

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**  
2 **OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
3 **HELD DECEMBER 12, 2022**  
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 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, on the 12<sup>th</sup> day  
7 of December 2022.

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 Mark Finnicum  
15 Marlee Sunchild  
16 Amie Thompson  
17 Paige Turoski  
18

19 **Others Present:** Tom Moore, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business  
20 Operations; Tom Hering, Director of Information Technology; Jackie Mainwaring,  
21 Executive Director for Student Achievement; and Luke Diekhans, Human Resources  
22 Incoming Director.  
23

24 Also present were Tom Cabbage, Great Falls Education Association (GFEA) President  
25 and Lisa Sapp, MAFB Child and Youth School Liaison.  
26

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

31 **ADOPT AGENDA**  
32

33 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to adopt  
34 the agenda as presented. A special thank you was given to George Garber for his  
35 donation of the 1998 Nissan Frontier to the C.M. Russell High School Auto Tech  
36 Department.  
37  
38

39 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**  
40

41 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve  
42 the Consent Agenda as presented.  
43

44 **A. Minutes of the November 28, 2022, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board  
45 approved the minutes of the November 28, 2022, 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 the nominations for Good Apple  
2 Awards: Community Member Erin Townsend, East Middle School Food Pantry  
3 Volunteer Stacey Jones, East Middle School Technology Coach Kayte Howell,  
4 Elementary Technology Coach Charlene Ammons, Great Falls High School Music and  
5 Drama teachers Elizabeth Quinby, James Mephram, Emily Schauer, Patrick Ryan and  
6 Bridger Lutz, Riverview Elementary School teacher Ryan Faulk, C.M. Russell High  
7 School DECA Store Attendant Linda Sullivan, Mountain View Elementary School  
8 Counselor Amy Schoenen, Mountain View Elementary School First Engineer Matt  
9 Wavra, Human Resources Department staff Kerry Dattilo, Heather Spurzem, Susan  
10 Woyth, Sandy Bennett, Shannon McKiernan and Nicole Lamelin, Giant Springs  
11 Elementary School teachers Hanna Crawford and Elaine Nutter, East Middle School  
12 Custodians Kyle Flood and Paul Blystone, Print Center Technicians Patty Broesder,  
13 Heather Ashby and Heather Nelson, and Longfellow Elementary School Crossing  
14 Guard Brisana Champlin.

15  
16 **D. Montana School Bus Drivers Certificate – OPI TR-35** – The Board approved the  
17 Montana Bus Drivers Certificate – OPI TR-35 for the individual listed in the agenda.  
18

19 **E. Transitional Kindergarten Student Attendance at the Early Learning Center for**  
20 **the 2022-2023 School Year** – The Board approved the students listed in the agenda to  
21 attend the Early Learning Center for the 2022-2023 school year due to exceptional  
22 circumstances per Board Policy 3100.  
23

24 **F. Donation of a 1998 Nissan Frontier to the C.M. Russell High School Auto Tech**  
25 **Department** – The Board approved the donation of a 1998 Nissan Frontier by George  
26 Garber to the C.M. Russell High School Auto Tech Department with thanks.  
27

28 **G. Junior Reserve Officer’s Training Corps (JROTC) Student Travel to Spokane,**  
29 **WA** – The Board approved CMR and GFH JROTC students to travel to Spokane, WA to  
30 compete in a military drill team competition December 9-11, 2022.  
31

32  
33 **COMMUNICATION**

34  
35 **A. Report of the Student Representatives**

36 Great Falls High (GFH) School Student Representatives Hayley Bouchard, Ryan  
37 Harrington and MacKenna Medina reported that GFH held its Prom on November 19,  
38 2022, and that it was well attended and a huge success. The students reported on  
39 class activities in Mr. Sullivan’s Biology class, Mrs. Dea’s English class, Mrs. Kessner’s  
40 Culinary class, and Mrs. Baroch’s French class. Mrs. Litzinger’s Life Skills students  
41 have been baking cookies that are then given to GFH students at the end of each week.  
42 Winter sports are underway, and the students gave updates for girls’ and boys’  
43 basketball, swimming, and wrestling. The GFH Student Council participated in the  
44 Salvation Army’s bell ringing at Scheel’s and Sam’s Club competing against CMR and  
45 Central Catholic to see who could raise the most money. The students reported that last  
46 week, the annual holiday concerts were held with a variety of music and traditions that  
47 have held strong for decades. Happy Birthday was sung to Ian Davidson at the  
48 December 6<sup>th</sup> concert in honor of his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. Mr. Davidson and his wife Nancy are

1 the donors that graced GFH with the renovation of their beloved auditorium. Hayley,  
2 Ryan and MacKenna reported that this month's Character Strong word is *Empathy*.  
3 GFH students and staff demonstrate this daily. One example is the Kindness Board  
4 where sticky notes are posted with positive and kind words and phrases.

