

Granite School District

Board of Education Meeting Tuesday, September 1, 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 5:01 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
Mitch Nerdin	Chief of Staff
Leslie Bell	Assistant Superintendent
Tyler Howe	Assistant Superintendent

Doug Larson, Policy and Legal Services Director, and Stacy Bushell, Executive Secretary, were in attendance.

INTERVIEWS FOR GRANITE BOARD, DISTRICT I

There were four final candidates to fill the board vacancy in District I. They were interviewed in alphabetical order; Elena Leppard, Marilyn Taft, Benjamin Ungricht, and Janelle Williamson.

The meeting adjourned for the dinner break.

GENERAL BOARD MEETING

The Granite School District Board of Education reconvened at 7:00 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, Amiee Warren, Holli Meza, Maria Evans, Kylie Jones, and Elizabeth Stuk
GEA - Michele Jones and Jaden Ford
GAEOP - Andrea Ingleby, Lola Dunn, and Gayna Breeze

Pledge of Allegiance – Jaden Ford

Reverence – Wilson Elementary 5th grade students

GOOD NEWS MINUTE

Clarke Nelson said when he visited a rehabilitation facility he was recognized by a recently graduated Granite student. She was working as a CNA, and they discussed her opportunity to study and gain certification at the GTI. It was a delight to speak with her about her experience in the program and in her career endeavors.

Karyn Winder said the retreat in August gave time for self-reflection on evaluations. The result of the pickleball tournament - Clarke Nelson is the singles champion; she and Kim Chandler won doubles. She was happy to see over 1,000 at the Granger Network back to school night. She forgot her badge at a school visit; the office staff did a great job adhering to safety protocols.

Kris Nguyen attended Magna Night Out for unity and safety. Kids who attended were talking about schools and how much fun they are having in their new classes, Hunter High held 2nd annual Caps to Crayons event before the football game. Hunter held community council and PTA meetings yesterday there are many positive interactions.

Connie Burgess attended Show Up for Teachers award recognition at Calvin Smith Elementary with Abby Cox. Meals for all teachers were provided by Beehive Meals. She is looking forward to the Olympic Literacy kickoff at Granger Elementary.

Kim Chandler congratulated Wilson Elementary on their Constitution focused reverence this evening. She thanked everyone who prepared for the board retreat.

Julie Jackson attended many back-to-school activities. She loves to see schools full of teachers and students. She values the way she has been accepted into the community as a board member.

Nicole McDermott visited the Westbrook campus where several at-risk student programs are housed. Granite provides so many opportunities for students to succeed. Donations to the program provide textbooks for students concurrently enrolled at Salt Lake Community College.

RECOGNITION - postponed

GRANITE ELECTED OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION

Bev Uipi, Millcreek City councilwoman, came to observe candidate interviews. There is a proposal for multi-unit housing near schools, she invited comments from the board on this proposal. Millcreek has a wonderful relationship with Granite School District.

PATRON PARTICIPATION - none

CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes August 4, 7, 18 and 25, 2026

Purchases as outlined in the agenda.

Personnel:

Employee Hires and Separations

Leave of Absence

Financial Reports:

Purchase Order Summary

Change Order Summary

Accounts Payable Pay Vouchers

Superintendent Contract Amendment

Motion: I move that we approve the Consent Agenda.

Made by: Julie Jackson

Seconded by: Kim Chandler

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Granite Board, District I Appointment

President McDermott said there were four candidates interviewed earlier this evening. She invited board members to share their thoughts and impressions of the candidates. Board members commented. Clarke Nelson asked to make a motion, President McDermott accepted.

Motion: I move this board appoint Elena Leppard to replace Julie Jackson for precinct one.

Made by: Clarke Nelson

Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Board members deliberated the motion and discussed candidates for about 20 minutes.

Call to Question: Clarke Nelson

Vote: Yea: 1 (Clarke Nelson), Nay: 5, Abstain: 1 (Julie Jackson)

President McDermott called for a substitute motion and debate continued.

Call to Question: Clarke Nelson

Vote: Yea: 3 (Jackson, McDermott, Nelson),
Nay: 4, (Burgess, Chandler, Nugyen, Winder)

Substitute Motion: I put Ben's name forward to be the new district one candidate for the board school district.

Made by: Connie Burgess

Seconded by: Karyn Winder

Board members discussed alternative actions and the constraints they are under by law to settle this matter in open board meeting.

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion failed. Yea: 1 (Chandler) Nay: 6

President McDermott said the board will vote on the original motion to appoint Elena Leppard.

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Athletic Participation

Kyle Anderson, Curriculum and Instruction Director and Aaron Whitehead, Athletics/PE Specialist, shared progress toward alignment in athletics. They explained an overview of the information contained in each school report.

