APPROVED

Griffin School District #324

Minutes

Griffin School Board Study Session

Date and Time
Wednesday April 15, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location
Griffin Library

Attend via Zoom

Zoom Link

Directors Present
Blair Baker, Emma Rose, Tesa Frevert, Trish Hefton

Directors Absent
Julie Osterberg

Guests Present
Allison Adair, Kirsten Rue

I. Opening Items

A. **Record Attendance**

B. **Call the Meeting to Order**

Trish Hefton called a meeting of the board of directors of Griffin School District #324 to order on Wednesday Apr 15, 2026 at 6:03 PM.

C. Pledge of Allegiance & Land Acknowledgement

D. Approval of Agenda

Emma Rose made a motion to approve the Agenda.
Tesa Frevert seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. New Business

A. Student Representative Process

Superintendent Kirsten Rue presented a proposal to integrate **Student Representatives** into the Board of Directors, utilizing the existing **ASB Council** as a foundational link. The model focused on vertical alignment between student leadership and district governance, providing representatives with an adult advocate (ASB Advisor) to help navigate complex board topics. Superintendent Rue noted that ASB Advisor Anneka Brown supported the concept.

Director Tesa Frevert raised concerns regarding inclusivity, noting that limiting recruitment to ASB members might exclude qualified students who are not currently in the council. She advocated for a rigorous application process—including faculty recommendations and potentially Board interviews—to give the role appropriate "weight."

Superintendent Rue requested clarification on the Board's capacity to manage such a formal process. Director Emma Rose suggested that while the Board should set the criteria, staff (teachers and advisors) should handle the selection to maintain efficiency and ensure the process is replicable regardless of Board turnover.

Structure and Term Length
The Board discussed the logistics of the role, reaching a general consensus on several points:
-Dual Representation: Director Rose proposed having two representatives to provide a peer support system and ensure consistent coverage.
-Term Duration: Board Chair Trish Hefton and Director Frevert debated term lengths. While a two-year staggered model (7th and 8th grade) or a single semester were discussed, the Board expressed concern that a semester is too short for meaningful learning, while two years may be too burdensome for middle school families.
-Contingency Planning: The process must account for high turnover and transportation dependencies inherent to middle school students.

Meeting Attendance and Participation

To maximize student engagement while minimizing the "non-voting member" frustration mentioned by Chair Hefton, the Board explored a tiered attendance model:
-Study Sessions: Directors Frevert and Rose favored prioritizing attendance at informal work sessions. This environment allows students to participate as peers in discussion without the formality or voting limitations of regular business meetings.
-Regular Meetings: Attendance at formal Board meetings would be optional or focused on ceremonial roles, such as presenting awards, to highlight student involvement to the public.

The Board finalized its initial deliberation regarding the student representative structure, focusing on grade-level eligibility, the link to student government, and the recruitment process.

The Board reached a consensus to prioritize **7th and 8th-grade students** for the representative roles. Superintendent Rue noted that 6th graders are often still transitioning to the academic and social demands of middle school, such as navigating multiple teachers and classes. By focusing on 7th and 8th graders, the district ensures the representatives have settled into the middle school environment and are better prepared for the additional responsibilities of Board service.
Integration with ASB Council

To address the need for both inclusivity and mentorship, Superintendent Rue proposed a compromise regarding the **ASB (Associated Student Body) Council**:
-Open Application: Recruitment will not be exclusive to existing ASB members; any qualified student may apply.
-"Connect, Not Commit": Director Frevert suggested that instead of requiring full ASB membership, student reps should maintain a "connection" to the council. This involves a monthly meeting with the ASB Advisor to report on Board discussions and gather student feedback without overburdening the student's schedule with daily ASB duties.
-Leadership Pipeline: This connection ensures that the Board representatives remain linked to the broader student leadership body and have a platform to share information with their peers.

The Board discussed a multi-faceted recruitment approach to identify a diverse range of candidates:
-Dual-Nomination Model: The process will allow for both **self-nomination** (for students already interested in leadership) and **staff/teacher nomination**.
-Encouraging New Voices: Director Rose emphasized that staff nominations are crucial for identifying students who may possess leadership potential but do not yet see themselves in such a role. This "tap on the shoulder" approach was noted as a successful strategy in neighboring districts to recruit students who might otherwise not apply.

