

**WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR MARCH BOARD MINUTES
MARCH 5, 2025
In Person and Zoom**

The Regular March Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Wyoming Valley West School District was held at the Middle School and on Zoom on the above date. Meeting was called to order at 7:23 pm by President Kamus. The following Board Members answered present to roll call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus. Superintendent Tosh, Finance Manager Kachurak, Attorney Messinger, and Board Secretary Bullock were present. Student representative Emily Bolan was also present.

Moment of Silence was followed by a salute to the flag.

Mr. Novrocki, Mr. Shook, Mr. Sharkus, and Mr. Bonczewski gave a brief presentation on the 2025-2028 District Comprehensive Plan.

President Kamus announced that an executive session was held prior to this meeting to discuss multiple personnel issues, and executive sessions were also held February 12th, 19th, and 25th for superintendent interviews.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD – Emily Bolan

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Mr. Tosh thanked Mr. Novrocki, Mr. Shook, Mr. Bonczewski, Mr. Sharkus, Mr. Waskevich, and Mr. McGinley for all their contributions and all the administrators in the district. The Comprehensive Plan, from having done a number of them over the years, is very time-consuming hard work that creates a lot of sleepless nights. Thank you for a great presentation and for all your hard work. Friday, March 14th is an In-Service Day with no classes for students and Friday, March 28th is now an ACT 80 Day with early dismissal. This is a make-up from a January postponement. Thank you to all our administrators, teachers, and staff for making Read Across America Week such a great tradition and a great learning experience. I had the opportunity to read at Dana St. last week to Mrs. Sutton's Kindergarten class. If you never read to a Kindergarten class, I highly recommend it. I would also like to thank our Federal Programs Coordinator, Debbie Troy, along with the district consultant, Kim Walck. Last year they started Title I Family Engagement Nights, and they have evolved into a terrific academic learning opportunity for teachers, parents, and students. We are very proud of the tremendous turnout we are getting for these very popular events. Tomorrow night we will have Third Ave. from 5:00 to 7:00, State Street tomorrow night from 6:00 to 8:00 and next week the Middle School on Tuesday from 5:00 to 7:00. We are also very excited to announce that our state-of-the-art STEM Lab is now virtually complete. We will have an official grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony next Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. and we are currently working on a night for the community to come in and see this tremendous academic resource. The day and details are still being worked out. I would like to acknowledge Mrs. Carey, High School Principal, Mr. Waskevich, Mr. Bonczewski, Mr. Hettes, and Mrs. Gordon. I am always hesitant to name people, if I forget someone, I apologize. These people have worked extremely hard to get this state-of-the-art STEM Tutoring Lab up. I think it is going to be a great resource that this district is going to be very proud of. It is going to be able to be used by students, high school, middle school, and ultimately, we will have some elementary kids there also. Finally, with sadness, this week I was informed that our Field Hockey Coach, Linda Fithian, her assistants, Diane Webster, and volunteer coach, John Fronzoni submitted their resignations as coaches of the Wyoming Valley West Girls Field Hockey Team. Over the past 29 seasons, under their leadership, the girls made 23 trips to the District Championship Game, 29 years and 23 trips. They were fourteen-time District II Champions and nine times runner up. They made six trips to the State Elite 4 and 3 trips to the State Finals. They were two-time State Champions in 2003

and 2019, and one-time a state runner up in 2017. Overall, Coach Fithian compiled an amazing record of 437 wins, 112 losses, and 15 ties in her now legendary career. I am not sure those records will ever be broken. In addition, Coach Fithian was responsible for a multitude of Lady Spartans receiving athletic scholarships to compete on the collegiate level and always emphasized athletics are not a right, they are a privilege. Coach Fithian always made her girls academics come first and field hockey second. While we will miss Coach Fithian and her staff, we thank them for their contributions, their professionalism, and running one of the truly great athletic programs, not only in this area, but in the entire state of Pennsylvania. