

**GRESHAM-BARLOW SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10 JT.**  
**Minutes of Regular Board Work Session**

**Thursday, March 12, 2026**

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The Gresham-Barlow School District Board of Directors met in regular session on Thursday, March 12, 2026 in the large conference room 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:**

Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Holly Riegelmann, Erasto Sedda.

**Cabinet Members present:**

Dr. Tracy Klinger, Superintendent  
John Koch, Deputy Superintendent  
Dr. Sara Deboy, Assistant Superintendent  
Jeff Gibbs, Executive Director of Technology Services  
Athena Vadnais, Director of Communications and Community Engagement

**Opening Items**

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**1. Call to Order (6:00 p.m.)**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the board chair, Blake Petersen.

**2. Roll Call (6:00 p.m.)**

Directors Coleman-Cox and Farrens were absent from the meeting. A quorum of the board was present.

**3. Approve Meeting Agenda (6:01 p.m.)**

**MOTION 71:** Move to approve the meeting agenda as presented. This motion, made by Kris Howatt and seconded by Brenna Puderbaugh, Carried.

Aye: Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Holly Riegelmann, Erasto Sedda

Aye: 5, No: 0, Absent: 2

**Action Items**

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**4. Policy Review: First Reading (6:01 p.m.)**

Policy BHD - Board Member Stipends and Reimbursements

This policy came directly from OSBA. A stipend would be limited to the amount approved in the budget. If it moves forward, there would be a decision to make on the amount. The board had extensive, in-depth conversation about this policy. Board members in support of the policy noted that school board directors are the only elected officials in Oregon who don't receive compensation. They argued that stipends are an equity tool because they help offset costs such as childcare and lost wages, which may otherwise prevent a diverse range of candidates from serving on the board. Availability of a stipend may attract a wider variety of people to serve on the board.

Other board members raised concerns regarding the fiscal impact of the stipends, especially during a challenging budget cycle. They expressed hesitancy about possibly diverting funds from classroom resources, and noted that they originally ran for their positions knowing they were unpaid. In response, it was noted that the increasing complexity and time commitment of modern board service requires significant training and engagement, which justifies financial support.

They need more of that training to understand the impact of the budget and to make sure they are aware, involved, and engaged, not just at a cursory level of understanding. Mr. Koch provided additional budgetary context noting that if every member accepted the stipend, the total cost would equate to approximately one quarter of a licensed position and one half of a classified position. There could also be tax liabilities for board members. The district would have to provide an end of year statement for board members to claim on their taxes. Board members asked about mileage and if they should be claiming mileage from going to and from board meetings. Mr. Koch clarified that it would be similar to employees, they don't get paid for going back and forth to work, but do get paid when they have to travel to other buildings or for conferences. Reimbursement for conferences would still be covered under the same rule.

It was noted that they could still approve the policy since they would have to take action later to implement the stipends. They would have to go through an approval process every year. Board members had questions about whether the stipends would be retroactive. Mr. Koch will check with OSBA, but noted that it would be easier to approve on a July to June schedule for budget purposes. Board members noted that they could possibly put a clause in policy or AR stating that if they are at or above their ending fund balance, they could consider stipends. The board discussed continuing this conversation at the April 23, 2026 work session. This would allow the absent board members to be included in the conversation.

#### Policy FF - Naming of New Facilities

This was brought back to the board for additional discussion. It includes a draft that Superintendent Klinger put together based on input from the board policy review committee. The board took a moment to review the suggested language. This policy was originally brought forward for review to clarify who decides when a space in a building has a designation, how long it would have that designation, and how it was recognized. The language presented would centralize naming authority under the Board, moving away from the previous practice where principals could independently designate spaces. Mr. Koch reviewed the list of facilities and spaces currently named after people.

This change in policy is intended to address past inconsistencies. The board discussed the emotions attached to existing names and memorials, acknowledging that while larger facilities like gyms or fields require high-level oversight, smaller recognitions like dedicated trees or student memorials also need a clear, documented process to ensure they are respected over time and not lost during building renovations. Conversation focused on the criteria for honorees, specifically whether the policy should require individuals to be deceased or allow for the recognition of living community members. While some members argued that honoring a person during their lifetime provides a more meaningful tribute, others expressed concern about the potential volume of requests for beloved staff members and the complexity of choosing between them. They also discussed commercialization of spaces, noting that at the collegiate level this is tied to fundraising. Mr. Koch noted this would be problematic at the K-12 level due to copyright issues. It would have to be more local. The board addressed the use of tribal terms. Under state law Thunderbirds, White Buffalo, and Eagles are allowed. They would like this referenced in a footnote for the policy.

