

1                   **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
2   **HELD DECEMBER 13, 2021**  
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 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day  
6 of December, 2021.  
7

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

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

18 **Others Present:** Tom Moore, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business  
19 Operations; Tom Hering, Director of Information Technology; Ruth Uecker, Assistant  
20 Superintendent K-6; Heather Hoyer, Assistant Superintendent 7-12; Lance Boyd,  
21 Director of Student Services; and Stephanie Schnider, GFPS Foundation Director. Also  
22 present were Tom Cabbage, Great Falls Education Association (GFEA) President and  
23 Lisa Sapp, Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) Child and Youth Education Services-  
24 School Liaison.  
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**  
31

32 Chairperson Gray announced that Action Item A, the 2020-2021 Financial Statements  
33 and Audit Review, has been postponed and will be included in the January 10, 2022  
34 Board agenda.  
35

36 Motion – Gordon Johnson, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to adopt  
37 the agenda, with the exemption of Action Item A, as presented.  
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39

40 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**  
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42 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve the  
43 Consent Agenda as presented.  
44

45 Assistant Superintendent 7-12 Heather Hoyer presented Supervisor of Music and Arts  
46 Dusty Molyneaux with a Good Apple Award for his outstanding work during the All State  
47 Music Festival in October.

1 Dusty Molyneaux explained that Consent Item E is a request for several music groups  
2 from both high schools to attend events in Spokane, WA in March 2022. He explained  
3 the State of Washington’s COVID-19 regulations and how the District is proposing to  
4 meet the requirements.

5  
6 **A. Minutes of the November 22, 2021, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board  
7 approved the minutes of the November 22, 2021 Regular Board Meeting as presented.

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

10  
11 **C. Good Apple Awards** - The Board approved the nominations for Good Apple  
12 Awards: Rhonda Lopez, Randy Remsen and Tiffany Shotnokoff, District-wide  
13 Transportation Drivers, Lauren Coughlin, Teacher at Giant Springs Elementary School,  
14 and Emilie Martin, Crossing Guard at Longfellow Elementary School.

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

18  
19 **E. C.M. Russell (CMR) High Chanteur Choir, Great Falls High (GFH) School  
20 Delphian Choir, CMR and GFH Chamber Orchestras and GFH Symphonic Band  
21 Travel to Spokane, WA in March 2022** – The Board approved the C.M. Russell (CMR)  
22 High Chanteur Choir, Great Falls High (GFH) School Delphian Choir, CMR and GFH  
23 Chamber Orchestras and GFH Symphonic Band Travel to Spokane, WA in March 2022  
24 as presented.

25  
26 **F. Donation of Soffit Break with Stand and Material Cutter with Soffit Material** –  
27 The Board approved the donation of Soffit Break with Stand and Material Cutter with  
28 Soffit Material from Great Falls College/Montana State University to the Industrial  
29 Technology Department at C.M. Russell High School with thanks. Chairperson Jeff  
30 Gray gave special thanks to Great Falls College/Montana State University for their  
31 continued partnership with the school district and for this donation.

32  
33 **G. Donation of 594 2 x 4s** – The Board approved the donation of 594 2 x 4s from RY  
34 Timber to the Industrial Technology Departments at East and North Middle Schools with  
35 thanks. Trustee Bronson noted this donation is valued at approximately \$5,000 and  
36 gave special thanks to RY Timber for helping the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Industrial Technology  
37 Departments at both of the middle schools.

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40 **COMMUNICATION**

41  
42 **A. Student Representatives’ Report**

43 C.M. Russell (CMR) High School Student Representatives Luke Banks and Ashton  
44 Blake reported on the \$5,000 STEM Pipeline Grant that the CMR Chemistry program  
45 received from PhRMA for presenting a demonstration on how they use technology in  
46 the classroom, and reviewed the recent activities of the Health Occupations Students of  
47 America (HOSA). The students reported that CMR’s Drama Department just completed  
48 their performances of *Nunsense*. Money raised from the presentations will be donated

