

**GRESHAM-BARLOW SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10 JT.**  
**Minutes of Regular Board Business Meeting**

**Thursday, January 8, 2026**

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The Gresham-Barlow School District Board of Directors met in regular session on Thursday, January 8, 2026 in the council chambers of the Public Safety and Schools Building, 1331 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham, OR. A Zoom link was provided for virtual meeting attendance.

**Board Members present:**

Heather Coleman-Cox, Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Holly Riegelmann

**Cabinet Members present:**

Dr. Tracy Klinger, Superintendent  
John Koch, Deputy Superintendent  
Dr. Sara Deboy, Assistant Superintendent  
Carla Gay, Executive Director of Innovation and Partnerships  
Heidi Lasher, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning  
Donna Ravenberg, Executive Director of Student Support Services  
Jeff Gibbs, Executive Director of Technology Services  
Athena Vadnais, Director of Communications and Community Engagement  
Pete Bejarano, Director of Finance

**Opening Items**

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**1. Call Regular Business Meeting to Order and Pledge of Allegiance (7:01 p.m.)**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by the board chair, Blake Petersen. Director Farrens led the board, administration, and all those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Roll Call (7:01 p.m.)**

All members of the board were in attendance at the meeting. Position 7 of the board is currently vacant.

**3. Approve Meeting Agenda (7:03 p.m.)**

**MOTION 48:** Move to approve the meeting agenda as presented. This motion, made by Holly Riegelmann and seconded by Brenna Puderbaugh, Carried.

Aye: Heather Coleman-Cox, Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Holly Riegelmann

Aye: 6, No: 0

**4. Land Acknowledgement (7:03 p.m.)**

Director Howatt read the Land Acknowledgement at the start of the meeting.

**Citizens' Requests of Board**

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**5. Guidelines for Public Comment (7:04 p.m.)**

Chair Petersen reviewed the process and requirements for submitting public comment. There was one comment received before the start of the meeting. Mark Spolitak, a sophomore at Gresham High School, presented information around why students should be able to participate in activities regardless of whether or not they are failing classes. He noted that it sounds unjust that students be banned from participating because they are struggling in class. He

referenced the Bill of Rights for Children and Youth adopted by the City of Portland and Multnomah County in 2006, that states that extra-curricular activities should be made available to all students. These are not made available to all students; they are only available to those who are excelling academically. He shared that he understands the district may not have entire control as OSAA is involved, but asked that the school board do anything they can to help students who may be failing. Following the comments, Chair Petersen asked that the superintendent follow up with Mr. Spolitak after the meeting.

## Consent Agenda

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- 6. Minutes from Special Work Session - December 11, 2025**
- 7. Minutes from Regular Board Business Meeting - December 11, 2025**
- 8. Financial Report**
- 9. Personnel Report: Employee Contracts**
- 10. Approval of Consent Agenda (7:09 p.m.)**

Chair Petersen reviewed the items included in the consent agenda.

**MOTION 49:** Move to approve the consent agenda as presented. This motion, made by Holly Riegelmann and seconded by Kris Howatt, Carried.

Aye: Heather Coleman-Cox, Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Holly Riegelmann

Aye: 6, No: 0

## Recognitions

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- 11. Sam Barlow High School Boys & Girls Soccer (added January 5, 2026) (7:10 p.m.)**

Dr. Deboy led the board, administration, and all those in attendance in recognizing Sam Barlow High School soccer athletes for their accomplishments. Matty Callison was named Mt. Hood Conference Offensive Player of the Year and 1<sup>st</sup> Team All State. Braelyn Roberson was also named Mt. Hood Conference Offensive Player of the Year.

- 12. Gresham High School Football (added January 5, 2026) (7:11 p.m.)**

Dr. Deboy led the board, administration and all those in attendance in recognizing the Gresham High School Football Team for making it to the state playoffs for the first time since 2019. A total of 18 of their student athletes received All-League recognition in the fall.

- 13. Sam Barlow High School Boys and Girls Water Polo (added January 8, 2026) (7:13 p.m.)**

Dr. Deboy led the board, administration, and all those in attendance in recognizing Sam Barlow High School water polo athletes. The Boys Water Polo team finished 24-9 and were league champions. The Girls Water Polo Team were also named league champions, and finished their season 20-7. All-League recognitions were awarded to 7 men and 7 women on each team. Makayla Riegelmann received Mt. Hood Conference Player of the Year, and was named 1st Team All-State. Coach Mike Riegelmann was named Coach of the Year for both the boy's and girl's teams.

## Gresham-Barlow Education Foundation Report

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- 14. Update from the Foundation (7:14 p.m.)**

There was not a foundation representative in attendance to provide a report at the meeting.

