

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**
2 **OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
3 **HELD DECEMBER 11, 2023**
4

5 A duly called Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Great Falls Public
6 Schools was held at the District Offices Building, 1100 4th Street South, on the 11th day
7 of December 2023.

8
9 **ROLL CALL:** Brian Patrick took roll call.

10
11 **Trustees Present:** Gordon Johnson - Chairperson
12 Kim Skornogoski – Vice Chairperson
13 Bill Bronson
14 Marlee Sunchild
15 Amie Thompson
16 Paige Turoski
17

18 **Trustees Absent:** Mark Finnicum - Excused
19

20 **Others Present:** Tom Moore, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business
21 Operations; Lance Boyd and Jackie Mainwaring, Executive Directors for Student
22 Achievement; Luke Diekhans, Director of Human Resources; Stephanie Becker,
23 Director of the Great Falls Public Schools Foundation; and Tom Hering, Director of
24 Information Technology.
25

26 Also present was Shelli Lavinder-Schwalk, Montana Federation of Public Employees
27 Field Consultant.
28

29 At 5:30 pm, Chairperson Johnson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of
30 Trustees and asked Trustee Sunchild to lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.
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32

33 **ADOPT AGENDA**
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35 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to adopt the
36 agenda as presented.
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39 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**
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41 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve
42 the Consent Agenda as presented.
43

44 **A. Minutes of the November 27, 2023, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board
45 approved the minutes of the November 27, 2023, Regular Board Meeting as presented.
46

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

49 **C. Good Apple Awards** – The Board approved the nominations for Good Apple
50 Awards for Jordon Falkenhagen, Great Falls Public Schools Technology Core
51 Technician and Chad Euerle, Riverview Elementary School 1st Engineer.

1
2 **D. Montana School Bus Drivers Certificates – OPI TR-35’s** – The Board approved
3 the Montana School Bus Drivers Certificates – OPI TR-35’s for the individuals listed in
4 the agenda.

5
6 **E. Transitional Kindergarten Student Attendance Agreements at the Early**
7 **Learning Family Center for the 2023-2024 School Year** – The Board approved the
8 students listed in the agenda to attend the Early Learning Family Center for the 2023-
9 2024 school year due to exceptional circumstances per Board Policy 3100.

10
11 **F. C.M. Russell High School Partial Roof Replacement Bid Award** – The Board
12 approved the lowest qualified bidder, Metalworks of Montana, for the C.M. Russell High
13 School partial roof replacement in the amount of \$373,805.00.

14
15
16 **COMMUNICATION**

17
18 **A. Report of the Student Representatives**

19 C.M. Russell (CMR) High School student representative Caroline Hermiller reported
20 students are enjoying giving back to the community through community service events
21 such as Salvation Army bellringing and participating in the *Polar Plunge* to raise money
22 for Special Olympics. Caroline highlighted lessons in Mrs. Arps’s Health, Ms. Clutter’s
23 Culinary, Mrs. Davis’s French, Mr. Davis’s Forensics, and Ms. Johnson’s Criminal
24 Justice classes that students loved this month. Winter athletic events are underway,
25 and teams were excited for the first competitions. Caroline encouraged everyone to
26 attend winter art exhibits in the O.C. Seltzer Gallery at CMR and a crosstown exhibit on
27 December 14th at the Luna Coffee Bar as the art is incredibly impressive. Drama
28 students just completed their final performance of “Little Shop of Horrors” and received
29 praise for their amazing performances. Students had an incredible experience learning
30 about culture, ceremony, and harvest stewardship at the Bison harvest with Dugan
31 Coburn, Director of Indian Education for Great Falls Public Schools. Health Occupation
32 Students of America (HOSA) students participated in a training for local firefighters and
33 volunteered at the Eastview Senior Care Center to practice skills that will prepare them
34 for working in the healthcare community. CMR students have officially “adopted” the
35 West Elementary School Wildcats. They are looking forward to spending time in the
36 elementary classrooms supporting their future Rustlers.

