

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
2 **HELD JANUARY 10, 2022**
3

4 A duly called Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Great Falls Public
5 Schools was held at the District Offices Building, 1100 4th Street South, on the 10th day
6 of January, 2022.
7

8 **ROLL CALL:** Superintendent Moore took roll call.
9

10 **Trustees Present:** Jeff Gray, Chairperson
11 Gordon Johnson, Vice Chairperson
12 Bill Bronson
13 Mark Finnicum
14 Kim Skornogoski – via Zoom Conferencing
15 Marlee Sunchild
16 Nathan Reiff
17

18 **Others Present:** Tom Moore, Superintendent; Tom Hering, Director of Information
19 Technology; Ruth Uecker, Assistant Superintendent K-6; Heather Hoyer, Assistant
20 Superintendent 7-12; Lance Boyd, Director of Student Services; and Stephanie
21 Schnider, GFPS Foundation Director. Also present was Tom Cubbage, Great Falls
22 Education Association (GFEA) President. Director of Business Operations Brian Patrick
23 and Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) Child and Youth Education Services-School
24 Liaison Lisa Sapp participated via Zoom Conferencing
25

26 At 5:30 pm, Chairperson Gray called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of
27 Trustees and asked everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.
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29

30 **ADOPT AGENDA**
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32 Motion – Gordon Johnson, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to adopt
33 the agenda as presented.
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35

36 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**
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38 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Nathan Reiff, passed unanimously to approve the
39 Consent Agenda as presented. Trustee Johnson recognized Combustion Services for
40 their donations of boiler material and parts, and \$20,000 to the Buildings and Grounds
41 Department.
42
43

44 **A. Minutes of the December 13, 2021, 2021, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board
45 approved the minutes of the December 13, 2021 Regular Board Meeting as presented.
46

47 **B. Personnel Actions** – The Board approved the Personnel Actions as presented.
48

1 **C. Good Apple Awards** - The Board approved nominations for Good Apple Awards:
2 Trisha Harp-Gardner, Cascade City-County Health Department Public Health Officer,
3 Dugan Coburn, Director of Indigenous Education, Jessica Boyer, Kylan Hallett,
4 Academic Achievement Coaches, TJ IronBear, Brandon Fish, Serena Steffenson,
5 Angela HeavyGun, Indigenous Education Youth Development Specialists, Curtis
6 Valladold, Homeless/Youth Development Specialist, Miranda Murray and Jordan
7 Lankford, Instructional Indigenous Education Coaches, Patty Hodson, Indigenous
8 Education Secretary, Jessica Cape, Teacher at North Middle School, Clint Houston,
9 Jesse Rosteck, Kristi Kinsey, Aaron McAdam, School Resources Officers and Sergeant
10 Rob Beal, Great Falls Police Department Detective.

11
12 **D. Incoming 2021-2022 Student Attendance Agreements** – The Board approved the
13 three incoming student attendance agreements listed in the agenda for the 2021-2022
14 school year with the tuition to be paid for by the parents, district of residence and/or
15 state.

16
17 **E. Transitional Kindergarten Student Attendance at the Early Learning Center for
18 the 2021-2022 School Year** – The Board approved students B.R. and S.D. to attend
19 the Early Learning Center for the 2021-2022 school year due to exceptional
20 circumstances per Board Policy 3100.

21
22 **F. Student Activity Account at C.M. Russell High School** – The Board approved the
23 Student Activity Account Fund “Moxie” at C.M. Russell High School. Funds collected
24 will be used to provide services or donations to various groups and organization in
25 Great Falls dedicated to women and women’s issues.

26
27 **G. Student Activity Account at Great Falls High School** – The Board approved the
28 Student Activity Fund Account “Cybersecurity Club” at Great Falls High School. Funds
29 collected will be used to finance class projects.

30
31 **H. Donation of Boiler Materials and Parts** – The Board approved the gift of boiler
32 material and parts from Combustion Service Company to Great Falls Public Schools
33 with thanks.

34
35 **I. Donation of \$20,000 Cash** – The Board approved the gift of \$20,000 cash from
36 Combustion Service Company to Great Falls Public Schools with the intent to support
37 the Buildings and Grounds Department for the construction at Little Russell Building
38 with thanks.

39
40 **J. Innovative Educational Program Tax Credit Donation** – The Board approved the
41 state tax credit donation of \$40,000 from Ben Snipes to the Great Falls Public School
42 Elementary District with thanks. The funds will be used for the Innovative Educational
43 Program.