1 to *Shop With a Cop*. Luke and Ashton reported that the CMR Volleyball team finished  
2 the 2021 season undefeated and were the AA Volleyball State Champions. CMR  
3 students Dawson Williams and Hannah Bingham have been nominated by U.S. Senator  
4 Jon Tester to the Prestigious Military Service Academies. The students will be notified  
5 in January if they have been accepted. Luke and Ashton reported on *Winter* activities  
6 that included the Winter Art Show at O.C. Seltzer Memorial Art Gallery, Holiday  
7 concerts, the annual fruit sales, the beginning of Winter sports and the Electric City  
8 Speech and Debate Tournament. As part of community service projects, the National  
9 Honor Society at CMR will be helping to deliver food and toys to needy families and  
10 CMR student government and football players helped the Salvation Army with their  
11 annual bell ringing.

12  
13 Paris Gibson Education Center (PGEC) Student Representative Kendal Mickealson  
14 announced that 19 seniors have completed their high school requirements. Most of the  
15 graduates will wait until May to walk for Graduation. PGEC continues to enroll new  
16 students with more on a waiting list. Kendal reported Jobs for Montana Graduates  
17 (JMG) students delivered chemo care packages to the Sletten Cancer Center and will  
18 be teaming up with Loy Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade students to prepare a meal for the  
19 Veterans at the Grace Home. Each resident will be presented with a Purple Star pin as  
20 a small token of appreciation for their service. PGEC, along help from the Great Falls  
21 Public Schools Foundation, Alluvion and other donors, provided over 28 families with  
22 food for during the Thanksgiving break. PGEC is currently preparing food baskets for  
23 the Winter break.

24  
25 Great Falls High (GFH) School Student Representatives Hayley Bouchard, Ryan  
26 Harrington and Valon Haslem reported that the Winter Formal was held on December 4,  
27 2021. The theme was the Roaring 20's and students had a great time with nearly 400  
28 students in attendance. Zach Newton and Avrie Costley were crowned Prom King and  
29 Queen. Holiday concerts were held December 6-7 in the beautiful Davidson  
30 Auditorium. Special acknowledgement was given to the music teachers for leading the  
31 concerts. A new student exhibit in Dahl Gallery has opened and showcases the art that  
32 GFH students have been focused on for the past few months. The students gave  
33 updates on the winter sport teams that include swimming, wrestling and boys' and girls'  
34 basketball, along with the recent Electric City Speech and Debate Tournament. The  
35 Bison Giving Tree is filled with tags for people to help those in need in the Bison  
36 community. Special thanks was given to Mrs. Bohannon who is always integral to  
37 ensuring that the Giving Tree happens.

38  
39 **B. Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) Communication** - Lisa Sapp, Malmstrom Air  
40 Force Base (MAFB) Child and Youth Education Services-School Liaison said she did  
41 not have anything to report.

42  
43 **C. Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Moore thanked Public Health Officer  
44 Trisha Gardner for her service to the public health and safety of the community. She  
45 was a consultant and advisor to all at GFPS as we navigated through the pandemic. He  
46 wished her well with her new job opportunity with the Department of Public Health and  
47 Human Services.

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**Our Students, Staff and Community**

Superintendent Moore congratulated the East Middle School Plunge Team for raising over \$5,000 for Special Olympics. He reported that many students have been volunteering in the community with bell ringing for the Salvation Army, the Business Professionals of America Walk-a-Thon, that raised money for Special Olympics, music students performing for community groups and the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) students raised money for a meat locker at the Veterans’ Home. Superintendent Moore announced that Great Falls Public Schools will host the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce Business 4 Breakfast on December 14, 2021. The event will showcase our JROTC students as they lead the pledge, GFH Choir, as they sing a Holiday song and BPA students as they serve the breakfast. Holiday crafts and cards made by elementary and middle school students will be presented to the guests. He congratulated the CMR Drama Department for a successful performance of the Musical/Theatrical production of Nunsense and gave special thanks to the CMR Drama and Music teachers involved.

