

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
Regular Meeting – August 24, 2026
MINUTES

President Kuykendoll called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.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, Bill Albrecht, Kelly Jones, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. ***Others in Attendance***: Robin Moore, Kevin Garthe, Shannon Bauer, Heidi Gottleber, Andrea Clark, Allyson McCann, John Piper, Scott Gottleber and Kim Manning

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the August 24, 2026 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Oppenheim for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the August 24, 2026 Consent Agenda Items, as presented.

Included on the Consent Agenda were the August 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes and the teacher hiring of Jessica Priem, Colleen Lee and Tristyn Guerrero.

Dr. Barnes noted that Tristyn Guerrero will be teaching at Wacousta, not Willow Ridge as noted in the board packet.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

A. CAPITOL CONNECTIONS

Mr. Holmes noted there is nothing to report as the legislature is still on summer recess.

B. EATON RESA

Mrs. DuFort shared the Board received a presentation the Career Preparation Directors, approved the Adult Education and Meadowview student handbooks, hired a speech therapist, social worker, audiologist OT, monitoring technical assistant for mentoring support, and a medical staffing OT noting all of these position were to fill a variety of small FTE hours with the exception of the medical staff position which is filling a vacancy for the upcoming school year, and approved the Charlotte Public Schools food

service agreement to provide food services for Meadowview and the GSRP program. Made the appointment of two parents to the parent board and discussed the MASB delegate assembly for the ALC coming up on October 15. In closing she shared a Behavior Intervention Guide that was created by the Early Childhood Director noting it may be a good resource for the district as we move to take over GSRP programming within the district.

C. GRAND LEDGE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Ms. Shannon advised the Foundation is currently working to establish a Bingo night fundraiser. She also notes they are looking at doing something new with their teacher grants this year by awarding one, larger scale project versus awarding many smaller grant awards.

D. DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

President Kuykendoll advised the committee did not meet due to scheduling conflicts.

E. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Oppenheim advised the committee has not met since their last meeting.

F. BOND UPDATE

Bond and Capital Projects Supervisor John Piper provided the board with updates on construction at the high school, the Wacousta classroom addition, the Morris Ag Building, and the Delta Center Classroom and Gym. He also shared that the basketball court at Wacousta has been fenced off to keep the kids safe.

G. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Barnes shared the district wrapped up our pre school year professional learning today. The district rolled out this year's PD plan which is differentiated noting staff did some self-assessments, and based on those self-assessments they were divided into groups sharing the main focus for professional learning is around standards-based learning, trauma-based learning, MTSS and restorative practices. He reminded everyone that kids report tomorrow for the first day of school remarking it is exciting to welcome the students back. In closing, he shared this year marks the 175 year the district has been doing this work of growing learners sharing the first school within the boundaries of what would become Grand Ledge Public Schools was the red school building built in 1851 on the site that is now Greenwood. He noted this is something to celebrate with the bond conversation last time, the professional learning, while it hasn't always been perfect and there is always room for growth, it is great to pause and celebrate as we look to next 175 years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Robin Moore addressed the board asking for the members individual, and full board endorsement, of the ESP Bill of Rights. She encouraged the members to take time and look over the literature.

Heidi Gottleber addressed the board regarding her concerns for special education services for her students.

Kevin Garthe thanked the district for the work put into Wacousta Commons remarking this is going to be a good addition for the library and for the community.

OLD BUSINESS

A. REVISED BOARD POLICIES

Motion by Mr. Oppenheim, seconded by Mr. Holmes for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve Revised Board Policies 0167.5, 1422, 2260, 3122 and 4122, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. PROBATIONARY TO TENURE STATUS

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Oppenheim for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to award Tenure Status to Emily Baker, Heather Hicks, Amanda Hill, Chelsi Hillard, Grant Householder, Erin Kowalesky, Connie Larson, Kelly Parsons, Matthew Powers, Natalie Queen, Shirley Ries and David Schmidt, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

B. 2026-2027 STAFF HANDBOOKS

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Oppenheim for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2026-2027 Staff Handbooks for Certified Staff, Non-Certified Staff, Central Office Supervisors, Central Office Support Staff and Deans of Students, Student Support and Leads, as presented.

A detailed discussion among the members noted there are still a couple of other handbooks that will be brought to the board at a later meeting, noted there are a few grammatic and formatting issues that need to be cleaned up before posting, and clarified questions from the members.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. 2026-2027 STUDENT HANDBOOKS

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2026-2027 Student Handbooks, as presented.

Superintendent Barnes noted these handbooks represent a years' worth of work by members from every instructional group and every building. He provided an overview of the most noteworthy changes explaining that the items highlight in green represent new language, yellow represents information that was already in the handbook but has been moved to a new spot. He pointed out the flow chart on how things are handled, along with the new information in the student code of conduct with regard to restorative practices, restorative consequences and consequences. He noted that while we can't

capture every behavior and every action that may happen, it is the hope that by clearly spelling out pathways, we can be more succinct in our discipline process.