37
38 Great Falls High School (GFHS) student representatives Ryan Harrington, Brooklyn
39 Griffin, and Seth Royer reported the new location for Prom (the Newberry) was a
40 success. Bison athletes are looking forward to successful winter seasons. Scott Klinker
41 signed his intent to play baseball at Montana State University Billings and Bella Pachek
42 signed her intent to continue swimming at Old Dominion University. Brooklyn said the
43 tradition of the *Peace, Peace* Holiday concert brought the crowd to tears and
44 encourages everyone who couldn’t attend this year to attend next year. Seth reported
45 on diabetes awareness events, memorial bricks that can be purchased for a memorial
46 walkway at Great Falls High School, and student art on display in the GFH Dahl Gallery.
47 Clubs were busy making and selling their products at the Christmas Stroll last week.
48 Ryan commented that he was excited to be back at the Board Meeting as he had a
49 busy fall. He wanted to recognize Principal Habel for creating many of the ideas behind
50 projects that are currently taking place at GFH. Students are ringing the Salvation Army
51 bells around town to raise money for charity and are hoping to continue their winning

1 streak for raising the most money. Ryan acknowledged the phenomenal commercial
2 that the Video Production students produced for the Great Falls Public Library's Annual
3 Book-A-Thon and the collaboration that goes into making the commercial a success.
4 Ryan was proud to announce the GFH Football Team was awarded the Stockman Bank
5 Team Sportsmanship award. Ryan was proud and congratulated Bob Stingley for
6 winning the Montana High School Association (MHSA) Cross-Country Coach of the
7 Year.

8
9 Paris Gibson Education Center (PGEC) student representatives Mona Marceau and
10 Morgan Williams reported there are currently 220 students at PGEC and the largest
11 class is Seniors with 97. Morgan reported on new class offerings including a homework
12 club, medicine bag science lab, drum making from elk hides, ornament making, and an
13 engineering hour to introduce students to a new 3D printer. "Foreign Friday" is a
14 favorite class offered once a month. Students learn about the history, culture, and
15 traditions of different places in the world. Morgan encouraged everyone to visit PGEC to
16 see current student artwork on display throughout the building. Mona reported on a
17 wellness week event prior to Thanksgiving where community partners, students, and
18 teachers spent time together to focus on wellness; acknowledging that the holidays are
19 joyful for some, but very difficult for others. Students put together Thanksgiving dinners
20 with the Community Food Bank that included resources from the recent bison harvest.
21 Students enjoyed making and selling their products at the Pop-Up Shop during the
22 Christmas Stroll and thanked Becky Nelson for organizing the event. Students are busy
23 volunteering during the month of December at the Children's Museum, Rescue Mission,
24 and the Community Food Bank.

25 26 **B. Superintendent Report**

27 Superintendent Moore thanked the student representatives and also echoed the
28 congratulations to Mr. Stingley for the honor. He stated again how he appreciates the
29 reports that all students have on classes they love at their respective schools.
30 Superintendent Moore introduced Jody Murray and recognized her for her work with the
31 United Way campaign. Great Falls Public Schools raised \$58,546 this year for United
32 Way and is one of the top five pacesetter organizations in Great Falls. Jody was gifted
33 with a "You Are a Difference Maker" coin by Superintendent Moore.
34 Several hundred books were given away at the Pop-Up Shop. Superintendent Moore
35 thanked GFPS electrical technician, Josh Winterrowd, for helping to get heat and
36 electricity in the venue site; and also thanked GFPS Community Relations Coordinator,
37 Becky Nelson, for organizing the event.
38 Superintendent Moore was unable to attend the premiere of the Great Falls Public
39 Library Book-A-Thon commercial due to a conflicting meeting, but acknowledged the
40 great work of Kelly Wiles, Video Productions teacher at Great Falls High School. He
41 stated Susie McIntyre from the Great Falls Public Library was in attendance at the
42 Board Meeting and would be speaking soon.
43 Superintendent Moore reported on the CORE school update and said Principal
44 interviews were being conducted this week, Wednesday, December 13. The University
45 of Montana Western was recently awarded nearly \$400,000 by the Office of the
46 Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) to implement a Sprint Degree in partnership
47 with Great Falls College and Great Falls Public Schools. Executive Director Jackie
48 Mainwaring will provide further updates after the first of the year – with the principal
49 being selected by then.
50 Superintendent Moore encouraged everyone to consider taking advantage of the
51 Montana Innovative Tax Credit Program where donations can be made to the

