

November 2025



Newsletter

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Letter from Superintendent Ryan

A Season of Gratitude, Growth & Confidence

As we move from October into November, it's hard to believe we're already shifting from fall co-curricular seasons into deer hunting, holiday gatherings, and winter weather. With the mild fall we've had, it's almost hard to imagine that November truly marks the gateway to winter, that time of year when any given day can bring a mix of sunshine, snowflakes, or something in between, much like a Thanksgiving plate with a little bit of everything!

If you've been in and around campus lately, you've seen that construction progress is well underway. Footings and foundations have been poured for the new elementary gymnasium, while excavation and foundation preparation are in

motion at the high school. Watching these transformations unfold is exciting, and it's another opportunity to say thank you to our community for your continued support in making these projects possible. You have truly helped shape the future of learning in West Salem.

At our Annual Meeting, the administration presented the Board with the 2025-26 budget and revenue limit worksheet. I'm proud to share that, despite a 12.7% increase in property values, the passing of two referendums, and declining enrollment, we can maintain last year's total tax amount. Even better, our mill rate will be \$1 lower than we projected and communicated to voters during the referendum process. More information on this will be included in our December newsletter. This

Letter continues on next page...

is outstanding news for our taxpayers and reinforces our commitment to responsible stewardship and community value. Careful planning, collaboration, and teamwork continue to drive our success. Proof that when a community comes together with integrity and focus, great things happen.

Later this month, the state will release school and district report cards, and we look forward to sharing those results with our community. We have much to be proud of and thankful for, from our talented students and dedicated staff to our supportive parents and community members. Together, we maintain high expectations and a shared focus on continuous improvement. As Eckhart Tolle once said, “Acknowledging the good that you have in life is the foundation of all abundance.”

In that spirit of abundance, I want to thank each of you for your continued partnership in making the School District of West Salem such a wonderful place to live, work, and learn.

As we approach Thanksgiving, I’m reminded of something that also applies beautifully to our district: You don’t find confidence, you build it. Confidence isn’t something that suddenly appears; it’s constructed brick by brick through choices, habits, and follow-through. Each time we honor a commitment, whether to a student, a teammate, or our community, we build proof of what we are capable of. Those small acts of integrity become the foundation of trust and belief in ourselves.

As a district, we continue to build that confidence every day. Through hard work, resilience, and unity, we’re creating something lasting and unshakable. As confidence grows stronger through experience, so too does our community when we face challenges together and keep moving forward.

From all of us in the School District of West Salem, thank you for your support, your trust, and the countless ways you help us grow stronger together.

I am wishing you and your family a warm, safe, and gratitude-filled Thanksgiving.

Ryan Rieber
Superintendent

Calendar of Events

November

Athletic Events

Saturday, November 15, 2025

- 8:30am Basketball: Girls Varsity Scrimmage vs. Altoona, Cochrane-Fountain City, Durand-Arkansaw & Fall Creek @ Fall Creek High School

Thursday, November 20, 2025

- 5:45pm Basketball: Girls JV Game vs. Central @ West Salem High School
- 7:00pm Basketball: Girls Varsity Game vs. Central @ West Salem High School

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

- 5:45pm Basketball: Boys C-Team/JV Game vs. New Richmond @ West Salem Middle School
- 7:00pm Basketball: Boys Varsity Game vs. New Richmond @ West Salem High School
- 7:00pm Ice Hockey: Girls Varsity Game vs. Baraboo @ Reedsburg Area Community Arena
- 7:00pm Ice Hockey: Boys Varsity Game vs. Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln @ South Wood County Recreation Center

Band Events

Sunday, November 23, 2025

- TBA Depart for Disney Trip
- Sunday, November 30, 2025
- TBA Return from Disney Trip

Elementary School Events

Thursday, November 6, 2025

- 6:15pm 4th Grade Music Concert @ Heider Center

Friday, November 7, 2025

- 7:20am Walking School Bus Meet at the corner of N. Tilson & W. Hamlin Streets

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

- 9:00am Veterans Day Program @ WSES Gym

Thursday, November 13, 2025

- 5:00pm Read Like an All Star Literacy Event @ WSES Gym

Friday, November 14, 2025

- 7:20am Walking School Bus Meet at the corner of N. Tilson & W. Hamlin Streets

Monday, November 17, 2025

- 6:00pm 4th Grade P.E. Night

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

- 8:15am 4th Grade to Madison Hoff, Allind & Wegner

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

- 8:15am 4th Grade to Madison Miller, Ihle & Steiner

Calendar of events continues on next page...

