

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education

Regular Meeting – September 22, 2025

MINUTES

President DuFort 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***: Coban Holmes, Matt Oppenheim, Kali Stevens, Nicole Shannon, Ashley Kuykendoll and Denise DuFort. ***Board Members Absent***: Toni Glasscoe. ***Central Office Administrators***: Bill Barnes, Steve Gabriel, Adrienne Barna, Wendy Seida, Bill Albrecht, Kelly Jones, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. ***Others in Attendance***:, Robert C. Cox, Chastity Cox, Brenton Bell, Asher McFadden, Greysen Howard, John Piper, Susan Nye, Maddox Cook, Sandy Hubbard, Jan M. Seeger, Tim Totten, Bella Mlay, Indya Fitzpatrick, Asher Travis, Aleya Travis, Prya Snow, Jaya Fitzpatrick, Shawn Bronson, Crystal Hewitt, Samentha Hewitt, Sally Jo Nelton, Dale Cole, Jenny David, Bob David, Erin McGinnis, Narasha Redman, Doug Waldrop, Ave Gomez, Sabrina Harvey, Crandall, Mark Freeman, Paula Dunn, Susan Sowle, Katie Grass, Rick Schneider, Jon Wise, Pauline Quagliata, Melissa Charbonneau, Melissa Mazzola, Chris Klaver, Karlee Ruedisale, Ashley Allison, Aaron Almy, Leanna Agheneza, Cindy Stoneham, Isabell Castle, Kevin Garthe, Anne Marie Dionise, Linda Thelen, Caitlynn McKelvey, Rachel Lehman, Lily Zuber, Christina Traiter, Zac Gomez, Journey Loveall, David Bernier, Jill Fillingham, Rylee Hanna-Rendon, Mary Kelly, Jashua Harkins, Rickie Kuykendoll, Mark Sanchez, Henry Schmitz, Zoey Schmitz, Melody Parson, Shannon Bauer, Joe Peth, and Kim Manning

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Holmes for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the September 22, 2025 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Ms. Kuykendoll for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the September 22, 2025 Consent Agenda Items, as presented.

Included on the Consent Agenda were the September 8, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

A. CAPITOL CONNECTIONS

In Dr. Glasscoe's absence, Mr. Holmes commented we are still patiently waiting a budget from the State.

B. EATON RESA

President DuFort advised she does not have a report as the Eaton RESA Board is scheduled to meet on Wednesday.

C. GRAND LEDGE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Ms. Shannon shared the Foundation is working on new fundraising opportunities involving apparel and a trivia night. She noted more information will be shared soon.

D. DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Ms. Kuykendoll noted the committee met and discussed restructuring the committee to ensure we are meeting the needs of the district and the best way to report out.

E. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Holmes noted the committee did not meet in September, but will be meeting in October.

F. FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ms. Kuykendoll commented as Mr. Holmes noted, we still don't have a budget. It is important to bring this to the attention of the public and the full board to ensure an understanding of the impact this could have on students specifically with regard to free lunches. The current budget has monies to continue the free breakfast and lunch program through September 30th, which is a Wednesday. However, if we don't have a budget before September 30th, the funds go away on October 1st. However, the district has worked within its budget and has in place monies that will provide the continuation of this service for October 1st and 2nd. This will be recognized in the next budget update. She stressed the Finance Committee wants to ensure the public is acutely aware the district may need to make some hard decisions and October 13th is the target date for those hard decisions if we still don't have a budget up to and including can the school district stay operational or do we have to find another way. She encouraged everyone to reach out to their legislators and tell them we need a budget.

Superintendent Barnes reminded everyone, by law, the legislature is supposed to have a budget passed by July 1st and the fiscal year ends on September 30th. This means if there is no budget passed by September 30th, there is no money coming in after that date. He noted he will continue to communicate with families as we get closer to that September 30th date as things will get trickier as we move along. In response to board member questions, Dr. Barnes noted the information he shares will include where families can seek meals and food subsidies.

Mr. Ellsworth noted we currently share information on community meals throughout the district at GLComets.net/upcoming.

G. BOND UPDATE

Bond and Capital Projects Director John Piper provided updates on construction work at the high school, Neff, Willow Ridge, Operations and Hayes, and noted that we are awaiting state approval for the classroom additions at Wacousta. In closing he shared that we should have architectural drawings for the Morris property soon.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Barnes part of the process for his evaluation is updates every month, noting tonight's presentation is the last one prior to his evaluation which will take place in October.

a. Superintendent's Evaluation Update – G. Student Growth & District Goals

Dr. Barnes provided the board with an update regarding Student Growth and District Goals. He reviewed the goal for Student Growth and Progress Toward District Wide Goals. He provided current evaluation data for each school and reviewed current progress of the 42 Strategic Plan SMART goals for 2024-2025 and 2023-2024.

