

School District of West Salem
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
August 24, 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 August 20, 2026.

Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

Trish Harman led everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and Graham Sjoquist recited the District Mission Statement.

Roll Call

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

Approval of Agenda

N. Walters moved, C. Wilson seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Written and Oral Reports

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

Connection with the Community

Tula Mitchell, Student Representative, reported on:

- Tennis
 - The girls' tennis team has played 11 varsity matches and one jv match so far. They ended last week with their first home matches of the season, which was the La Crosse Invitational.
- First Day of School
 - The first day of school is approaching on August 31st. The Link Crew is preparing to assist the freshmen on their first day at the school and at the school forest.
- Homecoming
 - Homecoming is also rapidly approaching. This year, the football game is on September 18th against Black River Falls and the dance is September 19th. As soon as school starts, the student council will get right to work planning the activities for Homecoming Friday and the dance for Saturday.

Graham Sjoquist, Student Representative, reported on:

- Cross Country

- The cross country team has started strong with their first week of practice. Their first meet of the season is in Shorewood on Thursday. They are also sleeping overnight and practicing with Shorewood the next morning.
- Volleyball
 - The girls' volleyball team had their first week of practice last week and started to finalize the teams for this fall season. Their first games of the season is a tournament on August 28th and 29th in Appleton.
- Soccer
 - The soccer team also had their first week of practice and has figured out teams for the season. Their first game is tomorrow as they face off against Mount Horeb.
- Football
 - The football team has started their season off quickly. They had their first game of the season Friday, dominating Onalaska with the final score being 28-0.

Correspondence

None.

Public Comments

None.

Start of School Report from Superintendent Ryan Rieber.

Public Hearing

Public hearing to consider a request for early start of the 2027-2028 school year per WI State Statute 118.045 (3) – request a waiver for early start of school year due to excessive costs associated with the transportation of pupils who attend private schools that start prior to September 1.

C. Griffin called the hearing to order at 7:17 p.m. No one wished to speak. C. Griffin ended the hearing at 7:18 p.m.

Consent Agenda

C. Wilson moved, N. Walters seconded to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

- a. the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of August 10, 2026;
- b. the invoices to be paid;
- c. co-curricular recommendations: 7th grade Head Volleyball coach and 7th grade Assistant Volleyball coach;
- d. to hire Kayla Foley, HS Science Teacher, and Jolene Anderson, HS Business Education Teacher;
- e. the resignation of Jason Holter, High School Business Education Teacher;
- f. to accept donations from the La Crosse Area Community Foundation, which donated \$610.00 to the Jim's Grocery Bag-Schroeder Fund; Cynthia and William Innes for \$20.00 to the Random Acts of Kindness Fund; and Estates of West Salem LLC donated \$500.00 to the West Salem School District. Motion carried, unanimously (6-0).

Discussion/Action Items:

B. Garbers moved, T. Harman seconded, to approve the request to submit a waiver for an Early Start of the 2027-2028 school year due to excessive costs associated with the transportation of

pupils who attend private schools that start prior to September 1. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

J. Hatz moved, B. Garbers seconded, to adopt the Food Service Agreement with the School District of Bangor for the 26-27 school year. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

T. Harman moved, N. Walters seconded to adopt the following Resolution:

"Whereas the following school districts have students with disabilities, and whereas it appears that the educational interests of all children in these school districts will be served best by the districts joining together to offer special services, as authorized by the Department of Public Instruction, to meet the needs of the students with disabilities."

"Be it, and it is hereby resolved that the school boards of the School District of West Salem and the Bangor School District agree to establish and maintain, on a cooperative basis, a students with disabilities special education program(s) pursuant to Section 66.0301 of the Wisconsin Statutes." Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

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

Live Streaming of the Board Meeting ended at 7:28 p.m., as noted on the Public Meeting Notice.

Board Development

Superintendent Rieber and Director of Instruction, Alyssa Harlan, presented a draft of the Board's Collective Commitments. The board discussed the draft and made agreed-upon edits.

Superintendent Rieber led the Board on a tour of the new facilities and facilities currently under construction.

Adjournment

N. Walters moved, C. Wilson seconded to adjourn at 8:47 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Hatz, Clerk