



Montpelier School Board Meeting

May 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM - Room 112

Minutes

Board Members Present: Scott Harms, Kyle Throener, Dan Koep, Wade Dally, Kelsey Naze, Abram Valenta, and Tony Roorda.

Also Present: Superintendent Phil Leitner, Principal Sara Wilson, and Business Manager Brittany Hansen.

Absent: None

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00M by President Scott Harms. The Board was given the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: None

Approval of Agenda: No changes requested

Consent Agenda:

Valenta made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Throener seconds motion; motion carries unanimously to approve the following:

- Approval of April 2026 bills and financial reports
- Approval of April 15, 2026, Board meeting minutes
- No new open enrollment/Non-Tuition Agreements were discussed for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Hiring – Joni Brandenburg – Paraprofessional - \$21.83/hr
- Hiring – Jennifer Lusby – Teacher - \$45,500 (per current Negotiated Agreement)
- Hiring – Dianne Brown – Election Worker
- Hiring – Sue Valenta – Election Worker
- Hiring – Julie Bennett – Election Worker
- Hiring – Janice Block – Election Worker
 - All election workers receive \$15/hour (typically 10AM-8PM) with meal and mileage

Committee Reports

Buildings and Grounds/Playground Committee:

The septic system was also discussed. After evaluation by K2S Engineering, the committee met to discuss options for the septic system and will review with the Board. Naze gave an update that the zipline was ordered. The committee is also looking into various options for picnic tables in that area.

Superintendent's Report:

- Mr. Leitner reported that the two upright freezers in the cafeteria have been having issues. One will need to be replaced prior to the start of the new school year, and the other may also need to be replaced.

Mission Statement: Embracing success through education

Vision Statement: Preparing today for a better tomorrow.



Montpelier School Board Meeting May 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM - Room 112 Minutes

- He attended NDSBA meeting on April 30, 2026. Topics included mill levies and legislative funding outlook.
- Year end reporting has begun and will continue throughout the summer
- May 26, 2026-June 5, 2026 the new Principals will be working with Mrs. Wilson on development plan for the next school year.
- Gym floor – We typically have the gym floor ‘stripped’ roughly every 3 years. The cost is roughly \$7,200 to complete.
- A student survey was conducted for Grades 6-11 for after school activities that they would potentially like to participate in.
 - 28 responses
 - Academic Support (8) – 28.6%
 - Playing Support (9) – 32.1%
 - Music/arts (17) – 60.7%
 - Fun things to do (17) – 60.7%
 - Archery (11) – 39.3%

Principal's Report:

- Pre-K had an open house recently and has 9 total students.
- BARR Conference- The BARR Conference was held in California. 4 staff members were able to attend this training
- State testing was April 28-29-30th; test results will be coming in the Fall 2026.
- Applied for a Dyslexia Professional Development grant of \$4,700 to assist teachers with identifying students that may be struggling.
- Graduation – We had 8 graduates for 2025-2026. Congratulations Graduates!
- IEP and 504 Plan basics were reviewed with the Board.
- Mr. Leitner and Mrs. Wilson reported some of our school accomplishments over the last 4 years as it was Mrs. Wilson's last meeting as principal.
 - **Team Focus and Building School Culture**
 - Vital Network
 - Staff events (Christmas party and potlucks), morning announcements, staff shout outs and Celebrations
 - Team Meetings (great for sharing information, collaboration and hearing all perspectives)
 - Community fundraising - sound system and playground
 - Staff Development
 - Mentoring programs (Admin, Teacher, Business Manager)
 - Supporting professional development for staff
 - Safety Care training for staff
 - **Developing and Supporting Staff - Addressing Employee Pay and Benefits**
 - Masters level pay increased, credit reimbursement and partnership with UND for a master's program scholarship

Mission Statement: Embracing success through education

Vision Statement: Preparing today for a better tomorrow.