A detailed discussion among the members discussed the new CKLA curriculum and what we are doing with regard to increasing Math knowledge including standards-based learning, how we create experience for kids to plug in to what makes the most sense for them and how we create systems of support noting our professional development has been targeted around this and the district seeks outside professional development opportunities and provide evidence-based practices and a multi-level approach to addressing universal needs. In addition, the board recognized the data we are using and the programs we offer to families to allow them to better support their students with what they are learning. Information was shared regarding the [Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators \(MAISA\)](#) and their [Early Math & Literacy Practices](#) as recourses families can access. Appreciation was expressed for the data being presented by cohort.

In wrapping up, Dr. Barnes commented that while he is presenting the data, he is presented it as a district and the data doesn't belong to him but to the many real humans that are here tonight; the students, the staff, the families who are doing the work that is getting the results. It's the people who greet our students, that feed them lunch, that make sure they get to school safely, that make sure they have clean buildings and that provide the instruction. It's the 700 district employees that make the impact along with the parents and family members. Together we are engaging in the learning and growth of our students as a district. He remarked while it is he who is presenting the data as part of his evaluation, it is the 5500 students, the 700 staff members and all the families that the data belongs to.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Secretary Shannon read the rules for addressing the board.

Steven Castle addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Robert Cox addressed the board opposing Mr. Logel.

Benton Bell addressed the board opposing Mr. Logel.

Jan Seeger addressed the board regarding her belief children are being indoctrinated, the restoration of biblical values and coming together with common sense.

Sandy Hubbard addressed the board saying we are strong in our connections and commenting we have the right to say what we want as long as we are not hurting other people. She encouraged peace, acceptance in our community and in our school district.

Prya Snow addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Tim Totten addressed the board opposing Mr. Logel.

Dale Cole addressed the board opposing Mr. Logel.

Joe Pettit addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel commenting the Federal government is trying to control our right to free speech and stating at a local level we can be better.

Christina Traister addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Jeff McNeilly addressed the board remarking the Lansing State Journal is coming in and acting like they are a part of our community, stating school shooters are kids that need help, mental help. He commented the district is supposed to be teaching our kids no indoctrinating them and that he wants the district to educate them to think for themselves not to follow anyone's ideologies.

Rachel Lehman addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

David Bernier addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Rylee Hanna-Redman addressed the board commenting Grand Ledge has always been a very diverse community with many clubs to show everyone is accepted. She condoned adults for arguing about a person's job regarding a private Facebook post. She stated she can post what she wants because it is her first amendment right. She encouraged the

continuation of our diversity programs and having teachers who respect students first amendment rights in our schools.

Melissa Charbonneau addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Mark Sanchez addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Brian Szcapanek addressed the board in opposition of Mr. Logel and citing policies he believes were violated.

Mary Kelly addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Lily Zuber addressed the board commenting on the leadership of this board and the superintendent is amazing remarking on funding meals for our students. She shared she was on campus at MSU during the shooting that occurred there. She noted as a history teacher the Constitution is one of her most sacred things and she holds her own religious beliefs. She remarked sharing opinions is a valuable thing. She stated she loves it here.

Asher McFadden addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Bella Mlay addressed the board sharing her experience of meeting Mr. Logel and noting she felt a sense of belonging upon the meeting. Not through any spoken words, but by the titles on his bookshelf. She remarked she doesn't believe we are able to get to point where we all agree politically but she believes Mr. Logel was drawing attention to the biggest issue – student safety.

Aleya Travis addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel and his character.

Ava Gomez addressed the board commenting someone should not be fired for voicing their opinion and remarking everyone has a right to do so.

Zoe Gomez addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Sabrina Harvey-Cronk addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel and the first amendment.

Henry Schmitz addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

Shawn Bronson addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel and expressing how proud she is of her students for the confidence given to them by their parents and their teachers.

Connor Stewart addressed the board in support of Mr. Logel.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2025-2026 STAFF HANDBOOKS

Motion by Mr. Oppenheim, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2025-2026 Dean of Students and Interventionist Staff Handbooks, as presented.

Dr. Barnes explained these two specific handbooks, speaks specifically to the rolls of Dean of Students and Interventionist.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. 2025-2026 EATON COUNTY YOUTH FACILITY COURSE GUIDE

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Ms. Kuykendoll for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2025-2026 Eaton County Youth Facility Course Guide, as presented.

Dr. Barnes advised there were no changes from the previous year, but the handbook was updated to reflect the current school year.

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF & BOARD

Communications Director John Ellsworth advised that Grand Ledge High School Principal Dr. Ken Wright shared we have two National Merit semifinalists and advising he will be sharing more information in his Tuesday Tales tomorrow.

