

**Granite School District**  
**Board of Education Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 6, 2026**

A meeting of the Board of Education of Granite School District convened in the Boardroom at the Granite Education Center, 2500 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah. President Nicole McDermott called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM, those in attendance:

Nicole McDermott	President
Kris Nguyen	Vice President
Connie Burgess	Board Member
Kim Chandler	Board Member
Julie Jackson	Board Member
Clarke Nelson	Board Member
Karyn Winder	Board Member

The following members of the administration were present:

Ben Horsley	Superintendent
Todd Hauber	Business Administrator
Dr. Mitch Nerdin	Chief of Staff
Leslie Bell	Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Tyler Howe	Assistant Superintendent

Doug Larson, General Counsel, and Stacy Bushell, Executive Secretary, were in attendance. Dr. Mitch Nerdin, Chief of Staff, was excused.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

#### **Strategic Plan Update**

Dr. Joan Bramble, Organizational Effectiveness Director and Amber Clayton, School Leadership and Improvement Director gave a report on the strategic plan. Their report focused on leading and lagging indicators for academic and talent development priorities. The annual assessment report will be presented in February.

#### **Audit Report**

Todd Hauber introduced Matt Geddes, Squire & Company auditor, who briefly summarized the fiscal year 2025 audit and compliance reports. The opinion they issued is that the district's financial position presents fairly in all material respects. Review of financial statements finds the information contained to be accurate and reliable. There were no findings of material weakness or significant deficiencies in internal controls. The compliance audit reviewed Title I and Special Education programs. Special Education programs received a clean opinion. For Title I there was a qualified opinion, the only compliance exception was regarding transfer students. One school was missing required documentation of where students were transferring to. A corrective action plan was identified, and the district is working on that plan. Finally, the district complied with all material respects with the compliance requirements outlined in the State Auditor compliance guide.

Todd Hauber then acknowledged Chris Lewis, Accounting Director, whose leadership results in these positive outcomes. Taxpayer dollars are well taken care of under his guidance and the work of his team. The 2025 annual financial report is available on the Granite School District website.

### **Taylorsville City Taxing Entity Committee Presentation**

Todd Hauber introduced Dina Blaes, Chief of Strategic Engagement for Taylorsville City, who presented information about the RDA of Taylorsville Taxing Entity Committee (TEC). The city is requesting to extend an urban renewal project area. The project area covers 65.11 acres at 5400 S and Bangerter Highway. The city plans a required sewer upgrade for redevelopment, residential development of 600 units on 16.5 acres, property acquisition, building façade improvements, improved circulation on public roadway, and mixed-use development opportunities. If approved the tax collection period would extend from 2029 to 2038 with a cap of \$22,010,037, inclusive of what has been collected through tax year 2024.

Todd Hauber reviewed the rubric used to evaluate these requests, the outcome evaluated this project neutral for Granite School District. Historically Granite has not supported residential development, however a policy shift may be warranted since we are experiencing declining enrollment instead of growth.

Board member Clarke Nelson and Todd Hauber are designated to represent Granite's interests on this proposal, they will be voting. Board members can contact them if they have input or questions.

### **GENERAL BOARD MEETING**

The Granite School District Board of Education reconvened at 7:03 p.m. in the Boardroom. President Nicole McDermott welcomed all in attendance for this session and called for a roll call of board members; all board members were present. President McDermott invited those representing organizations to introduce themselves:

PTA - Liz Shellum, Amy Warren, and Michelle Steenblik  
GEA - Michele Jones

Pledge of Allegiance: Jen Johnson

Reverence - Hunter High Debate

### **GOOD NEWS MINUTE**

Clarke Nelson attended athletic events over the winter break, he thanked coaches for their efforts. As we begin a new semester counselors will be working hard on class changes.

Karyn Winder attended choir concerts and athletic events in December. The highlight for her was Valley Junior High's Winter Fest. It takes an army of volunteers to gather donations and help students to select gifts for their families. It was fun to participate.

