

School District of West Salem
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
April 27, 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 April 23, 2026.

Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

Caitlin Wilson led everyone in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and Trish Harman recited the District Mission Statement.

Roll Call

Present: Catherine Griffin, Caitlin Wilson, Trish Harman, Ben Garbers, Jennifer Hatz, Bob Minard and Nick Walters. Also in attendance – Administration: Ryan Rieber, Justin Jehn, Alex Hubing, Heidi Horton, Ben Wopat, Shawn Handland, and Alyssa Harlan; Student representatives: Tula Mitchell and Graham Sjoquist. Recording secretary: Jennifer Larson.

Approval of Agenda

J. Hatz moved, B. Minard seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Reorganization of the 2026-2027 School Board

Election of 2026-2027 School Board Officers

B. Garbers moved to nominate Catherine Griffin for the office of President. B. Minard moved, J. Hatz seconded to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Catherine Griffin as the President of the West Salem School Board. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Griffin moved to nominate Caitlin Wilson for the office of Vice President. B. Minard moved, N. Walters seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Caitlin Wilson as the Vice President of the West Salem School Board. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Griffin moved to nominate Jennifer Hatz for the office of Clerk. B. Garbers moved, B. Minard seconded to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Jennifer Hatz as the Clerk of the West Salem Board of Education. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Garbers moved to nominate Trish Harman for the office of Treasurer. B. Garbers moved, N. Walters seconded to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Trish Harman as the Treasurer of the West Salem School Board. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Minard moved, B. Garbers seconded a resolution to authorize the Board officers to borrow money for the 2025-2026 and the 2026-2027 school years per Wisconsin state Statutes 67.12(3). Motion carried unanimously.

T. Harman moved, C. Griffin seconded to select the Union State Bank of West Salem as the bank depository. Motion carried unanimously.

J. Hatz moved, B. Garbers seconded to authorize the use of facsimile and digitized signatures. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Wilson moved, N. Walters seconded to authorize the Board officers to invest surplus funds. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Minard moved, N. Walters seconded to continue with the current schedule, selecting the second and fourth Monday of each month for Regular School Board meetings, with a start time of 7:00 p.m.

B. Minard moved, N. Walters seconded to amend the motion to set only one meeting for December 14, 2026, and May 10, 2027. Amendment carried unanimously.

The motion, as amended, is to continue with the current schedule, selecting the second and fourth Monday of each month for Regular School Board meetings at 7:00 p.m., with the exception of one meeting on December 14, 2026, and May 10, 2027. Motion carried unanimously.

T. Harman moved, B. Garbers seconded to appoint Jennifer Larson as the Deputy Clerk and Shawn Handland as the Deputy Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

Board members should provide their input to the Board President regarding committee assignments by May 4, 2026.

J. Hatz moved, N. Walters seconded to select Catherine Griffin as the CESA #4 Representative. Motion carried unanimously.

Written and Oral Reports

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

Connection with the Community

Graham Sjoquist, Student Representative, reported on:

- Senior presentations
 - This week, Seniors are finishing up their Panther Portfolio presentations to their classes, and all they have left to do is their final presentations, which will be judged on May 6th.
- Prom
 - Prom is in the near future on Saturday, May 2nd! The junior class has put together a prom committee, and they have been helping set up prom since November. The junior class has also voted for prom court recently, and the members have been announced.
- Boys' tennis

- Boys' tennis is off to a strong start, even with all the weather causing cancellations and practices inside. They started off their season with a scrimmage against Tomah and have since had five matches, including a Quad at home.
- Golf
 - After a couple of weather cancellations, the golf team is starting off well with their last team win in Arcadia. They had their last varsity meet on Saturday in Sparta and performed well for the small school field.
- Baseball
 - The baseball team has started its season off on a good note with a 3-3 record in its conference and a 3-4 record overall. They have had 7 games and have their eighth season game tonight against Viroqua.

Tula Mitchell, Student Representative, reported on:

- Track
 - The Girls and Boys Track and Field team has had an excellent start to the season. They have had four indoor meets and six outdoor meets since the start of the season, with the latest being the Knights of Columbus meet on Saturday at UW-L. Also, last Tuesday at Logan, the girls 4x200 meter relay set a new school record!
- DECA
 - Four members of the DECA team headed to Internationals in Atlanta, Georgia last Friday. They will be competing from Saturday to Tuesday and will be back in West Salem this Wednesday.
- NHS
 - At the end of last week, the National Honor Society announced who the new members will be for the 2026-2027 year. NHS also announced their new officers for the upcoming year, as well as Induction for the new members and officers will be this Sunday at 6pm.
- Girls Soccer
 - The girls' soccer team is off to a strong start to their season. They have played 6 games so far this season with a record of 3-3. They have another full slate of games this week as well.
- Scholarship
 - This past week, the WIAA announced its Scholar Athlete Award recipients for all the divisions. Our own Josie Brudos earned this award for division 2. This is an honor as only four girls per division earn this award!

Correspondence

A thank-you card from Lydia Jochen was read.

Public Comments

None.

Consent Agenda

C. Wilson moved, B. Minard seconded to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

- a. the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of April 13, 2026;
- b. the invoices to be paid;
- c. Co-Curricular Recommendations: high school head football coach – Justin Jehn;

- d. to hire Makayla Nortman as a 1.0 FTE high school Math Teacher; Matthew Duster as a 1.0 FTE middle school Special Ed Teacher;
- e. the resignation of Faith Moser-high school Psychologist;
- f. to accept the donations from Janet Fritsch donated \$775.00 to middle school Odyssey of the Minds, Arndt, Buswell, & Thorn S.C. donated \$300.00 to middle school Odyssey of the Minds, La Crosse PR, INC donated \$560.00 to elementary school Odyssey of the Minds, Brittney Hodgson and Kyle Jones donated \$1000.00 to DECA Scholarship, the American Red Cross donated \$1100.00 to Scholarship funds, Cynthia and William Innes donated \$20.00 to the Random Acts of Kindness Fund

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items:

C. Wilson moved, B. Minard seconded to approve the teacher and school psychologist contracts for the 26-27 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

J. Hatz moved, N. Walters seconded to approve the contracts for vehicle drivers for the 26-27 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Garbers moved, C. Wilson seconded to approve a county letter of support for school funding and a resolution in support of including voucher payments on property tax bills. 6-Aye, 1-Nay (Minard). Motion carried.

C. Griffin moved, T. Harman seconded to approve the Budget Adjustments for 2025-2026. Motion carried unanimously.

The list of to-do items/Board member information requests was reviewed, and one duplicate item was removed.

Live Streaming of the Board Meeting ended at 7:55p.m., as noted on the Public Meeting Notice.

Closed Session

The Board did not convene in closed session.

Board Development

Superintendent Rieber provided a new Board Member welcome and orientation to all the Board Members.

District Strategic Initiatives were discussed, and Ben Garbers presented his research on mission statements.

Adjournment

C. Griffin moved, T. Harman seconded to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Wilson, Clerk