GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
MEETING MINUTES
May 28, 2026

The Grand Forks School Board Government Affairs Committee met on Thursday, May 28, 2026, with Josh Anderson presiding.

Committee Members Present: Josh Anderson, Jay Kleven, Dr. Terry Brenner, Brandon Baumbach, and
Committee Members Absent: Amber Flynn, Dr. Catherine Gillach, and Matt Bakke.

Others Present: Dr. Elisa Diederich, Executive Director of Special Education; Eric Ripley, Executive Director of Career and Technical Education; Leslie Bjelde, Principal of Wilder Elementary School; Ryan Gatzke, Accounting Supervisor; and Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary.

Call to Order.
The meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m.

Approval of Minutes.
It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Anderson to approve the minutes of April 16, 2026, as written. Upon a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously. Absent: Flynn.

Discussion of Legislative Topics.
The committee discussed K-12 funding, focusing heavily on disparities in special education funding and upcoming technological transitions.

Baumbach reported on a recent legislative committee meeting on special education funding, at which he presented district data highlighting a fundamental flaw in the state's special education formula. He noted that the current system fails Grand Forks and likely other North Dakota districts by not tying dollars directly to individual student needs. The committee agreed that Baumbach's presentation should be shared publicly, along with background information to provide context.

Dr. Brenner noted that the district's information technology manager was heavily engaged in assisting with the state's transition from PowerSchool to Infinite Campus, and that the state should bear the financial cost of the shift.

The discussion also addressed the high probability that a ballot measure to provide free school meals will pass and its potential impact on state education funding. While the district is not opposed to free meals, there are other avenues already in place for that. Concerns were raised that the legislature might reduce general foundation aid to pay for free school meals. Free school meals could also impact the number of applications for free and reduced meals, which are tied to federal Title funding.

Other legislative topics of interest are funding surrounding private and charter schools and vouchers.

To foster further strategic conversations with local legislators, an informal face-to-face social will be considered this summer.

Next Meeting Date.
The next meeting date is to be determined.

Adjournment.
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

APPROVED _____
(Date)

Approved 10:15.2026

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Josh Anderson, Meeting Chair

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Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager