

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School Board**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday October 2, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.**  
**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Reading of Mission Statement & Vision
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes September 4, 2025

- |     |  |    |     |   |
|-----|--|----|-----|---|
| 6.  | Review Ledger  |    |     |   |
| 7.  | New Business:  | RA | IPA | I |
|     | i. FACE-Early Childhood Move                                     |    |     | X |
|     | ii. Increased Enrollment   |    |     | X |
|     | iii. Hiring a Cultural Assistant                                 |    |     | X |
|     | iv. New MN Truancy Policy  |    |     | X |
| 8.  | Old Business:  | RA | IPA | I |
|     | i. None  |    |     |   |
| 9.  | Supervisor Reports:  |    |     |   |
|     | i. Tara Dupuis, Superintendent                                   |    |     |   |
|     | ii. Daniel Merfeld, Principal                                    |    |     |   |
|     | iii. Blake Ludemann, Education Grants and Accountability Manager |    |     |   |
|     | iv. Michelle Hamski, Interim Special Education Coordinator       |    |     |   |
|     | v. Mace Fonoti, Kitchen  |    |     |   |
|     | vi. Hailey Martin, Wellness Coordinator                          |    |     |   |
|     | vii. Dawn LaPrairie, Cultural Coordinator                        |    |     |   |
|     | viii. Barbara Francis, FACE Coordinator                          |    |     |   |
|     | iv. Kathy Nelson, Transportation                                 |    |     |   |
| 10. | Other  |    |     |   |
| 11. | Adjourn  |    |     |   |

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
Superintendent-Tara Dupuis  
School Board Report  
October 2, 2025**

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**OJIBWE SCHOOLS MOTTO**  
"Anokii, Nanda-gikendan, Enigok gagwe, Gashkitoon"  
"Work, study, strive, succeed"

**Travel/Trainings:**

- MKV Training
- TNEC
- ISD 709 JOM / AIPAC

**Accomplishments:**

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant 180K to cover after school programming
- School Based Health Center Grant 187.5K
- Phones / process procedure going WELL
- Work Based Learning has senior students in the AAniin program and the Ganawendaasowin (Child Care Center)
- PSEO / one student
- CNA program / one student
- CTE at Cloquet / one student
- Challenges:
- Need FACE teacher early childhood
- Increased student population this year

**Budget changes:**

- We are able to post for a cultural assistant
- Vehicle purchase was an amendment to budget

**Employee updates:**

- Need Phy Ed teacher
- Need FACE Early Childhood teacher

**Goals within Department:**

- Special Education teachers needed
- Licensed staff in area of licensure
- Increase student enrollment

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
Principal-Daniel Merfeld  
School Board Report  
October 2, 2025**

**Travel/Trainings:**

- No current upcoming travel/Trainings for staff
- High School English Teacher and Reading Specialist completed READ Act Training
- Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> Food Summit coming up

**Student Activities:**

- Past Activities:
  - Back to School Event
  - The Taking Care of Things Gathering
  - Wild Rice Harvest
    - High School
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade
- Upcoming Activities:
  - Pow wow: After school meetings taking place on Tuesdays
  - Looking into other field trips
  - Remaining Home Volleyball games: 10/1,10/2, 10/7 and 10/13

**Accomplishments:**

- New Basketball Jerseys arrived
- All required READ Act training completed
- Student enrollment is up, KG is full

**Challenges:**

- Filling basketball schedules
- Waiting list for Mental Health Therapist requests
- SPED Instructors are at max capacity
- Getting Mini Apps Processed for college student internships

**Employee updates:**

- Still need a P.E. teacher to be hired
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Substitute Teacher has become available
- Teachers have been covering on their preps, working on getting payment into Portal
- Having all head coaches complete all required trainings

**Goals within Department:**

- Review all Lit. and Math Plans
- Create a list of updates for both plans
  - MDE Will come out with approved lists in Nov.
  - Cross-reference them with BIE Standards
- Audit Process Beginning Soon

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School**  
**Grants & Accountability Manager–Blake Ludemann**  
**School Programs and Facilities**  
**October 2, 2025**

**Travel/Trainings:**

- Various webinars, Microsoft Teams calls with BIE staff, monthly training sessions held by BIE
- Mandatory trainings regarding mandated reporting and bloodborne pathogens.

