7:00 PM.

4. Consideration of the Agenda

5. Consent Agenda

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held on June 8, 2026
- Approved the appointment of Caroline Smith as full-time Business Teacher at Orono High School, effective August 19, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Tasha Feldman as full-time Special Education Transition Teacher at Orono High School, effective August 19, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Jennifer Engelken as 0.7 FTE Physical Education Teacher at Orono Intermediate School, effective August 19, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Jane Martin as full-time Art Education Teacher at Orono Intermediate School, effective August 19, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Shana Borgen as FTE .2 Guidance Counselor at Orono High School, effective August 25, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Julie Jurek, Long-term Substitute Social Worker at Orono Intermediate School, effective August 27, 2026, through December 21, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Holly Howe as full-time Fourth Grade Teacher Long-term Substitute at Orono Intermediate School, effective September 26, 2026, through December 18, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Jennifer Justen as full-time Special Education Teacher Long-term Substitute at Orono Schumann Elementary, effective August 25, 2026, through December 18, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Susie Truax as full-time Special Education Teacher Long-term Substitute at Orono Intermediate School, effective September 21, 2026 through October 31, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Kari Heitke as full-time Floating Building Substitute at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective August 25, 2026, through June 4, 2027.
- Approved the unpaid .2 FTE unpaid Leave of Absence of Kathryn Haagenson, Guidance Counselor at Orono High School, for the 2026-27 School Year.
- Approved the 1.0 FTE unpaid Leave of Absence of Emily Purnell, Second Grade teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School for the 2026-27 School Year.
- Approved the appointment of Erin Henderson as full-time Media Clerk at Orono Middle School, effective August 28, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Calvin Nelson as full-time Districtwide Seasonal Grounds Custodian, effective June 29, 2026.

- Approved the appointment of Rebecca Bills as full-time Principal Assistant Secretary at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective August 17, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Lisa Thom as full-time Guidance Office Secretary at Orono Middle School, effective August 25, 2026.
- Approved the change of assignment of Megan Jochims, full-time Classroom Para at Orono Schumann Elementary School, to full-time Special Education Para at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective September 1, 2026.
- Approved the change of assignment of Lydia Leck, full-time Guidance Office Secretary at Orono Middle School, to full-time Principal Secretary at Orono Middle School, effective August 7, 2026.
- Approved the resignation of Kelly Leary, full-time Health Specialist at Orono Middle School, effective June 10, 2026.
- Approved the resignation of Victoria Fernette, part-time English Language Program Paraeducator, effective August 10, 2026.
- Approved the resignation due to retirement of Lisa Krebsbach, full-time Principal Secretary at Orono Middle School, effective August 14, 2026.
- Approved the resignation due to retirement of Lori Roberts, part-time Paraprofessional at Orono Intermediate School, effective August 31, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Coda McCann as part-time Districtwide Technology Intern effective July 7, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Oliver Lamparske as part-time Orono Activities Center Monitor, effective August 5, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Jhett Leibfried as part-time Orono Activities Center Member Services Associate at the Orono Activities Center, effective August 12, 2025.
- Approved the Fall coaching contracts for the Fall 2026 season:

Cross Country

Brian McCollor, Head Coach (Boys)
Nathan Porter, Assistant Coach
Nate Uselding, Assistant Coach

Addy Hallen, Head Coach (Girls)
Michelle Naylor, Assistant Coach

Football

Joe McPherson, Head Coach
Craig Lachowitz, Varsity Assistant Coach
Kyle Jensen, JV Coach
Tom Borrell, 9th Grade Coach

Barry Wohler, Varsity Assistant Coach
Jason Seurer, Varsity Assistant Coach
Mitch Benson, JV Coach
Tyrone Baker, 9th Grade Coach

Soccer – Boys

Grant Steine, Head Coach
Neil Vassar, Varsity Assistant
Peter Sherman, B Coach

Nathaniel Kurtzweg, Varsity Assistant
Trevon Sladek, JV Coach
Graham Alme, 9A Coach

Soccer – Girls

Erin Murray, Head Coach
Caitlin Tripp, Varsity Assistant Coach
Sienna Loughlin, B Coach

Natalie Soper, Varsity Assistant Coach
Brandon Hunt, JV Coach

Swim Dive – Girls

Katie Reynolds, Head Coach
Bret Beecher, Assistant Coach

Alden Von Barga, Assistant Coach
Jenna Lattu, Assistant Coach

Tennis – Girls

Aaron Dvorak, Head Coach
Caroline Sherman, JV Coach

Brian Brown, Varsity Assistant Coach
Dawn Reidinger, B Coach

Volleyball

Abby Perrin, Head Coach
Anders Carlson, 10th Grade Coach
Jessica Campbell, 9th Grade Coach

Laurie Jensen, Varsity Assistant Coach
Kim King, JV Coach
Benjamin Schaumburg, 9th Grade Coach