5  
6 Paris Gibson Education Center (PGEC) Student Representatives Stratton Kiser and  
7 Miah LeDeau reported that students are learning to knit and crochet to help replenish  
8 hats to be hung on the free hat bulletin board. The students are also learning about the  
9 fibers and other materials associated with the hats. PGEC students toured the  
10 Hometana store to learn about running a small business. Lynx Grafix students and  
11 PGEC Art students participated in the *Pop-Up Shops* held during the Christmas Stroll at  
12 the Celtic Cowboy and Hometana. The students proudly sold their homemade items.  
13 The students said PGEC will be open to students over the Winter Break. Former PGEC  
14 Principal Drew Uecker will be offering archery for students to participate and soup and  
15 chili will be available so students have a warm meal. Bell ringings continue and the  
16 students invited everyone to stop by and witness one of these meaningful ceremonies.  
17 Stratton and Miah said PGEC students continue to volunteer in the community. Recent  
18 volunteer projects included cleaning the Great Falls Iceplex, baking and making holiday  
19 cards for the Grace Home, helping package meals for the Meals on Wheels program,  
20 wrapping presents at Kaufmans and playing with the pets at Happy Tails. On December  
21 21, 2022, the Student Voice group will hold a Wellness Wednesday where teachers will  
22 offer stations with wellness activities and students will have an opportunity to rotate  
23 through the stations.

24  
25 C.M. Russell (CMR) High School Student Representatives Caroline Hermiller and  
26 Allison Marr reported on class activities that included a winter bison hunt through the  
27 CMR Indian Education Department, activities in Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Birkett's  
28 Biology 1-2 class, Mrs. Davis's French class, Senior American Government class and  
29 Mr. Corda's Guitar class. The students reported that the Key Club attended the State  
30 Youth Conference last month and donated their time for the Salvation Army's bell  
31 ringing. Other groups that volunteered for the bell ringing were Student Government,  
32 and athletic teams. Business Professionals of America (BPA) students and Distributive  
33 Education Clubs of America (DECA) students supported Special Olympics by raising  
34 money for and participating in the Polar Plunge during the Christmas Stroll. Speech and  
35 Debate students are selling Christmas ornaments and students are crafting hats in the  
36 library with the knitting maker to hang on a free hats bulletin board just as PGEC  
37 students have done. Caroline and Allison said that CMR students are spending time  
38 discussing gratitude, empathy and advocacy for mental health and academic needs.  
39 CMR's Hall of Fame will be undergoing a restoration that will include new and uniform  
40 team signage and restored pictures hung on a new bracket system. The hope is to also  
41 repaint the gym and have the project completed by the Fall of 2023. The performing  
42 arts department concluded the production of *Beauty and the Beast* last weekend. A  
43 special thank you was given to the drama and music departments for their hard work in  
44 making the production a huge success. The students expressed their gratitude to the  
45 generous community members who donated \$1700 in Walmart gift cards to help  
46 support students in need for the remainder of the year.

1 **B. Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) Communication** – Lisa Sapp, MAFB Child  
2 and Youth School Liaison gave background on the Military Interstate Compact and the  
3 Purple Star program and then announced that five schools in Montana have been  
4 awarded Purple Star School status by the Military Interstate Children’s Compact  
5 Commission (MIC3). Additionally, three individuals with close ties to Great Falls Public  
6 Schools have been awarded Purple Star Champion Awards by the MIC3. She  
7 announced the GFPS schools who will be receiving the Purple Star designation  
8 are Great Falls High School, Chief Joseph Elementary School, Meadow Lark  
9 Elementary School, and the Early Learning Family Center. The fifth school is the  
10 Montana School for the Deaf and Blind.

11 Lisa gave examples of how MAFB and GFPS are working together to offer family  
12 engagement activities to better support students and families. Such events include the  
13 Loy Elementary Parent Outreach on December 13, 2022, High School Hack on January  
14 3 and January 5, 2023 and the free Developmental and Health Screening for military  
15 children ages 0-5 on February 10, 2023.