## Superintendent and District Leadership Report

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- 15. Update from the Superintendent and District Leadership (7:15 p.m.)**

Superintendent Klinger provided an update on meetings and activities she has participated in over the past month. She reflected on the incredible generosity of staff and the community over the last month. For the Holiday Joy Box Event,

counselors identified 31 students to receive personalized care packages. Staff adopted these students and shopped for specific items to help these students feel celebrated. The district's community partners, Voya Investments and Columbia Sportswear, donated 340 coats for students at Title I schools. These are being distributed now so that students are ready for the colder temperatures ahead. Thanks to Toys for Tots, KPTV, and KGW, the Hall Elementary free toy store was stocked with hundreds of items for families to have a joyful shopping experience.

Superintendent Klinger reminded the board of the current financial landscape. The district is facing significant funding constraints due to rising operational costs and state and federal uncertainty. Based on current projections it is estimated they need \$7.5 to \$13 million in budget reductions. This is in addition to reductions already made for this current year. They are developing a reduction plan and are committed to a process defined by communication and collaboration. She encouraged the community to stay informed and participate in outreach efforts starting next month.

Lastly, she recognized the dedicated individuals serving on the Board. January is School Board Appreciation Month, and she noted that board members spend countless hours in a role that is often stressful and complex. She thanked each board member individually for their steadfast commitment to students and staff, and shared how personally grateful she is for their partnership and guidance as a new superintendent.

## Board Reports and Requests

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### 16. Updates from Board Members (7:19 p.m.)

Board members summarized various meetings and other activities they participated in during the past month. Topics included the following:

- OSBA elections were held last month and they were not re-elected to their position; they plan to keep active with OSBA and bring back information. It is a valuable organization providing many resources for the state.
- Visiting schools including Powell Valley, East Orient, and West Orient; sharing Powell Valley's partnership with Barlow where they connected with the woodshop class to build movable shelves in the library.
- Seeing Barlow's art class come up with an ingenious idea for making wall murals out of painter's tape.
- Watching lots of athletics and activities; enjoying watching the various schools compete in middle school basketball, with tonight's game being West Orient playing Clear Creek.
- Looking forward to the Mt. Hood Conference in two weeks with hopes that a GBSD team will come out on top.
- Being nominated and elected to the Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) via OSBA; looking forward to the upcoming meeting in Salem January 24th.
- Sharing an email received from Principal Shawnda Sewell saying the Portland Opera performance at North Gresham was a hit with students talking about it for weeks; it is a memory they will hold for a while.
- Volunteering at Hollydale before winter break to help with the Snowflake Café serving hot chocolate; students use real money and it brings a really fun atmosphere.
- Attending an assembly at David Douglas High School where they recognized Tucker Santillanes as a Scots Angel; there were lots of Gresham reps and families present, and they recognized his movement and struggles. The majority of students stood up to say they want to raise money for this family.
- Assisting the senior booster club with fundraising at Barlow.
- Attending the Barlow Alumni Concert for band and choir and seeing the alumni participate in the performance.
- Attending the Les Schwab invitational and seeing both Gresham and Barlow come away with some clutch wins.
- Wishing everyone a strong, healthy and happy start to the new year.

## Presentations

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### 17. Healthy and Safe Schools Plan (7:27 p.m.)

Dr. Deboy invited Alan Crapser to join her for the presentation, and noted that this is an annual report that has been

required since 2016. This report focuses on environmental issues and how to manage those items to make sure schools are safe. Mr. Crapser shared that everything on the website has been updated and is current including the scheduled dates for the next round of testing. Since last year's presentation they added a way to record all of the information and achieve what the Oregon Department of Agriculture was looking for, and they are also linking it to the rest of the state.

Board members asked if this coincides with the report for the long-range facilities planning. Dr. Deboy clarified that this is a bit different. This is more for environmental hazards they have to check in all buildings. Some of the newer buildings are exempt from some testing because they are newer. This is a requirement that happens annually.

#### **Recess/Reconvene**

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#### **18. Board Recess (7:30 p.m.)**

The meeting was recessed at 7:30 p.m. and reconvened at 7:40 p.m.

#### **Committee Meeting Minutes and/or Reports**

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#### **19. Policy Review Committee Minutes, December 12, 2025 (7:40 p.m.)**

The minutes of the Policy Review Committee Meeting on December 12, 2025 were provided for the board to review. There was no discussion of this agenda item.

#### **Associations Reports**

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#### **20. Gresham-Barlow Education Association (GBEA) (2 minutes) (7:41 p.m.)**

There was not a representative from GBEA in attendance to provide a report.

