

Granite School District
Board of Education Meeting
Tuesday, March 31, 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 5:00 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.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Instructional Materials Review, Sex Education

Dr. Noelle Converse presented a committee recommendation for sex education materials. This information is presented to the Board in compliance with Senate Bill 55, Utah Code, and Board policy. The recommended materials are available for the next 30 days on Granite’s website and in person at the district office. Parents are invited to give feedback and ask questions during this time. A final recommendation for adoption will be made on May 5, 2026, at the Board of Education meeting.

Capital and Construction Update

Justin Naegle, Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Director, presented information about current construction and capital projects.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President McDermott said there is need for an executive session and called for a motion.

Motion: I move we move to executive session for the purpose of Character and Competence, Litigation, Real Estate, and Collective Bargaining.

Made by: Kim Chandler
Seconded by: Connie Burgess

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously, Connie Burgess: Yea, Kim Chandler: Yea, Julie Jackson: Yea, Nicole McDermott: Yea, Clarke Nelson: Yea, Kris Nguyen: Yea, Karyn Winder: Yea, Yea: 7, Nay: 0

President McDermott announced that the executive session would convene in Room B-217. The executive session convened in room B-217 at 5:47 p.m. Those in attendance were Nicole McDermott, Kris Nguyen, Connie Burgess, Kim Chandler, Julie Jackson, Clarke Nelson, Karyn Winder, Ben Horsley, Todd Hauber, Mitch Nerdin, Leslie Bell, Tyler Howe, Doug Larson, Patrick Flanagan, and Stacy Bushell.

Motion: I move to adjourn the executive session.

Made by: Karyn Winder

Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

The executive session concluded at 6:56 p.m.

GENERAL BOARD MEETING

The Granite School District Board of Education reconvened at 7:01 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, Holly Mesa, and Kylie Jones
GEA: Michele Jones
GAEOP: Gayna Breeze, Amy Wolters, Sherry Anderson, Melinda Losee, Amanda Pennington, and Diana Pennington
Elected Officials: Lorrin Colby Jr., Kearns City Council
Senator Wayne Harper
Representative Carol Moss

Pledge of Allegiance – Jen Johnson

Reverence - Oakwood Elementary Dancers

GOOD NEWS MINUTE

Karyn Winder said the unified theater performance of *Aladdin* at Hunter High was the highlight of this month. She appreciates going to community council meetings. It is fun to see how creative parents and faculties can be when working together. Valley Junior High is working hard to improve attendance. Their reward was to attend the Mario movie during school hours.

Clarke Nelson was invited to attend the Cottonwood network PTA awards night. He was impressed with the unity amongst these network schools and contributions of so many parents.

Kris Nugyen attended Hunter and Cyprus network community council meetings with Superintendent Horsley; she appreciated parents who were willing to come and share their thoughts. She was invited to see Brockbank STEM math students hosting a *Senior Ball* at the Magna senior center. Students learned about budgeting and event planning for this project. The students and seniors really enjoyed it.

Connie Burgess attended *Mean Girls Jr.* at Eisenhower, the students did wonderful work. She appreciates how administration takes time to meet with teachers and the community.

Kim Chandler said a lot had been happening however she wasn't able to attend everything she was invited to. She thanked the student performers for their dance for the Board Reverence tonight, she admires their willingness to share their talents.

Julie Jackson went to the Cottonwood network meeting where they talked about how to coordinate efforts to help students and families. She appreciates the way principals advocate for their students. Lisa Turner, secretary at Morningside, is retiring, and students showed up to thank her for all she does for them.

Nicole McDermott visited school community council meetings. The Hunter performance of *Aladdin* was incredible and touching. She also attended *Descendants* at Bennion Junior High and *Peter and the Star Catcher* at Taylorsville. She had the opportunity to judge at a junior high orchestra festival; the students blew her away! We are beginning 30 years of service recognition. Today Janet Vorwaller at the GEC Café was recognized.

RECOGNITIONS

ASBO International's Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting

Todd Hauber recognized Chris Lewis, Accounting Director and the entire accounting team.

