

School District of West Salem
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
April 13, 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 7:01 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 April 8, 2026.

Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

Lydia Jothen led everyone in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and Zeke Hyer recited the District Mission Statement.

Roll Call

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

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.

Board President Catherine Griffin recognized student representatives Lydia Jothen and Zeke Hyer with certificates. Erik Peterson also received a certificate and plaque for his dedicated service on the West Salem School Board.

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

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

Art Department Presentations – K-12 District Honors Exhibit. Winning artwork was hung and winners were presented with a Certificate.

Connection with the Community

Lydia Jothen, Student Representative, reported on:

HOSA had its wellness day Friday afternoon. They had been planning this for months and hosted a variety of events. They had relaxing activities like reading with cats, educating activities like presenters on nutrition, and several physical activities like hiking and biking. In the morning, the seniors attended adulting sessions and prepared for their portfolio presentation, while the juniors were introduced to the panther portfolio. The freshmen and sophomores took the preACT.

The top 5% of seniors attended the honors banquet last Wednesday. The area schools were in attendance, and everyone had a nice meal while listening to some speakers.

The summer musical was recently decided, and it's going to be Grease. The roles just came out, and the cast is beginning to memorize their lines.

Track had another meet on Friday. This was their first outdoor meet. This was an open meet, so there were some fun races like the 4x1 with the throwers running, and they don't use a baton but instead use random objects like squishies, folding chairs, and rubber ducks.

Zeke Hyer, Student Representative, reported on:

The baseball team has started its season with a 2-2 record, and they just had a game today against Luther.

The softball team also started its season with a 6-1 record, with Senior Josie Brudos leading the show on the mound, and at the plate with 4 home runs to start the year.

The girls' soccer team started its season as well last week with an unfortunate loss to Madison West.

Ms. Maxwell and the Prom committee are in the final stretch of planning prom as their big day is May 2nd.

The juniors are also starting to get introduced to the Panther Portfolio project, as juniors have the opportunity to do their project over the summer if they would like.

Seniors are in the midst of the Panther Portfolio presentations in class before they present in front of judges on May 6th. Shortly after that, the class of 2026 graduates! Both Lydia and I will be speaking, so I hope to see most of the board there!

Correspondence

A Department of Public Instruction Proclamation declaring Month of the Military Child, April 1-30, 2026, was read.

A Department of Public Instruction Proclamation declaring the 41st annual National School Library month, April 1-30, 2026, was read.

A Department of Public Instruction Proclamation declaring Week of the Young Child®, April 11-17, 2026, was read.

A thank you card was read from Terri Martinson.

Public Comments

None.

Consent Agenda

C. Wilson moved, J. Hatz seconded to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

- a. the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 23, 2026;

- b. the invoices to be paid;
- c. Co-Curricular Recommendations: volunteer tennis coach coach-Annie Wachter-Labus, volunteer robotics coach-Ben Garbers;
- d. To hire Trevor Fink as a 1.0 FTE Career & Technical Education teacher;
- e. to accept the donations from Cynthia and William Innes donated \$20.00 to the Random Acts of Kindness Fund, Hidden Valley Designs, Inc. donated \$500 to the West Salem Trap team, an anonymous doner donated \$1000 to the Scholar Athletes Scholarship.

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items:

C. Wilson moved, E. Peterson seconded to proceed with drafting a county letter of support for school funding and a resolution in support of including voucher payments on property tax bills. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Live Streaming of the Board Meeting ended at 8:22p.m., as noted on the Public Meeting Notice.

Closed Session

C. Griffin welcomed the motion for closed session: The Board will discuss, consider and, if appropriate, take action pursuant to Wis. Stats §19.85(1) (c) Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility,” for the following purposes:

- Consideration of issuance of a preliminary notice of non-renewal for a professional staff member
- Superintendent evaluation
- Approval of closed session minutes from March 23, 2026

C. Griffin moved, J. Hatz seconded that the Board convene in closed session at 8:26 p.m. A roll call vote was taken: B. Minard, Aye; T. Harman, Aye; C. Griffin, Aye; E. Peterson, Aye; C. Wilson, Aye; B. Garbers, Aye; J. Hatz, Aye. Motion carried unanimously. Also in attendance: Jusitn Jehn, Heidi Horton, Ryan Rieber and Jennifer Larson.

Closed Session

Adjournment

B. Minard moved, B. Garbers seconded to adjourn at 10:11 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Wilson, Clerk