

School District of West Salem
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2026
Marie Heider Meeting Room – 7:00 p.m.

As noted on the Public Meeting Notice: Live streaming of this meeting was available on our District's YouTube page.

Convene

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Catherine Griffin. The meeting was noticed to the Coulee Courier, La Crosse Tribune, WLSU Radio 89 FM, WXOW TV-19, WKBT-TV, WKTY, Union State Bank, First Community Credit Union, Village of West Salem, posted at each school, district website, and district office on March 6, 2026.

Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

Erik Peterson led everyone in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and Ben Garbers recited the District Mission Statement.

Roll Call

Present: Catherine Griffin, Erik Peterson, Ben Garbers, Bob Minard, Trish Harman and Jennifer Hatz. Also in attendance – Administration: Ryan Rieber, Justin Jehn, Alex Hubing, Heidi Horton, Shawn Handland, Scott Johnson and Alyssa Harlan; Student representatives: Lydia Jochen and Zeke Hyer. Recording secretary: Jennifer Larson. Excused: Caitlin Wilson and Ben Wopat.

Approval of Agenda

B. Garbers moved, T. Harman seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Written and Oral Reports

District Strategic Initiative updates from the Superintendent's Collaborative team and the Superintendent were reviewed.

CESA #4 Board of Control – C. Griffin reported on the Board of Control's agenda.

Student Art Show in the Heider Center was reported by Angie Hemker. School Board and Administration will pick the artwork, and it will hang in the Heider Meeting Room for 1 year.

Construction Project Update – Superintendent Rieber reported on the construction progress of the Elementary and High School projects.

Teaching and Learning Committee, – B. Garbers-Chair reported on Agenda Items: winter data for AIMS WebPlus (K-5 literacy), Personal Reading Plans (K-3), FastBridge (K-5 math) and I-Ready (6-8 math and reading) and the Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning.

Storm Ready Presentation – Scott Johnson presented along with Mark McGinnis from Skies Consulting and Michael Kurz from the National Weather Service the districts Storm Ready Plan to increase preparedness for severe weather.

Connection with the Community

Zeke Hyer, Student Representative, reported on:

The boys' basketball team is currently in the heat of the playoffs, following a recent regional final win over Onalaska. This marks the second consecutive year where our boys have knocked them out of the playoffs. The boys play this Thursday at Logan against Central for the Sectional

The girls' basketball team ended their season in a tough loss against Viroqua. State Wrestling for individuals was two weekends ago, where we had a record 5 individuals compete. Two of these 5 placed, with senior Mason Chambers taking 3rd at the 157lb weight class, and senior Caden Anderson taking 5th at the 195 lb. weight class.

The outdoor education class had a recent caving trip last week, where I and 4 others became the first to get lost in this cave on the trip. Nonetheless, it was a blast, and I am very grateful for the opportunities that class presents!

To end my section last Thursday the power went out in the town due to a squirrel somehow taking out power for some 4 thousand people. This led to the students getting out of school early. So I wanted to formally thank this squirrel for his contributions to the student body. He will be greatly missed.

Lydia Jothen, Student Representative, reported on:

Gymnastics went up to Wisconsin Rapids on Thursday after they took second as a team at sectionals. The team competed with Seniors Hayden Rhode and Olivia Maki, sophomores Brielle More, Candice Drury, and Anya Tenor, along with a few Bangor girls. They took 7th in D1. Individually, Hayden qualified on bars, and Olivia qualified on vault, both performing well. After the Weekend they went to Mrs. Jones' parents' house and had dinner with them.

With winter sports ending, that means that spring sports are starting up. The first track practice was tonight, and several other spring sports are starting open gyms and captain's practices.

NHS hosted a blood drive last week and received 62 units of blood, surpassing the 55-unit goal. Many students tried donating blood for the first time, some with better experiences than others. Each donor got a 15-dollar Amazon gift card and a free pint of ice cream at Culver's, along with a chance to win various local gift cards.

The math team competed at Eau Claire a few weeks ago. Unfortunately, only 2 students were able to attend, so they didn't get enough points to place as a team. However, after a grading error was uncovered, senior Katie Townsell took 2nd individually.

The play put on by high school students Too many Detectives in the Murder Mansion, had 3 showings that all went really well. There were tons of humor and the students did an amazing job portraying their famous characters such as Sherlock Holmes, Batman, and the Scooby Doo Squad. Something unique about this play was the ending was different for each showing.

A few Thursdays ago, we had a unique day at the high school. We started the day with the Senior vs staff basketball game, where the staff unfortunately won. At halftime, seniors who have made an impact on their winter activities were recognized. Then we listened to Uncle Reggie speak about never giving up when life gets hard. He also played some fun tunes, had the crowd singing, and played the soprano sax. Later that day, students had the chance to pick various activities they wanted to do, such as playing cars, broom ball at the Panther Den, basketball, and many more. The school ended the day by show choir putting on their performance for us all to watch.

Correspondence

A thank you card was read from the Paul Huber Family.

A Department of Public Instruction Proclamation declaring Child and Adult Care Food Program Week, March 15-21, 2026, was read.

Public Comments

Sara Steien and Heather Hordyk spoke on the 4th grade class size increase.

Consent Agenda

T. Harman moved, B. Minard seconded to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

- a. the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 23, 2026;
- b. the invoices to be paid;
- c. Co-curricular Recommendations: Odyssey of the Mind Coaches: Bruce Hart, Lauren Ellinger, Elijah Straub, Alex Straub, Nathan Eckley, Wayne Schaitel, Brooke Murpy, Michele Maland and Lindsey Gilberts; MS track coaches-Tucker Wildes, Mike Sanford, Adam Rogge, Laura Deal, volunteer girls soccer coach-Syden Jain, assistant MS softball coach-Lexi Hinker, head 8th grade MS softball coach-Lauren Lovely, head 7th grade MS softball coach-Katie Fink, volunteer baseball coaches-Isaac Olson and Jayden Beckley;
- d. to accept the donations from Cynthia and William Innes donated \$20.00 to the Random Acts of Kindness Fund; the Piper Family Fund of Thrivent Charitable Impact & Investing donated \$4005.65 to student scholarships and Donna Guepfer, Special Fester Fund donated \$1000.00 to the purchase of an adaptive bike.

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items:

J. Hatz moved, E. Peterson seconded to approve the first reading of Special Update (see below) **Wisconsin Local Policy Update Special Update - Act 57. 5-Aye, 1-Nay (Minard).** Motion carried.

po1213 STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE
po3213 STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE
po4213 STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE
po8462 CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Director of Finance, Shawn Handland presented a Fund 46 Review presentation. No action was taken.

The list of to do items / information requests was reviewed. No action was taken.

Adjournment

B. Garbers moved, T. Harman seconded to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik Peterson, Acting Clerk