

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education

General Business Meeting - January 26, 2026
MINUTES

President Kuykendoll called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m. She led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Superintendent Bill Barnes indicated the presence of **Board Members**: Matt Oppenheim, Kali Stevens, Nicole Shannon, Denise DuFort, Coban Holmes and Ashley Kuykendoll. **Board Members Absent**: Toni Glasscoe. **Central Office Administrators**: Bill Barnes, Adrienne Barna, Wendy Seida, Bill Albrecht, Kelly Jones, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance**: Tim Totten, Kat Farr, Heather Vanderlaan, Hayley Herington, Kaylie Cano, John Piper, and Kim Manning

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the January 26, 2026 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by, seconded by for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the January 26, 2026 Consent Agenda Items, as presented.

Included on the Consent Agenda were the January 12, 2026 Organizational Meeting and Work Session Minutes and the hiring of Cassandra Ferry.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

A. CAPITOL CONNECTIONS

Mr. Holmes noted the cell phone restriction bill is now in front of the Governor after passing both the House and Senate. He advised this is really not a big deal for the district, but there are some things that will need to be looked at including information in our policies versus just having information in the student handbooks. Additionally, he shared the federal budget expires at the end of the month, again noting this is probably not a big deal to the district but it is hard to know exactly how it will impact us.

B. EATON RESA

Mrs. DuFort shared information from the past two Eaton RESA Board meetings noting they received a Strategic Plan update noting the board will focus on the new creating the new Strategic Plan that will be coming forward sometime this year. They spent time

reviewing Superintendent Williams' accomplishments in preparation for his evaluation that will be conducted on February 4th. She reminded members the County-Wide School Board Meeting (CASBA) is scheduled for Thursday, January 29th at 6:00 p.m. sharing members may attend in person or virtually. During the meeting they will receive a legislative update from Matt Schuler with MASA. The board confirmed Candace Tess appointment to the Parent Advisory Committee, approved sending a team to the ASU-GSV summit again this year, and continued talks on the Capital Area Region Education Collaborative to assist by working with the legislative body around education policy around the region.

C. GRAND LEDGE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Ms. Shannon shared the Foundation applied for the Cool School Challenge through Consumers Credit Union and has advanced to the net bracket. She reminded everyone sign-up is open for the 5K race taking place on June 13th and shared the Foundation continues to look at other fundraising options including another trivia night and the possibility of hosting a bingo night.

D. DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

President Kuykendoll noted the committee continued discussions around board recognitions, the hiring of the new chamber director, the change in date of Yankee Doodle Days, goals for the year and the use of the my student voice data.

E. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Holmes noted the Committee worked through the bullying policy that is up for board consideration later in the agenda. They also discussed priorities for the year.

F. BOND UPDATE

Bond and Capital Projects Supervisor John Piper reminded everyone of the impending high school shut down during Spring Break. He further provided updates on construction work at Wacousta, the Morris Property, and Delta Center.

G. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Barnes thank you to John for keeping us up-to-date and moving forward. He thanked the Holbrook team for being here on a snow day and introduced Holbrook Principal Kat Farr.

a. Holbrook Elementary School

Holbrook Elementary Principal Kat Farr provided the board with an overview of the 25-26 Restorative Goal, how they are working to build prosocial behaviors and positive relationships through student surveys, staff professional development, silent mentors, and peer buddies. She went on to share details surrounding the window and mirrors concept including student work being on display, Holbrook Highlights, restorative circles and books; the 25-26 Unified School-Wide Goal wherein staff will implement professional learning communities, collaborative planning and CKLA teacher observations; the 25-26 Academic Goal of having 53% of students scoring proficient or advanced as

measured by M-STEP. Teacher Heather Vanderlaan shared information regarding 4th grade student learning and progress including teacher planning and preparation and learner autonomy. Ms. Farr reviewed 1st and 2nd grade literacy and teacher Hayley Herington shared how she is using STEAM to ensure all students feel included and seen in their school and have a sense of belonging. In closing Ms. Farr noted January is School board Appreciation Month and she thanked the members of the board for their support and dedication to students, staff and our continuous growth.

b. Original Wacousta Planning

Superintendent Barnes advised in the original bond we were slated to knock down the original Wacousta building noting this is a very expensive process. He reviewed that Watertown Township had expressed interest in purchasing the building but this didn't work out in the end due to cost. Following that, the district began to think about how we can make it a useable space. We began talks with several groups about partnerships and creating a community hub for programs. He noted the building is still in really good shape, is fully functional and could be very useful in serving the community through a shared cost model. He advised this is all still tentative information but we have verbal commitments from the Wacousta Cooperative Preschool and the Grand Ledge Area District Library. He shared a map with the proposed space usage noting there will also be professional learning space for the district, as well as a home for GLPS Robotics and Archery. He shared the district, in conjunction with the Eaton RESA is also looking at creating a Regional Culinary Arts Program. He noted there will be some initial costs from an internet and access control perspective, as well as the need to repave the parking lot to create appropriate parking. He noted this will provide a great service to the Wacousta community and give a home to some of our programs.