Kris Nguyen attended Christmas performances. She enjoyed the holiday program at Pleasant Green; the EE class was especially cute. At Magna STEAM school she read The Polar Express to students who received a box of cereal and pajamas. Cyprus SBOs worked hard to fill their food pantry.

Connie Burgess said teachers thanked her for the two preparation days before the students returned. She also enjoyed attending athletic events.

Kim Chandler appreciated the longer winter recess for families. She is looking forward to the legislative session.

Julie Jackson enjoyed many Christmas concerts. At Upland Terrance she talked with a parent whose child was included with all students in the performance. This was a first for her child and it was very special for them. Skyline's dance concert was so artistic and well done she would have paid \$50.00 to attend. Olympus high unveiled the Matt Barnes basketball court. Coach Barnes is the 3rd winningest coach in Utah. He also teaches a bowling class for seniors where he fosters unity in addition to teaching bowling skills.

Nicole McDermott went to Bacchus where Mark Miller Subaru sponsored a Santa sack distribution with the Jazz Bear and lots of other fun. She attended a meeting on the Taylorsville remodel and addition the plans are very exciting. The auditorium is under construction to install new seats. On December 23 she dismissed employees for the Christmas break, she appreciates hard working and dedicated employees.

**GRANITE ELECTED OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION** - none

**PATRON PARTICIPATION** - none

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Minutes – December 2, 2025

Purchases as outlined in the agenda.

Change Order as outlined in the agenda.

**Personnel**

Employee Hires and Separations

**Financial Reports**

Purchase Order Summary

Change Order Summary

Accounts Payable Pay Vouchers

Principals Cash Report

Monthly Budget Report

Easement at Hunter Junior High, Rocky Mountain Power

LAND Trust Amendments

Property Sale, CTE home at 6317 W Cape Ridge, WVC, UT 84128

President McDermott explained that one purchase was removed from the consent agenda and called for a motion.

**Motion:**        **I move we accept the Consent Agenda with the exception of charter bus services for Cottonwood High Performing Arts travel.**

Made by:        Kris Nguyen

Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Karyn Winder requested to add a reference to her comment regarding the 5-period schedule possibly coming to Granger High to the December minutes.

**President McDermott accepted an amendment to the motion to accept the Consent Agenda with the exception of charter bus services for Cottonwood High Performing Arts and adding Karyn’s statement to the December minutes.**

Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

### **INFORMATION ITEM**

#### **Legislative Preview**

Ben Horsley and Todd Hauber shared a report on the timeline for the 2026 legislative session, revenue, funding, and interim bills. The legislative tracker will be posted to Granite’s website throughout the session.

### **FIRST READINGS**

#### **Article VII.C.2. School Grounds Access and Safety**

This is a consolidation of policies regarding the use of school grounds that includes school safety rules from HB 84 legislation and balances them against our obligation to use schools as civic centers for the community. This policy describes the types of activities that are prohibited on school grounds and limits access by dogs and other animals on school property, except for service animals.

Board members made suggestions for adjustments to the language of this policy.

**Motion: I move that we approve policy VII.C.2. School Grounds Access and Safety with the changes that we just discussed “after consultation with district leadership” in C1 and C4 and a reference to other applicable policies in section H as a first reading.**

Made by: Julie Jackson

Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### **Article X.A.4. High School Graduation Standards and Requirements**

The updates to our existing policy add language permitting the Focused Graduation Pathway program as required by state law. The Focused Graduation Program allows students at Granite Connection High School who are behind on credits required for graduation to obtain credits needed through General Educational Development (GED) exams. This program will not be used to facilitate early graduation.

**Motion:** I move that we approve X.A.4. Senior High School Graduation Standards and Requirements as a first reading with the simultaneous action of suspending the language in B.1.b., B.2.b. and E.2. until the board can revisit after the fate of some impactful legislation is clear and we can determine our path.

Made by: Kim Chandler  
Seconded by: not seconded

After discussion and clarification about the need to pass section H to implement the focused graduation pathway, President McDermott called for an alternate motion.