School District of West Salem

**Wednesday, November 26-Friday,
November 28, 2025**

All Day No School-
 Thanksgiving Brea

Middle School Events

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

8:00am Veterans Day
 Program @ WSMS
 Gym

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

All Day Trimester 1 Ends

**Wednesday, November 26-Friday,
November 28, 2025**

All Day No School-
 Thanksgiving Break

High School Events

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

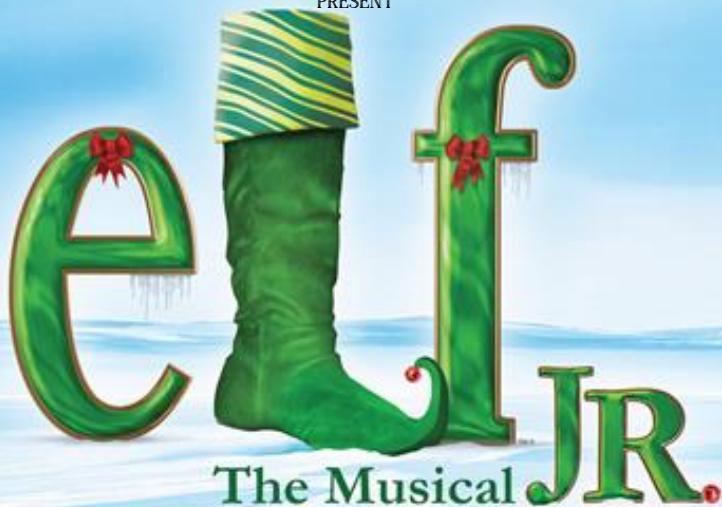
10:55am Veterans Day
 Program @ Heider
 Center

**Wednesday, November 26-Friday,
November 28, 2025**

All Day No School-
 Thanksgiving Break

School District of West Salem

THE WEST SALEM HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA & MUSIC DEPARTMENTS
PRESENT



elf Jr.
The Musical

Book by
Thomas Meehan and Bob Martin

Music by
Matthew Sklar Lyrics by
Chad Beguelin

Based on the New Line Cinema film written by David Berenbaum

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20
AND
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21

7:00 PM

MARIE W. HEIDER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

TICKETS – \$5.00 – AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR 1 HOUR BEFORE SHOWTIME

CLASS OF 2026: IT IS YOUR TIME

Senior year is finally here! We have an important yearbook deadline to keep in mind. Each senior needs to submit the following photos:

1. Yearbook Portrait

This photo is a traditional, formal head and shoulders pose. You may use this same portrait for everything if you would like.

***No full-length poses, hats, props, "misty" filters, or distracting backgrounds.**



2. Times of Our Lives

This may be less formal.



3. Baby Photo

This photo will be used to morph into the "big kid" photo for the Senior Slideshow. The best morphs are created using baby photos where the baby's face is the dominant part of the photo.



4. Senior Photo for Slideshow

This photo will be the photo that the baby photo morphs into for the slide show. It can be the same photo used for the Yearbook or Times of our Lives if you would like.

Photos due:
SAVE THE DATE
Friday, Nov. 7,
2025

Submit **300 dpi jpeg** photo(s) via email to armstrong.andrea@wsalem.k12.wi.us
Please label photos with the student name and publication - ex. JoeSmithYearbook.
Labeled hard copy photos can be dropped off to room 241 - silver box.

Homecoming 2025-Through the Decades



Fall Fun Run!

During our first Early Release Day of the year, our WSES students and staff got outside on a beautiful morning for their first Fall Fun Run to enjoy some exercise and fresh air! Whether running, walking, or somewhere in between, they took off on the 1/2 mile course around campus before finishing and enjoying a healthy snack! We'd like to give a huge thank you to Mr. Merrill, Mrs. Meyers, and Ms. Tischler for their hard work setting this up and making it such a fun event for all!



