



02/18/2026
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES, GALLATIN GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT #35

GALLATIN GATEWAY SCHOOL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
CALLED MEETING – 6:04 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:04 PM.

2. TRUSTEES AND STAFF PRESENT

TRUSTEES PRESENT: BN, AS, TM, LH, CM

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF PRESENT: KH (SUPERINTENDENT), HH (DISTRICT CLERK)

BOARD CHAIR TM READ THE RIGHTS OF THE BOARD MEETING AND OUTLINED THE STRUCTURE AND FLOW OF THE EVENING.

3. PRESENTATION & BOARD DISCUSSION

TM PRESENTED A SLIDESHOW AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE AMOUNT OF PUBLIC FEEDBACK AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS INCLUDED:

- CONTINUING TO ASK “WHO” WHILE FOCUSING ON ANSWERING “WHAT.”
- RECOGNIZING THAT THE BUILDING IS FILLED WITH GOOD PEOPLE, THOUGH CURRENT CHALLENGES MAY EXTEND BEYOND INDIVIDUALS.
- ENCOURAGEMENT TO REMAIN ENGAGED IN BOTH SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OPPORTUNITIES.
- EXAMINATION OF WHETHER CURRENT CHALLENGES ARE UNIQUE TO GALLATIN GATEWAY.

- NOTED GROWTH IN GALLATIN COUNTY WHILE SCHOOL ENROLLMENT HAS REMAINED FLAT.
- REVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AFFECTING THE DISTRICT.
- EMPHASIS THAT GALLATIN GATEWAY SCHOOL WILL REQUIRE BOTH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT MOVING FORWARD.

PUBLIC COMMENT & DISCUSSION

ERICA PARRISH

- STATED THAT OPEN BOARD SEATS ARE NOT WELL ADVERTISED.
- ASKED WHETHER A COMMUNITY SURVEY HAS BEEN CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS IN A RURAL SCHOOL.
- ASKED ABOUT THE “PULSE” OF THE COMMUNITY.

DISCUSSION ON SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION

- GALLATIN GATEWAY CONSOLIDATION IS NOT CURRENTLY OF INTEREST DUE TO POTENTIAL TAX IMPACT ON TAXPAYERS.

LAIN KAY

- RAISED CONCERNS REGARDING LACK OF MUSIC PROGRAMMING.
- STATED THAT LACK OF FULL PROGRAMMING IMPACTS ENROLLMENT AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL.

CARRIE ASHE

- ASKED HOW THE PROJECTED DEFICIT FOR NEXT YEAR WAS CALCULATED.

LAURA MEYERS

- ASKED ABOUT CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RELATED TO MEDICAL CONDITIONS.
- EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT LACK OF PROGRAMMING COULD NEGATIVELY IMPACT ENROLLMENT.

TM DISCUSSED POTENTIAL MULTI-DISTRICT AGREEMENTS FOR SHARED TEACHERS AND PROGRAMMING.

ANDREA BARHAM

- ASKED WHETHER PARENTS COULD VOLUNTEER FOR PE.
-

4. STRATEGIC PLANNING & FINANCIAL REVIEW

DISCUSSION INCLUDED:

- THE MTSBA STRATEGIC PLAN, INCLUDING 5-YEAR AND 10-YEAR GOALS.
- THE LAST STRATEGIC PLAN ANTICIPATED GATEWAY VILLAGE GROWTH.
- ACCREDITATION STANDARDS ARE CURRENTLY BEING MET.
- AS STATED ADMINISTRATION REVIEWS THE STRATEGIC PLAN WEEKLY, AND THE BOARD REVIEWS IT MONTHLY.
- WHILE THERE IS NO DEDICATED MUSIC TEACHER, EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO ENSURE STUDENTS STILL RECEIVE MUSIC INSTRUCTION.
- THE BOARD EXPRESSED OPENNESS TO REVIEWING OR REVAMPING THE STRATEGIC PLAN PRIOR TO THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR.
- AGREEMENT THAT ANY CHANGES WOULD REQUIRE A DEDICATED MEETING AND CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF BENEFITS.