**Motion:** I move to approve as a first reading Article X.A.4. Senior High School Graduation Standards and Requirements.

Made by: Karyn Winder  
Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Called for vote: President McDermott  
Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### **Fiscal Policy Manual - Section 7**

This section of the Fiscal Policy Manual is being updated to increase the minimum threshold for purchases under \$999.99. Previously, the minimum threshold before multiple bids were required was \$499.99. This change was requested by school principals and puts the district in line with other districts in the state.

**Motion:** I move that we approve Fiscal Policy Manual 2025 0424 - Section 7 updates as a first reading.

Made by: Julie Jackson  
Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott  
Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

#### **SECOND READINGS**

##### **Article X.F.6. Students with Disabilities**

This policy is an overview of the key elements of special education services provided by the district that ensure students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This policy describes the district's obligations and responsibilities related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973), Individualized Education Programs (IEP), Child Find, and least restrictive environments (LRE) for students with disabilities. Additionally, this policy has instructions for procedural safeguards, discipline, graduation and terminations of services, and parent participation. Finally, this policy incorporates by reference the Granite District Special Education Handbook.

**Motion:**           **I move that we approve Article X.F.6. Students with Disabilities as a second and final reading.**

Made by:           Karyn Winder

Seconded by:    Kris Nguyen

Called for vote:   President McDermott

Results:           Motion Passed Unanimously

**Article VIII.B.12. Student Code of Conduct**

The revisions to this policy bring us into compliance with Utah State Board of Education (USBE) Rules R277-608 and 609. The policy outlines Emergency Safety Interventions (ESI), when to use them, how to use them, and how to report such interventions. The updates also address restorative measures and conditions for suspensions and expulsions. The policy has been updated to require parents to be present for the questioning of elementary students or students with diminished capacity when reasonable, and for the school to notify parents of disciplinary concerns as promptly as possible.

**Motion:**           **I move that we approve Article VIII.B.12. Student Code of Conduct and Discipline of Students for a second and final reading.**

Made by:           Julie Jackson

Seconded by:    Karyn Winder

Called for vote:   President McDermott

Results:           Motion Passed Unanimously

**Article X.A.6. Learning Materials**

The revisions made to this policy are minor updates. Guidance from USBE regarding sensitive materials necessitated eliminating advance placement (AP) and international baccalaureate (IB) programs from the list of classes and the instructional materials exempted from the sensitive materials analysis.

Julie Jackson reminded board members that she is voting for this to protect teachers, but she fundamentally disagrees with the law.

**Motion:**           **I move that we approve Article X.A.6. Learning Materials as a second and final reading.**

Made by:           Kim Chandler

Seconded by:    Kris Nguyen

Called for vote:   President McDermott

Results:           Motion Passed Unanimously

**SUPERINTENDENT and BOARD REPORTS**

Superintendent Horsley finished teaching 1<sup>st</sup> semester at Granger High, he thanked his 42 students and Ms. Robinson. He received extensive appreciation for the two planning days.

Karyn Winder shared information reported to the benefits committee, there is 97% utilization for medical and pharmacy up 17% compared to the year before. There is a suggestion to conduct an RFP for medical insurance providers.

Connie Burgess reported that the USBA conference will be this weekend. Public Education will be recognized January 21<sup>st</sup>, and January 30<sup>th</sup> is USBA Day on the Hill.

Julie Jackson said that District Community Council will be next Tuesday at 6:30, where they will receive feedback from parents on proficiency-based learning. January 21<sup>st</sup> from 3-6 p.m. school boards have the rotunda at the Capitol. There is an opportunity for our students to showcase their learning and accomplishments. If you have suggestions for groups or can provide support for this event, please let us know.

Nicole McDermott said the final two focus groups met before the winter break. The 8-hour task force's work will continue next week.

### **ADJOURN**

President Nicole McDermott adjourned the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

Note: A copy of related materials and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/> and <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Organization/2744>

APPROVED: February 3, 2026