Clarke Nelson suggested a spending look back of 3–5 years in future reports.

Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Joan Bramble, Organizational Effectiveness Director and Valerie Bergera, Student Assessment Director reported on the strategic plan. They reviewed the planning and execution cycle and shared recently updated priorities.

Board members had questions about the talent development objective which will be addressed in an upcoming staffing report.

Parent Teacher Conference Pilot

Dr. Mitch Nerdin reported that this pilot is intended to improve parent-teacher and SEP conference experience for students and parents. He then introduced Sarah Wall and Rachel Lowry, principals at West Lake STEM Junior High and Granger Elementary, where they will use a new format in upcoming conferences. The conference will be student led and teacher supported. This model encourages students to own their learning, actively participate in celebrating success and identifying goals.

FIRST READING

Article IX.A.1.I. Military Leave

This first reading contains an important update to our existing Military Leave policy that includes changes that were agreed upon in the most recent negotiated agreements. This policy update establishes that the District will provide up to fifteen (15) days of full pay per year for all approved military leave requests as approved by Human Resources.

Motion: **I move that we approve Article IX.A.1.I. Military Leave as a first reading.**

Made by: Julie Jackson

Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion passed unanimously.

SECOND READINGS

Article VII.G.1. Annual Student Population Analysis Procedures

This policy creates separate timelines for boundary changes and for school closures.

Board members Burgess and Chandler said that during the first reading a request was made to change wording: F.1. and G.1. from “no sooner” to “at least”.

Motion: **I move that we approve Article VII.G.1. with the discussed amendments for a second and final reading.**

Made by: Julie Jackson
Seconded by: Kim Chandler

Called for vote: President McDermott
Results: Motion passed unanimously.

Article VIII.A.24. Electronic Devices and Acceptable Use of Technology

This second reading updates the existing electronic devices policy to conform to state law.

Motion: **I move that we accept VIII.A.24. Electronic Devices and Acceptable Use of Technology as second reading and final reading.**

Made by: Connie Burgess
Seconded by: Karyn Winder

Called for vote: President McDermott
Results: Motion passed unanimously.

Article VIII.A.18. Student Travel

This second reading updates the existing Student Travel policy to include a change required by state law regarding fee waivers and action plans.

Motion: **I move that we approve Article VIII.A.18. Student Travel 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.A.3. Fees in Public Schools

This second reading updates the existing policy on fees in public schools to reference the fee waiver and action plan changes in the student travel policy.

Motion: **I move we accept Article VIII.A.3. Fees in Public Schools as a second and final reading.**

Made by: Kris Nguyen
Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Called for vote: President McDermott
Results: Motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Horsley said the next two policies were vetted by the Law and Policy committee and are being expedited to conform with a recent audit.

Article X.F.7. Medicaid Claims

This reading is a new policy that establishes requirements for District employees involved in providing or documenting services or claims for Medicaid reimbursement. This policy also covers false claims and other improper practices related to Medicaid reimbursement.

Motion: **I move to approve Article X.F.7. Medicaid Claims as a final action.**

Made by: Karyn Winder

Seconded by: Julie Jackson

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion passed unanimously.

Fiscal Policy Manual §18 – Reporting Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

This reading is an update to our Fiscal Policy Manual that addresses reporting fraud, waste, and abuse, and includes protection for whistleblowers. This policy defines waste, fraud and abuse, provides examples, and outlines procedures for reporting suspected violations.

Motion: **I move that we approve Fiscal Policy Manual §18 - Reporting Fraud, Waste, and Abuse as a final action.**

Made by: Julie Jackson

Seconded by: Karyn Winder

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion passed unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT and BOARD REPORTS

Superintendent Horsley said this has been a very smooth opening to the school year. He has visited 87 classrooms and Chromebooks are not being overused, in fact he only saw one during those visits. He met with Upland Terrace parents and appreciates collaborative conversations with their school community.

Connie Burgess said the USBA fall meeting will be on September 24 at the USBA office.

President McDermott said the Law and Policy committee discussed three additional policies. If board members have feedback, they should let her know.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Real Estate

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

Motion: **I move we go to executive session for the purpose of real estate.**

Made by: Kim Chandler

Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott

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

An executive session convened in the boardroom at 10:15 p.m. Those in attendance were Kris Nguyen, Connie Burgess, Kim Chandler, Julie Jackson, Mitch Nerdin, Clarke Nelson, Karyn Winder, Todd Hauber, Ben Horsley, Stacy Bushell, and Nicole McDermott.

Motion: I move to adjourn executive session.

Made by: Julie Jackson

Seconded by: Kris Nguyen

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Surplus Property Declaration

Motion: I move to adjourn.

Made by: Julie Jackson

Seconded by: Kim Chandler

Called for vote: President McDermott

Results: Motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 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: October 6, 2026