**Our Staff and Community**

As part of the District’s ongoing efforts to recruit and retain teachers, Superintendent Moore said Community Connections Manager Becky Nelson and Human Resources Director Kerry Dattilo have been working on two upcoming events. On December 21, 2021, new teachers are invited to help wrap gifts and lead crafts with children at the Great Falls Rescue Mission. This service project is a way to give back to the Great Falls community. During February 11-13, 2022, Great Falls Public Schools will be hosting a High Voltage Weekend in the Electric City for college seniors throughout the state who are majoring in education. This will be an all-expense paid weekend to learn about Great Falls, and interview for teaching positions for the 2022-2023 school year.

**Our GFPS Community**

Superintendent Moore announced that starting in January 2022, the District will be asking for community volunteers to participate in a GFPS Citizen’s Academy. The academy will consist of six meetings for community members to learn about governance, facilities, programs and more about the District.

**COVID-19 Update**

Superintendent Moore gave updated COVID-19 information on the positive COVID-19 cases in GFPS, and the new cases, average cases per 100,00 and the positivity percentage in Cascade County. He also reported on the Cascade County vaccinated percentage for eligible Montanans by age group. Superintendent Moore said the positive COVID cases are the lowest since the beginning of the school year and that he will be meeting with the COVID Advisory Panel in the upcoming weeks to recommend that the current mask mandate in the elementary schools be lifted after the holiday break, with the caveat that if directed by health officials, or due to an outbreak, the mandate may be reinstated. The District will continue its other safety protocols such as sanitation and physical distancing. He explained that since March 2020, the District has weathered the storm of COVID. During the time of schools being closed in the Spring of 2020, for the students that chose remote learning last year, and for the students that were quarantined or isolated last year, it is clear that the students benefit from face-to-

1 face learning and being around others. The District reopened schools in the Fall of  
2 2021 with safety protocols in place with the advice of health professionals, not  
3 politicians, and using the guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics. The  
4 District's goal is to Reengage, Reintegrate and Remediate. Superintendent Moore said  
5 the health professionals were concerned that the new COVID variant was more  
6 selective to children and advised the District to continue with its safety protocols. He  
7 said this has been a very difficult year for administration and staff with the District's  
8 mask mandate. It has created friction with parents and school staff. It is time to come  
9 together, to be respectful and kind to one another, and to focus on the academic and  
10 social/emotional needs of the students. Lifting the elementary mask mandate effective  
11 January 3, 2022, will allow parents to make their own decisions for their children  
12 concerning masks. Superintendent Moore said he will still highly recommend that  
13 masks be worn, especially in areas where physical distancing cannot be maintained.  
14 He explained the District has a flexible Board Policy in place to be able to adapt to  
15 changing trends of the community.

16 Chairperson Gray thanked Superintendent Moore for his candor and said he  
17 appreciates everything the Leadership and staff have done to protect the students and  
18 understands this has been a very stressful time for staff, students and families.  
19

20 **D. Audience Communication** - Community member Noelle Johnson thanked  
21 Superintendent Moore for his comments concerning the possibly of lifting the mask  
22 mandate for elementary students and staff after the holiday break. She feels the District  
23 is double-minded by requiring the wearing of masks in elementary buildings when they  
24 are not worn out in the community.  
25

## 26 **ACTION ITEMS**

27  
28 **A. 2020-2021 Financial Statements and Audit Review** – This item was not presented  
29 and will be included in the January 10, 2022 Board agenda.  
30

31 **B. Second Reading of Revised Board Policies 1210, 2050 and 8421 and New**  
32 **Board Policy 8502** - Superintendent Moore explained the revisions to Board Policies  
33 1210, 2050, 8421 and new Board Policy 8502 and said that he has not received any  
34 comments or concerns since the first reading on November 22, 2021.  
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36 Motion – Gordon Johnson, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to  
37 approve revised Board Policies 1210, 2050 and 8421 and new Board Policy 8502 as  
38 presented.  
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40 **C. Financial Report and Check Register for October 2021** – Motion – Mark  
41 Finnicum, Seconded – Nathan Reiff passed unanimously to approve the October 2021  
42 Financial Report and Accounts Payable checks #118132 - #118653 in the amount of  
43 \$2,022,500.00 and Payroll checks #72348 - #72615 in the amount of \$703,798.73 as  
44 presented.  
45

46 **D. Student Activity Report for October 2021** – Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded  
47 – Gordon Johnson, passed unanimously to approve the Student Activity Monthly Report  
48 for October 2021 as presented.