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46 **COMMUNICATION**

47

1 **A. Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Moore announced that today, June 10,
2 2022, would have been Jan Cahill's 74th birthday. He explained that following Jan's
3 passing in June 2021, a former Board member made a request to have a space at the
4 District Office Building named after Mr. Cahill. Per Board Policy 8451, a committee was
5 appointed to review the request. The committee recommended that a memorial plaque
6 be placed in the main conference room at the District Office Building to honor Mr. Cahill.
7 Superintendent Moore introduced Jan Cahill's family who were in attendance and
8 presented the plaque and inscription that will be proudly displayed in the Aspen
9 Conference Room as a dedication to Mr. Cahill and his service on the Great Falls Public
10 School Board of Trustees and for his commitment to education. Superintendent Moore
11 read the inscription that was prepared by Director of Business Operations Brian Patrick
12 with the assistance of former Superintendent Tammy Lacey. Former Trustee Don Ryan
13 said one of Mr. Cahill's attributes was that he always listened. When you spoke to Jan,
14 you knew you were heard.
15 A short break was taken at 5:43 p.m. to allow the Board members to meet with Mr.
16 Cahill's family and thank them for his service.
17 The meeting resumed at 5:47 p.m.

18
19 **Our Staff and Community**

20 Superintendent Moore said in celebration of National Law Enforcement Appreciation
21 Day on January 9, 2022, he would like to recognize and extend appreciation to the
22 District's School Resources Officers (SRO) Detective Clint Houston, Detective Jesse
23 Rostick, Detective Kristi Kinsey, Detective Aaron McAdam and Supervisor of the SRO
24 Program Sargent Rob Beal for their dedication to protecting and serving our schools
25 and the children of this community. All were presented a Good Apple Award and a
26 small token of appreciation. Chief Jeff Newton said the SRO Program has been a part
27 of Great Falls Public Schools for the past 23 years and he is proud of the program and
28 how the officers serve in our schools.

29
30 Superintendent Moore said the District continues its efforts to recruit for all positions
31 within the schools. A Job Fair will be held on January 28, 2022, at the District Office
32 Building for classified positions and a teacher recruitment weekend is scheduled for
33 February 11-13, 2022. He thanked Community Connections Manager Becky Nelson
34 and Human Resources Director Kerry Dattilo for their continuous work on recruiting.

35
36 Superintendent Moore congratulated Transportation Drivers Ronda Lopez, Randy
37 Remsen and Tiffany Shotnokoff for receiving Good Apple Awards. These drivers
38 transport students in the District's vans, and combined, drive 400 miles every day
39 helping to get our students safely to and from school.

40
41 **Our GFPS Community**

42 Superintendent Moore announced that applications will be available starting January 11,
43 2022, for Great Falls community members to participate in a GFPS Citizens Academy.
44 The academy will meet six times starting February 3 and end in April. Each meeting will
45 showcase different departments within the District and will be held in different locations.
46 He reviewed the schedule and topics and indicated that the number of participants will
47 be limited to 25-35 people.

48

1 **COVID Update**

2 Superintendent Moore showed a graph of COVID numbers from September 10, 2021 –
3 January 10, 2022. The positive numbers have increased each day during the past
4 week, and today, the positive cases were 201, leaving over 50% of classrooms not
5 covered by substitute teachers. Positive numbers in staff throughout the District, along
6 with staff absent for other medical reasons, caused concern that student needs were
7 not being met. Superintendent Moore said he met with the COVID Task Force and it
8 was recommended to close school for the remainder of the week. He explained this will
9 result in 3.5 days of remote learning for students as January 14 is a half-day of school
10 and there is no school on Monday, January 17. The District will monitor the COVID
11 numbers closely and will resume school on January 18 if the numbers have decreased
12 enough allowing schools to be properly staffed. He said along with schools being
13 closed, all school sports and activities for the week have been postponed or cancelled.
14 Superintendent Moore reported that Alluvion will continue to perform rapid COVID tests
15 for GFPS students and staff at the Montana Expo Park from 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. Monday,
16 Wednesday and Friday and that the school nurses will be in the buildings each day to
17 provide rapid COVID tests to students and staff. Vaccine Clinics that provide COVID
18 vaccines, flu vaccines and Tdap vaccines continue to be offered through Alluvion.

19
20 **B. Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) Communication** - Lisa Sapp, Malmstrom Air
21 Force Base (MAFB) Child and Youth Education Services-School Liaison reported that
22 on January 27, 2022, MAFB will hold a Town Hall Meeting. GFPS Cabinet members
23 will present at this event and will be available to answer questions from the audience.
24 On February 8, 2022, MAFB will hold a Developmental and Health Screening for
25 children ages 0-5 that will include dental and vision check-ups. Base access is required
26 to participate in the event. For those unable to attend, an additional screening is
27 scheduled for April 5, 2022.