For next steps, the board would like an AR developed that outlines a clear procedure for different types of facilities including distinguishing between an entire building, a library, or a specific waiting room. It would also define how community members could formally submit naming requests. Mr. Koch will take this back to the policy committee to review the language around naming something after a living versus deceased person. They will also look at the timeframe for review to determine if it should be annually or every few years. He will look at what other districts have for an AR, and suggest a title change to include the naming of facilities and spaces.

#### Policy JOA - Directory Information

The Policy Review Committee gave thorough consideration to Policy JOA - Directory Information, and discussed un-striking grade level and the most recent school attending. Board members asked if this information is published in any

capacity. Mr. Koch shared it does get published for things like sports, military, and colleges. This is the information the district would provide automatically. The board also asked how a student who doesn't want this information released knows to prevent it. Mr. Koch shared that every year there is a handbook review that shares where to check off if they don't want the information released. They will move this policy forward to the next consent agenda.

#### Policy IKJ - Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Mr. Koch shared that the committee reviewed the policy and didn't make any changes. Jeff Gibbs was in attendance as he has been doing a lot of work behind the scenes, including managing a steering group for AI. Board members noted that AI is changing so fast, and asked if the district is doing things in a deliberate way to help students understand the impact of AI. Mr. Gibbs shared that they currently have pockets of teachers doing this. They want to focus on developing professional development for the upcoming school year to ensure all teachers are equipped to instruct students on appropriate AI use, bias detection, and data privacy. They want teachers to have the same comfort level. Mr. Koch added that the current transition with AI mirrors the introduction of the internet in the late 1990s, requiring the district to adapt its tools for information distribution and accuracy. The Board acknowledged that AI presents unique challenges, such as the potential for generating entirely false information and the significant environmental costs associated with the technology's high energy and water consumption.

To ensure transparency and consistency across classrooms, the district plans to include AI disclosure language in registration packets and syllabi. Mr. Gibbs reviewed information on the development of a "scale of AI use," which will provide teachers with a standard guide for when AI is acceptable to use, such as for research or to create an outline. Other assignments might not allow any use of AI. Data privacy remains a top priority, with the district focusing on a list of approved, contained tools to protect student information. Board members emphasized that AI literacy is now a critical skill and suggested that an "AI lens" should eventually be applied to other district policies, including those regarding sexual harassment, to address emerging technological risks. This policy will move forward to consent agenda.

#### **Recess / Reconvene**

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##### **Board Recess (7:01 p.m.)**

The meeting was recessed at 7:01 p.m. and reconvened at 7:07 p.m.

#### **Discussion Items**

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##### **5. Retention of Board Meeting Recordings (7:07 p.m.)**

Superintendent Klinger shared that this is being brought to the board for conversation in terms of public meeting laws that changed requiring meetings to be recorded. They have had conversations around how long they want to keep recordings, and some of it had to do with storage. What is their practice and how does it need to evolve. They also had a request from someone who made public comment to have it deleted from the record, and they can address this with not having the video available. Requirements say they need to have videos accessible on the website, and the district has to have them available for one year following the approval of the meeting minutes. Superintendent Klinger also shared that earlier in the year they found that AI bots were capturing snippets of board meeting videos and presenting them out of context which could be another consideration.

The board discussed various options for how long to keep video recordings on the website, including a 3-month period on the website with a 3-year or 5-year retention by the district. Board members noted that 3 months felt like a very short timeline for keeping videos available on the website. There was further discussion about keeping the recordings available for one year on the website. They also discussed having the district retain any executive session recordings for a longer period in case of any litigation. The board discussed how this could be included in policy. They want to ensure they are meeting the minimum requirements, but also be able to specify the maximum timeframe for retention. They

will bring this topic forward to the Policy Committee to discuss including it in policy. In the short term, they will move forward with maintaining one year of video recordings on the website.

#### **6. Budget Survey Data Review (7:32 p.m.)**

Superintendent Klinger noted that in relation to their budget reduction process, they have done recent community engagement. They started with sharing lots of different information and updates, and created several opportunities for the community to share feedback on their priorities related to process. The leadership team is using this information to guide conversations on the budget they are working to develop. They held an in-person budget forum that was well attended in February. They followed this with a virtual forum that included a presentation and question and answer (Q&A) portion. The video was shared broadly to give context about where money comes from and how it is spent. They had over 900 people take the budget survey to share their priorities. Superintendent Klinger reviewed the participation rates. They also held a key communicator meeting with business and faith-based groups giving them the same background information and encouraging them to take the survey.