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2 **E. Intergovernmental Agreement for the Transfer of Monies to the State** – Director  
3 of Business Operations Brian Patrick gave the background on the Federal Medicaid  
4 reimbursement process for Mental Health Services that ended June 30, 2020. The  
5 reimbursement process was administered through DPHHS and required that school  
6 providers meet federal and state Medicaid requirements. In the 2021 Legislative  
7 Session, House Bill 671 passed transferring the management of the Comprehensive  
8 School and Community Treatment (CSCT) program from DPHHS to the Office of Public  
9 Instruction (OPI) effective July 1, 2021. The Legislative intent is to minimize  
10 administrative burden on school districts. The Legislature also provided through HB 2  
11 \$2.2 million in bridge funding to pay the local state match for Medicaid claims effective  
12 July 1, 2021. When this bridge funding is exhausted, schools will have to follow a  
13 process that has been in development by OPI. DPHHS and OPI worked on an  
14 Intergovernmental Transfer process. This new process involves a transfer of funds from  
15 one government entity to another; from the District to OPI and from OPI to DPHHS.  
16 Upon receipt of the monies, DPHHS will make a payment to the District based on the  
17 established criteria. However, GFPS' administration, along with all of the AA Districts  
18 have reservations about the process. Director of Student Services Lance Boyd  
19 explained that the AA Districts have concerns on the amount of work this agreement  
20 creates for the district. Questions have been asked and recommendations have been  
21 made to OPI with no response. He said all of the AA Districts are not approving the  
22 agreement at this time until questions can be answered and legal counsels approve the  
23 agreement. Trustee Skornogoski asked if there are concerns the District may lose the  
24 community partners that help provide the services. Mr. Boyd said he has had  
25 conversations with them and they are working on other avenues. Trustee Bronson  
26 thanked Mr. Patrick and Mr. Boyd for their presentations and said the Legislature was  
27 clear that House Bill 671 was intended to be collaborative between districts and  
28 agencies. He said much work needs to be done to the proposed agreement, therefore  
29 was making a negative motion on this action item.  
30

31 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to not  
32 approve the Intergovernmental Agreement for the transfer of monies to the State as it  
33 has been presented to the District.  
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36 **F. C.M. Russell (CMR) High School Roof Replacement Lowest Qualified Bidder** –  
37 Director of Business Operations Brian Patrick explained the CMR roof above the Music  
38 Department needs to be replaced. This project was not included in the 2016 bond  
39 language. The low bid of \$968,805.00 by Metal Works of Montana exceeds the  
40 District's available funding for the project. Cushing Terrell Architects (CTA) worked with  
41 Metal Works and renegotiated the bid and the portion of the roof to be replaced.  
42 Sections A1, A2 and C are the priority sections to be replaced. The revised bid is  
43 \$498,357.00 with the work to be scheduled for the Summer of 2022. Mr. Patrick said  
44 the timing of the approval allows supplies to be ordered and arrive in time for the work  
45 to be completed.  
46

47 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Nathan Reiff, passed unanimously to approve  
48 the C.M. Russell High School Roof Project with the understanding that the lowest

1 qualified bidder, Metal Works of Montana, will complete the revised project that includes  
2 Sections A1, A2 and C for \$498,357.00. Work will be scheduled for the summer 2022.

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5 **ACTION: OTHER**

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8 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**

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10 **A. First Reading of Revised Board Policies 2140, 2240, 2312R and 3121 -**

11 Superintendent Moore reviewed, in detail, the changes to existing Board Policies 2140,  
12 2240, 2312R and 3121 and asked if anyone has comments, concerns or questions to  
13 contact him before the next Board meeting.

