

Minutes of Regular Meeting

The Board of Education Jenison Public Schools

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of Jenison Public Schools was held on Monday, May 12, 2025, beginning at 6:33 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 6:33 pm.

Members Present:

Eric Hartman, D.C.,
President

William Waalkes,
Vice President

Chris Reed, Ph.D.,
Treasurer

Jen Postema,
Secretary

Jennifer Griffin, DPM
Trustee

Donna Mooney
Trustee

Shannon Hogan,
Trustee

Others Present:

Brandon Graham, Ph.D.,
Superintendent

Leslie Philipps,
Assistant Superintendent /
Title IX Coordinator

Christine Marcy,
Director of Finance and
Operations

Luke VerBeek,
Rosewood Principal

Rachael Postle-Brown, PhD,
Bursley Principal

Michael Leiter, PhD,
High School Principal

Recognitions: Rosewood Elementary and Future Leadership Academy

Rosewood Elementary:

Mr. Luke VerBeek, Rosewood Elementary Principal, introduced and highlighted the individuals making an impact on Rosewood Elementary and its community.

Student: A. Pike was selected by the Rosewood staff for her bravery and being a wonderful student and an honorable third secretary at Rosewood Elementary. She was diagnosed with a health condition last year. She has shown such courage and resilience throughout the year. She has also been helpful in the front office often doing crafts and working on special projects with Mrs. Schaaf. She is a wonderful student and "third secretary".

Staff: Chris Greco, 3rd grade teacher, will be retiring this year after 30 years of service. Mr. VerBeek expressed heartfelt appreciation for Mrs. Greco, noting her profound impact on the Rosewood community. Stating that he was holding back emotion, he shared how she has been an incredible asset to the school, even joking that he asked her husband if they could keep her a little longer. She is known for her calm demeanor, but when she speaks, everyone listens. He affectionately referred to as the "school mom," particularly by newer staff. She has been a guiding force and a source of steady leadership to Rosewood. Her compassion, commitment, and support have deeply enriched the

Rosewood family. As she retires, she leaves behind a strong legacy and passes the torch to continue the positive momentum she helped build. She will be truly missed and warmly welcomed back should she ever wish to return.

Dr. Graham echoed these sentiments, describing Mrs. Greco as a true gift to the district who has set a high standard for excellence. He shared a touching story relayed by a parent, who spoke of Mrs. Greco's compassionate support during a difficult time in their child's life—an example of her lasting impact. Dr. Graham concluded by presenting Mrs. Greco with a special gift from the district in recognition of her remarkable career and contributions.

Volunteer: Harold Griffion (unfortunately unable to attend this evening). A wonderful, compassionate, and giving individual. Thankful for all he does for Rosewood Elementary.

Future Leadership Academy:

Future Leadership Team in Attendance: John Baker (Transportation), Jeff Brown (High School), Sami DuVal (Bauerwood), Keegan Goalen (Dean of Students), Joe Harmsen (Orchestra), Katie Hernki (Bursley), Carol Johnson (Orchestra), Mykalanne Jones (Pinewood, El Puente), Becca Kelly (Bursley), Alanna Kermkow (Jr. High), Melissa Knop (Jr. High), Kathrine Kober (El Puente), Jenna Kraft (El Puente), Amber Larsen (Dean of Students), Beth Lauren (Transportation), Peyton Morse (Sandy Hill), Nicole Oppe (Dean of Students), Kelly Osterink (Rosewood), Lindsey Rohde (Psychology-ECC), Tara Sebolt (ECC), Becky Steele (Jr. High), Kelly Tavis (Jr. High), and Jenny vanBiljon (Parent Liason)

Unable to attend: Jane Brown (High School), Lucas Bultema (Junior High), Halle Hibbits (Junior High), Alex Krombeen (Jr. High), Justin Stroh (Jr. High), and Avery Thomas (Sandy Hill)

Dr. Graham shared his gratitude to Dr. Rachael Postle-Brown, Dr. Michael Leiter, and Mrs. Leslie Philipps and their leadership in helping develop this program. There are thirty-plus staff members involved in the program, and composed of staff members across the district not just teachers. This is the second year of the program and the program has been quite the success especially not knowing what to expect. This group has been created as part of the district's strategic vision and plan of investing in people.

