

# Minutes of Regular Meeting

## The Board of Education Jenison Public Schools

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A regular meeting of the Board of Education of Jenison Public Schools was held on Monday, April 20, 2026, beginning at 6:30 pm in the Jenison Center for the Arts Boardroom.

### Call to Order:

President of the Board of Education, Dr. Hartman, called the Jenison Public Schools Board of Education meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

### Members Present:

Eric Hartman, DC,  
President

William Waalkes,  
Vice President

Chris Reed, PhD,  
Treasurer

Jen Postema,  
Secretary

Jennifer Griffin, DPM  
Trustee

Donna Mooney  
Trustee

Shannon Hogan,  
Trustee

### Others Present:

Brandon Graham, PhD,  
Superintendent

Leslie Philipps,  
Assistant Superintendent /  
Title IX Coordinator

Christine Marcy,  
Director of Finance and  
Operations

Michael Leiter, PhD,  
High School Principal

Brian Bennink,  
JCA Manager

Alana Kooi,  
Co-Director of Teaching and  
Learning

Jenny Riha,  
High School Counselor

Katie Koole-McCurdy,  
High School Counselor

Katie Moy,  
Chief of Staff

### Recognition: High School

High School Math Department:

Dr. Graham praised the High School Math Department for their strong collaboration and dedication, expressing appreciation for their continued hard work.

Dr. Leiter also expressed gratitude towards the Math Department, and noted that under the department's leadership, the students have shown significant growth in Math. Michigan measures progress using Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs), which track year-over-year learning compared to peers with similar prior scores and demographics. With an average benchmark of 50% at the State and OAISD, the JHS Math Department achieved a 67% growth rating last year. The highest in the state. He praised the team's strong collaboration, commitment, and effectiveness.

Dr. Graham added that the department was doing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) even before the district implemented them. He appreciates the focus on supporting all students. He recognized the team's leadership and is thankful for their work. He also acknowledged retiring staff

members Jenny Huizenga and Steve Uganski, thanking them for their years of service and contributions to the district.

The individuals recognized at the meeting were: Jeff Brown, Zach Darling, Erica Elsie, Kevin Groothuis, Megan Ter Haar, Tony Hoffman, Jenny Huizenga, Fiona Johnson, Madison Krol, Ryan Nelson, Kristin Terrigno, Kevin Verbeek, and Steve Uganski

**Strength & Performance:**

Dr. Graham expressed appreciation to Zach Mendoza, Director of Strength & Performance, for his dedication to students and for consistently going above and beyond. He noted that Mr. Mendoza introduced staff training sessions this spring and voluntarily spent additional time training staff, recognizing the importance of supporting their health and well-being.

**JCA/Theater:**

Mr. Brian Bennink, JCA Manager, shared appreciation to Amy Schrock for all her work on the Senior Citizen Appreciation Night. She went above and beyond to ensure every guest felt comfortable, welcomed, and valued. It was especially meaningful to see the excitement of the senior citizens, who truly felt celebrated. Recognizing how challenging it can be to engage this group, Mrs. Schrock made extra efforts to connect with local senior communities and even created a concierge-style experience to enhance the evening. Dr. Graham added that the event is always a special occasion and thanked Mrs. Schrock for representing the district so well.

**Recess:**

Dr. Hartman called a recess at 6:40 pm to congratulate the individuals recognized.

**Reconvene:**

The meeting reconvened at 6:47 pm.

**Public Comment:**

Ashley Rottman (11078 56th Ave, Allendale) - She provided the Board of Education with an update on Wilderness Academy, noting the success of a recent read-a-thon in which students logged over 17,000 minutes, earning a schoolwide Read-In and demonstrating increased reading progress. The school also celebrated its first year as an official PTO, with elections held on April 15 and strong parent involvement. Fundraising efforts supported teacher grants for new classrooms at the ECC. Community engagement included a well-attended nature walk at Grand Ravines and a partnership with Calvin University for the school's pollinator garden and greenhouse planning. Upcoming events include a spring concert, Field House Frenzy on April 25, and Culver's Night on April 28. In regard to the third-grade transition, Beth from transportation has already been planning to incorporate Wilderness Academy into routing. As they plan for this transition, they hope it will be the last one and would like to request that the district begin scoping and planning now for a WA third grade program.