14  
15 **B. First Reading of the 2021-2024 Information Technology Plan –** Director of

16 Information Technology Tom Hering explained the intent of the 2021-2024 Technology  
17 Plan is to formulate a blueprint for the next three years to integrate technology into  
18 curriculum, deliver adequate access and reliable infrastructure and equipment, provide  
19 needed training and support and develop addition computer science career pathways.  
20 He gave examples of ways the plan addresses its objectives. Mr. Hering said GFPS will  
21 coordinate with Great Falls College – Montana State University (GFC-MSU) for a dual  
22 credit program in cybersecurity. This education will provide the building blocks for the  
23 students to seek a career in a growing and desirable industry. The District will expand  
24 the use of video training for both training and instruction. The District will purchase new  
25 equipment with a minimum of 3 years warranty. To reach this goal, the annual  
26 Technology Levy would need to be increased. He explained the District has applied for  
27 a grant through the COPS School Violence Prevention Program to replace all cameras  
28 and recorders in the middle and high schools. Elementary school cameras and  
29 recorders will be replaced with ESSER III funding. Mr. Hering said GFPS is dedicated to  
30 supporting students with disabilities and will develop district-specific Assistive  
31 Technology (AT) guidelines to support education teams with the AT decision making  
32 process. Another objective of the Plan is to maintain an industry standard five-year  
33 hardware replacement cycle for staff and student computers. Driving factors to  
34 accomplish this initiative are Technology Levy funding and staffing to replace  
35 approximately 2,500 computer a year once the Plan is fully operational. Mr. Hering  
36 explained the draft 2021-2024 Technology Plan is included in the Board agenda and if  
37 anyone has questions or concerns to contact him. The plan will be brought to the Board  
38 for approval at the January 10, 2022 Board meeting. Superintendent Moore thanked  
39 Mr. Hering and the Industrial Technology Department for their work on the three-year  
40 plan and the work they do throughout the District.

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

43 Trustee Finnicum thanked everyone for their hard work during 2021.  
44 Trustee Skornogoski said she has been attending the English Lanuage Arts (ELA)  
45 curriculum meetings and said the consensus of the committee is how to teach reading  
46 effectively. The District has seen flat reading data and teachers cannot teach effectively  
47 without the updated materials. She said it is critical to update curriculum on a more  
48 regular basis. Trustee Skornogoski thanked the teachers and administrators for dealing

1 with others that may not be kind and thanked the community members who spoke at  
2 Board meetings with kindness. She was appreciative that the elementary schools were  
3 able to hold holiday concerts this year.

4 Trustee Reiff said he appreciated the work that was done to allow parents the  
5 opportunity be at the schools to watch their children’s holiday programs.

6 Superintendent Moore thanked K-6 Assistant Superintendent Ruth Uecker and Music  
7 and Arts Director Dusty Molyneaux for making this happen.

8 Trustee Bronson reported that he has also been attending the English Language Arts  
9 (ELA) Curriculum meetings and said from the beginning, teachers need to understand  
10 how to implement. He is glad for the focus on reading. He said he has attended the  
11 Collaborative Solutions meetings and was impressed with the professional development  
12 change that was presented. Trustee Bronson attended a meeting where Community  
13 Connections Manager Becky Nelson presented the teacher recruitment event  
14 scheduled in February. He said many community partners have committed to help  
15 sponsor.

16 Trustee Sunchild said as a former teacher of the District, she is excited to hear about  
17 the new ELA curriculum – everything starts with reading. She thanked the community  
18 members that have passionately spoken at Board meeting and said she hopes their  
19 passions go into all aspects of their students’ education.

20 Vice Chairperson Johnson said the Superintendent’s Evaluation is due January 6, 2022  
21 or as public comment at the January 10, 2022 Board meeting. The Trustees’ portion of  
22 the Superintendent’s Evaluation will be due January 14, 2022.

23 Chairperson Gray reported that he has been attending high school programs along with  
24 an elementary program at Giant Springs Elementary School. He loves to watch the  
25 excitement on the faces of the audience at the programs.

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28 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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30 Chairperson Gray said the next Regular Board Meetings are scheduled for Monday,  
31 January 10, 2022 and Monday January 24, 2022.

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34 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

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36 Motion – Gordon Johnson, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to  
37 adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:45 p.m.

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Jeff Gray, Chairperson

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Brian Patrick, Clerk