1 Elementary or High School District. The donation deadline is January 17, 2024 as
2 dollar-for-dollar tax credit is on a first come, first served basis.
3 Superintendent Moore reported briefly on the School District Health Insurance Trust (HB
4 332). Trustee Bronson is a member of a committee collaborating with a group of AA
5 representatives to determine if the trust is feasible. There are three different proposals
6 and Trustee Bronson stated it is a slow process and they must evaluate every step
7 carefully. Mr. Patrick said it just takes time to get a consultant together and the object is
8 to get it done right and benefit every school in Montana.
9 Superintendent Moore said he and Mr. Patrick would be representing GFPS at the
10 County Commissioner’s Meeting on Tuesday, December 12, and encouraged everyone
11 to attend if they were interested.
12

13 **C. Audience Communication**

14 Chairperson Johnson introduced Susie McIntyre, representing the Great Falls Public
15 Library. She shared information regarding incidents of hate propaganda being placed in
16 several library books. She stated the literature is dangerous and poses significant
17 threats to our vulnerable children. The Great Falls Public Library is encouraging
18 community involvement with the “Hate Has No Home Here” campaign currently
19 underway. She encouraged everyone to display signage in windows to help spread the
20 word.
21

22 Chairperson Johnson thanked Ms. McIntyre for her communication.
23
24

25 **ACTION ITEMS**

26
27 **A. Non-Renew Temporary, Non-Tenured Teachers with Positions Expiring June 6,**
28 **2024** – Director of Human Resources, Luke Diekhans, presented information regarding
29 non-renewal of temporary and non-tenured teachers whose positions will expire on
30 June 6, 2024. These employees were hired on a temporary basis and may apply for
31 positions in which they qualify through the in-district transfer process.
32

33 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to approve
34 the non-renewal of the teachers listed in the agenda.
35

36 **B. Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Craft Council 2023-2025** – Director of
37 Human Resources, Luke Diekhans, said the International Brotherhood of Electrical
38 Workers – Local 233, Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters – United
39 Brotherhood of Carpenters, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District
40 Council 82, Local 260 and Plumbers and Fitters, and International Union of Operating
41 Engineers Local 200 – Local 400, combined to create the Craft Council. The District
42 contacted the Craft Council with the option to extend their current agreed upon contract
43 for the 2024-2025 to keep bargaining agreements consistent. The extension will allow
44 the District to negotiate all units in the same calendar year; thus allowing the District to
45 project budgets for the entire year. The union members voted in favor of the contract
46 extension.
47

48 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to approve
49 the two-year Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Craft Council members as
50 presented.
51

1 **C. Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Great Falls Association of**
2 **Educational Office Personnel Local #7795 of the Montana Federation of Public**
3 **Employees (MFPE) representing the District's Clerical Staff Members** – Director of
4 Human Resources, Luke Diekhans, introduced the five members of the clerical
5 negotiating team - Daneen Pate, Ashlie Clark, Amy Schmidt, Debbie Munson, and Trish
6 Hasselstrom, along with MFPE Field Representative Shelly Lavinder-Schwalk. He
7 stated the current CBA expired June 30, 2023 and after extensive negotiations with the
8 team members, a new three-year contract was ratified. Luke summarized the details of
9 the CBA. He stated back-pay, retroactive to July 1, 2023, would be paid out to union
10 members prior to the holiday.

11
12 Vice Chairperson Skornogoski thanked Luke and the members of the Union for their
13 hard work and stated she was happy there was a three-year agreement.

14
15 Daneen Pate, Great Falls Association of Office Personnel Union President, spoke on
16 behalf of the bargaining team, thanking the District for a fair contract with more livable
17 wages. She stated the new wages are more in line with what other districts are making
18 and expects the result will help retain employees; a win for the District, a win for their
19 union team, and a win for the community.

20
21 Chairperson Johnson thanked the team for their communication.

22
23 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve
24 the three-year Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Trustees of
25 School District No. 1 and A and the Great Falls Association of Educational Office
26 Personnel Local #7795 of Montana Federation of Public Employees as presented.

27
28 **D. Traffic Education Class Fee Increase** – Executive Director for Student
29 Achievement, Jackie Mainwaring, introduced High School Coordinator of Curriculum,
30 Beckie Frisbee. Beckie reported that on March 9, 2020, the Board of Trustees
31 approved an increase to Driver's Education class fees. Due to the COVID pandemic,
32 however, the fee increase was not implemented. Beckie explained the increased costs
33 of gas, maintenance, and salaries for teachers, makes it necessary to increase the
34 course fees. Currently \$60 per student is being pulled from the reserve fund to cover
35 costs – a fund intended to cover vehicle maintenance and car replacement.

