

School District of West Salem  
Regular Board Meeting Minutes  
June 8, 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 Acting President Caitlin Wilson. 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 June 4, 2026.

### *Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag*

Justin Jehn led everyone in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and Alyssa Harlan recited the District Mission Statement.

### *Roll Call*

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

Absent: Board Members Catherine Griffin and Bob Minard and Superintendent Ryan Rieber. Ben Wopat.

### *Approval of Agenda*

T. Harman moved, N. Walters seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

### **Written and Oral Reports**

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

### **Connection with the Community**

*Graham Sjoquist, Student Representative, reported on:*

- Track

The boys and girls track team has had a remarkable end to their season. At the conference meet both the boys and girls won the team championships. The boys won their 6th straight championship, and the girls won their 2nd straight championship. The teams then went on to regionals at GET. We had many individuals qualify for the sectional meet in Rice Lake. Both teams went on to win the team championships at regionals as well. At sectionals, we had phenomenal performances, including three new school records broken. Michael Torrance broke the 20-plus-year 800-meter record in a time of 1:56. Evan Berra set the 3200-meter record in a blazing time of 9:30. Olivia Maki reset her record again in the 300-meter hurdles. The following athletes/relays qualified for the state meet this past weekend at UWL: boys 4x1, boys 4x2, girls 4x8, Cade Donahue in the 200, Michael Torrance in the 800, Evan Berra in the 3200, Isaiah Laack in shot put, Kaylee Skiles in the 100, Olivia Maki in the 300H, and 100H. Congrats to all runners at state.

- Graduation

The class of 2026 graduated on May 22nd. Mrs. Jones gave the graduating class a farewell address to the graduating class. The seniors had a full day of fun activities, including a breakfast, senior sign-out, and one last walk through the schools. Congratulations graduates.

- Foreign Exchange Students

West Salem had the neat experience of hosting 5 foreign exchange students this year. They were Fiona from Germany, Youseff from Egypt, Sinna from Finland, Martina from Spain, and Fredrick from Germany. It was so cool to get to know the different cultures and traditions that they have.

- Panther Portfolio

As of May 30th, incoming seniors who got approved to start their Panther Portfolio Projects have begun working on them. There are a large number of students who got approved to start this summer, and many project ideas that are unique and fun for the students and the community.

*Tula Mitchell, Student Representative, reported on:*

- Baseball

The boys' baseball team finished their season last week, losing a close game to Merrill. Congrats on a great season, boys.

- Softball

The girls' softball team ended their season at the sectional semifinal last Tuesday, the 2nd. They played Baldwin Woodville and lost 0-4. They were regional champions and had an overall record of 21-4.

- Marching band

The high school Marching Band has officially started its summer band camp. They started last Monday, the 1<sup>st</sup>, and their last day is Friday, the 12th. During band camp, they learn the routine for the upcoming marching season and memorize their marching song for the season.

- Soccer

The girls' soccer team has started the playoffs. They won their first playoff game at home and then lost their next game in a shootout to Baldwin Woodville. Great season, girls.

- Grease

The cast for the summer musical, Grease, has been working extremely hard on the play. The opening day is on June 11th with a performance the next day on June 12th. They also have shows the next week on June 17th and 18th.

### *Correspondence*

A thank-you card from Addie Jehn and Amanda Beld was received and read.

A Department of Public Instruction Proclamation declaring June 14-20, 2026 Summer Food Service Program Week was read.

### *Public Comments*

Emily Wiedemann and Andrea Pierson spoke about 4K Open Enrollment.

### **Consent Agenda**

J. Hatz moved, N. Walters seconded to approve the following Consent Agenda items with the exception of item C. varsity boys' soccer coach recommendation, which was removed from the consent agenda for further discussion at the next Board meeting:

- a. the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of May 11, 2026;
- b. the invoices to be paid;

- c. Co-curricular Recommendations: varsity volleyball coach, varsity girls' tennis coach, varsity girls' cross-country coach, and WIAA Membership renewal;
- d. to hire Malena Lupient as a 1.0 FTE High School Counselor and Emily Phillips as a .75 FTE District Multilingual Learners Teacher;
- e. the resignation of Tabitha Kemp, School Counselor, and Ryan Olson, Athletic Director;
- f. to accept a donations from Cynthia and William Innes, in the amount of \$20.00 for Random Acts of Kindness Fund, West Salem Cares donated \$1000.00 to the Jane Doe Fund for the general balance, West Salem Cares donated \$406.55 to the Jane Doe Fund for the Senior balances.

Jane Doe donations from Tiffany Brenengen: \$17.45, Cynthia Lambert: \$5.25, Ann Donahue: \$2.75, Anna Graham: \$13.85, Carrie Gulley: \$3.25, Jessica Hauser: \$55.70, Ethan Hegge: \$13.20, Monika Logging: \$20.05, Ashley Nelson: \$29.95, Audra Nelson: \$288.05, Jennifer Odegard: \$5.45, Sara Patterson: \$21.75, Danielle Reichert: \$.30, Erica Schauf: \$.50, Amy Schmidt: \$12.45, Heidi Schwarz: \$117.35, Kimberly Volden: \$.90, Tabitha Kemp: \$16.55, Deb Kendhammer: \$5.20.

Motion carried, 3-0 with 2 Abstentions: 2 (T.Harman, B. Garbers)

**Discussion/Action Items:**

B. Garbers moved, N. Walters seconded to cancel the July 27, 2026, Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

B. Garbers moved, J. Hatz seconded to remove the 4K open enrollment cap for the 2026/2027 school year. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Justin Jehn explained to the board about the possible need for a policy change to our graduation policy due to potential WIAA tournament conflicts in the future. No action was taken.

**The list of to-do items/Board member information requests was reviewed.**

*Live Streaming of the Board Meeting ended at 8:07 p.m., as noted on the Public Meeting Notice.*

**Closed Session**

C. Wilson stated 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” regarding compensation and salary recommendations for individual district employees and administrative staff members for the 2026-2027 school year;

and Wis. Stats §19.85(1) (e) deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, for the purpose of discussing employee compensation with the West Salem Education Association for the 2026-2027 school year.

B. Garbers moved, T. Harman seconded that the Board convene in closed session at 8:08 p.m. A roll call vote was taken: T. Harman , Aye; N. Walters, Aye; C. Wilson, Aye; B. Garbers, Aye; and J. Hatz, Aye. Absent: B. Minard, and C. Griffin. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Also in attendance: Jennifer Larson, Crystal Becker and Shawn Handland.

*Closed Session*

B. Garbers moved, T. Harman seconded to reconvene into Open Session at 8:53 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

**Open Session**

**Discussion/Action Items:**

B. Garbers moved, N. Walters seconded to set wages for the support staff for the 2026-2027 school year. Motion carried, 4-0 with 1 Abstention (J. Hatz).

B. Garbers moved, N. Walters seconded to approve the agreement with the West Salem Education Association for the 2026-2027 school year. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

**Adjournment**

B. Garbers moved, N. Walters seconded to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully submitted,

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Jennifer Hatz, Clerk