

Minutes for March 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, and Pat Meier. Member absent: Student Rep Afton Scegura.

Also attending was: Superintendent Chris Swenson, Elementary Principal Jim Stang, Director of Finance and Operations Garrity Gerber, Adm. Assistant Linda Zapzalka and Natasha Barber with Star Publications.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Christensen, second by Knettel, to approve the amended agenda. Items added: 6.16. Approve Targeted Services Summer Program and Budget; 7.8. Approve Spring 2026 Coaches; 7.9. Accept resignation from Melissa Hartung; 7.10. Accept resignation from Tammi Hanson; 7.11. Approve Superintendent Job Posting; 7.12. Discussion regarding superintendent search and sub-committee; 7.13. Approve 2025-2027 Work Agreement for Transportation Director Rodney Ebnet. Motion carried. All In Favor (AIF).

Motion by Christensen, second by Hansen, to approve the consent agenda. Items in the consent agenda included: approval of the minutes from the 2/18/26 Regular Board meeting and 3/4/26 Board Work Session; approval of the schedule of bills in the amount of \$328,745.19. Computer checks approved #59253 through #59415 and #31479 through #31482 in the amount of \$1,712.46; approval of the electronic transfer for Feb. 2026, \$463,617.74; acknowledgement of the Treasurer's Report balance per books \$5,570,647.53; approval of revised Policies 404 Employment Background Checks and 406 Public and Private Personnel Data. 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, administration, staff and guest.

Citizen Participation: None

Superintendent Swenson updated the Board on the new school website development. The new site will be in place for next school year and Becca VanHeel will be involved with the training and up-keep. He informed the Board that testing proctors are all in place and testing season has begun in the secondary school with the elementary school starting soon. Mr. Swenson explained that the Fitness Center Waiver approval was pulled from the agenda so that a few more logistic program details could be worked out prior to approval.

Elementary Principal Jim Stang reported things are busy with testing season coming up as well as other end of the year events. He thanked the PTA for sponsoring Math Night and facilitating all that is involved. Stang announced that the Summer School grant was approved and he will be filling those staffing positions. He also talked about Kindergarten Round-Up and staffing cuts with moving to 3 sections in some grades. Stang expressed appreciation to Rodney for scheduling all the transportation needed for field trips and to NHS for the fabulous Activity Night they sponsored for grades 5-9.

BSED report, Pat Meier reported extra hours were approved for Para Ed Supervisors and Audiologists, donations to Savers were approved, discussion took place on staffing changes, a workshop day was revised for staff to accommodate schedules and policies were approved.

Mr. Swenson reported secondary teaching assignments are in progress for FY 2027 school year.

Business Manager Gerber reported the budget is following along on track, CTE grants are beneficial and have been extended, the Square card reader system for concession stand sales and admission tickets proved beneficial, however athletics will be moving to Bound for electronic ticketing for FY27. He updated the Board on

Paid Leave which takes about 3 hours a week to facilitate and informed the Board he had a walk-through with an individual from a Critical Response Group and once it is published, will be helpful in emergency situations.

Business Items:

Motion by Meier, second by Burg, to approve the proposal for replacement of fire doors from Mid Central Door at a total cost of \$56,849.49 which is required by fire code. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Knettel, second by Christensen, to approve the proposal for replacement of fire exit and egress signs from Liberty Electric Co. Inc. at a total cost of \$20,761.40 which is required by fire code. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Hansen, second by Knettel, to approve the financed purchase of a new bus with State contract pricing through Stock Growers Public Finance with an estimated cost of \$165,166.00. This is to replace an existing bus. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Meier, second by Christensen, to approve the purchase of a Special Education transport van using Medical Assistance funds from United in the amount of \$101,820 + taxes and title fees. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Knettel, second by Hansen, to approve the proposal for refinishing the intermediate gym floor from Johnson Floor Sanding at a total cost of \$22,000.00. Paid for with LTFM Funds. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Burg, second by Christensen, to approve the proposal from Ultra Painting for painting the Intermediate Gym at a total cost of \$34,470.00 Paid for with LTFM Funds. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Christensen, second by Hansen, to approve the Chromebook purchase for FY27 at a total cost of \$114,394.00. Buying now, prior to price increase, saves \$14,000 . Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Meier, second by Knettel, to approve the financed purchase of the football/track scoreboard at a total cost of \$245,633.00. The Husker Athletic Booster Club is paying for the complete scoreboard project over 5 years. Motion carried. AIF.

Mr. Swenson explained this is an option for students not wanting to take college math, more of an applied math concept. Motion by Knettel, second by Burg, to approve the new course proposal, FUNdamental Math and Game Theory. Motion carried. AIF.

The meeting continued with the first reading of revised Policy 506 Student Discipline, for approval section O will be removed, first reading of revised Policy 722 Public Data and Data Subject Requests and first reading of Policy 806 Crisis Management. These policies are required to be reviewed annually.

Motion by Meier, second by Christensen, to permit District Administrative Assistant to make technical updates on policies when recommended by MSBA. Technical updates do not change a policy's substantive provisions. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Christensen, second by Hansen, 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>
PTA	\$331.04	Preschool Picnic
Scooters Auto Repair	\$200	Community Ed for Archery
Holdingford Gas and Grocery	\$500	Community Ed for Archery
WD Scepaniak	\$200	Community Ed for Archery
Sytek	\$50	HS PBIS for MCAs
We Haul for You	\$250	HS PBIS for MCAs
Holdingford Gas and Grocery	\$200	HS PBIS for MCAs
Booster Club	\$300	Trap Shooting

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.

Mr. Gerber summarized the requirements laid out in the MOU which is a 20 year agreement and has previously been approved by the Husker Athletic Booster Club. Motion by Christensen, second by Meier, to approve the MOU with the Holdingford Husker Booster Club for advertising rights and financial contributions in regards to the football scoreboard. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Meier, second by Christensen, to approve the Targeted Services Program and Budget. Motion carried. AIF.

Personnel:

Motion by Meier, second by Hansen, to accept the resignation from Lauren Volkers from her role as Student Council & Prom Advisors at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion carried. AIF. The Board and Administration thanked Ms. Volkers for her time serving in the advisorship positions.

Motion by Burg, second by Christensen, to accept the resignation from Katie Novitzki from her role as Student Council & Prom Advisors at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion carried. AIF. The Board and Administration thanked Ms. Novitzki for her time serving in the advisorship positions.

Motion by Christensen, second by Hansen, to accept the resignation from Jessica Mickelson from her role as Prom Advisor at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion carried. AIF. The Board and Administration thanked Ms. Mickelson for her time serving in the advisorship position.

Motion by Christensen, second by Knettel, to adopt the Resolution Nonrenewing Probationary Teacher Hannah Brandanger. On Roll Call voting in favor: Martini, Christensen, Burg, Opatz, Knettel, Hansen and Meier. Voting against: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Knettel, second by Christensen with many many thanks, to accept the resignation from Superintendent Chris Swenson to be effective 6/30/2026. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Christensen, second by Hansen, to hire School Pro at a cost of \$4,000 to conduct the District Superintendent Search. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Burg, second by Hansen, to hire Cheryl Carlson for a Long Term Substitute Speech Pathologist at MS30 Step 1, from approximately 3/16/2026 through the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Christensen, second by Knettel, to approve the Spring 2026 Coaches. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Knettel, second by Burg, to accept the resignation from Melissa Hartung, Preschool Para effective 5/21/2026. The Board and Administration thanked Melissa for her 10 years with the district. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Christensen, second by Knettel, to accept the resignation from Tammi Hanson, Secondary Adm. Assistant effective 5/22/2026. Motion carried. AIF. The Board and Administration thanked Tammi for her 7 years with the district.

Mr. Gerber asked the Board to review the Superintendent Search Brochure. Motion by Christensen, second by Hansen to approve the Superintendent Job Posting Brochure with the corrections as discussed. Motion carried. AIF.

Discussion regarding superintendent search and the creation of a sub-committee. Opatz opened discussion on the subcommittee to meet and make decisions on logistical items without breaking open meeting laws. This will be decided at the 4/1/2026 Work Session.

Motion by Meier, second by Knettel, to approve 2025-2027 Work Agreement for Transportation Director Rodney Ebnet. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Christensen, second by Burg, to accept the resignation from Gabby Fobbe, Sixth Grade Teacher, effective 5/28/2026. The Board and Administration thanked Gabby for her 5 years with the district. Motion carried. AIF.

Motion by Knettel, second by Christensen, to hire Alissa Berdan for a full time Custodial position with a start date of 3/20/2026. Motion carried. AIF.

A review of the upcoming meeting dates took place.

Superintendent Application Screening Meeting Monday April 13, 2026 5:00 PM HS Meeting Room.

Meet & Confer Meeting April 15, 2026 @ 3:15 PM in the District Conference Room.

School Board Meeting April 15, 2026 @ 6:00 PM in the HS Meeting Room.

Superintendent Round 1 Interviews April 17, 2026

Superintendent Round 2 Interviews April 22, 2026

Adjourn

Agenda completed at 7:59 PM. A motion to adjourn was made by Christensen and a second by Hansen. Motion carried. AIF.

Respectfully Submitted by
Clerk Evelyn Martini