16  
17 **C. Superintendent’s Report** – Superintendent Moore introduced Brian Holbein,  
18 USSAF Lt. Colonel (Retired) Junior Reserve Office’s Training Corps (JROTC) Teacher  
19 at Great Falls High School and Senior Aerospace Instructor and Michael Wonch, USAF  
20 MSgt (Retired) JROTC Teacher at Great Falls High School and Aerospace Science  
21 Instructor and congratulated them for receiving the Purple Star Award. He thanked  
22 them for their work and dedication to the JROTC program. Lt. Colonel Holbein and  
23 MGST Wonch were congratulated by the Board of Trustees. Superintendent Moore  
24 congratulated Colonel Christopher Karns, Mission Support Group Commander,  
25 Malmstrom AFB for receiving the Purple Star Award and thanked him for his support of  
26 Great Falls Public Schools and for his work with military families as they transition to  
27 MAFB and GFPS. Colonel Karns said GFPS has been very supportive of military  
28 families and their children. He thanked Lisa Sapp for her exceptional work with military  
29 families and the school district.

30 Superintendent Moore announced that State Superintendent Elsie Arntzen will be  
31 hosting a Community Forum on December 19, 2022, from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. at Great  
32 Falls College/Montana State University. The focus of the forum is to bridge the  
33 communication between schools and families. Local legislators will be in attendance to  
34 hear from parents in the community.

35 Superintendent Moore introduced Sunnyside Elementary School Principal Durbin  
36 Thomsen and four students. The students spoke about the Character Strong Program  
37 that has been implemented district-wide this year. The students said the Character  
38 Strong word of the month is *Empathy* and told what it means to them. A short video  
39 was shown that showcased other Sunnyside Elementary School students talking about  
40 what they like best about the program.

41  
42  
43 **D. Audience Communication** – None

44  
45  
46 **ACTION ITEMS**

47  
48

1 **A. 2021-2022 Financial Statements and Audit Report** - Director of Business  
2 Operations Brian Patrick reported that prior to the Board meeting, a Board Work  
3 Session was held to review the Audit Report. He introduced Sarah Stanger of  
4 Anderson ZurMuehlen who explained that she reviewed in detail with the Board during  
5 the Work Session the 2021-2022 General Purpose Financial Statements and Audit  
6 Report. She reviewed the highlights of the Audit Report stating that Great Falls Public  
7 Schools received a clean Audit report for the fiscal year ending in 2022. She explained  
8 important components of the Audit that include the Letter of Transmittal and the  
9 Management’s Discussion and Analysis. These are easy to read documents for anyone  
10 wanting to know more about the audit. Sarah thanked the Business Office staff for their  
11 help during the Audit.

12  
13 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve the  
14 General-Purpose Financial Statement with Auditors Report for Fiscal Year ending June  
15 30, 2022 as presented.

16  
17 **B. Riverview Playground Asphalt Project** – Director of Business Operations Brian  
18 Patrick explained that half the playground at Riverview Elementary School was replaced  
19 last year and that the remaining half is in very poor condition and needs replacement. A  
20 pre-bid walkthrough is scheduled for January 24, 2023 at the Riverview Elementary  
21 School playground and the bid opening is scheduled for February 13, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.  
22 Mr. Patrick said the funding for the project will be paid from the Building Reserve Fund.

23  
24 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to approve  
25 the bid specifications and bidding timeline for the Riverview playground asphalt project  
26 as presented.

27  
28 **C. Trustee Resolution Calling for an Election on May 2, 2023** – Director of Business  
29 Operations Brian Patrick explained that the Trustees must pass a resolution calling for  
30 an election at least 70 days before the election. The resolution must include the  
31 election date, purpose of the election, stating whether the election will be by mail or poll,  
32 voting locations and times the polls will be open. The resolution also includes the  
33 names of the election judges. He explained the May 2, 2023, election will be held to  
34 elect three (3) Trustees for three-year terms. The deadline for a person to file for a  
35 Trustee position is March 23, 2023. Trustees do not have to set levy amounts at this  
36 time; however, they must be set in time for the Clerk to certify the ballot, not less than  
37 30 days before the election or March 31, 2023.

38  
39 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to adopt a  
40 Resolution calling for an Election on May 2, 2023 per the attached document in the  
41 agenda that sets forth the date, purpose, ballot deposit sites, and the times the ballot  
42 deposit sites will be open.