- Approved wages for substitutes, test proctors, students, summer grounds workers, and athletic coaches for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Approved the contract for Nickolas Taintor, Director of Business Services, for the period of time beginning July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028
- Accepted Donations Totaling: \$743,812.06
- Authorized the 2026-2027 LEA (Local Education Agency) Representative
- Approved the Annual MDE (Minnesota Department of Education) Statement of Assurances
- Accepted the Summary of the Superintendent's End-of-Year Evaluation
- Approved Continued Membership in the following Organizations for the 2026-2027 School Year:
 - o AMSD – Association of Metropolitan School Districts
 - o BrightWorks
 - o MSBA – Minnesota School Boards Association
- Approved Voucher and Payment Registers:
 - o Bill Vouchers: 325090-325618, 2068-2087
 - o EP Register: 903490-903565
 - o EFT Vouchers: 327-331, 6704-6716
 - o Capital One: 53711-53777

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda: Lundsgaard

Board Member Wallander clarified that while coaching salaries were included in the Personnel Report, they are serving solely as a volunteer coach this fall and feels comfortable supporting the recommendation.

Second: Wallander

Vote: APPROVED - 6 in favor, 0 against

6. – Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Superintendent Flesher welcomed the board back, expressing gratitude to the dedicated staff who maintained and improved the campus over a busy summer. She extended special thanks to the buildings and grounds team, led by Director Nick Tainter and Coordinator Chad Eishens, for overseeing an unprecedented schedule of summer construction projects. She also recognized Director Beaverson, his technology team, and their summer interns for their work enhancing district-wide technology and preparing for a smooth school year rollout.

Dr. Flesher applauded the Special Education and Community Education teams for their flexibility and care in navigating daily construction shifts. Community Education experienced remarkable engagement, logging over 7,500 enrollments across 532 camps and classes, averaging more than 600 students per week. Highlights included 120 incoming kindergartners participating in Ready Set Kindergarten at Schumann Elementary, 55 students in Discovery Kids, 146 in Spartan Kids, and nearly 100 participants at the Family Color Dash. She invited families to the upcoming Discovery Center Open House and Vehicle Fair on September 3rd, as well as Art in the Park on September 22nd.

Turning to fall activities, Dr. Flesher noted that 374 students are registered for fall sports as High School League practices officially began. Auditions for the Orono High School fall musical production of

Cinderella were announced for September 2nd for both performance and crew roles. Finally, Dr. Flesher outlined key return dates, noting that new teacher orientation begins Wednesday, all teachers return for the staff kickoff on August 25th, and students officially return on September 1st.

7. – Board Members Questions and Comments

Wendy Lundsgaard - Board Member Lundsgaard opened by reminding the board that the deadline to submit resolutions to the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) is September 23rd, inviting members to submit any topics or issues they would like represented. She then noted that the district is facing upcoming state funding cuts to special education. While Orono expects a small funding increase from the Permanent School Fund, Lundsgaard emphasized that it will not be enough to offset those losses.

Board members Usset, Wallander, Madson, Tempero, or Borchers had nothing to report.

8. – Old Business

8. A – Other Old Business as Necessary

9. – New Business

9. A – Construction Projects Update

Nick Taintor, Director of Business Services, updated the board on construction projects completed across the district during the past year and provided an overview of planned work for the upcoming school year.

9. B. – Resolution Accepting Conveyance of Real Property from the Orono Ice Arena, Inc.

Motion to approve: Wallander

Second: Madson

Board Member Lundsgaard will abstain from this vote and the next item, due to her husband's position on the Ice Arena Board.

Roll Call Vote: APPROVED – 5 in favor – Usset, Wallander, Borchers, Madson, Tempero, 0 against, 1 abstain - Lundsgaard.

9. C. – Acceptance of Ground Lease and Recreational Facility Cooperative Agreement

Motion to approve: Wallander

Second: Madson

Vote: APPROVED – 5 in favor, 0 against, 1 abstained – Lundsgaard.

9. D - Annual Summer Technology Update

Sean Beaverson, Director of Technology, provided the board with an update on the technology projects that took place during the summer. Mr. Beaverson was joined by Joel Mellor, Cloud Systems Specialist, Lia Staples, Operations Specialist, Jason Woyak, Systems & Security Specialist, and members of the summer tech-intern program: Lily Woyak, Ruby Gehrman, and Coda McCann.

9. E – Other New Business as Necessary

No other New Business was brought forward.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

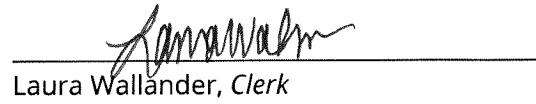
Motion to adjourn: Madson

Second: Usset

Vote: APPROVED – 6 in favor, 0 against.



Todd Madson, *Vice Chair*



Laura Wallander, *Clerk*