As a part of the survey for elementary, middle school, and high school, participants were asked to rank order the four topics in each column. Superintendent Klinger reviewed the survey rankings noting that for total survey respondents, student supports was most often rated as the top priority, followed by specials, class size, family nights and after school programming. The in-person forum was included as a separate column of responses because it was an opportunity for people to hear other perspectives, and grapple with reasons why they would choose priorities and in what order. It was thoughtful, deep conversations. They pulled parent and staff responses separately to see what patterns or differences they would see. All are really close in terms of the top priorities.

Superintendent Klinger reviewed the chart of priorities for middle school noting they still see the trend of student supports being in the top two for all levels. Board members asked about the student responses and where they are reflected. Superintendent Klinger noted they are in the “survey all” column. The board noted they would be interested in seeing how the student responses differed if they were pulled out for their own column. Next, they reviewed the high school chart of priorities which had some variation in electives or CTE. There was some evidence in reviewing the surveys that students may have taken the survey during classes. They also did the same for district level rankings, and had a brief explanation of what the 4 items are. There is belief and acknowledgment that some of the reductions need to happen at the district level. It was consistent across the board for what those priorities were.

Superintendent Klinger reviewed the “survey all” which has information from the big survey. It allows them to see side by side. There are differences of opinion on class size based on the level of the students. Part of what they heard at the forum in talking with the community is that everything on here is important. Key takeaways from the survey included respondents urging the district to be mindful of class size, especially at the elementary level. Another key takeaway is around the student support need related to behavioral and mental health; it is part of a safe learning environment. Elective and CTE programs are valued in the district and are part of student engagement. Preserving a well-rounded educational program is important, and they want to maintain as many opportunities as possible.

In looking at the guiding principles around how they are creating stability, they are keeping options open and flexible to respond to various needs. They are planning ahead for fiscal stability by making sustainable decisions, not one-time, short-term solutions, while also maintaining a full school year. They are being straightforward and upfront with communication and have plans to push out similar information of what was shared tonight to staff and families. In their decision-making tool they are looking at what is the community impact, and what are the thoughts of the community. They are also focusing on how they support staff and students directly impacted by decisions they make.

Board members asked about the guiding principle to identify budget cuts that are sustainable year after year and what

that looks like. Superintendent Klinger shared that the two strongest examples of this is to not utilize furlough days or a COLA (cost of living adjustment) freeze where it is a one-time thing. It is less about programs that may come and go. Furlough days and COLA tend to be an immediate emergency response. The board asked how people were notified about the survey, including non-parent or community members. Superintendent Klinger shared parents received messages and high school students all got an email invitation to participate. Mrs. Vadnais added that they sent emails to key communicators and posted the survey on their budget development site. The goal was to focus it on the people most impacted by the budget reductions because they will live and breathe it. Families, students, and staff were the top priority, and then the community members. This was one of their biggest survey responses and it was open for two weeks. All budget updates over the last three months have gone to the key communicators list and are on the budget planning webpage. This is a way for school districts to communicate with the community in a cost-effective way. The budget presentation video with the CFO was only 6 minutes long and had 331 views. Mrs. Vadnais reviewed where to find the budget information on the website. The board asked for response rates broken down by students, staff, and parents. Mrs. Vadnais will share that information with the board.

#### **7. Strategic Plan (added 03/09/26) (8:07 p.m.)**

Superintendent Klinger reviewed information shared with the board at the Strategic Planning Retreat in February, noting they had homework following the retreat to review strategic plans from other districts. They talked through a strategic plan, what it is, and why it is important. The focus of this discussion was to hear feedback on their homework, and also to share the drafted RFQ (Request for Qualifications) with proposed next steps and timeline. Superintendent Klinger asked the board about anything that stood out – positive, negative, or things they want to make sure are highlighted as they move forward with a strategic plan.

The board discussed the various strategic plans they reviewed from other districts, noting they liked the ones that included clarity, interactive dashboards, and accessibility features. Aspects from Hillsboro, Beaverton, and Centennial's strategic plans were highlighted in conversation. They felt it would be important to have Spanish translation available for their plan. Visually they liked how Beaverton's plan looked, but noted that Hillsboro's was also nice having everything in one place in a PDF. Superintendent Klinger noted that a PDF doesn't meet website accessibility requirements, however, the dropdown menus from Beaverton do. Board members appreciated the vision of these plans noting that all of them were produced from Option 1. They would like to see the strategic plan addressing regional partners and bringing the city, county and ESD to the table.

