

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD SEPTEMBER 21, 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 21st day of September 2026.

At 5:30 pm, Chairperson Johnson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

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

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; Jackie Mainwaring, Executive Director of Student Achievement; Jeff Williams, Director of Information Technology; Heather Spurzem, Director of Human Resources; Heath Heggem, Communication Connections Events Coordinator; and Katelyn Marsik, Director of the Great Falls Public Schools Foundation. Also present were Tom Cubbage, Great Falls Education Association President and Lisa Sapp, Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) liaison.

Chairperson Johnson asked everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPT AGENDA

Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

1 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Craig Duff, passed unanimously to approve the
2 Consent Agenda, with special recognition to the donation of the 2000 Ford F-150, as
3 presented.

4
5 **A. Minutes of the September 8, 2026, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board approved
6 the minutes of the September 8, 2026, Regular Board Meeting as presented.

7
8 **B. Personnel Actions** – The Board approved the Personnel Actions as presented.

9
10 **C. Good Apple Awards** – The Board approved the nominations for Good Apple
11 Awards: Callie Ross, Student Support Specialist, and Lisa Hermansson, AWARE
12 clinician, both located at Giant Springs Elementary School.

13
14 **D. Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) TR-35 School Bus Driver Certificate**
15 – The Board approved the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) TR-35 School Bus
16 Driver Certificate for the individual listed in the agenda.

17
18 **E. Incoming Student Attendance Agreements for the 2026-2027 School Year** – The
19 Board approved the incoming student attendance agreements for the 2026-2027 school
20 year for the students listed in the agenda. Tuitions will be paid for by the District of
21 Residence.

22
23 **F. Kindergarten Early Entrance for 2026-2027 School Year** - The Board approved the
24 student listed in the agenda to enroll in kindergarten for the 2026-2027 school year by
25 special permission, per Board Policy 3110R.

26
27 **G. Student Activity Monthly Report for August 2026** – The Board approved the
28 Student Activity Accounts for August 2026 as presented.

29
30 **H. Charles M. Russell High School Chamber Orchestra Travel Request to the**
31 **National Orchestra Festival in Chicago, Illinois** - The Board approved the C.M.
32 Russell High School (CMR) Chamber Orchestra travel request to the American String
33 Teachers Association's (ASTA) National Orchestra Festival (NOF) in Chicago, Illinois
34 from February 24-27, 2027.

35
36 **I. Donation of a 2000 Ford F-150 Pickup to Paris Gibson Education Center** – The
37 Board approved the donation of a 2000 Ford F-150 pickup from Drew and Ruth Uecker
38 to Paris Gibson Education Center's Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) program, with
39 thanks.

40
41 **J. Establish a Student Activity Account "Class of 2030" at Great Falls High School**
42 – The Board approved Great Falls High School's request to open the "Class of 2030"
43 Student Activity Account.

44
45
46 **COMMUNICATION**

1
2 **A. Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) Communication** - Lisa Sapp, Malmstrom Air
3 Force Base (MAFB) liaison reported on a Pupil-Instruction Relation (PIR) opportunity
4 MAFB provided to thirty-four (34) District teachers during the summer. She also spoke
5 about the Military Family Information Fair that took place in August.
6

7 **B. Superintendent Report**

8 Superintendent Hoyer wished Trustees Bronson and Henning happy birthday.
9 She reviewed the commemorative days the District instructs students on through the
10 school year. She stated that this is a requirement from the 2025 Legislative session
11 HB377. She thanked Miranda Murray for getting commemorative day information to the
12 schools.

13 The *Worlds of Work* event took place September 15, 2026, where Great Falls Public
14 Schools (GFPS) 8th grade and 10th grade students attended along with many other
15 students from surrounding school districts. Superintendent Hoyer thanked all of the
16 vendors and volunteers who attended.

17 Superintendent Hoyer updated the Board on the progress of the GFPS 2027-2030 Long
18 Range Strategic Plan. She stated that the draft is currently at Cabinet and is scheduled
19 to launch at the end of the month.

20 She stated that National Custodial Appreciation Day is October 2, 2026, and Curriculum
21 and National Instructional Coaches Day is October 6, 2026.

22 Montana Law requires school Districts to have at least eight (8) disaster drills a year, in
23 which four (4) of those must be fire/evacuation drills. Superintendent Hoyer reviewed
24 the types of disaster drills in the District, including three (3) new drills planned for future
25 dates. She thanked the staff involved who help with these drills.