#### **21. Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) (2 minutes) (7:41 p.m.)**

Tia Ross, an elementary secretary at East Orient Elementary School, was in attendance to report on behalf of the Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) Chapter 8 employees. She shared that they are less than a month away from negotiating their contract, and they are looking forward to working with the team. Even in difficult times they trust the process and believe they will strengthen their contract. She added that while they want snow days, they don't want them on that week of bargaining.

#### **Action Items**

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#### **22. Center for Advanced Learning (CAL) Charter School Renewal (7:42 p.m.)**

Carla reviewed information in the agenda packet and introduced Kristen Miles of OSBA and Jessica Gallagher of CAL for the presentation. Ms. Miles shared that the renewal report was included in the board's packet, and she would provide an overview of the review and report. She prefaced her presentation by stating that she is not an attorney and nothing she says will constitute legal advice. She reviewed the renewal process which consists of a letter of intent to renew, public hearing, and board vote. The board will have the opportunity to vote on renewal during the meeting.

The components of the evaluation are divided into three areas, Academic, Financial, and Organizational, with criteria that the board uses for consideration. The information and analysis that Ms. Miles performs is aligned with criteria in statute. She doesn't make a recommendation that comes from her. Instead, she provides material to the district and board, and the recommendation comes from the superintendent.

The criteria for consideration comes from ORS 338.065(8)(a), and she first looks at whether the charter school is in compliance with ORS 338 and all other applicable state and federal laws. In answering this question, Ms. Miles shared that the school is implementing the material terms of the contract. Teachers appear to be properly licensed, and public

meetings laws appear to be followed. She did make a recommendation about posting policies and meetings, updating their handbook, and noting votes in meeting minutes. The student enrollment application should have a legal review to ensure it doesn't create barriers to enrollment. The next question was if the school was in compliance with the contract. Ms. Miles shared that most provisions are adhered to. The district provides SpEd services to CAL, but the school should include how families can access services in their family handbook. CAL is required to provide EL services, but reports that the home district for the student provides these services. This contract discrepancy should be addressed.

Next, she looked at whether the charter school is meeting performance goals specified in the contract. Data comes from CAL's internal goals, which are not reported to ODE due to the nature of the program. These goals include the expansion of work-based learning opportunities, and increasing dual credit access. To expand work-based learning they have off-site placements, participate in the East County College and Career Readiness Initiative, and work with community partners to offer individual or small group volunteer opportunities. For the dual-credit access over 92% of eligible students are earning college credits.

In looking to see if the charter school is financially stable, Ms. Miles shared that they have met all near term measures of performance, their debt to asset ratio meets the criteria, and they have plenty of cash on hand. Their cash flow is negative, indicating a reliance on reserves. This means expenses have exceeded revenues. In further conversations, they are going through a strategic spend down. Investments were made in safety and security, LED lighting, and AV equipment. They are monitoring the finances and strategically using those reserves. She shared that they will need to continue monitoring and make sure that trend decreases. If there is any renewal criteria in the contract they should meet that, however there is no renewal criteria in the contract.

Ms. Miles reviewed the next steps flowchart based on a yes or no vote from the board. If they votes yes there are 90 days to negotiate a contract. If they vote no, CAL could pursue other options such as becoming a private school, or they could resubmit and go through a series of appeals. She shared how much she enjoys working with district staff and CAL, and noted it is always wonderful to meet with families, students, and staff, and tour the school to see the program. The contract negotiations start right away after the vote, and the contract should be executed within 90 days. If it is not executed in 90 days the old contract remains in place until the new contract is executed. Last year it was recommended that CAL keep the same governance model and remain a charter school. She would recommend reviewing several sections of the contract to make sure it matches current practice.

Following the presentation, there was time for additional questions from the board. They noted concern about the negative balance and asked if they were in a positive position without the spend down. Ms. Gallagher confirmed that they are and the spend down is being made in support of the CAL board. The board noted the unique setup of CAL and its programs, and asked if there are any other high schools like it in Oregon that are supported and managed by multiple districts. Ms. Miles confirmed there are not, CAL is the only one. Board members asked with this unique setup of students are still wanting to attend and if there is a waiting list. Ms. Gallagher shared that when they talk about students with SpEd or language services, that population has grown exponentially. They are stretching some of the constraints from previous contracts they've had. There is still incredible demand and they will start recruitment next week. Board members had a clarifying question around why the report says teachers appear to be properly licensed, and why it wouldn't state it more decisively. Ms. Miles noted that she doesn't have any concerns. She gets a staff list and checks it with TSPC. She says that for all her evaluations because she is trusting that the information she is given is accurate. Ms. Gallagher provided additional clarification sharing that the Gresham-Barlow Human Resources team is contracted with CAL, and they support them to make sure teachers are licensed through TSPC. Diane Santos also helps with the CTE teachers. The board asked if they have any teachers with charter registry licenses. Ms. Gallagher shared that they have one in language arts, but he just completed his masters and will be moving over to the licensed teacher list.