43  
44 **D. 2023 School Election by Mail Ballot** – Director of Business Operations Brian  
45 Patrick explained the Trustees must send a request to the Election Department of  
46 Cascade County officially requesting the school election be held by a mail ballot. The  
47 estimated cost to run a school election is \$40,000.

48

1 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to  
2 approve the request to the Election Department of Cascade County that the 2023  
3 school election be conducted by mail ballot.  
4

5 **E. 2024 School Election by Mail Ballot** – Director of Business Operations Brian  
6 Patrick explained the Trustees must send a request to the Election Department of  
7 Cascade County officially requesting the school election be held by a mail ballot. The  
8 estimated cost to run a school election is \$40,000.  
9

10 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to  
11 approve the request to the Election Department of Cascade County that the 2024  
12 school election be conducted by mail ballot.  
13

14 **F. Cascade County to Conduct the 2023-2024 School Elections** – Director of  
15 Business Operations Brian Patrick explained this request is not for the upcoming May  
16 2023 election, but the election during the 2023-2024 school year. He said if the Board  
17 does not officially make this request, the Elections Department, by law, cannot run the  
18 election. The Election Agreement that was included in the agenda, clearly outlines the  
19 responsibilities, per election laws, of the Elections Office and the school district when  
20 conducting an election.  
21

22 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to officially  
23 ask the Cascade County Elections Department to run the elections for Great Falls  
24 Public School Districts 1 & A during the 2023-2024 school year.  
25

26  
27 **ACTION: OTHER**  
28  
29

30 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**  
31

32 **A. Federal Minimum Wage Increase Effective January 1, 2023** – Human Resources  
33 Incoming Director Luke Diekhans explained that the current minimum wage is \$9.20/hr  
34 and that effective January 1, 2023, the minimum wage will increase to \$9.95/hr. The  
35 wage change will impact specific employee groups within Great Falls Public Schools  
36 and is estimated to increase costs by approximately \$7,500 annually.  
37

38 **B. First Reading of the New K-12 Library Standards Documents KUDs (Know-  
39 Understand-Do)** – Curriculum Coordinators Rachel Cutler and Beckie Frisbee  
40 explained the State of Montana adopted new state standards for Library Media and  
41 Information Literacy in July of 2021 and that the standards are based upon national  
42 library standards. All Library Media Specialists from the school district were invited to  
43 meet during the Summer of 2022 to collaboratively analyze, and write KUDs (Know,  
44 Understand, Do) for the GFPS library curriculum. They reported that the Director of the  
45 Great Falls Public Library also participated in the meetings. Rachel and Beckie said the  
46 public can view the new KUDs on the District’s website and contact the Curriculum  
47 Office with any questions or feedback.  
48

1 **C. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments –**

2 Trustee Thompson reported that she has attended numerous student events in the past  
3 weeks and how much she has enjoyed them. She wished everyone a great holiday  
4 break.

5 Trustee Finnicum reported that he attended State School Board meetings last week that  
6 included presentations on cyber security and building safety. He said tonight’s student  
7 reports were great and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

8 Trustee Skornogoski congratulated the Purple Star Award recipients and said the  
9 JROTC program has a positive impact with its students and is appreciative of the  
10 District for continuing to support the program. She also thanked Colonel Karns for his  
11 dedication to the military students and families.

12 Trustee Turoski reported she has attended several school functions recently and said  
13 as a former military student, she appreciates all the school district does to help military  
14 families and students.

15 Trustee Bronson voiced his concerns of marijuana dispensaries and the negative  
16 impact they have on communities and students. He said the Great Falls Chamber of  
17 Commerce members recognize this and will be working with community partners and  
18 the school district to take pro-active measures. He reported that he also has attended  
19 student events and appreciates the opportunities the school district offers to students.

20 Trustee Sunchild said she is grateful that Paris Gibson Education Center will be keeping  
21 its doors open during the holiday break.

22  
23  
24 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

25  
26 Chairperson Johnson reminded everyone that the Office of Public Instruction Parent  
27 Community Forum is scheduled for December 19, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. and will be held at  
28 Great Falls College/Montana State University. Written comments on Superintendent  
29 Moore’s evaluation from the community are due January 5, 2023. The next Regular  
30 Board Meetings are scheduled for Monday, January 9, 2023, and Monday, January 23,  
31 2023.

32  
33  
34  
35 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

36  
37 Motion – Amie Thompson, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to  
38 adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 6:47 p.m.

39  
40  
41  
42  
43 \_\_\_\_\_  
44 Gordon Johnson, Chairperson

45 \_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Patrick, Clerk