36
37 Chairperson Johnson asked if he was correct in assuming if we continue to run the
38 program on current class fees, we will lose our reserves and no longer be able to
39 sustain the program. Beckie confirmed his account as accurate.

40
41 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to
42 approve the Traffic Education Class Fee increases to \$200 for the May, June, and July
43 sessions in 2024; \$225 for the January 2025 session; and \$250 for sessions beginning
44 with the Fall Session of 2025 and subsequent sessions.

45
46 **E. Establish Advertising Information for the Superintendent Search** – Chairperson
47 Johnson explained the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) has been
48 contracted to conduct the search for a new superintendent. MTSBA must have
49 authorization of the information to include on the advertisement, including the salary
50 range, closing date, and required application materials. The Board Budget Committee

1 met on December 5, 2023 and reviewed the current AA Superintendent salaries and
2 recommended the salary range be between \$175,000 and \$185,000.

3
4 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Marlee Sunchild, passed unanimously to approve
5 the closing date, the required application materials, and the 2024-2025 salary range for
6 advertising purposes.

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9 **ACTION: OTHER**

10 There were no items pulled from the Consent Agenda to discuss.

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13 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**

14
15 **A. Federal Minimum Wage Increase Effective January 1, 2024** – Director of Human
16 Resources, Luke Diekhans, reported per federal law, the Minimum Wage will increase
17 to \$10.30 per hour on January 1, 2024. Approximately 90 employee positions will be
18 affected, and the increased wages will result in approximately \$2,800 of additional fiscal
19 responsibility to the District.

20
21 **B. Strings 101 Pilot for the 2024-2025 School Year – C.M. Russell High School**
22 **Only** – High School Coordinator of Curriculum, Beckie Frisbee reported on a new pilot
23 program that will provide an entry level course for Fine Arts credit to those students who
24 wish to learn a string instrument in high school but did not have the opportunity to learn
25 earlier in his/her school career. Currently there are not enough courses available for
26 those interested students. The pilot will come under review every year.

27
28 Chairperson Johnson commented that he visited with Supervisor of Music and Arts,
29 Dusty Molyneaux and C.M. Russell Strings Teacher, Steve Olson. Mr. Olson would use
30 his prep period to teach the course.

31
32 Trustee Thompson asked how many students would be involved in the pilot. Ms.
33 Frisbee stated at least fifteen but no more than forty.

34
35 **C. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments**

36 Trustee Thompson commented it is great when someone like Mr. Stingley is recognized
37 for doing great things in our schools. She was pleased with the District's employees'
38 contributions to the United Way campaign.

39 Trustee Sunchild thanked Mr. Diekhans and the MFPE members for ratifying their
40 contract. She also thanked Susie McIntyre for her work in uniting the community with
41 the "Hate Has No Home Here" campaign.

42 Trustee Skornogoski thanked Becky Nelson and the community partners for the Pop-Up
43 Shop at the Christmas Stroll. Many elementary students, as well as high school
44 students, had an opportunity to showcase their talents and raise money for their causes.
45 She stated she attended "The Little Shop of Horrors" drama production at C.M. Russell
46 High School and it was "beyond fabulous". With Holiday concerts in full swing at all of
47 the schools in the district, Trustee Skornogoski gave a special thanks to janitors, gym
48 teachers, staff, and especially Mr. Molyneaux for all of the behind-the-scenes work it
49 takes to make the concerts a success.

50 Trustee Turoski attended the Great Falls High School's Video Productions class
51 premiere of the new commercial for the Great Falls Public Library Foundation Book-A-

1 Thon. The young actors were extremely proud to be standing next to their high school
2 mentors. Trustee Turoski also appreciated the work of the bargaining groups.
3 Trustee Bronson also attended many events and echoed Trustee Skornogoski's
4 comments about the wonderful drama production at C.M.Russell High School. He
5 thanked Susie from the library and stated this was not the first time we have had the
6 community push back against society. He encouraged everyone to speak out and not
7 make the same mistakes from the past.

8
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10 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

11
12 Chairperson Johnson said the Audit Review that was originally scheduled prior to this
13 Board Meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. prior to the next regular Board Meeting on Jan
14 8, 2024. He wished everyone Happy Holidays!

15
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17 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

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19 Motion – Trustee Bronson, Seconded – Vice Chairperson Kim Skornogoski, passed
20 unanimously to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:06 p.m.

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23
24

Gordon Johnson, Chairperson

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Brian Patrick, Clerk