Dr. Leiter and Dr. Brown shared about the program. The first year was a time to share about leadership roles and hearing from guest speakers on various topics and leadership roles (many of the district leaders presented and what they do); the first year cover the leadership vision and what the various leadership roles look like. They have met several times throughout the year preparing for future leadership roles within the district and actively working on leadership projects across the district. They learned about leadership roles and how to apply their insights and skills in real-world contexts (later sessions), further enhancing their readiness to take on leadership positions.

The second year it was about team collaborations and connections. It was more hands on and logging hours of experience which included subing for administrators, shadowing the administrators, presenting at PLCs, going on PLC visits, etc. Many were figuring out roles they would or would not want to pursue, and what they could do in the future. Each staff member in attendance at the meeting was able to introduce themselves and say a little about what they have learned through their experience.

It has been a great opportunity to grow leadership within the district and create a professional leadership program. The program will take a year off to collect what they learned, and start up again with a new cohort of staff members.

Recess:

Dr. Hartman called a recess at 6:52 pm to congratulate the individuals recognized.

Reconvene:

The meeting reconvened at 7:00 pm.

Public Comment:

Megan Nollet (7619 Chickadee Dr, Jenison) - She spoke on behalf of the Wilderness Academy's Advancement Committee and provided several updates. She shared a concern about about students being separated when transitioning to the new schools and urged the district to keep the students together. She noted the committee will meet with administrators in June and shared several updates they are working on, including: developing clear criteria for expanding to 3rd and 4th grades, providing input on leadership, opportunities to meet the new principal, appreciation for the field trips to the transitioning schools, and proposing a strategic plan in collaboration with families. She emphasized the Wilderness Academy families are strong advocates for outdoor education and are committed to working collaboratively with the district to build trust and transparency moving forward.

Reina Richardson (1935 Parkwood St, Jenison) - She expressed disappointment of the transition of 2nd grade students that will separate students, especially after prior assurances that they would remain together. She shared that it was disheartening for families to learn of this change and emphasized that students are emotional already with the transition and want consistency. She asked the district to take into account the student well-being, keep the students together, and maintain the trust of families.

Joe Haiduk (8210 Lamplight Dr, Jenison) - He provided an update about the work being done at the Wilderness Academy, including the work event held on May 3, 10a-4p. He shared appreciation to Ms. Hogan, Dr. Griffin, and Dr. Graham for their help that day. He noted that there were over 30 people who helped that day. Many projects worked on was moving large amounts of concrete, improving the hallows (adding more mulch, etc), painting projects (spools that are used as tables), spreading mulch, removing invasive species, and more. Additional projects are planned once the school year is over. They want to spread more mulch, build more tables, create steps for the hillsides (they are steep and concerned individuals may fall), create a decorative structure to hide the porta potty, and more.

Bradley Slagh (7142 Riley, Zeeland) - He is the State Representative of the 85th District. As promised, Mr. Slagh stops in from time to time to keep the District updated. He provided the Board of Education with a brief update about what is happening in the State of Michigan, including budget expectations. He shared that the House has approved \$100 million in disaster relief for Northern Michigan, and passed a Snow Day Forgiveness bill to waive attendance requirements for schools impacted by storms that caused schools to close. He noted that the state budget process is progressing, with the House expected to finalize its version in the coming weeks. While he is hopeful for a July 1 budget, the Governor and State Legislature also need to approve their budgets. He also added that a school safety package is scheduled to go to the House floor next week.