**School Programs Accomplishments:**

- Farm to School Application is under way with FDL Plannings assistance. We will be going for the additional equipment portion of the grant, \$25,000.00 with a 1:1 match using Blue Cross Blue Shield funding for the match. This will be used to replace our existing school Combi Oven that was installed during the school's initial construction 22 years ago.
- We received grant funding in the amount of \$187,500 from the Minnesota Department of Health for School-Based Health Centers. This will fund a cooperative program ran out of the school in partnership with Min No Aya Win Human Services Division. This is a three-year grant to fund the planning, implementation, and beginning operational year for our School Health Center.
- MN State Electric School Bus grant has been tabled for this year pending further internal research and review.
- Working with Vicki O on Non-Exclusionary Disciple (NED) grant application.
- Will be submitting yearly Facility Operations and Maintenance report by September 30<sup>th</sup>

**Facilities/Operations and Maintenance/Environmental Management System**

**Goals of program:** Protect the health and well-being of students, staff, and visitors to the school. Provide a clean and safe environment for learning and working.

**Accomplishments:**

- Door 2 handicap button and related badge infrastructure has been repaired and is in working order
- HVAC project substantial completion should be done by October 31<sup>st</sup>. They are finalizing various measures and balancing within our system to adjust some odd pressure issues in certain rooms as well as fixing some noise issues with certain air handlers.
- Playground will be done in October, before HVAC. Poured in Place rubber foundation is currently being put down, followed by basketball court resurfacing and finally fencing.

**Employee Updates**

- None

**Challenges**

- Lack of time!

**Goals:**

- Continued development and management of school program grants.
- Continued development and management of facility improvement projects.
- Continue improvement with the day-to-day operations, management, and safety of the Ojibwe School.

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School**  
**Interim Special Education Coordinator- Michelle Hamski**  
**School Board Report**  
**October 2, 2025**

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**Travel/Trainings:**

- Attended BIE Special Education Office Hours
  - Updated Reporting Platform and Due Dates

**Accomplishments:**

- School Psychologist has started
- HealthPro was able to fill Occupational Therapist Position
  - Tentative start date 10/6/2025
- Elementary/Middle School and High School staff meetings held to review IEP Snapshots and highlight information for classroom teachers and school support staff

**Student Updates:**

- Total Students Receiving Service: 38
  - DD: 3
  - SLD: 21
  - EBD: 8
  - S/L: 6
    - ISEP: 38/38

**Employee Updates:**

- Occupational Therapist hired through HealthPro

**Challenges:**

- Reduced special education staff numbers
- Increased caseload of high school special education students

**Goals:**

- Continue to improve on collaboration and communication between special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and classroom teachers to ensure that all the special education needs of each individual student are being met
- Hire qualified special education teacher
- Hire qualified paraprofessionals to continue to assist case managers and classroom teachers
- Hire Occupational Therapist
- Being consistent and maintaining high standards within the Special Education Team

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
Kitchen Supervisor-Mace Fonoti  
School Board Report  
October 2, 2025**

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**Accomplishments:**

- Grilled Burgers and Wild Rice Brats for the Back to School BBQ for lunch service Sept. 5th
- Attended the Native American Nutrition Conference at Mystic Lake Casino
- Obtained equipment funding from Blue Cross Blue Shield that was allocated for the Farm to School Equipment match, those funds are now directed to use for the equipment needs of the Ojibwe School Kitchen.

