

Granite School District
Board of Education Meeting
Tuesday, June 16, 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 6:00 PM, those in attendance:

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

Julie Jackson, board member, participated virtually.

The following members of the administration were present:

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. Superintendent Ben Horsley was excused.

Pledge of Allegiance: Todd Hauber

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Todd Hauber and Brian Ipson presented. The 2026-27 budget contains a balanced budget for all funds for which the board has legal responsibility/authority, it includes the final revised budget for 2025-2026. The published budget is available on Granite's website and printed copies of the property tax impact schedule were made available at this meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

Monica Wilbur addressed the board. Residents are facing proposed tax increases; for Salt Lake County 14% and for Granite School District 9%. Books depicting explicit sex, promoting LGBTQ+ and gender queer ideologies, and glorifying violence and body horror are in Granite schools. EdTech and AI reinforce digital addiction and dependance in living life online. The Board continues to fund these things. She requested the board consider stepping back from this tax increase, reallocating taxpayer resources to internal controls to mitigate against risk of mismanagement of public funds on programs that do not provide provable return on investment. Specifically English language learner software, behavior supports, instructional coaches, and school administrator support should not be funded because you think they are a good idea. There needs to be more responsibility for these funds.

Zachary Myers commented that class sizes are too high. He supports the tax increase and would support more to lower class size. Nothing is more important than investment in education for our children. Property tax is a good vehicle for this.

ACTION ITEMS

President McDermott asked if board members had questions before entering a motion. She then asked about school safety requirements.

Response: Some security measures were part of the 2017 bond, in addition, legislative action requires additional security measures. Funding was promised by the legislature, but that funding has not been received.

Karyn Winder commented, postpartum parental leave and the school guardian program were unfunded mandates from the legislature.

Kim Chandler asked about school accountability reporting. For example, she wants a way to evaluate the impact of increased spending on instructional coaches.

Response: The Utah State Board of Education website shows Acadience and RISE scores, these are different than the report from 2021-22. It is difficult to evaluate a direct correlation between funding and student achievement because there are many variables to consider. After a year of implementing intensive interventions at BOOST schools the raw data shows considerable improvement. Professional development to improve instruction is most effective when an instructional coach works directly with a specific teacher in their classroom to implement proven strategies.

Approve the final 2025-2026 Budget.

Motion: **I move that we approve the final 2025-26 budget as published.**

Made by: Connie Burgess

Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Kim Chandler commented, she voted against the budget last year. She recognizes that this is merely performative since the budget year has passed, therefore she will abstain from this vote.

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed. Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1 – Kim Chandler

Adopt the interim budget for the school year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027.

Motion: **I move we Adopt the published tentative 2026-2027 budget as the approved interim budget.**

Made by: Kris Nguyen

Seconded by: Connie Burgess

Discussion: Kim Chandler said, as mentioned, I did not vote for this budget last year. There are a lot of the same things. Four years ago, I stated that I would like to see an independent audit of our expenses to see where we could cut back. Over the past four years I have come to understand

my request more clearly. I believe Todd and his team do a really good job building a budget that aligns with the priorities of the district and directives. My issue is with the priorities and directives themselves. We have discussed reducing the cost of Chromebooks and screens, I have not seen that reflected yet. I am still waiting for an official estimate on SEL expenses in the district. I can say with certainty that we spend millions on it; SEL specific curriculums or other curriculums embedded with SEL, third party contracts like Panorama that track SEL, IB programs, whole child programs, survey implementation and analysis, trainings, conferences, even FTE hired for the purpose of implementation. It's a lot of money budgeted for something I believe is harming students and society. Its removal would drastically alter the budget. I have the same concerns about the legislature as last year. This year the State Senate tried to pass a bill allowing them to take all of the property tax gathered in the school district and supplant it with income tax as a means to bypass the constitutional earmark while pressuring school districts to keep property tax high. There is no support there either. I agree with the statement, property tax is contrary to liberty. It is not, in my view, some kind of social contract that everyone somehow agrees to by existing in this country or state. Many cannot afford to own property as a result of it. At the end of the day, I will not support raising property taxes when these impactful issues remain part of our budget. I wanted to clarify that.

Nicole McDermott asked what would happen if we didn't pass this increase?

Response: We will be 21 million dollars short of balancing the budget and we would have to go to budget reductions, immediately. In the meantime, in the spirit of the truth in taxation process we have set aside a reserve account in the budget that covers these expenses in anticipation of the truth in taxation hearing. So, a separate answer is we have funds set aside to carry us through for another year.

Connie Burgess said if we reduce from what we have now it is so difficult for students, we lost the music program when we didn't have money. I just hope we don't lose anything else. Things that will help the children and focus on them, to me, is so important, I just hope we can have this and move forward. I think we are on a good trajectory right now and I would hate to see us lose what we have started right now.

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed, Yea: 6, Nay: 1 (Chandler)

Adopt the preliminary tax rate.

Motion: I move that we set the preliminary tax rate to 0.006136, subject to changes in the State Basic Levy Rate.

Made by: Connie Burgess

Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed. Yea: 6, Nay: 1 (Chandler)

Authorize the Truth-in-Taxation Hearing to be held August 18, 2026.

Motion: **I move we Authorize a truth in taxation hearing to be held August 18, 2026, at 6:00 PM.**

Made by: Clarke Nelson

Seconded by: Karyn Winder

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

ADJOURN

President Nicole McDermott adjourned the meeting at 6:48 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: July 7, 2026