A detailed discussion among the members expressed concern for the GPA requirements for student athletes with Dr. Barnes advising this is established by MHSAA guidelines, with language regarding parent involvement in booster clubs and language in the cell phone policy.

Ms. Shannon offered a friendly amendment moving that the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education approve the 2026-2027 Early Childhood, Community Recreation, Elementary, Intermediate, Middle School and High School Handbooks, with the removal of the first two sentences under Cell Phone Use. Mrs. DuFort accepted the friendly amendment.

Mr. Oppenheim offered a friendly amendment to remove the 2026-2027 Community Recreation Handbook from the approval. The friendly amendment was accepted by Ms. Shannon and Mrs. DuFort.

The motion on the floor:

Motioned to approve the 2026-2027 Early Childhood, Elementary, Intermediate, Middle School and High School Student Handbooks with the removal of the first two sentences under Cell Phone Use.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. CURRICULUM GUIDE & ELECTIVE OFFERINGS

Motion by Mr. Oppenheim, seconded by Mr. Holmes for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2026-2027 Grand Ledge High School Curriculum Guide and the eagle Middle School and Hayes Intermediate School Elective offerings, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Motion by Mr. Oppenheim, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the continued appointment of the District School Improvement Team (DSIT) and the Caregiver School Improvement Team (CSIT) as District Professional Development Advisory Committees. The motion carried unanimously.

F. NON-EXCLUSIVE LICENSE AGREEMENT

Motion by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Mr. Oppenheim for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Non-Exclusive License Agreement between Grand Ledge Public Schools and New Life Assembly of God of the City of Grand Ledge, as presented, and authorize Superintendent Bill Barnes to execute the Agreement on behalf of the district. The motion carried unanimously.

G. COMMON RESPONSE TERMINOLOGY LANGUAGE

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to adopt the standardized response terminology of Hold, Secure, Shelter, Lockdown, and Evacuate, as required by MCL 380.1308d, and direct the administration to implement the standard response terminology in collaboration with local first responders. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF & BOARD

Communications Director John Ellsworth noted the similar theme from all of the union leaders during the staff opening day program remarking he has never seen such a collaborative mind shift. He thanked the board members who were able to attend. He commended the board on handling parliamentary procedure and noted there may be room to revise practice to encourage healthy conversations.

Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Dr. Bill Albrecht pointed out the folder at each of the member places, noted this is what was shared with new teachers and advising if there are any questions from the members to reach out him directly.

Superintendent Barnes noted the folders referenced by Dr. Albrecht are a great indicator of common language remarking this is a reflection of using our Strategic Plan language and strategic framework. He commented on how proud he was of the work put into the handbooks. He thanked Ms. Moore for her advocacy for the EPS Bill of Rights and thank Allyson McCaan for her leadership. He thanked Mrs. Gottleber for sharing her experience and advocating for her students. He thanked Mr. Garthe for his support of Wacousta Common noting it was a great ribbon cutting ceremony and sharing that he also attending the Archery Open House last Friday out at Wacousta Commons as well remarking there is a lot of excitement around Wacousta Commons.

Mr. Oppenheim expressed he enjoyed attending the staff opening day remarking on the leaders' comments, Mr. Ellsworth's abilities and being entertained by the Kahoot. He expressed his appreciation for the structure and the system in place for handing out staff apparel remarking it was a great experience to see how it is done and that stating it was very impressive.

Ms. Stevens thanked Mrs. Gottleber for addressing the board expressing her understanding of how hard public speaking can be. She gave a special thanks to bus driver, Susan, on Route 8 noting that when she was driving her "practice" route today, she pulled over and let the kids get on the bus and take pictures with her.

Ms. Shannon thanked everyone for partnership in Wacousta Commons and Ms. Moore for her advocacy with the bill of rights. She remarked she is proud of where grand ledge is, while we continue to look for opportunities for improvement. She thanked Mrs. Gottleber for being an advocate for her family. In closing, she thanked everyone for getting the district ready for tomorrow remarking the open houses were fantastic.

Mrs. DuFort congratulated everyone on the Wacousta Commons opening. She remarked it was fun to be at the staff opening day and thanked Winkie and the Cheer teams for being there to welcome the staff back. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to have discussions with her fellow board members around the handbooks and reiterating that she would prefer that we not revise handbooks more than once per year and supporting a first and second reading of the handbooks going forward.

Mr. Holmes commended the open houses and schedule pick up remarking everyone is excited about tomorrow stating it is going to be a big day. He expressed his appreciation for the work that goes into making the first day smoother.

President Kuykendoll echoed the sentiments of her fellow board members expressing her appreciation for everyone's commitment and tenacity.

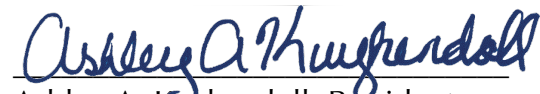
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:


Coban J. Holmes, Secretary


Ashley A. Kuykendoll, President