28 MAFB Mission Support Group Commander Colonel Karns shared with the Board his
29 appreciation for Superintendent Moore’s leadership and commitment to partner with
30 MAFB. He said that as Superintendent Moore has led the District through the
31 Coronavirus pandemic, it is clear that he cares about our children and their education
32 experience. He looks to ensure the safety and security of children which is a goal we all
33 share. Colonel Karns said MAFB is fortunate to have Superintendent Moore as a
34 mission partner and look forward to working with him in the years ahead.

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36 **C. Audience Communication – None**
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39 **ACTION ITEMS**

40
41 **A. 2020-2021 Financial Statements and Audit Review** – Director of Business
42 Operations Brian Patrick reported that prior to the Board meeting, a Board Work
43 Session was held to review the Audit Report. He introduced Sarah Stanger of
44 Anderson ZurMuehlen who explained that she reviewed in detail with the Board during
45 the Work Session the 2020-2021 General Purpose Financial Statements and Audit
46 Report. She reviewed the highlights of the Audit Report stating that Great Falls Public
47 Schools received a clean audit report for the fiscal year ending in 2021. She explained
48 important components of the audit that include the Letter of Transmittal and the

1 Management's Discussion and Analysis. These are easy to read documents for anyone
2 wanting to know more about the audit. Sarah thanked the Business Office staff for their
3 help during the Audit.

4 Chairperson Gray asked when the Audit will be available on the website. Sarah said
5 she will have the final copy to Brian Patrick within a week.

6
7 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve the
8 2020-2021 Financial Statements and Audit Review as presented with thanks given to
9 Brian Patrick and the Business Office staff.

10
11 **B. Financial Report and Check Register for November 2021** – Motion – Gordon
12 Johnson, Seconded – Nathan Reiff passed unanimously to approve the November 2021
13 Financial Report and Accounts Payable checks #118654 - #119140 in the amount of
14 \$3,332,268.59 and Payroll checks #72616 - #72890 in the amount of \$590,299.39 as
15 presented.

16
17 **C. Student Activity Report for November 2021** – Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded
18 – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to approve the Student Activity Monthly Report
19 for November 2021 as presented.

20
21 **D. Second Reading of Revised Board Policies 2140, 2240, 2312R (delete) and 3121**
22 - Superintendent Moore explained the revisions to Board Policies 2140, 2240,
23 2312R(delete) and 3121 and said that he has not received any comments or concerns
24 since the first reading on December 13, 2021.

25
26 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Gordon Johnson, passed unanimously to approve
27 revised Board Policies 2140, 2240, 2312R (delete) and 3121 as presented.

28
29 **F. Second Reading of the 2021-2024 Information Technology Plan** – Director of
30 Information Technology Tom Hering announced that since the first reading of the 2021-
31 2024 Information Technology Plan on December 13, 2021, he has received notification
32 that the District received a \$50,000 grant from the Department of Defense (DOD) that
33 will be used to replace video surveillance equipment district-wide starting with the
34 middle schools and high schools. As a condition of the grant, the District must match
35 25% of the funds used. These funds will be used from the Technology Fund. Mr.
36 Hering said he had received a few questions after the first reading of the Plan and
37 asked if anyone had other questions or concerns. Vice Chairperson Johnson said there
38 were many red items throughout the Plan indicating funding was necessary and asked
39 is a Technology Levy could help with the funding. Mr. Hering said a Technology Levy is
40 an option the District and Board should consider in the future. Trustee Skornogoski said
41 local tech support will be needed to ensure our students are “modern” learners.

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43 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Nathan Reiff, passed unanimously to approve
44 the 2021-2024 Information Technology Plan as presented.

