

**GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 24, 2026**

The School Board of Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 held a regular meeting on Monday, August 24, 2026, at the Mark Sanford Education Center, with President JoNell Bakke presiding.

Board Members Present: Mary Adams, JoNell Bakke, Dr. Allyse Dunnigan, Amber Flynn, Brianna Hall, Jay Kleven, Lori Kraemer, Eric Lunn, and Jeff Manley.

Board Members Absent: None.

Student Board Members Present: Bella Aipperspach and Elsa Parrill.

Student Board Members Absent: None.

District Administration Present: Dr. Terry Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Ryan Gatzke, Interim Business Manager; Dr. Kris Arason, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education; Chris Triggs, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education.

Other Present: Brady Olson, President, Grand Forks Education Association; and Cindy Johnson, Senior Executive Assistant and School Board Operations Coordinator.

Resource Staff Present: Kristyn Vetsch, Encore Program Director.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Reading of School Board Meeting Norms.

Hall read aloud the meeting norms.

Approval of Agenda.

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Manley to approve the agenda. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Manley, Lunn, Kleven, Hall, Adams, Dunnigan, Kraemer, Flynn and Bakke. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Public Comments.

None.

Discussion of NDSBA Opportunities for Board Member Development.

Dr. Brenner informed the board of upcoming professional development opportunities sponsored by the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA). These events include the

School Law Seminar, the Annual Convention, and the New Member Learning to Lead Workshop (formerly the New Member Seminar). New board members are required by Policy BE and state law (NDCC § 15.1-09-32) to attend the workshop within one year of assuming office. The events will take place October 8–9, 2026, in Bismarck. Board members were requested to notify Cindy Johnson of their attendance plans.

Encore Program Update.

Vetsch and Triggs updated the Board on the Encore Program, detailing its services, programming, locations, activities, participation statistics, fees, enrollment, and waitlists. While the program serves over 800 students, staffing and site limitations prevent fully clearing the waitlist.

A missed application deadline leaves the district ineligible for grant funding until 2030, resulting in a \$213,000 impact on the General Fund. Board members examined fee equity across locations

and suggested this should have been a board-level conversation during budget realignment.

Billing practices for abbreviated months, such as December and May, were discussed. Vetsch noted that tuition discounts were offered to families not requiring full-month care and that high school helpers enabled extended service in May.

Brady Olson joined the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Discussion of School Board Guiding Change Document.

Dr. Brenner recommended reviewing the 2021–2022 Guiding Change Document to align its financial targets with current fiscal realities. While the document set an aspirational goal of a 15% General Fund balance, the financial environment has changed considerably since the document was developed. Gatzke reported that the ending fund balance is currently below 1%. He cautioned that depleting funds would force the district to borrow money and could trigger intervention by the Department of Public Instruction. Historical reliance on the General Fund for building repairs was discussed, though a recent public vote raised the building fund cap from 10 to 20 mills. Following discussion, the Board agreed to schedule a future work session to review the document's parameters.

Consent Agenda.

It was moved by Flynn and seconded by Kleven to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- August 10, 2026, school board meeting minutes;
- Teacher appointments, effective August 17, 2026, as follows:
 - Megan Harmon-Blanchette, Social Studies Teacher, 188-day contract, salary schedule placement MA/MS, Step 4, \$58,716;
 - Karen McIntyre, Math Teacher, 94-day contract (40% with possible extension to the second semester), salary schedule placement MA+30, Step 24, \$17,214.40;

- Tyler Gropp, Social Studies Teacher, 188-day contract, salary schedule placement MA/MS, Step 4, \$58,716; and
- Third-party request for access to student information for SLP Now and SLP Toolkit as presented.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Flynn, Manley, Lunn, Kleven, Hall, Adams, Dunnigan, Kraemer, and Bakke. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Consideration of General Fund Financial Statement.

Gatzke reported that for the period from July 1, 2026, through July 31, 2026, total general fund revenue was \$179,025 and total general fund expenditures were \$3,552,439, resulting in expenditures exceeding revenue by \$3,373,414.

Gatzke noted a year-over-year timing variance, as the state foundation aid payment of \$7.9 million was received on August 3 rather than in late July. Board members addressed several specific line items, questioning high expenses for gas and oil and for paras/classified staff, which Gatzke agreed to investigate, and inquiring whether the district receives a share of city-assessed delinquent tax penalties. It was noted that a \$185,000 state grant will eventually offset portions of the expenses for the Infinite Campus software deployment.

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Adams to approve the General Fund Financial Statement for July 1, 2026, through July 30, 2026, as outlined. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Dunnigan, Kraemer, Flynn, Manley, Lunn, Kleven, Hall, Adams, and Bakke. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Announcements.

None.

Board Requests for Future Consideration.

- Flynn requested clarification on whether the board needs to revisit the UND/RRGC PILOT

following the County Commission's action on the PILOT.

- Dunnigan requested an update on the new paraprofessional allocation formula, including details on the formula structure, budget impact, teacher feedback, and confirmation that all IEP requirements are being met.
- Kleven reminded the board of a request for public clarification regarding transportation charges, specifically addressing whether a single use incurs a full-rate payment.

School Board Meeting Norms—How Did We Do?

Hall concluded that the board did a great job of following its meeting norms.

Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
(Date)

JoNell Bakke, President

Ryan Gatzke, Interim Business Manager