Legislative Champions

Ben Horsley recognized Senator Wayne Harper and Representative Carol Moss.

Academic All American in Debate

Isabelle Miller, student at Hunter High school.

All State High School Art Show

Yoselyn Zaval, student at Granger High School.

GRANITE ELECTED OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION- none

PATRON PARTICIPATION

Reid Taylor, West Valley City, addressed the board regarding an email he sent to President McDermott asking to review electronic device policy implementation across Granite junior high campuses. He is concerned about variances in how the policy is administered. He asked for a response and accounting of standards governing district-wide policy decisions, search methodology for GRAMA responses, and actions that followed referral of this policy to the Law & Policy committee in October 2025.

Danielle Housman is deeply concerned about the planned reduction of special education teachers in elementary schools and how these decisions are made. She asked for engagement with stakeholders before making cuts.

Jessica Winder Lee, social worker, addressed the board regarding options for rebuilding West Kearns Elementary. For trauma impacted students, relocation during a rebuild would be difficult. They need adequate space for a sensory room, a specialized bathroom including a changing table, and a fenced playground. Longer commute times would be challenging. She asked the Board to consider these concerns going forward with their decision.

Michele Jones, GEA President, appreciated collaboration during the legislative session which reflects a shared commitment to students. Their efforts resulted in success on several bills passing or failing. By working together, we achieve stronger outcomes.

CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes March 3 & 24, 2026

Awards of Contract as outlined in the agenda.

Purchases as outlined in the agenda.

Personnel

Employee Hires and Separations

Leaves of Absence

Financial Reports

Purchase Order Summary

Change Order Summary

Accounts Payable Pay Vouchers

Principals Cash Report

Monthly Budget Report

Easement at Evergreen Junior High, Rocky Mountain Power

LAND Trust Amendments

Motion: I move that we approve the Consent Agenda.

Made by: Julie Jackson

Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

ACTION ITEMS

Administrative Appointments and Transfers

Administrative appointments effective July 1, 2026.

Francesca Hall	Principal	Vista Elementary
Rebecca Baggett	Assistant Principal	Beehive Elementary
Ileana Moro Catalan	Assistant Principal	Hunter and South Kearns Elems.

Administrative transfers effective July 1, 2026.

Lindsay Adams	Principal	Elk Run Elementary
Heidi Draper	Principal	Moss Elementary

Monica Thayer	Principal	Walker Elementary
Anahi Uhlig	Principal	West Valley Elementary
Jeff Walton	Principal	Hillsdale Elementary
Lisa Wells	Principal	Silver Hills Elementary
Julie Wilson	Principal	Academy Park Elementary
Rachel Bartholomew	Dean of Students	Driggs and Upland Terrace Elems.
Prema Chruthoti	Assistant Principal	Pleasant Green and Silver Hills Elems.
Kimberlee Hill	Assistant Principal	Lake Ridge Elementary
Elisa Jennings	Assistant Principal	Walker Elementary
Brent Nelson	Assistant Principal	Lincoln and Vista Elems.
Annie Orton	Assistant Principal	West Kearns and Whittier Elems
Rikki Rindlisbacher	Assistant Principal	Jackling Elementary
Melanie Roybal	Assistant Principal	Armstrong and Rolling Meadows Elems.
John Anderson	Principal	Bennion Junior High
Jake Brown	Principal	Bonneville Junior High
Mike Douglas	Principal	Olympus Junior
Josh Adams	Assistant Principal	Olympus High
Erin Tanner	Assistant Principal	Granger High

Motion: **I move to accept as an action item the approval of the administrative appointments and transfers.**

Made by: Karyn Winder

Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

Dr. Tyler How introduced the appointed administrators who then introduced their guests.

2026-2027 Student Fee Schedule

Tyler Howe reviewed fees for the 2026-2027 school year.

Discussion: High school principals will work to include estimated class fees with class registration to alert parents of the cost for the class. This is in addition to publishing the fee schedule. The district will continue to work with Focus to see if it is possible to include class fees during the fall registration process.