Dr. Hartman thanked the public for their time and comments provided to the Board of Education.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Mrs. Postema motioned to approve the agenda as prepared. Dr. Griffin seconded the motion. The Board of Education voted to approve the agenda as presented with a vote of 7-0.

**Action Items:**

**1. Approval of Minutes:**

Dr. Reed motioned to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2026, Board of Education Meeting. Ms. Hogan seconded the motion. The Board of Education voted to approve the minutes as presented with a vote of 7-0.

**2. Approval of Financial Report:**

Mrs. Postema motioned to approve the March Financial Report as presented. Mrs. Mooney seconded the motion. Ms. Marcy stated that the district is on track with the budget amendment and has been working on the final amendment for 2025-26 and the budget projection for 2027. She reported that current revenues for this fiscal year are greater than projected, and spending is on track. The Board of Education voted to approve the financial report as presented with a vote of 7-0.

**3. Ratification of 2026 Refunding Bonds:**

Dr. Reed motioned to approve the Ratification of 2026 Refunding Bonds as presented. Mrs. Postema seconded the motion. The Board of Education was provided documentation regarding the ratification of the District's 2026 Refunding Bonds. In December 2025, the Board approved refinancing a portion of the District's 2016 School Building and Site and Refunding Bonds, which become eligible for early payoff in May 2026. The goal was to take advantage of lower interest rates and reduce overall costs, similar to refinancing a mortgage. The Board had previously approved issuing up to \$16.75 million in new bonds and allowed the District to move forward with the sale when market conditions were favorable. The bonds were sold on March 31, 2026, and the offer was accepted on April 1, 2026, with Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Incorporated serving as the underwriter. The District will issue \$13.75 million in bonds, with a total purchase price of \$14,836,315.35. The bonds will mature between 2027 and 2041, with interest paid twice a year beginning November 1, 2026. The refinancing is expected to save the District money, with annual debt service payments of about \$1.4 million and an overall savings of approximately 6.67%. Proceeds from the bonds will be used to pay off the older bonds and cover issuance costs, with any remaining funds deposited into the Debt Retirement Fund. UMB Bank, N.A., Grand Rapids, Michigan, was approved to serve as Escrow Agent, Paying Agent, and Bond Registrar, and an escrow account will be established to manage repayment of the refunded bonds. The bonds may be paid off early starting May 1, 2036, under certain conditions.

A roll call vote was taken:

YEAS: Griffin, Hartman, Hogan, Mooney, Postema, Reed, and Waalkes

NAYS: none

Abstentions: none

The Board of Education voted to approve the Ratification of 2026 Refunding Bonds as presented by a roll call vote of 7-0.

**4. Ratification of 2026 Building and Site Series II Bonds:**

Dr. Reed motioned to approve the Ratification of 2026 Building and Site Series II Bonds as presented. Dr. Griffin seconded the motion. The Board of Education was provided documentation regarding the ratification of 2026 Building and Site Series II Bonds. In December, the Board approved for the District to refinance a portion of its 2016 School Building and Site and Refunding Bonds and to proceed with the next phase of the \$117 million bond program approved by voters in May 2024. The timing of the sale met the state requirement that bond sales be spaced at least two weeks apart and took advantage of favorable market conditions. Strong investor demand led to more orders than available bonds, allowing the District to secure a premium and benefit from a strong State rating. This issuance is the second of three planned bond series. The Board had previously authorized up to \$52 million for this series and delegated authority to the Superintendent and/or Director of Finance and Operations to complete the sale. That authority was exercised on April 16, 2026, when the bonds were successfully sold. The Board ratified and affirmed the sale of the bonds in the amount of \$48,155,000, with an approximate \$4 million premium, for total proceeds of about \$52 million. The bonds will mature between 2027 and 2051, include semiannual interest payments, and standard redemption provisions. Bond proceeds will be used to pay issuance costs, with the remaining funds deposited into the 2026 Capital Projects Fund to support facility improvements. The Board also approved the Bond Purchase