District Announcements



Preparing for Their Future

Students in English 11 got some important real world experience recently when they participated in mock interviews! Interviewers from several local businesses including Trane Company, Workforce Connections, Nesnah Ventures, Altra, and UW-La Crosse conducted 10-15 minute mock interviews with the students. During class, they discussed interview strategies and practiced answering questions to prepare for their interviews. The interviewers provided feedback on their ability to professionally answer questions about their education and work skills and experiences. It was a great day filled with valuable experiences for our students!



School Board Members

Catherine Griffin, President ~~~~~(608) 769-1714

Erik Peterson, Vice President ~~~~~(608) 792-5370

Trish Harman, Treasurer ~~~~~(608) 332-9222

Caitlin Wilson, Clerk~~~~~(608)780-3836

Bob Minard, Director~~~~~(608)786-9998

Ben Garbers, Director~~~~~(608) 498-9510

Jennifer Hatz, Director~~~~~(608) 317-3115

Board meetings are held the second and fourth Monday of every month

District Announcements

Heider Center



Art Gallery

“Discombobulated Arrangements” Ethereal Abstract
Mixed Media Works
by Cooper Calvetti
Runs October 14-November
21
Reception: Thursday,
November 13
6:00-7:30p.m.

Box Office Hours
(608) 786-2550
Monday &
Thursday: 1:30 to
4:00 p.m.
www.heidercenter.org

Assisted Living “The Home for the Holidays”
Saturday, November 22, 2025
7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$28/\$26/\$10

Rick Compton and Betsy Bennett are off their walkers once again in this all new, hysterical holiday sequel to the runaway hit about the nursing home and beyond. Christmas and retirement will never be the same as the characters bring new meaning to decking the halls, spinning the dreidel and trimming the Kwanzaa bush.



Looking for Important Dates?

The district school year calendar, as well as individual building events and athletic events can all be found on our district website. Go to www.wsalem.k12.wi.us and navigate to the top right corner and click on the calendar icon. From here, you can view the school year calendar, Coulee Conference Athletic calendar, Mississippi Valley Athletic calendar, and individual building events.



Seasonal Goodness

Our school nutrition department recently started a new initiative at our elementary school where students have a chance to sample a recipe at lunch that incorporates the Harvest of the Month, a local, seasonal produce item. October's Harvest of the Month was apples and students had a chance to try out some delicious apple crisp served by some of our fourth grade volunteers before it was served as their “sweet treat” of the week for “Sweet Treat Thursday!” We love seeing them try new foods and recipes!





REFERENDUM PROJECT UPDATES

What is Happening with the Construction Projects?



We are now two months into the school year, there are a lot of exciting things happening around campus. To ensure the safety of everyone with the construction projects starting, please read signs and do not enter construction zones!

Work completed thus far on the Elementary School includes erosion control, temporary rock access for the road, parking, and prep areas as well as site demolition and building excavation. We are about 3.5% complete on construction but will start to see additional movement in the coming weeks. We are excited to continue to watch the gym addition evolve.

The ground has officially been broken over at the High School site. Thanks to all the staff, community members, and board members who attended the groundbreaking on October 8. It was an exciting day for the District as we start to renovate and build spaces that will provide fantastic opportunities for our students here at WSHS for years to come.

Construction design documents were sent out to bid mid-October with approval from the board scheduled for the end of October. Construction has started on the relocation of the long jump, triple jump, and pole vault areas. As construction starts to pick up, we will have a web page that will be on the District site where you can see photos and footage of the construction projects at both sites. Stay tuned in the next few weeks for the publishing of that page!



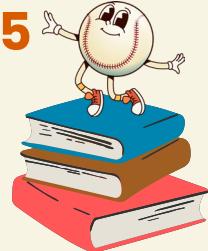


WEST SALEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

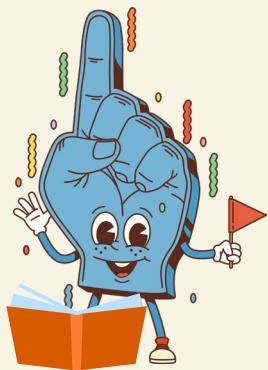
READ LIKE AN ALL-STAR

NOVEMBER 13, 2025

5:00 – 6:30 P.M.



JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF
GUEST READERS, GAMES,
PRIZES, AND MORE!



DINNER WILL BE
AVAILABLE TO
PURCHASE FROM
4:30 – 7:00 P.M.
CASH ONLY!



School District of West Salem

School District of West Salem

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2025

Marie Heider Meeting Room

7:00 p.m.

Convene

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 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, WKTW, Union State Bank, First Community Credit Union, Village of West Salem, posted at each school, district website, and district office on September 18, 2025.

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

C. Griffin read a statement from Bob Gollnik regarding no longer serving on the board due to a recent move out of the district.

Approval of Agenda

E. Peterson moved, B. Garbers seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Written and Oral Reports

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

Business Operations Report – E. Peterson reported that the committee was presented a review of the revenue limit worksheet and the short-term borrowing amount request at the meeting prior to the regular board meeting on September 22, 2025.

Transportation Update Stat Update – Rick Kline presented a transportation update for 24/25 and for the start of the 25/26 school year. He provided updates on staffing, new busses, software and technology.

Connection with the Community

Zeke Hyer, Student Representative, reported on: This past Friday our football team won against Arcadia 13-0 after just 8 minutes of playing time due to weather cancellations. The Panthers will play this week at Luther for their homecoming with our homecoming being the following week.

The soccer team has had a solid start to the season with 2-3 conference records, the team has a game tomorrow against Aquinas.

Volleyball had a tournament in Austin MN this last weekend, where they took first with a 4-0 record. This past Wednesday they had a unique practice. Instead of practicing in the gym, they headed over to Fox hollow for some sand volleyball and then had some team bonding time over dinner.

Student Council has been staying busy with homecoming week just one week away, members are very excited for powderpuff as practices started just today, and members are busy in their respective grades organizing lip syncs and floats.

Foreign exchange students Fiona and Frederick from Germany, Youssef from Egypt, and Martina from Spain! I have gotten the opportunity to get to know Youssef and Frederick and they are both amazing people. Not only do these students learn a ton from us, but also the student body learns a ton from these students!

Lydia Jothen, Student Representative, reported on: The band has spent the last week learning a field show for halftime, but unfortunately, since the game was cancelled, we did not get to perform. Instead, we spent a few hours in the band room waiting out the storm, playing games like ninja, euchre, and learning how to toss a color guard. This Sunday despite there being rain in the forecast, it held off, and the band was able to march this last weekend in the Applefest Parade!

A few Fridays ago we had Cody Greenwood, a motivational speaker, and Rebecca Brunner, a singer who was on American Idol come to the high school. There was a concert set up with lights and loud music. Then Cody told us a story about his relationship with his father who sadly committed suicide. He used a roller coaster analogy to make us think about who the harness is. Who are the people who will keep us safe and protected when we feel thrown upside down. We discussed it in our homerooms after, and overall the students seemed to be engaged.

School District of West Salem

School District of West Salem Regular Board Meeting Minutes September 22, 2025 Marie Heider Meeting Room

7:00 p.m

The Outdoor Education class, which is a senior PE class, took their canoe trip on the Black River last Wednesday. I was also on the trip, and everyone had tons of fun! In the morning we got pored on, and our canoes filled with water, but by the afternoon it was sunny and warm. We cooked out on the beach, played spike ball, went cliff jumping, and one girl even found a friendly stray cat and canoed the rest of the way back to take it home and keep it as a pet!

Correspondence – None.

Public Comments – None.

Consent Agenda

E. Peterson moved, B. Minard seconded to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

- a. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 8, 2025
- b. Invoices to be paid
- c. Co-curricular recommendations: head gymnastics coach-Carrie O'Hearn, head girls' basketball coach-Mike Malott, head boys wrestling coach-Josh Brewer, head boys' hockey coach-Richard Brown, head girls' hockey coach-Jamie Olson, head 8th grade boys' basketball coach-Anthony Schultz, assistant 8th grade boys' basketball coach-Nick Schultz
- d. Donations

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items:

Shawn Handland presented the preliminary numbers for the Revenue Limit Worksheet. No action was taken.

B. Garbers moved, E. Peterson seconded to approve the following borrowing resolution: "Be it resolved that the School District of West Salem will borrow from Union State Bank on a shortterm revenue anticipation basis, from time to time, in one or more advances, the sum not to exceed \$5,000,000 at any one time, for the operation of the schools of the district. Be It Further Resolved that the West Salem School District by its President and District Clerk shall execute a Promissory Note of the School District to be dated September 22, 2025 in the amount of \$5,000,000 with an interest rate of 5.50% and payable

in full on June 30, 2026." Motion carried unanimously.

Ryan Rieber gave a Strategic Plan Reauthorization and update. No action was taken.

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

Live Streaming of the Board Meeting ended, as noted on the Public Meeting Notice. Live Stream Ends at 7:51 p.m.

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, regarding the employment and compensation of a district employee.

B. Garbers moved, B. Minard seconded that the board convene in closed session at 7:54 p.m. A roll call vote was taken: C. Griffin, Aye; E. Peterson, Aye; C. Wilson, Aye; T. Harman, Aye; B. Garbers, Aye; and B. Minard, Aye. Motion Carried (6-0)

Closed Session

Adjournment

C. Griffin moved, B. Garbers seconded to adjourn at 8:57 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Caitlin Wilson, Clerk



JOIN OUR TEAM!

We Are Looking for Bus Drivers!

[APPLY VIA WECAN](#)



Bus Driver

Key Responsibilities

- Current CDL or willing to obtain one
- Ability to work well with students of all ages
- Complete a pre trip inspection & keep the bus clean and orderly
- Approximately 3- 3.5 hours per day

Benefits of Joining Us

- CDL Training & Costs provided by district if needed
- Starting at \$25.52/hour
- Enjoy a school year schedule!
- Ability to take extra trips

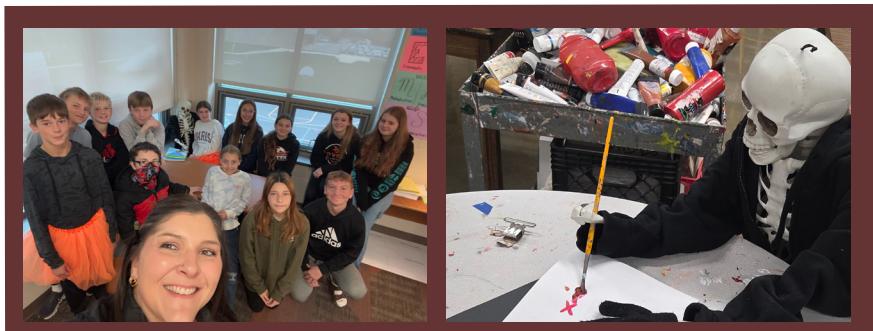


School District of West Salem

A Little Bit of Fun at WSMS

Meet West Salem Middle School's newest seasonal employee, Mr. Bones! He was on his way out of the building, when Mr. Seigenthaler, our custodian, decided to rescue him and take him on a few adventures! He has made his way all over the middle school from the kitchen, to receiving, and the art and

STEM classrooms to Ms. Beld's office! Students and staff love seeing where he ends up everyday, and he's even gotten in on a few selfies! Thanks for spreading some smiles and cheer!



Did You Know?

Cranberries are the state fruit of Wisconsin!

**CRAVE
CRANBERRIES**



Check out videos and photos of the innovative things happening in your student's classroom at our district Facebook page and Instagram page. Our social media features videos of student activities, teacher features, classroom selfie photos, etc...

Check out our Facebook page
@SchoolDistrictofWestSalem
and

Follow us on X
@WestSalemSD
and Instagram
@schooldistrictofwestsalem



For WSHS athletic events, visit our website:

- *click the calendar icon and then
 - *click Coulee Conference/ Mississippi Valley Conference
 - For WSMS athletic events,
 - *click the calendar icon and then
 - *Three Rivers Conference

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