Amy Mabin (2761 Lark St, Jenison) - She shared that she sent an email to the board but didn't hear back from anyone. She stated she is an educator and parent. She added that at a recent board meeting Mr. Gingerich recognized an Intervention Specialist from El Puente, and wanted to echo the appreciation and support, and how it has positively impacted her family. However, she expressed a growing concern that about a lack of support for El Puente students, and not given equitable resources. She stated that El Puente students continue to perform well but there are gaps in student support services - both academically and behaviorally. They don't have a full-time Intervention Specialis, no behavioral paraprofessional, no on-site special education teacher, and limited access to Spanish-speaking diagnosticians. She feels that these gaps in staffing and services are not aligned with the needs of the students. She urged the district to to ensure that El Puente students have the same access to intervention, behavioral, and special education support as students in other buildings. She thanked the board for its time and added that all students, regardless of what building they attend, deserve equal access to the supports that help them thrive.

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

Approval of Agenda:

Dr. Griffin motioned to approve the agenda as prepared. Dr. Reed 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 Financial Report:

Mrs. Postema motioned to approve the April Financial Report. Mrs. Mooney seconded the motion. The Board of Education voted to approve the financial report as presented with a vote of 7-0.

2. Scheduling of Budget Hearing:

Dr. Reed motioned to schedule the Jenison Public School Budget Hearing for Monday, June 9, 2025. Mr. Waalkes seconded the motion. To levy the fully authorized operating millage without going through the Truth and Taxation Hearing process, the district must comply with Section 16 of the Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act, which calls for the establishment of a budget hearing, including newspaper notification, and resolutions proposing the adopting millage rates. The law requires school budgets to be adopted before the beginning of the fiscal year, which is July 1, 2025. A notice for such a hearing, including time, date, and place, along with the availability of the budget for public inspection, will be published at least six (6) days before the hearing. The Board of Education has approved the budget hearing for Monday, June 9, 2025, beginning at 6:20 pm in the Jenison Center for the Arts Boardroom with a vote of 7-0.

The SEAB Hearing will start at 6:00 pm, and the regular Board of Education Meeting will follow the Budget Hearing, to start tentatively at 6:30 pm.

3. Approval of OAISD General Fund Budget Resolution:

Mrs Postema moved to support the OAISD 2025-2026 General Fund Budget as presented to the Board of Education. Dr. Griffin seconded the motion. In 2004, legislation was enacted that local school boards review and either approve or disapprove their Intermediate School District's general fund budgets. The budgets are to be submitted to the local school boards by May 1, and the school boards are to pass a resolution of support or disapproval with specific objections noted on the budgets before June 1 of that year. The Ottawa Area Intermediate School District provided documentation of its 2025-2026 proposed general budget to the JPS Board of Education. The information provided to the Board of Education included the following:

- A cover letter addressed to the board members
- Resolution
- The full general fund budget package from OAISD
 - Graphs of the total OAISD operating budgets (special education, career/technical education, and the general fund).
 - Graphs of the OAISD general fund department budgets
 - A 2025-2026 general fund budget overview, including a summary of significant variances between this year and the next
 - The line item general fund budget for 2025-2026
- An excerpt from the revised school code (Act 451 of 1976)

It was noted that there was more spending into the Fund Balance than normal, but it is potentially due to capital projects. The ISD has been renovating its facilities to accommodate more students' access to the Tech Center. The ISD moved its Administrative Services to give more space for classes, potentially getting more access to close to 300 more students. There is a waitlist annually for the programming offered by the Tech Center.

A resolution is required to approve the budget. A roll call vote was taken:

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

NAYS:

Abstentions: none

The Board of Education voted to support the 2025-2026 OAISD General Fund Budget by a roll call vote of 7-0.

4. Approval of 2025 Administrative Contract Extensions:

Mrs. Mooney motioned to approve the 2025 Administrative Contract Extensions. Dr. Reed seconded the motion. Mrs. Philipps provided the list of administrators for contract extensions to the Board of Education. The approval is only for a one-year contract extension with a few new positions having a two-year contract. The Board of Education voted to approve the administrative contract extensions as presented with a vote of 7-0.