Agreement, confirmed the Preliminary Official Statement as final, and authorized the execution of the final Official Statement and related documents. UMB Bank, N.A. was confirmed as Paying Agent and Bond Registrar. District officials were authorized to complete all necessary steps to finalize the transaction, and any conflicting prior resolutions were rescinded.

A roll call vote was taken:

YEAS: Griffin, Hartman, Hogan, Mooney, Postema, Reed, and Waalkes

NAYS: none

Abstentions: none

The Board of Education voted to approve the Ratification of 2026 Building and Site Series II Bonds as presented by a roll call vote of 7-0.

**5. Approval of 2026 Administrative Contract Extensions:**

Mr. Waalkes motioned to approve the 2025 Administrative Contract Extensions. Mrs. Postema seconded the motion. Mrs. Philipps presented the list of administrators recommended for one-year contract extensions to the Board of Education. This approval is for the contract extension, as the salary scales were already approved as mandated by the Office of Retirement Services, requiring the development of formal salary schedules, the Board of Education approved the Administrative Base Salary Schedule on February 16, 2026. The Board of Education voted to approve the administrative contract extensions as presented with a vote of 7-0.

**6. Approval of Superintendent Contract:**

Dr. Griffin motioned to approve the Superintendent Contract as presented. Dr. Reed seconded the motion. Mrs. Philipps shared that the Superintendent's contract extension is for one year, aligning the contract term with those of other District administrators. The salary for the 2026–2027 school year had already been approved by the Board as part of the teacher contract and salary schedules. The salary scales were already approved as mandated by the Office of Retirement Services, requiring the development of formal salary schedules, the Board of Education approved the Administrative Base Salary Schedule on February 16, 2026. It was also noted that the Board will evaluate Dr. Graham in accordance with the Michigan Educator Evaluation Guidelines for Superintendents (Policy 4603). The Superintendent's final evaluation rating must be approved by the June Board meeting to ensure timely submission to the State of Michigan by July. Additionally, the rating system has been updated, with "Effective" now representing the highest rating (previously "Highly Effective"). The Board of Education voted to approve the Superintendent's contract as presented by a vote of 7-0.

**7. Approval of Universal FAFSA Policy:**

Mrs. Mooney motioned to approve the Universal FAFSA Policy. Dr. Reed seconded the motion. The high school counselors along with Mrs. Alana Kooi, Secondary Director of Teaching and Learning shared a brief presentation with the Board of Education on the Universal FAFSA policy to be included in the 2026–2027 student handbook. Mrs. Kooi noted that Mrs. Jenny Riha is leading efforts to strengthen college and career readiness and support student planning beyond high school. The policy would require all seniors, beginning with the Class of 2027, to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or submit an opt-out waiver prior to graduation. The intent is to increase student access to financial aid and postsecondary opportunities by making FAFSA completion the standard expectation. The initiative is supported by a grant opportunity focused on improving college and career readiness. Funds would support expanded programming, including career exploration, college visits, financial aid education, FAFSA completion events and assistance, and increased family outreach. It was noted that approximately 72% of jobs require postsecondary training, while fewer than half of graduates enroll within six months. Completing the FAFSA can provide access to scholarships, career training programs, and state aid such as the Michigan Achievement Scholarship, with many families qualifying for financial assistance. It was noted that many students miss out on financial aid for college, career training, or trade programs because they never fill out the FAFSA. By implementing this policy, it will help students access more financial aid and opportunities, including scholarships, career training programs, and state aid like the Michigan Achievement Scholarship. While also encouraging enrollment

in college, career training, or trade programs and helping to close opportunity gaps for students. It was emphasized that there is no penalty for opting out, but completing the FAFSA can open doors to significant funding, benefiting nearly 70% of families who qualify for assistance. Overall, the goal of the policy is to better prepare students for postsecondary success by increasing awareness of, access to, and support for a wide range of pathways. The Board of Education voted to approve the Superintendent's contract as presented by a vote of 6-1 (Ms. Hogan opposing).