Superintendent Klinger shared that they had talked about the different levels of strategic planning they could consider. Option 1 would be really comprehensive hiring a consulting. Typically, those are 5-year plans. Option 2 was about utilizing what they already have in place, and hiring a consultant to freshen it up and make sure everything is in alignment. Option 3 is utilizing their integrated grant process which they have done three times now. There are also other layers in the accountability bill that tighten language around accountability and measures. She noted that it doesn't hurt to push something out and gather requests from people who do this work, then they can decide once they hear from organizations and see what they would propose. They could push out the RFQ with an April due date, then have cabinet review the proposals and make recommendations at the April work session.

The board asked if accessibility is included in the RFQ. They would also like to have the board conditions included to ensure the plan is in alignment. They felt that Option 1 is what they would need to use, noting that they can't afford to not have vision for their students right now. It's not that they don't have vision, but it is fragmented right now and pieces feel outdated because they were prior to the pandemic. They are more in favor of starting with a blank slate. To have a clear path forward is even more important because of the budget situation they are in right now. They will need to clearly communicate what they are doing to help students. Superintendent Klinger added that along with accessibility and board conditions, she will also include the educational technology plan and long-range facilities plan in the RFQ.

The board noted that they are comfortable with Superintendent Klinger sending out the RFQ and bringing proposals back to the board at the April work session. They asked her which district strategic plans she liked best. Superintendent Klinger shared that the plans from Centennial and Hillsboro resonated with her. She was intrigued when she found out the same organization worked on both plans. They will need someone that understands the different state requirements they have to meet so they are getting multiple things done with one plan. She liked the clarity and the metrics. Board members noted that at the SIP Meetings, they heard from building leaders noting that they love the instructional leadership, but are often in crisis response. This is the board's opportunity to get those leaders to instructional leadership in a coherent way.

**8. Gresham Arthur Academy Update (added 03/11/26) (7:57 p.m.)**

Chair Petersen noted that the board received a letter from Gresham Arthur Academy (GAA) on March 3, 2026 and it is his job to respond to the letter. The charter school is appealing to the board about their contract. Normally, his response would have been that they are in the middle of their contract and would rely on the district to do this. He felt he needed to bring this conversation to the board to determine if they respond in this manner, or take this up in a work session.

Board members noted that they can't override the staff who know the budgeting process, and any response that would deviate from what they are doing would undermine them and may not be a prudent approach to this matter. There may be missing information they don't have. Chair Petersen shared that the core of the appeal comes from a disagreement of the outcome of the informal audit by the finance office. Superintendent Klinger added that the board hasn't seen the audit specifically, but they have received two different letters from GAA. The district is in an existing contract which meets the statutory requirements. They aren't doing anything out of line or different than what was agreed on when everyone signed the contract. This is a request to amend the contract.

Board members asked when the contract is up for renewal. Superintendent Klinger shared that they are about mid-cycle and it would take board action to change the terms of the current contract. Board members noted that they are comfortable with the board chair speaking on behalf of the board in conjunction with the superintendent. They noted that the message could be the district doesn't see the purpose of bringing this to the board. Superintendent Klinger noted that in their first letter, GAA explained some of the financial struggles they are having. They have been a good partner to the district and she thinks they would say the district has been a good partner to them. Ultimately, the district is meeting the requirements of statute and their contract. Chair Petersen will craft a letter of response with the board secretary's assistance.

**9. Future Board Agenda Topics (8:37 p.m.)**

The board reviewed future board agenda topics. Board members noted that they used to be notified when agenda items changes. Chair Petersen shared that he will work on adjusting how board members are notified in the future. He also noted that they are going to introduce some training at the April 23rd work session on policies they had questions on related to their last meeting.

**Closing Items**

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**10. Announcements (8:40 p.m.)**

Chair Petersen reviewed the announcements included in the board agenda packet noting that the tentative special work session on March 19th will be virtual. A Zoom link for virtual meeting attendance will be provided for upcoming meetings.

March 19, 2026: Special Board Work Session (*Tentative*) - 5:30 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting

March 19, 2026: Budget 101 - 7 p.m.  
Partnership Room  
Center for Advanced Learning

March 23-27, 2026: Spring Break  
No Board Meetings

April 2, 2026: Regular Board Business Meeting - 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers  
Public Safety and Schools Building

**11. Adjournment (8:43 p.m.)**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 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