

## **Minutes for February 18, 2026 Regular School Board Meeting**

Chair Opatz called the regular meeting of the School Board of Independent School District #738 to order at 6:00 PM in the meeting room.

Members present: Ben Christensen, Evelyn Martini, Nicole Burg, Lori Opatz, Rob Knettel, Sarah Hansen, Pat Meier, and Student Rep Afton Scegura.

Members absent: None

Also attending was: Superintendent Chris Swenson, Secondary Principal Tom Cooper, Business Manager Garrity Gerber, and Adm. Assistant Linda Zapzalka.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Christensen, second by Martini, to approve the amended agenda. Items added: 6.3. Correct typo and 7.4. Approve a 5-year Child Care Leave. Motion carried. All In Favor (AIF).

Motion by Meier, second by Martini, to approve the consent agenda. Items in the consent agenda included: approval of the minutes from the 1/21/26 Organizational School Board meeting and 2/4/26 Board Work Session; approval of the schedule of bills in the amount of \$248,647.55. Computer checks approved #59104 through #59252 and #31478 through #3177 in the amount of \$1,464.15; approval of the electronic transfer for Jan. 2026, \$1,354,046.89; acknowledgement of the Treasurer's Report balance per books \$5,843,492.67; approval of amended Policies 211 Criminal or Civil Action Against School District, School Board Member, Employee, or Student; Policy 401 Equal Employment Opportunity; Policy 405 Veteran's Preference; Approval of the new Secondary course proposals Forensic 2, Textile Design, Global Foods, Meat Processing, Vet Science, and Think, Learn, Communicate (TLC). On Roll Call voting in favor: Martini, Christensen, Burg, Opatz, Knettel, Hansen and Meier. Voting against: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Opatz welcomed fellow board members and administration.

Citizen Participation: None

Superintendent Swenson gave a shout out to the Dance Team and Coaches for their accomplishments at State competition taking 3rd place in both Jazz & Kick! He wished Monica Novitki the best competing at the State Gymnastics Tournament this weekend and congratulated the Wrestlers for taking 2nd place in the Section Tournament with individual competition coming up next. Mr. Swenson spoke about the FFA events planned for next week and lastly reminded the Board of the tough discussions that have started regarding possible cuts.

Secondary Principal Cooper reported on scheduling for FY27 and how they are working to meet most student class requests. He talked about Teachers dress-up-days for fun and to boost morale. Mr. Cooper gave a shout out to Science Teacher/MCA Booster Team member Nathan Anderson for raising \$4000 for MCA incentive prizes and thanked the rest of the MCA Booster Team for their dedication and work. Students that participate and strive to do their best on the MCAs will earn tickets for a drawing where they could win really nice prizes.

BSED report, Pat Meier reported a short meeting took place including a presentation on pathway to preschool, donation acceptance, approval of policies, first reading of policies and approval of a School Psych's request to take a year off. They will be filling this position while enrollment numbers remain steady and Sartell is adding a new program called Elevate for 18-22 year olds and the GRAFT program will be expanding to age 25.

Business Manager Gerber reported on summer project scheduling with restroom renovations, building recabling project, carpet replacements and intermediate gym updates. He informed the Board that MDE released a new formula for compensatory revenue which fluctuates every year and he has released capital requests to gather staff needs. These are due by the end of February.

**Business Items:**

Mr. Gerber explained bids were sought to replace carpet in the center section of Elementary School with a low bid from Hennen’s Floor Covering. Motion by Knettel, second by Hansen, to approve the flooring proposal from Hennen’s Floor Covering to replace flooring in 12 classrooms, in the amount of \$33,871.51. Motion carried. AIF.

The meeting continued with the first reading of revised Policy 404 Employment Background Checks and revised Policy 406 Public and Private Personnel Data.

Motion by Christensen, second by Burg, to adopt the Resolution Accepting Donations. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of Holdingford Public Schools, ISD 738, gratefully accepts the following donations as identified below:

<u>Donor</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Designated Purpose (if any)</u>
Box Tops for Education	\$32.80	Science
Booster Club	\$25,000	Athletics

The vote on adoption of the Resolution was as follows: In favor: Martini, Christensen, Burg, Opatz, Knettel, Hansen and Meier. Against: None. Absent: None. Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted. Board Chair Opatz read the donations aloud and thanked the donors for their generosity.

**Personnel:**

Motion by Meier, second by Knettel, to approve the Work Agreement with Admin Assistants for FY 2025-2026 & 2026-2027. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Martini, second by Hansen, to approve the extended leave for Jodi Zwilling to the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Meier, second by Christensen, to approve the amendment to the Business Manager Garrity Gerber’s Contract to be effective 2/9/2026. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Christensen, second by Knettel to approve a 5-year Child Care Leave beginning with the 2026-2027 school year for First Grade Teacher Ellen VanOverbeke. Mr. Swenson wished Ellen all the best and thanked her for the timely notice. Motion carried. AIF.

A review of the upcoming meeting dates took place.

Board Work Session March 4, 2026 @ 6:00 PM in the HS Meeting Room.

School Board Meeting March 18, 2025 @ 6:00 PM in the HS Meeting Room.

**Adjourn**

Agenda completed at 6:35 PM. A motion to adjourn was made by Christensen and a second by Burg. Motion carried. AIF.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Clerk Evelyn Martini