26 Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the current enrollment numbers and compared
27 numbers to the same time last year.
28

29 **C. Audience Communication – None**
30
31

32 **ACTION ITEMS**
33

34 **A. Financial Report and Check Register for August 2026** - Director of Business
35 Operations, Luke Diekhans, reviewed the financial report and check register for August
36 2026.
37

38 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve the
39 Financial Report and Check Register for August 2026 and Accounts Payable checks
40 #145837 - #146165 in the amount of \$1,954,279.50 and Payroll checks #86531 -
41 #86571 in the amount of \$41,935.04 as presented.
42

43 **B. Second Reading of Board Policies 1104 (New) – Student Representatives;**
44 **2105R (Delete) – Instruction; 2250 (Revised) – Adult Education; and 4550**
45 **(Revised) – Registered Sex Offenders** – Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the policies
46 above and stated that input was received from Trustee Bronson and community member
47 Randall Knowles on revised policy 4550. No other comments or recommendations for

1 changes were received since the first reading of the policies at the September 8, 2026
2 Board Meeting.

3
4 Trustee Bronson explained his input for recommended changes is to include employees of
5 the District.

6
7 Motion – Paige Henning, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve Board
8 Policies 1104 (New) – *Student Representatives*; 2105R (Delete) – *Instruction*; 2250
9 (Revised) – *Adult Education*; and 4550 (Revised) – *Registered Sex Offenders*, with the
10 recommended edits from Trustee Bronson.

11 12 13 **ACTION: OTHER**

14
15 There were no items extracted from the Consent Agenda to discuss.

16 17 18 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**

19
20 **A. Summer Data Report** – Executive Director Jackie Mainwaring stated that the
21 Summer Jumpstart program had a primary literacy and numeracy focus and one
22 hundred forty-three (143) students participated in the program in grades PK-3. Three
23 Innovative Summer Learning Camp opportunities were given to grades 4-8 where
24 twenty (20) to thirty (30) students attended each camp. They included one classroom
25 day and one field day experience. Three hundred fifty-eight (358) half-credits were
26 earned during the Summer School program at the high school level, which was an
27 increase from last summer. Fifty-eight (58) half-credits were earned by Indigenous
28 Education students. Mrs. Mainwaring stated that two hundred fifty-six (256) students
29 enrolled in Virtual Academy opportunities during the summer programs, with four
30 hundred sixty-six (466) half credits earned. The extended school year for Special
31 Education students resulted in seventy-one (71) students being offered services. Sixty
32 (60) of those students attended the sixteen-day program in June.

33
34 **B. First Reading of Revised Board Policies 2410 – *High School Graduation***
35 ***Requirements*; 5321 – *Leaves of Absence*; and 5321R – *Conditions of Use of Sick***
36 ***Leave*** - Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the recommended language revisions from the
37 Board Policy Committee to the Board policy listed. Language proposed brings policies
38 into alignment with legislative directives and/or cleans up confusing language. She
39 asked if anyone had questions or concerns to the revisions to contact her prior to the
40 next regular Board meeting.

41 42 **C. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments -**

43 Trustee Bronson stated that the Board of Directors of the Montana Schools Board
44 Association and its staff that has been reviewing the funding formula for school districts,
45 has concluded and will be bringing ideas to the legislature during this coming session.

1 Trustees Skornogoski and Henning stated that they have had an opportunity to meet
2 with the Insurance Committee and conversations regarding curbing insurance costs
3 have been happening.
4 Trustee Duff stated that he was very impressed with the Innovative Summer Camps and
5 they were very successful.
6 Trustee Thompson thanked her fellow Trustees for their work.
7 Chairperson Johnson asked Director of Human Resources, Heather Spurzem, to speak
8 on fingerprinting for Trustees. Heather stated that some employers might have already
9 fingerprinted them, like Trustee Hennings' employer, and they can ask them to provide
10 the District with the documentation. If they have not been fingerprinted, Trustees should
11 contact Human Resources to schedule an appointment to do so.
12
13

14 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

15

16 Chairperson Johnson said the next Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October
17 12, 2026.
18
19

20 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

21

22 Chairperson Johnson adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 6:14
23 p.m.
24
25

26
27 _____
Gordon Johnson, Chairperson

28
29 _____
Luke Diekhans, Clerk
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