**MOTION 50:** Move to approve the renewal of the public charter school the Center for Advanced Learning (CAL). This motion, made by Holly Riegelmann and seconded by Brenna Puderbaugh, Carried.  
Aye: Heather Coleman-Cox, Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Holly Riegelmann  
Aye: 6, No: 0

Following the motion, board members noted that they would be interested in an update on the contract negotiations along the way.

### **23. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) 2024-2025 (8:02 p.m.)**

Chair Petersen shared that in the past they have had the auditors come to present. Because it was a clean audit this year, they will have Mr. Bejarano present instead. Mr. Bejarano shared that auditors often present the most succinct information to boards, which is why they issued the separate letter to the board. The letter offers a quick summary of the ACFR. The first page is very boiler plate outlining what they do as auditors, along with the scope and timing. This audit firm does things differently than the rest of the state by going into a lot more detail. The audit findings are estimates. The biggest paragraphs in the letter are all about PERS because they are trying to determine exact liability amounts for PERS which is very hard to do. The third page gets into note disclosures and asks if there were any disagreements with the managers. This was all okay with no disagreements. They didn't consult with other accountants, and there were no other matters to bring to the board's attention. The last page reviews the district's responsibility and information about fraud risk assessment.

Mr. Bejarano shared that in summary this is a clean audit, which is notable because last year there were several findings. The district has always gotten an unmodified opinion, but this year doesn't have any additional asterisks. Becky Watt stepped into this role this year, and not having any findings is a huge testament to her expertise. Board members clarified that the reason the district had findings last year was because they changed auditors, and the way these auditors looked into things was different. The finance team asked for a tougher standard and they got that standard.

**MOTION 51:** Move to accept the 2024-25 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) as presented. This motion, made by Shawn Farrens and seconded by Kris Howatt, Carried.  
Aye: Heather Coleman-Cox, Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Holly Riegelmann  
Aye: 6, No: 0

## **Information Items**

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### **24. Financial Update (8:08 p.m.)**

Mr. Bejarano shared that the district's financial position remains stable, and they have improved the ending fund balance since the last projection. It is not at the required 8%, but it is improving and has increased since October's report. He thinks this is from the tax reports coming in. Board members asked if the forecast property tax revenue comes from the county assessor or if the district forecasts in house. Mr. Bejarano explained that they try to look at a variety of sources including Multnomah County and Clackamas County assessors, and their own internal projections. Property tax is much easier to predict because they know it is so differentiated that they will meet the cap every year.

### **25. Out of State Travel Report (8:10 p.m.)**

Dr. Deboy shared that this list shows the approved out of state travel for the district since September of this year. While it is a fairly short list, she wanted to recognize that there is more balance than they've seen before. Gresham has been seeking more opportunities. The Board requested after the last report to see the cost per student. Their administrative assistant Jade Joseph reached out to the school bookkeepers to make sure they had accurate numbers. They have had great opportunities including one for a middle school this year.

Board members noted that it has been a while since they have looked at that policy, and would love to hear how staff view the policy. They had good reasons for implementing the travel limitations. The board asked how the out-of-pocket amount for students is met. Dr. Deboy shared that it is generally fundraised. There are also principal discretionary funds that can be used. The tiers were put in place so that the expensive trips are every 3 years. It is in place so they can give a lot of opportunities without a lot of fundraising fatigue for families. Board members noted they would like to bring that policy back for review because the cost per tier has not increased in several years while the cost of travel has increased significantly. The board also asked who approves these figures or requests, and if it would be possible to add a column that says the number of students. Dr. Deboy will add that column to the future reports. The approval starts with principals, then goes to her and if she has questions, she takes them to the superintendent. There is a pretty detailed form they have to fill out.

## Closing Items

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### **26. Announcements (8:15 p.m.)**

Chair Petersen reviewed the announcements in the board agenda packet. A Zoom link for virtual meeting attendance will be provided for upcoming meetings.

January 22, 2026: Board Work Session - 6 p.m.

Council Chambers Conference Room  
Public Safety and Schools Building

February 5, 2026: Regular Board Business Meeting - 7 p.m.

Council Chambers  
Public Safety and Schools Building

### **27. Adjournment (8:15 p.m.)**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Sarah Avery  
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and  
Board of Directors

Note: These minutes were approved by the board on \_\_\_\_\_:sa