Motion: **I move to approve the 2026-2027 student fee schedule as a final reading.**

Made by: Kris Nguyen

Seconded by: Connie Burgess

Clarke Nelson reiterated his comment at the last meeting stating his displeasure in this process.

Karyn Winder asked teachers and coaches to keep students in mind as they develop spend plans. Charge what is needed and not necessarily the allowed maximum.

Called for vote: President McDermott
Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

Population Analysis Update

Steve Hogan, Planning and Boundaries Director, recapped the report and board action taken at the November 2025 board meeting. The Area 5 study was suspended indefinitely. Further, the Board asked that the ALC/DLI issue be studied by the Curriculum Department and for administration to consider using a consultant to evaluate enrollment trends, lead community engagement, and build assessments. The district gathered verbal estimates from consultants for these purposes. Depending on the scope of work, costs could exceed one million dollars. The enrollment trends over the past 20 years and looking to 2030 were presented. Projected enrollment comparisons for the 2026–2027 school year were reviewed. While there is not a recommendation, administration is looking for Board direction and next steps.

Superintendent Horsley emphasized that with the scheduled West Kearns rebuilding, an earnest conversation is needed about what size school to build and if consolidation and boundary adjustments could maximize taxpayer dollars. The same things need to be considered regarding the Arcadia, Frost and Truman areas. Enrollment numbers are not going to improve, and a plan is desperately needed. He asked the Board for directions on whether to hire a consultant, the desired depth of a study, and how they want to move forward.

Board Comments:

President McDermott invited board members to comment understanding that the Board said they were not going to reopen the Area 5 Study. A Board directed study on DLI and ALC programs is ongoing with a report expected in the fall. An analysis of student retention in areas where schools have been closed was also requested as that information will impact future decisions.

Karyn Winder said “Thank you Nicole. Amen to everything you just said. That’s kind of the edge of *“well it’s not going to change our numbers”*, let me push back because that gets under my skin. We know numbers are declining, we 100% know that, but we also asked four months ago for data to be collected on where these kids have gone. Now, the reason is, Western Hills, I represented it for years, Oquirrh Hills, I closed that school. It was in Kearns in my precinct and I’ve yet to see one data point that shows me how many kids we retained, where they went, did we get them back, are they going to charters, did they go to homeschool, did they just move and not come back? And I don’t feel like I can make any decision tonight because I don’t have the data I asked for. And it does affect how I look at the recommendations. It does affect my vote because if we continue closing schools and the decisions we make with the onboarding and where we put the schools and how we’re doing everything from busing to where we rebuild, then we’re shooting ourselves in the foot. We have to figure out how to retain the kids if we close schools. And I don’t have that information so I’m not making any decision tonight until I get some data. I’m not committing to anything tonight for that reason.”

Kris Nguyen feels better plans to consider the needs in the impacted communities are needed. Following last year’s closure students were retained well but that took a lot of effort. The Area 5 study was frustrating because we didn’t know where we were going to place the programs at those schools. If we know what is going to happen with a program, we can help to support that area or school. Our staff are capable to give us good information. A consultant would help to get the right information.

Connie Burgess believes a consultant is needed. Time is getting short for her to help with this. She would like to see information from a consultant.

Kim Chandler agrees with several statements, the Board needs more information and the right kind of data. That is why we are in this position trying to find a better way. After years of doing this, it is difficult to produce the data and a consultant is needed. She doesn't like the potential cost for a consultant and wonders if people could be hired internally to solely focus on this for a year. It is essential to get data on all the points we have discussed.

Julie Jackson proposed to identify a vision for DLI and ALC programs, look at a report on the effectiveness of past closures by the end of the summer, and begin an RFP for a consultant in the fall to review the entire district for one year. The cost for a consultant would be worthwhile considering the ongoing costs to maintain underutilized schools. The timeline for this may need to change. She believes a year-long process for closing schools is difficult for communities.

Clarke Nelson said the landscape has changed over the past six years. Considering the situation, it may make sense to adjust the timeline and process.