Montpelier School Board Meeting

May 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM - Room 112

Minutes

- Insurance offered to additional employees (secretary, head cook, and head custodian)
- Bus driver bonus increased
- Overall employee pay increased
- Non-traditional leave policy developed as an equitable way to pay classified staff when school is closed
- **Policies and Governance**
 - Student Cell Phone Ban before state ban put in place (before the state mandate)
 - Choice Ready Graduation Requirement Working
 - 22-23 and 23-24 - 43% Choice Ready
 - 24-25 and 25-26 - 69% Choice Ready
 - 22-23 and 23-24 - Under 10% received Choice Ready Scholarship
 - 24-25 and 25-26 - 46% received Choice Ready Scholarship
- **Priority on building a committee structure**
 - Policy BBBB - Board Committees
 - Strengthening Cognia goals and emphasis placed on development of a strategic plan (not finished)
 - Curriculum committee emphasized
 - IXL purchased for differentiated practice for all students
 - Amira Grant
 - Fastbridge program for streamlining universal screening and progress monitoring for English and math
 - Curriculum Review Plan
 - ELA curriculum purchase
 - Master curriculum document developed
 - **Keeping the School District in a Position of Financial Strength**
 - Leveraged ESSER dollars wisely
 - Maintained strong ending fund balance despite increased costs and unexpected building repairs
 - Approximately \$200K in roof repairs alone
 - Price increases
 - Employee compensation increased
 - Mill Levy rank (113 of 145 School Districts as of most recent DPI Finance Facts, 2025)
 - Special Reserve Fund Established
 - Major Funding Grants
 - ND Climbs - \$807,136.86 (BARR and Literacy)
 - High Quality Instructional Materials - \$31,000 (CKLA grant)
 - ND Counts - \$15,000
 - Best in Class - \$240,000 (over 4 years)
- **Managing Organizational and Systemic Change**

Mission Statement: Embracing success through education

Vision Statement: Preparing today for a better tomorrow.



Montpelier School Board Meeting

May 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM - Room 112

Minutes

- Continue to operate fully staffed in a very tough market for employers
- Creative solutions for staffing challenges and leveraging current staff to fill needs based on their strengths
- Hiring long term candidates based on cultural fit of organization
- Continuing to spread awareness of great public schools in an era that has seen confidence in public schools decrease
- Balancing the complexities of our world after a pandemic
- Increased capacity to distribute medication
- **Focus on Student Programs and Student Experiences**
 - Implementing BARR
 - College TourField Trips
 - Student Competitions
 - Field Day
 - Pumpkin Patch at Mr. Brown's Home
 - Community Service
 - Montpelier Scholarship Fund
 - 5 Day a Week PK Program
 - Dual credit offerings taught by Montpelier staff
 - Jamestown Art Center Grant
 - Amira
 - Bikes
- **Educational Excellence, Honors and Awards**
 - Stutsman County Teacher of the Year - Charity Dosch
 - Region IV Middle School Principal of Year - Sara Wilson
 - Stutsman County Teacher of the Year - Ryan Nelson
 - Niche Rankings (2026)
 - #12 of 125 Best Teachers in ND
 - #21 of 133 Best School Districts in ND
 - #22 of 137 Best Places to Teach in ND
 - #1 Best Teachers in Stutsman County
 - US News and World Report Best Elementary Schools (2025)

Business

Septic System Update:

The Building and Grounds Committee shared septic system updates. After discussion surrounding urgency, timing, cost, and the Engineering Plan, the Board would like to solicit for bids given the parameters K2S Engineering has in the current reports.

Valenta made a motion to solicit bids for the septic system repair within the specs of the design folder provided by K2S Engineering. Throener seconds motion, motion carries unanimously.

Mission Statement: Embracing success through education

Vision Statement: Preparing today for a better tomorrow.



Montpelier School Board Meeting

May 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM - Room 112

Minutes

NDPHIT Medical Renewal Summary:

Our committee to study insurance has met and is recommending to keep our current insurance plan of NDPHIT YourBlue 70 250 3750. The Health insurance committee will continue to meet during the school year discuss plans, vendors, send out surveys to gather feedback, and options for coverage as we will be mandated to switch to a different plan on NDPHIT for 2027-2028 school year.

Roorda made a motion to continue with NDPHIT YourBlue 70 250 3750 for the 2026-27 School Year. Koep seconds motion; motion carries unanimously.

Brady, Martz, & Associates Engagement Letter:

We received our Engagement Letter from Brady, Martz, & Associates. The 2025-26 Audit is estimated at a cost of \$10,000-15,000 and is anticipated to begin during August 2026, which is comparable to the cost last year.

