

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School Board**

**Regular Meeting**

**August 7, 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 June 12, 2025 Meeting Minutes
6. Review Ledger
  7. New Business:

	RA	IPA	I
i. Email Regarding Board Membership Meetings	X		
ii. 25-26 Parent/Student Handbook-Draft	X		
  8. Old Business:

	RA	IPA	I
i. School Board Elections	X		
  9. Supervisor Reports:
    - i. Tara Dupuis, Superintendent
    - ii. Valerie Tanner, 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
    - ix. Kathy Nelson, Transportation
  10. Other
  11. Adjourn

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
Superintendent-Tara Dupuis  
School Board Report  
August 7, 2025**

The Fond du Lac Ojibwe Schools are dedicated to providing a quality education, which focuses on integrating the Ojibwe culture into all students' learning experiences. Every learner will have the opportunity to be challenged, to succeed, and to be prepared for the future. Parents, staff, community, and students will demonstrate the highest level of expectations for themselves and the school.

**OJIBWE SCHOOLS MOTTO**

“Anokii, Nanda-gikendan, Enigok gagwe, Gashkitoon”

"Work, study, strive, succeed"

**Travel/Trainings:**

- TNEC Retreat July 13,14,15 (presentation by state agencies ex Compass)
- Tribal consultation regarding 14191 BIE July 1 and July 14
- IEFA July 21<sup>st</sup> in Morton Minnesota
- NSSWE Native Studies Summer Institute for Educators
- Meeting with Chris Davis 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing
- Safety Meeting with Head Start and Gaanawendaasowin Child Care

**Accomplishments:**

- School Based Health grant submitted
- Principal Hired
- We were awarded 180K for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant this will be used for after school activities
- Changes to the handbook were made primarily for Restorative Practices

**Challenges:**

- Budget changes
- Expanding Ojibwe Language

**Employee updates:**

- Daniel Merfield new K-12 Principal will start on August 4<sup>th</sup>
- Interviewed for FACE Teacher-needed to repost position
- Caitlyn Martineau was hired as a 3rd grade teacher
- Posted for 2 bus monitors-they will also cover recess duty
- Jen Blix will teach Kindergarten
- Andrea will move to 4<sup>th</sup> grade with her current class

- Shamra Benson will teach art in the afternoon for high school
- Carol Smith will be a Reading Assistant for grades 3-6
- Archie Yellow will move to Ojibwe Language teacher K-3
- Michelle H will take back full-time hours for interim SPED Coordinator (need approval)
- Alex will be back full-time in the kitchen

**Goals within Department:**

- Special Education teachers needed
- Licensed staff in area of licensure
- Plan to work with Ganaawendaasowin Child Care and Head Start to have our students take online courses for Child Care certification they will spend time in the classrooms and get paid to be learning.

**Fond du Lac Ojibwe School  
Grants and Accountability Manager-Blake Ludemann  
School Board Report  
August 7, 2025**

**Travel/Trainings:**

- Various webinars, Microsoft Teams calls with BIE staff, monthly training sessions held by BIE
- Attended annual BIE Facility Manager Training for Maximo, the school's asset management software. Very valuable multi-day training session that offers 1-on-1 time with various federal staff at the BIE.

**School Programs Accomplishments:**

- New school oven has been ordered and awaiting delivery and installation.
- Applied for the MN School-based Health Center grant for \$187,500 over three years. This would fund the opening of a school-based health center offering further health services to our students on site. Thanks to Nurse Tara for her assistance with this application.
- Local Food for Schools (LFS) from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture funded us an additional ~\$1500 for food purchases this school year on top of our usual farm to school grant funding
- I am working on a contract with Seon Design and Guaranteed Network Services to install CCTV systems on our two new school buses.

**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:**

- School HVAC project has been going well. The building temperature and humidity ended up holding much better than we anticipated. Projected end of project is early September and should minimally impact school activities and staff return to school week.
- Playground project is still on for this year, though construction will be pushed to begin in August and end in late September. This will necessitate closing the school playground for a portion of time this upcoming school year.
- BIE priority projects for FY2026 are due at the end of July. We are requesting funding for three projects. 1: Bus Barn 2: Generator Replacement. 3: School Receptacle Update. The bus barns' foundation issues have posed a problem. BIE staff and engineers at Planate have been working on the cost estimate for this project and it has been found that, with the amount of work needed, it would be more reasonable to build a new bus barn than to fix the existing structure.  
The school's generator is undersized for the amount of power draw we have. As a designated emergency shelter, it is necessary to have a functional, 100% capable backup generator available onsite. This should be a relatively simple project, knock on wood. School receptacle replacement is necessary due to new electrical codes which make this

a safety abatement. Any occupied education building is required to have tamper resistant outlets. This will involve replacing over 500 outlets at OJS and an additional ~50 at FACE.

- Environmental Management Assessment & Performance (EMAP) audit cleanup will be finished by beginning of school pending contractor involvement. Awaiting response from SafetyKleen.

### **Employee Updates**

- None

### **Challenges**

- Cuts to federal agencies that support tribally ran schools, such as the BIE, have had significant impacts. For example, staffing is at an all-time low at the BIE's facility management department, with whom I work closely on all facility projects. I have also been informed that unless it poses a safety risk, most facility projects will be going unfunded for the foreseeable future. This has been further cemented during our facility manager training sessions that I attended this July.

### **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  
Transportation-Kathy Nelson  
School Board Report  
August 7, 2025**

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**Travel/Trainings:**

- 9 staff completed the advance drivers training with Precision Driving in St. Cloud.
- Buses took Prevention & Intervention (P&I) to Bunker Beach in July.

**Accomplishments:**

- We currently have 4 buses running for P&I summer camp.
- Lacrosse Camp ran the week of July 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Challenges:**

- We are still working to hire a full-time driver and / or 2 part-time drivers and 1 transportation driver. Starting this fall we will offer 3 bus routes for Head Start and are looking to adding additional drivers as we get drivers available.
- I have heard that some drivers are looking at wages with Cloquet Transit- I have called and found out that they do not offer full time or benefits for part time drivers. I have informed a few of the drivers what Cloquet has to offer.

**Employee updates:**

- We were able to hire 1 full-time driver.
- We are currently looking to hire 2 bus / lunchroom monitors.

**Goals within Department:**

- With school fast approaching, our goal is to get our buses and staff ready for the upcoming school year.