Discussion among the members showed support for this endeavor with some concerns expressed over increased traffic on Herbison Road.

c. Morris Property Planning

Superintendent Barnes provided the board with an update on the Morris Property planning including renderings of the building sharing the idea is to have PreK-12th grade agriscience and natural science opportunities for students. He advised the plan is to have the building and programs ready by 2nd trimester of the 26-27 school year.

In answering questions from the board he noted that members of the leadership team toured two different districts that model kids and teachers are assigned for a full day of learning at the facility that is built into STEAM programming. He noted it does require some logistics and planning but we are prepared. He further shared that the architect and construction team has had some conversation with

the two neighbors directly adjacent to the property sharing that a building will be built on the land and that some of the property will still be farmed. Additional follow-up conversations will take place.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Holmes shared the rules for providing public comment to the board.

Tim Totten addressed the board regarding CHAT and the SEAB.

OLD BUSINESS

A. APPROVAL OF BOARD POLICY 5517.01

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Oppenheim for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve Board Policy 5517.01, as presented.

Dr. Barnes, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Oppenheim provided the board with a detailed overview of the edits being brought forward following the board's previous conversation regarding the policy.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. 2026 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Dr. Barnes noted that following the board's approval of their 2026 meeting schedule, it was realized that he, along with several members of the leadership team will be out of district on April 13th. He proposed the board has the option of moving the April 13th meeting to another date, or cancelling the meeting.

Consensus of the board was to cancel the April 13th meeting with the understanding that if any necessary business comes up, a Special Meeting will be called.

The revised agenda, removing the April 13th meeting, will be brought back to the board for approval at the February 9th meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. APPROVAL OF CHAT AS GLPS' SEAB

Motion by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Mr. Oppenheim for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to identify the Comprehensive Health Advisory Team (CHAT*) as the Grand Ledge Public Schools Sex Education Advisory Board (SEAB), recognizing CHAT will be comprised of up to 10 board members who will serve a four-year (4-year) term, which includes two co-chairs, one being a staff member and one being a parent of a student currently enrolled in the district. The GLPS Board of Education appoints Amy Ellsworth and Kellee Auge as the co-chairs. Service on the CHAT may be renewed by agreement of the individual member and the CHAT Board. Furthermore, any CHAT Board vacancies will be posted on the Academic**

Services Webpage on the district website, along with a link to apply. New CHAT board members will be appointed by the current CHAT board through majority vote.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE SALE OF BONDS

Motion by Mr. Oppenheim, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Resolution Ratifying the Sale of Bonds, as presented.

Superintendent Barnes and CFO Adrienne Barna provided the board with background information regarding the sale of the bonds and noting this will provide our taxpayers with a savings of \$1.8M over 10 years.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Mr. Oppenheim YES
Ms. Stevens YES
Ms. Shannon YES

Mrs. DuFort YES
Mr. Holmes YES
President Kuykendoll YES

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF & BOARD

Superintendent Barnes remarked that Mr. Totten had asked about applying to be a part of CHAT and advising he will email him directly once the webpage is ready. Additionally, he noted that CHAT is responsible for giving a report to the board every two years and that implementation will be forthcoming.

Mr. Oppenheim thanked President Kuykendoll for the ticket to the MLK Celebration last week noting he had never attended the celebration previously and remarking it was fantastic and that he was in awe of Dr. Nash.

Ms. Stevens remarked she is really happy to be here and enjoys working with everyone.

Ms. Shannon gave a shout out to new pole vault state record holder Katie Blue with a jump of 13'10". She also noted she is really excited about all the "stuff" that is taking place noting it is tough to beat.

Mrs. DuFort recognized that two of our musical groups participated in the Michigan Music Conference last week noting that it is an honor to have one group asked to join, let alone two! She noted she also attended the MLK Celebration, noting it was amazing and giving a shout out to Lawrence Jong for his 3rd place essay win.

Mr. Holmes thanked our 4:30 am team who is out driving and checking roads to ensure safe travels to and from school. He also reminded everyone the Beagle STEAM Showcase is April 23rd.

President Kuykendoll expressed she is grateful to be in such an incredible district that is doing some really cool things to support students commenting “we do great things here in Grand Ledge” while still recognizing there is always opportunities to be better.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Coban Holmes, Secretary

Attest:

Ashley Kuykendoll, President