5. Approval OAISD Board Election Resolution:

Board of Education Representative and Alternate:

Mrs. Postema motioned to approve the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District (OAISD) Resolution with the designation of Mrs. Donna Mooney as the Jenison Public Schools (JPS) Board of Education election representative and Dr. Jennifer Griffin as the alternate. A roll call vote was taken:

- YEAS: Griffin, Hartman, Hogan, Mooney, Postema, Reed, and Waalkes
- NAYS: none
- Abstentions: none

The Board of Education has voted to support the adoption of the OAISD Resolution, with Mrs. Mooney representing the JPS Board of Education and Dr. Griffin as the alternate to cast a ballot for the OAISD School District Board of Education by a roll call vote of 7-0.

OAISD Board Candidates:

The board briefly discussed the candidates in the Special Meeting. The board took nominations for the candidates.

Six-Year Term candidates:

Mrs. Postema motioned to have Mr. Rick Dernberger for one of the six-year term candidates. Dr. Reed seconded the motion. A roll call was taken:

- YEAS: Griffin, Hartman, Hogan, Mooney, Postema, Reed, and Waalkes
- NAYS:
- Abstentions: none

Mrs. Mooney motioned to have Mrs. Amanda Price for one of the six-year term candidates. Mr. Waalkes seconded the motion. A roll call was taken:

- YEAS: Griffin, Hartman, Hogan, Mooney, Postema, Reed, and Waalkes
- NAYS:
- Abstentions: none

Partial/Two-Year Term Candidate:

Mrs. Postema motioned to have Mr. John Siemion for the partial/two-year term candidate. Dr. Griffin seconded the motion. A roll call was taken:

- YEAS: Griffin, Hartman, Hogan, Mooney, Postema, Reed, and Waalkes
- NAYS:
- Abstentions: none

The Board of Education has voted to support Mr. Rick Dernberger and Mrs. Amanda Price for the OAISD School District Board of Education full-term positions and Mr. John Siemion for the partial-term position by a roll call vote of 7-0.

Discussion Items:

1. Pool Update:

Ms. Marcy provided the Board of Education with an update on the pool project, noting a possible delay in the construction timeline. The hope is to begin in July, but it may shift to mid-August to ensure all equipment is delivered and ready before work would begin. Although the improvements are important, construction will impact pool use during the first semester, impacting the fall and early winter seasons. The district is working with neighboring schools to ensure its swimmers have space to train and hold events during this time. JPS is hopeful the pool will be available for use by the second semester.

2. Superintendent Evaluation Process:

Mrs. Philipps reviewed the Superintendent Evaluation Process with the Board of Education, highlighting the recent changes to the evaluation process for Administrators and Superintendent Evaluations. The Superintendent evaluation started last year and includes a required mid-year progress report and appeal procedures as required by state policy (Policy 4603). The Board is required to approve the Superintendent's final rating at the June meeting to ensure timely reporting to the State of Michigan by July. She also noted that the rating system has changed, with "Effective" now being the highest rating (used to be "Highly Effective").

3. Superintendent Update:

Dr. Graham provided the Board of Education with a few documents. One, covered his professional goals for the 2024-2025 school year. The other, was the progress report for the strategic plan highlighting the 3rd quarter. The District is in its 4th year of the strategic plan.

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

- **Class of 2025:**
 - May 9 was the last day for Seniors.
 - This week is the Seniors' final exams.
 - Honors Night is Tuesday, May 20.
 - Graduation is on Thursday, May 22.
- **AP Exams:** Over 800 exams will have taken AP exams this year. The AP classes push students academically and also give college credit to some post-secondary schools. .
- **Junior & Senior Prom:** Was on May 3 at the Vintage Place in Grand Rapids. It was a nice night for the students.
- **Athletics:** It's been a great spring season! Congratulations to all the teams!
 - Jenison Boys Track and Field are OK Green Conference Champions. It's their first conference title in more than 50 years! Conference champions included the 4x800 relay, Brez Post in pole vault, Parker Strelecki in the 800m, and Seth Conner in the 1600m & 3200m.
- **Key Personnel Changes:**
 - Karen Dame moving to High School Assistant Principal
 - Sam Diekevers moving to Dean of Students
 - Jeanna Watson moving to Dean of Students
 - Daniel Russel will be the new Assistant Athletic Director (starting in July)
- **Junior Achievement and Business Students:** Many High School Business students went to the state capital today. Senator Roger Victory met with the students.
- **2025 Best Communities for Music Education:** Jenison Public Schools learned on May 12 that it has been designated a 2025 Best Communities for Music Education for its outstanding support and commitment to music education! Now in its 26th year, the national award goes to districts demonstrating outstanding achievement in providing music access and education to all

students. JPS is grateful for the talented music educators, and to the community who supports the programming.