Superintendent Barnes noted he started this meeting with a data set around student voice and he expressed his appreciation and thanks for the student voice in this meeting. He remarked that he believes what happened here tonight is a good lesson for our students. He shared 28 people spoke tonight sharing feedback around Mr. Logel's social media post. He noted there were a couple of people who mentioned this was on the agenda tonight to talk about clarifying this was not an item on tonight agenda. He went on to clarify the manner in which a school district operates. He thanked the families and community members who share concerns in a kind and productive way remarking this is how we should always operate with one another; in a kind and productive manner, no matter what side you are on. He shared we are supposed to be able to have disagreements and be able to discuss those disagreements in a kind and productive way. He went on to state that, unfortunately, this situation has not always been an example of that as office staff, Mr. Logel, and a number of people, him, his office staff, received many phone calls and emails from people that were passionate about this on both sides. He remarked that being passionate does not excuse being threatening, being mean, being unkind, or being uncaring. Fortunately, the vast majority of these types of phone calls and emails came from outside our district which gives him hope for the Grand Ledge Public Schools community. He went on to note that these types of communications create stress, angst and distractions from the work we are supposed to be doing. He further pointed out that of all the messages he received, or that his team received, none of them from students wanted him fired, and that was heard tonight from the students who spoke, who know Mr. Logel, which demonstrates the positive impact he has had on students. He noted it is important to recognize the systems and structures that create our rules and laws; our board policies, staff handbooks, collective bargaining agreements, and our Strategic Plan and all of these are discussed and adopted in a transparent manner at an open meeting. He noted that he responded to everyone within the district that reached out to him and that he did not cut, copy and paste any of those responses but recognizing there are only so many ways you can say that we follow our rules and laws. That is the truth, those are means we use to operate as a school district. He shared his job, the job the board hired him to do, is to operate the district, to interpret those rules and laws, and

ensure they are applied fairly and systemically. My noted his interpretation of our board policies do not prevent teachers from exercising their First Amendment right. He went on noting this is a good lesson for our students; When we choose to exercise those rights, when you talk about things on Facebook, which you have the right to speak your mind, but in exercising that right, things you say might not sit well with people and we can't control how they may react. As a community, discourse needs to be handled how it was handled tonight. He expressed his appreciation to those who spoke tonight who were kind and productive but stated he does not appreciate the discourse online or in his offices. In closing he stated that his interpretation of our board policies does not prevent Mr. Logel from continuing in his role and he is not going to fire Mr. Logel. As a district we will continue to operate within our rules, our law, and create our future citizens to lead us forward. He noted that he understands not everyone is going to agree with his decision but the reality is, we are going to interact with one another; at Meijer, the parade or a football game and we must move forward as a community and keep the focus on student growth and achievement.

Mr. Holmes expressed his appreciation to everyone for attending the meeting. He remarked the homecoming festivities were great and acknowledge the work put in by student council.

Mr. Oppenheim thanked Mr. Piper for his work on the many construction projects going on throughout the district. He commended him and his team for their organization and causing as little disruption to teaching and learning as possible.

Ms. Stevens thanked everyone for coming out tonight noting she is Proud to be a Comet and remarking she ran for this board to hear from our community and to learn and grow together. She thanked everyone for sharing their perspective.

Ms. Shannon thanked everyone who spoke tonight, especially the students. She commented that things have not been easy in this district over the last several years and she thanked everyone for the conversation tonight, thanked Superintendent Barnes for leading, especially when it has been so hard on our staff. She remarked their job is to be educating our students, not fielding threatening calls because people get whipped up. She remarked she is Proud to Be a Comet and is proud to have Dr. Barnes as our Superintendent. She remarked there is not much to say when you have the processes and transparency stating the internet is forever. The standards, the policies, they are all there. She expressed her appreciation for the matter being resolved and noting we have had hard times before and we came out stronger.

Ms. Kuykendoll gave kudos to our students. She thanked everyone for coming to this space and lending their voice; for the passion for their community. She reminded that everyone at the board table was elected to this space and remarked advocacy does not stop at the end of this meeting. She encouraged our students to continue to be engaged, to show up and give back the same way you see your teachers and the Superintendent show up for you. Even on the days when it is hard. She continued to encourage the students to make the community what they want to see it become, to never lose their passion reminding them they are paving the way for the people who come behind you. To the community she remarked she appreciates we have good systems and policies in place. In closing she reminded everyone that we still don't have a budget and that matters.

President DuFort thanked everyone for attending tonight. She acknowledged there are going to be circumstances that arise and we have our policies, bargaining agreements, procedures and our Strategic Plan to fall back on. She commented the district continues to improve and we continue to work harder to be better. She quoted her grandmother, "Good, better, best. Never let it rest until your good is better and your better is best." In closing she remarked we strive to be Proud to Be a Comet.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:24p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:



Nicole Shannon, Secretary



Denise DuFort, President