## Discussion Items:

### 1. Superintendent Update:

Dr. Graham briefly shared a few district events, happenings, and updates with the Board of Education.

- **Strategic Plan Progress Report:** Dr. Graham wants to keep the Board informed on the progress of the strategic plan with giving quarterly updates on its progress focusing on keeping each quarter on track to meet its established goals. He is thankful for the progress over the last 5 years, and knows that there is a lot more opportunity for growth. He is looking forward to the next 5 years goals. He provided a Quarter 3 update for the school year, giving a brief overview of each strategic goal:
  - Unlock Character-Driven Culture: Foster a Culture of Character, Belonging, and Positive Behavior
  - Invest in People: Strengthen Collaborative Teaching and Learning Through Full PLC Implementation and Data
  - Strengthen Student Learning - Secondary: Build a Secondary Level System of Common Assessments
  - Strengthen Student Learning - Elementary: Drive Elementary Achievement and Growth Through Data-Informed Collaboration
  - Engage Community: Build Strong Family Partnerships and Engagement
  - Continuous Improvement: Advance Safety, Security, and Facilities Through Strategic Investment and Design
- **School Climate Survey:** Is intended to gather feedback from parents, students, and staff. This anonymous survey aims to collect data about our school environment. Parents will receive a copy of the survey along with an opt-out letter and the process for opting out if they choose for their child. The data collected will help the District understand students', staff's, and families' perceptions of the school climate within JPS. Surveys will be sent out starting tomorrow throughout the beginning of May.
- **Prom:** The Junior/Senior Prom will be held Saturday, April 24 at the New Vintage Place.
- **Spring Testing:** Testing has started including SAT/PSAT and MSTEPS. AP Tests will begin in May.
- **Book Fair:** The district wide book fair will be held at the JCA this week. Many after school hours are available including after concerts.
- **WZZM Teacher of the Week:** Mr. Dan Scott, Jenison High School Orchestra Director, was named the WZZM Teacher of the Week! He was surprised with the news during one of his class times. This is one of many awards Mr. Scott has recently received.
- **Class of 2026 Valedictorian and Salutatorian:** Solah Han is the Valedictorian and James Williams is the Salutatorian. Solah Han finished with a GPA of 4.42 and plans to attend Johns Hopkins University to study Chemistry (Pre-Med). She was involved in orchestra, science peer tutoring club, Science Olympiad, National Honors Society, and so much more. James Williams had a GPA of 4.38 and plans to attend the University of Michigan to study electrical engineering. He was involved in football, science peer tutoring, Science Olympiad, and so much more.
- **Winterguard:** It has been a success season for the Winterguard. The Varsity Winterguard team won the state title for Scholastic A, the Junior High team won their class for the second year in a row, and the Junior Varsity team took 4th place in their class.
- **Upcoming Events:**
  - Board Tours of Maintenance/Transportation Building: May 5 or May 6

- HS Honors Night: May 19
- Commencement: May 21

**Adjournment:**

The President of the Board of Education, Dr. Hartman, adjourned the Jenison Public Schools Board of Education meeting at 7:59 pm with acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jen Postema, Secretary  
Jenison Public Schools Board of Education

**Future Meetings:**

Month:	Regular Meeting (held at 6:30 pm):	Workshop (held at 6:00 pm)
May 2026	Mon, May 11	
June 2026	Mon, Jun 8	
July 2026	Mon, Jul 13	