FOUNDATION PROPOSAL – CONSULTANT DISCUSSION

- DISCUSSION REGARDING THE FOUNDATION FUNDING A CONSULTANT.
 - QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT CONSULTANT EXPERIENCE WITH RURAL MONTANA SCHOOLS.
 - CLARIFICATION THAT THE BOARD IS NOT OBLIGATED TO ADOPT CONSULTANT RECOMMENDATIONS.
 - QUESTIONS REGARDING SCOPE AND PARAMETERS OF CONSULTANT SERVICES.
 - MENTION OF TODD WATKINS REVIEWING BUDGET HEALTH (NOT A RE-AUDIT) AT A LOWER COST THAN MASBO.
 - DISCUSSION ABOUT LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING AND OPERATIONAL RESILIENCY.
-

5. STAFFING DISCUSSION (2026–2027)

- DISCUSSION OF STAFFING PROPOSALS FOR 2026–2027.
- CONSIDERATION OF A SALARY FREEZE.
- DISCUSSION REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF A PART-TIME SUPERINTENDENT MODEL.

DAR ADDRESSED:

- IN-HOUSE CUSTODIAN VS. CONTRACTED SERVICES.
 - IMPROVEMENTS MADE INCLUDING INVENTORY SYSTEMS AND MINOR MAINTENANCE WORK.
 - EMPHASIZED PRIDE AND STEWARDSHIP OF THE BUILDING.
-

6. CONSENT AGENDA

AS MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

CM SECONDED.

NO BOARD DISCUSSION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- BRIDGED CHURCH
- AED
- EYKELBOSCH
- COMMITTEE MEETINGS
- FACILITIES – MCKINSTRY

BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

BASED ON THE STRATEGIC PLAN. NO MODIFICATIONS WERE RECOMMENDED.

OPENED UPDATE

- THE DISTRICT IS NOT LEGALLY ENGAGED WITH OPI.
 - ATTORNEYS ARE COMMUNICATING WITH OPI.
 - WORKING ON STUDENT TESTING LOGISTICS.
-

8. CALENDAR DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION REGARDING SHIFT FROM 180 DAYS TO 1080 INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS (GRADES 3–12).

OPTIONS DISCUSSED:

- 8:00–3:30 SCHEDULE ENDING BEFORE MEMORIAL DAY
- 8:00–3:00 SCHEDULE ENDING AFTER MEMORIAL DAY

DISTRICT HAS HISTORICALLY ALIGNED WITH BOZEMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT CALENDARS.

9. ACTION ITEMS

ADDITIONAL BOARD MEETINGS

CM MOVED TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL BOARD MEETINGS ON FEBRUARY 24, 25, AND 26.

BN SECONDED.

ALL IN FAVOR.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DECEMBER POLICY UPDATE

BN MOVED TO APPROVE.

AS SECONDED.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MTSBA SURVEY

KELLY TO COMPLETE AND SEND FOR APPROVAL.

FOUNDATION PROPOSAL – STRATEGIC PLANNING

CM MOVED TO APPROVE ADMINISTRATION ALLOWING THE FOUNDATION TO ENGAGE POTENTIAL RESOURCES SPECIALIZING IN LONG-RANGE FINANCIAL PLANNING, OPERATIONAL RESILIENCY, AND ENROLLMENT.

BN SECONDED.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

FOUNDATION PROPOSAL – MARKETING STRATEGY

BN MOVED TO APPROVE ENGAGEMENT FOR MARKETING STRATEGY SUPPORT.
CM SECONDED.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION INCLUDED ALIGNMENT OF MESSAGING, ACCESS TO HISTORICAL DATA, AND COMMUNICATION APPROVALS.

LEVY ADJUSTMENT

CM MOVED TO APPROVE AN INCREASE/DECREASE IN LEVY AMOUNT (AS PRESENTED).
BN SECONDED.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

FIELD TRIPS

BN MOVED TO APPROVE FIELD TRIPS.
CM SECONDED.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

BOOSTER SUPPORT – ATHLETIC STIPEND

AS MOVED TO APPROVE BOOSTER SUPPORT FOR AD/ATHLETIC STIPEND.
BN SECONDED.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. ADJOURNMENT

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:43 PM.