Roorda made a motion to hire Brady, Martz, & Associates to conduct the annual financial audit of the district's 2025-2026 financials school year. Dally seconds motion; motion carries unanimously.

NDSBA Policy Review:

Our recent policy review from NDSBA has been completed and is ready for the policy committee to begin reviewing any proposed changes. The Policy committee will meet to review the policy recommendations made by NDSBA.

Budget Amendments:

Montpelier Public School was recently awarded a NDCOUNTS grant of \$15,000 and will need to complete a budget Amendment. The purchase of the Chrysler Pacifica is also complete and will need a budget Amendment for \$42,729.

Roorda makes a motion to amend the 2025-2026 budget to include \$15,000 due to being awarded the NDCOUNTS grant and \$42,729 for the purchase of the 2020 Chrysler Pacifica. Valenta seconds motion; Motion carries unanimously.

Classroom Carpet Bids:

We received three (3) bids to update the carpet for room 108 (Mr. Lee's room). Goldade Flooring (\$6,468.47), Home Design Center (\$4,713.58), and LaValle Flooring (\$8,234.58).

Mission Statement: Embracing success through education

Vision Statement: Preparing today for a better tomorrow.



Montpelier School Board Meeting May 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM - Room 112 Minutes

Koep makes a motion to hire 'Home Design Center' based on bids received. Roorda seconds motion, motion carries unanimously.

2026-2027 Staffing Update:

Preliminary plans for staffing were be discussed. All Assignments currently listed have not been finalized.

Staffing - Note Assignments Not Finalized		
	2025-26	2026-27
Superintendent	Phil Leitner	1 Phil Leitner
Principal	Sara Boom	2 Tyler Lee 50% Maureen Schrader 50%
PK	Charly Dosch	3 Kenzie Bertsch
K	Maureen Schrader	4 Maureen Schrader 50% Samantha Nelson/Hunter Heck
1	Kenzie Bertsch	5 Samantha Nelson
2	Samantha Nelson	6 Jennifer Lusby
3	Tonya Kramer	7 Tonya Kramer
4	Tyler Lee	8 Hunter Heck
5	Ryan Nelson	9 Ryan Nelson
6	Tyler Lee	10 HS Staff
	Heidi Bear	Heidi Bear
BARR	Richard Wright	11 Tyler Lee
	Linda Dockter	
Business	Richard Wright	12 Richard Wright
Math 7-12	Kaina Harris	13 Kiana Harris (9-12) Heidi Bear/Tonia Kjellberg
Science 7-12	Ellen Fehr	14 Kiana Harris (9-12) Kiana Harris/Tonia Kjellberg
	LT Sub Tonia Kjellberg	
7-12 English	Heidi Bear	15 Heidi Bear
7-12 Social Studies	Julie Leggate	16 Julie Leggate
PK-12 PE	Don Entzi	17 Don Entzi
PK-12 School Counselor	Linda Dockter	18 Linda Dockter
Choir/Art	Kris Kietzman	19 Eve Scott
	Hunter Heck	
Band	Kris Kietzman	20
	Hunter Heck	
Business Manager	Brittany Hansen	21 Brittany Hansen
Paraprofessional 1	Dianne Brown	22 Dianne Brown
Paraprofessional 2	Hunter Heck	23 Joni Brandenburg
	Deb Hattlewick	
Title Paraprofessional	Curt Brown	24 Curt Brown and likely JMST Satellite Bus
Secretary/Bus Driver	Melissa Marshall	25 Melissa Marshall
Head Cook	Sara Jensen	26 Sara Jensen
Asst Cook/Custodian	Sally Dick	27 Sally Dick
Head Custodian	Randy Henne	28 Randy Henne
Bus Driver	Stacy Peckham	29 Stacy Peckham
Bus Driver	Marla Haugen	30
Bus Driver	Richard Wright	31
Bus Driver	Curt Brown	32

Other:

June 9 – School Board Elections

June 22 – School Board Meeting

July 15 – School Board Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brittany Hansen
Business Manager



**Montpelier School Board Meeting
May 20, 2026 - 6:00 PM - Room 112
Minutes**

Scott Harms, Board President

Brittany Hansen, Business Manager

Approval Date