The Board expressed enthusiasm for the "peer" nature of having two representatives, which will allow them to alternate attendance if needed and provide mutual support. Superintendent Rue concluded the discussion by confirming she would integrate these preferences into a formal, concrete proposal.

B. Resolution 25-26-03

Superintendent Kirsten Rue presented **Resolution 25-26-03**, a first reading of the request for a 180-day school year waiver from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). This waiver is identical to the one approved the previous year and allows the first two days of the school year to be dedicated to elementary-level **Family Meetings** (formally documented as parent-teacher conferences).

Superintendent Rue provided a summary of the feedback received regarding the implementation of these meetings:
-Parental Feedback: Survey results were approximately **80% positive**.
-Constructive Criticism: About 20% of respondents offered suggestions for improvement or expressed concerns.
-Recommendation: Based on the overwhelmingly positive reception from the community, Superintendent Rue recommended moving forward with the waiver for the upcoming school year.

The resolution will be brought before the Board for final approval at the next scheduled meeting.

III. New Policy

A. 3411 Accommodating Students with Seizure Disorders or Epilepsy

Superintendent Rue provided context for a series of new health-related policies (Items A through E). These policies were introduced following an annual review by the **Educational Service District (ESD)** and the district nurse, Chelsea. The analysis identified several missing policies critical to the district's health and wellness framework, specifically regarding the "help room" and specialized student medical needs.

Policy 3419: Asthma and Inhalers
Director Frevert raised a question regarding the practical application of Policy 3419, specifically how coaches are notified when a student is cleared to self-administer an inhaler during sports.
-Current Process: Superintendent Rue noted that students should have an emergency card and physical on file that includes this information.
-Action Item: The Superintendent will follow up with the district nurse to ensure the communication loop between the health room and coaching staff is "tight" and that emergency cards clearly reflect a student's competency to self-manage their medication.

Policy 3420: Anaphylaxis Prevention and Response
The Board held an in-depth discussion regarding "undesignated epinephrine" (EpiPens)—medication kept on-site for students who do not have a known allergy but experience a first-time anaphylactic event.
-Current Status: The district currently only stocks epinephrine for students with known prescriptions.
-Cost vs. Access: Director Frevert noted the high cost and short shelf-life of EpiPens, questioning if the district's close proximity to the fire department mitigates the need for on-site undesignated stock. Director Rose suggested exploring newer, potentially more affordable alternatives like nasal sprays.
-Liability and Safety: The Superintendent noted that while the district has historically focused on prescribed doses, having a policy for emergency "undesignated" use is considered a critical missing piece of the district's safety manual.

B. 3419 Self Administration of Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medications

C. 3420 Anaphylaxis Prevention and Response

D. 3422 Student Sports: Concussion, Head Injury and Sudden Cardiac Arrest

E. 3424 Opioid Related Overdose Reversal

F. 4129 Family Involvement

Superintendent Rue introduced **Policy 4129**, noting that while it is discretionary, it directly aligns with **Commitment Number 3** of the district's Strategic Plan: *Family and Community Engagement*.

Key Discussion Points:
-Strategic Alignment: The Board expressed appreciation for policy that is proactively informed by the Strategic Plan.
-Core Commitment: The policy formalizes the Board's dedication to fostering strong community relations and providing professional development for staff to enhance family involvement across the district.

IV. Policy Updates

A. Policy 3124 Removal-Release of Student During School Hours

The Superintendent presented updates to **Policy 3124**, which governs the protocols for students leaving campus during the school day.

Key Discussion Points:
-Administrative Flexibility: The primary update adds language allowing the **Superintendent, Principal, or their designee** to manage student releases.

-Operational Necessity: Superintendent Rue highlighted that including "designee" language is a critical administrative safeguard. She noted from past professional experience that the absence of this specific wording can create significant logistical and legal hurdles when the primary administrator is unavailable.