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47 **ACTION: OTHER**

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2 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**
3

4 **A. First Reading of Revised Board Policies 3231 and 4331** - Superintendent Moore
5 recognized Business Office Lead Aly Hauer for her work in preparing for each of the
6 Board Policy Committee Meetings. He reviewed, in detail, the changes to existing
7 Board Policies 3231 and 4331 and asked if anyone has comments, concerns or
8 questions to contact him before the next Board meeting.
9

10 **B. Montana High School Association Rule Change Proposals Report** – Director of
11 Athletics Mike Henneberg explained Great Falls High School and C.M. Russell High
12 School are members of the Montana High School Association (MHSA). Principals Geoff
13 Habel and Jamie McGraw are voting members of the MHSA representing their high
14 schools. Mr. Henneberg supervises and directs all MHSA sanctioned activities at
15 GFPS. MHSA will hold its annual meeting on January 17, 2022, at which time nine
16 proposals will be considered. Mr. Henneberg reviewed each of the proposals and
17 indicated how the GFPS administration intends to vote. Proposal 8, shot clocks for
18 Boys’ and Girls’ Basketball has a one-time installation cost of \$5,000 - \$10,000 and
19 Proposal 9, adding Boys’ Baseball as a MHSA sanctioned sport, has an annual cost
20 which is similar to Softball. The cost of Softball in 2021 was \$33,000 per school. This
21 includes travel, salaries and game/event associated costs. There would also be
22 additional one-time startup costs. Trustee Skornogoski asked if Boys’ Baseball was
23 added, would the District need to add another girls’ event? Mr. Henneberg said the
24 District currently has one more girls’ event with Girls’ Wrestling. Trustee Skornogoski
25 asked Mr. Henneberg to give the Board an update on the proposals after the annual
26 meeting has taken place.
27

28 Superintendent Moore asked the Board to allow time for K-6 Assistant Superintendent
29 Ruth Uecker to speak before moving to the next agenda item. Mrs. Uecker announced
30 that she will be retiring at the end of the school year. She said believes in the District
31 and its Vision and Mission and is so proud of the elementary principals, teachers and
32 support staff that are truly the heart of the District. Superintendent Moore said Mrs.
33 Uecker is an integral part of the Cabinet Team and she leaves behind a tremendous
34 legacy.
35
36

37 **C. Superintendent Evaluation Process** – Vice Chairperson Gordon Johnson reported
38 that the Superintendent Evaluation Process began in October. The community had the
39 opportunity to submit comments through January 6, 2022. Over fifty submissions were
40 received, most were complimentary and some had suggestions. The comments will be
41 compiled for the Board members’ review. He said Great Falls in the only AA school
42 district in the State that allows public input as part of the Superintendent’s Evaluation.
43 Trustees will submit their evaluation by January 14 and Board members will finalized
44 the evaluation process with Superintendent Moore on January 24. Vice Chairperson
45 Johnson said he will have a summary of the evaluation that will be made public on
46 January 28.

47 Community member Val Keaveny said he attends many Board meetings and has been
48 impressed by Superintendent Moore’s leadership. Mr. Moore supports the District’s

1 rules and guidelines and his main concern is student safety. Mr. Keaveny said he
2 doesn't always agree with Superintendent Moore, but appreciates his dedication to the
3 students and staff.

4
5 **D. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments –**

6 Trustee Skornogoski thanked Ruth Uecker for her service and wished her the best in
7 her retirement. She said Ruth is incredibly smart, passionate, responsive and leads her
8 team by listening first.

9 Trustee Bronson said he has been attending the secondary English Language Arts
10 curriculum meetings and continues to be impressed with the dedication to improve
11 student scores in this area. He encouraged his fellow Trustees to participate in
12 Montana School Board's Association's Think Tank Thursday. These virtual meetings
13 are held each Thursday at noon and include good information on a variety of topics.
14 Trustee Reiff said he has heard from frustrated parents concerning the school closure
15 and reminds everyone that we are all on the same team. He understands the
16 administration cares for the well-being of the students. He said the Citizen's Academy
17 is a great idea and hopes it will educate those parents/community members with
18 frustrations.

19 Trustee Sunchild she said she tries to remind people of the positive side of situations
20 when she is listening to negativity when decisions are made. She understands the
21 frustration parents have trying to find daycare for students in a short period of time. She
22 congratulated Ruth Uecker on her upcoming retirement.

23 Trustee Finnicum said he understands the decision to close schools was not an easy
24 one. He congratulated Ruth Uecker on her decision to retire.

25 Vice Chairperson Johnson said the District will not be the same without Ruth Uecker.
26 Chairperson Gray reported that he visited East Middle School last week and thanked
27 the building engineer for his quick actions when the transformer caught fire. He thanked
28 Cascade Electric and NorthWestern Energy for their assistance to keep heat in the
29 buildings.

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32 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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34 Chairperson Gray said the next Regular Board Meetings are scheduled for Monday
35 January 24, February 14 and February 28, 2022.

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38 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

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40 Motion – Gordon Johnson, Seconded – Nathan Reiff, passed unanimously to adjourn
41 the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:25 p.m.

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47 Jeff Gray, Chairperson

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48 _____
49 Brian Patrick, Clerk