- **Marching Band:** Next season's show is called the "Night Garden"
- **Pep Band:** The Pep Band played for the runners in the Riverbank Run on Saturday. They played on Lake Michigan Drive, and was a hit among the crowd. Even the bus driver took the opportunity to play along with them.
- **District Climate Survey:** The District collected over 5000 submissions from the survey. The District will be wrapping up the results to present to the board at a later date.
- **Staff and Teacher Appreciation Week:** Last week was Teacher Appreciation Week. Each day the JPS staff make an impact on the students, parents, and community members they serve. They are exceptional leaders and an incredible staff and are appreciated for all the things they do!
- **Athletics College Signing Night:** Jenison Athletic Department held its third College Signing Night at the Wildcat Fieldhouse tonight, May 12. Over 25 JPS student-athletes were recognized for playing sports at the college level next year! It was a special college signing night.
- **May 6, 2025 Election Results:** The Special Education Millage Proposal passed by a narrow margin (59.17% (29,114) YES: 40.83% (20,090) NO). The funding helps special education services in Jenison and schools across the county.
- **Athletics Hall of Fame:** The event didn't happen this year, but may be looking at future years for its return.
- **Bus Incident:** There was a minor bus accident happened heading to Byron Center for an athletic event. Fortunately, no one was hurt. A mirror needed to be replaced.

Move Into Closed Session:

The President of the Board of Education, Dr. Hartman, paused the Board of Education meeting to confer with the board to go into a closed session.

Purpose Closed Session: Security Presentation and Negotiations

Dr. Reed motioned to go into a closed session for the Security Presentation and Negotiations. Dr. Griffin seconded the motion. President Hartman called a closed session for the Board of Education at 8:02 pm.

A roll call vote was taken:

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

NAYS: none

Abstentions: none

The Board of Education has voted to end the regular session and to go into closed session for the Board and Administration to meet in a closed session for Security Presentation and to discuss Negotiations by a roll call vote of 7-0 at 8:02 pm.

The public was dismissed.

Recess:

The President of the Board of Education, Dr. Hartman, called for a recess at 8:02 pm to allow for a quick break and dismissal of the public.

Reconvene:

The meeting reconvened at 8:08 pm.

Closed Session: Security Presentation and Negotiations

During the Closed Session, the Board and Administration met in a closed session for a Security Presentation and to discuss Negotiations.

Security Presentation (Records or information of measures designed to protect the security or safety of persons or property, or the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of information systems, whether public or private, including, but not limited to, building, public works, and public water supply designs to the extent that those designs relate to the ongoing security measures of a public body, capabilities and plans for responding to a violation of the Michigan anti-terrorism act, chapter LXXXIII-A of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.543a to 750.543z, emergency response plans, risk planning documents, threat assessments, domestic preparedness strategies, and cybersecurity plans, assessments, or vulnerabilities, unless disclosure would not impair a public body's ability to protect the security or safety of persons or property or unless the public interest in disclosure outweighs the public interest in nondisclosure in the particular instance.)

Motion to come out of Closed Session and Return to Open Session:

Mr. Waalkes motioned to go out of the closed session. Mrs. Mooney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was needed to end the closed session. The closed session ended with a vote of 7-0 at 9:18 pm.

Dr. Hartman declared the Board of Education Closed Session adjourned at 9:18 pm.

Open Session:

There was no further action or discussion needed after reopening the closed session, and no public was present when reopening.

Adjournment:

The President of the Board of Education, Dr. Hartman, adjourned the Jenison Public Schools Board of Education meeting at 9:18 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)
June 2025	Mon, Jun 9	
July 2025	Mon, Jul 14	