Superintendent Horsley summarized and board members concurred with hiring a consultant to assist in conducting a district-wide study of student enrollment, facilities, potential school closures, consolidations and/or boundary adjustments, including all geographical areas and school levels. The Board would like updates on progress of the district-wide study before the final recommendation. Administration will share student retention data with the Board by August, followed by ALC and DLI program study results by November.

INFORMATION ITEM

Legislative Update

Ben Horsley and Todd Hauber presented a report on the 2026 Legislative Session. Mr. Hauber talked about the legislative budget priorities and new state funding for FY 27. Superintendent Horsley shared bill statistics and highlighted bills that will have significant impacts on public education. Legislative intern, Mary Sheets, also reported on new bills.

FIRST READING

Article VI.B.5 Audit Committee and Internal Auditing

This is a new policy that provides internal auditing responsibilities overseen by the Audit Committee of the Board of Education. This policy directs the Audit Committee to establish an internal audit program that objectively evaluates the effectiveness of District administration and operations as defined in Utah Admin. Code R277-113. This policy outlines Audit Committee duties and responsibilities, directions for engaging with external auditors, requirements for training, and access to fraud, waste, and abuse reporting.

Motion: **I move that we approve Article VI.B.5 Audit Committee and Internal Auditing as a first reading.**

Made by: Julie Jackson
Seconded by: Clarke Nelson

Called for vote: Vice President Nguyen
Results: Motion Passed, Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1 (Nicole McDermott)

SECOND READINGS

Article VI.B.1. Payroll and Accounting

This is a consolidation of policies regarding payroll and accounting. Policies were combined and edited for clarity to streamline the policy regarding paychecks and pay periods. The policy also authorizes payroll and payday procedures in Administrative Memo 155 - Payroll and Paydays.

Motion: I move that we approve Article VI.B.1. Payroll and Accounting policy as a second and final reading.

Made by: Karyn Winder
Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Called for vote: President McDermott
Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

Fiscal Policy Manual Section 12. Collection of Accounts Receivable and Other Debts

This section of the Fiscal Policy Manual is being updated to establish policy and procedure on collection of student debt. This update will clarify which debts are sent to collections and what action should be taken when there is a negative lunch account balance.

Motion: I move to approve Fiscal Policy Manual Section 12. Collection of Accounts Receivable and Other Debts as a second and final reading.

Made by: Kris Nguyen
Seconded by: Kim Chandler

Called for vote: President McDermott
Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

SUPERINTENDENT and BOARD REPORTS

Superintendent Horsley attended Dos Mundos family night, Hunter High's *Aladdin*, Fremont's *Cozy and Read* where 3,000 books were donated to the school, Magna STEAM reading event, and the district spring dance concert. The legislative session wrapped up, he thanked those who helped to make it successful. Granite students participated in a State of the Youth address at the Millcreek City Council meeting. Joe, a student at Wright, emailed and invited him to the school's STEM night. School Community Council Network meetings will continue through April. Clarke Nelson said confusion between the anonymous fraud hotline and bullying reporting mechanisms were cleared up and updated on the Granite website.

Karyn Winder said the benefits committee met this afternoon.

Kris Nguyen the Budget and Finance report at study session allowed everyone to hear the report. She facilitated the DCC meeting, these meetings are so valuable, attendees appreciated the information presented.

Connie Burgess said the USBA policy webinar is tomorrow. The pre delegate assembly is June 5 and the delegate assembly is June 6. All board members are invited to attend.

Kim Chandler attended a Parks and Recreation meeting. They have a new point of sale system. A ribbon cutting event at the Big Cottonwood Regional Park East playground will be Thursday, April 16 at 10:30 a.m.

Julie Jackson said USBA met with school boards around the state to discuss the legislative session. She is learning a lot from rural areas about their challenges. She and Connie will attend a retreat for USBA planning at the end of the month.

Nicole McDermott said the 8-hour task force reported to the board and their recommendations will be shared with the negotiations team. Law and Policy committee reviewed, high school graduation standards, electronic devices, acceptable use of technology, and legislative updates that will necessitate policy updates. She encouraged board members to share input on legislative priorities with Julie and Connie.

ADJOURN

President Nicole McDermott adjourned the meeting at 10:16 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: May 5, 2026