**Challenges:**

- One Full Time Staff is on medical leave
- Kitchen on call staff has not been dependable, currently working with HR and school principal to explore the option of hiring another on call.
- Trying to coordinate how to get an accurate lunch count for students and staff daily
- Kitchen Supervisor is working more hours in the kitchen and less hours in the office leaving a slower response rate to emails and unable to attend other meetings.
- Preparing for Audits

**Goals Within the Department:**

- To continue to maintain a smooth-running and effective School Nutrition Program through the new school year
- To continue to provide all meals within the MDE & USDA Guidelines
- Continue to keep the cafeteria safe for students and staff to congregate within the E.O.C. Guidelines
- To continue resource and incorporate more Indigenous and local foods into the FDLOS menu. To include and introduce meats locally raised and indigenous to area like venison, moose, rabbit, fish, and buffalo.
- To continue to network with all staff and available resources within and outside of the community to provide the best meal experience at the Ojibwe School
- To add signage through the use of technology to the cafeteria for students and staff to consistently be informed about, support programs, available resources, kitchen partnerships, menus, etc.
- Obtain more funding for kitchen staff trainings, equipment, and local foods

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
Wellness Coordinator-Hailey Dion  
School Board Report  
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**Travel/Trainings:**

- Restorative Practice – apologies.
- ALICE training.

**Accomplishments:**

- Collaborating with our School Linked Mental Health (SLMH) therapists to get their caseloads & schedules complete.
- Started teaching our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) schedule for grades K-3.
- Met with P&I regarding them coming in to teach our middle & high school students. They also want to do an after-school program.
  - Waiting to hear back from them.
- Met with Barb & Robin from the cultural center & discussed their involvement with some of our students.
- Assisting in planning the Powwow.
- Helping develop our 5-year strategic plan.

**Challenges:**

- Struggling with hearing back from P&I and someone to teach smoking cessation classes to some of our students.

**Goals within your departments for 2025-2026:**

- More engagement with our Backpack Program.
- Short wait times for our SLMH waitlist.

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
FACE Coordinator-Barbara Francis  
School Board Report  
October 2, 2025**

**Travel/Trainings:**

- No travel this month

**Accomplishments:**

- FACE Family Circle - Attended FDLOS Welcome Back to School event. Our booth was set up with FACE information to hand out to community members. We were able to connect and follow up with families that had interest.
- Adult Ed student GED history test was scheduled and then was cancelled by student who could not make that date. We have rescheduled for Oct 4<sup>th</sup>.
- We now have our FACE merchandise that we ordered from Community Printers. We purchased 2 tablecloths, a stand-up banner, and lanyards so our presence at events is more visible.
- 4 preschoolers in classroom
- 15 Adult Education students.
- 22 families signed up for Parent Engagement at this time.
- We have a new van and appreciate it greatly!
- Tasheana Rule has created individual packers for each component of FACE, Adult Ed, Preschool, and Family Engagement with a bio of each of us, contact information and a summary of what FACE is and what we offer. We will hand these out at each community event and distribute to departments with the FDL reservation and local businesses.

**Challenges:**

- Each Parent Educator must carry at least 20 families by December, or we will lose some of our funding. Working on recruiting.
- Budget is tight. Therefore, we have moved the preschool room down to OJS to save costs on buses, and to make sure children are included in breakfast, lunch, gym, language, and other areas such as music, library, and art if available.

**Employment Updates:**

- Our preschool teacher position is currently open.

**Goals within Department:**

- Parent Educator 1 must continue to recruit a minimum of 20 families as soon as possible.
- Continue to recruit new families and get the word out.
- Currently working on getting word out on our radio station. Our FACE administration is helping us out with this and will do most of the writing.



**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
Transportation-Kathy Nelson  
School Board Report  
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**Travel/Trainings:**

- We have transported the Volleyball team to games at Babbitt, Marshall H.S., Cass Lake and Remer, Students ricing at Jaskari Lake and 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade students to Grand Rapids

**Accomplishments:**

- We currently have enough buses for our routes and trips with available spares for breakdowns.

**Challenges:**

- Hiring has been our biggest challenge, The driver that we hoped was returning decided not to join us and the 2 transportation drivers declined the position.

**Employee updates:**

- We are currently seeking 2 bus drivers and 2 transportation drivers

**Goals within Department:**

- Know and obey the Minnesota motor vehicle laws.