B. 3413 Student Immunization and Life Threatening Conditions

Superintendent Rue introduced updates to **Policy 3413**, noting that these revisions are part of the ongoing effort to align district health policies with current standards. The Board reviewed the specific sections highlighted in the draft, which clarify the requirements for student attendance in relation to immunization status.

Key Discussion Points:
-Compliance Alignment: The updates ensure the district remains in compliance with state law regarding the documentation of immunizations or valid exemptions.
-Health Condition Management: The policy reinforces the requirement that students with life-threatening health conditions must have the necessary medical treatments and plans in place before they can attend school.

V. Superintendent Updates

A. Superintendent Kirsten Rue

Tribal Relations

Superintendent Rue announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the **Squaxin Island Tribe**. This agreement establishes a tribal liaison to work directly at Griffin, a development the Superintendent noted with high enthusiasm for the future of student support and cultural connection.

Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

Kindergarten Enrollment: The district is currently tracking enrollment numbers sufficient for two sections. A "Kindergarten Roundup" event is scheduled for **April 30**, supported by local signage and a promotional banner on a district bus to increase community awareness.
TK Program Changes: Due to legislative funding changes, the district must reduce its Transitional Kindergarten program to a **single section**. Superintendent Rue noted that while the district will continue to advocate for the expansion of TK at the state level, they must move forward with a reduced capacity for the upcoming year.
Admission Priority: To maintain transparency, the district will utilize a specific priority ranking for the TK waitlist:
-In-district students with disabilities.
-In-district students with financial need.
-In-district students with no prior preschool experience.

-In-district students by date of application.
-Out-of-district students (following the same criteria hierarchy).

District Events and Operations

Senior Luncheon: The annual Senior Luncheon will take place on **May 19**. Superintendent Rue expressed gratitude to the **Foundation** for their continued sponsorship of this event.

Business Manager Recruitment: The application window for the Business Manager position closes this Friday. The district has a strong candidate pool; screening is scheduled for the coming Monday, with formal interviews to follow the week after.

VI. Closing Items

A. For the Good of the Order

Community and Facility Highlights

Director Frevert and Superintendent Rue reflected on a recent visit to the **Squaxin Island Tribe's** newly remodeled education center. They highlighted the high quality of the facility, including the new pool and educational spaces, noting the importance of the continued partnership between the district and the Tribe.

Student Achievement and Extracurriculars

The Board celebrated recent successes within the district's archery program:
-National Qualifications: Several individual archers and the middle school 3D archery team have qualified for the national tournament.
-Booster Club Impact: Superintendent Rue and Director Frevert commended the **Griffin Archery Parents (GAP)** booster club for their highly successful fundraising efforts. Due to exceeding their financial goals, the organization was able to cover all state tournament registration fees for the students.
-Student Support: Beyond fees, the booster club provided t-shirts for all participants (not just state qualifiers), as well as care packages for students and coaches during the state competition.

Community Connections

Chair Trish Gregory shared a personal highlight regarding her son Carter's recent wedding to his fellow Griffin alumna, Amber. She noted that the couple met at Griffin in the seventh grade and that the entire wedding party consisted of former Griffin students. Trish reflected on how this serves as a testament to the profound social connections and lifelong friendships fostered within the district.

South Sound Reading Foundation

Superintendent Rue and Directors shared highlights from the **South Sound Reading Foundation** breakfast held earlier that morning.
-Attendance: The event was attended by Superintendent Rue, along with staff members Erin and Kim.
-Organizational Support: The Superintendent praised the foundation's mission to provide books to every child in Thurston County.
-District Partnership: It was noted that while the foundation has reduced its financial requests of local schools due to current budget climates, the district remains committed to supporting their efforts to promote literacy and provide resources to Griffin students.

B. Executive Session

The Board of Directors recessed into Executive Session at 6:57 **PM** to discuss the **performance of a public employee (Superintendent Evaluation)**.

Board Chair Trish Hefton initially estimated the session would last **30 minutes**. At approximately 7:35 **PM**, the Chair announced a **15-minute extension** to the Executive Session to allow for further discussion. Chair Hefton confirmed that the sole topic of discussion was the performance of the Superintendent and stated that **no formal decisions were made** during the session.

C. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Trish Hefton

"Where students thrive, feel valued, and shape a better world."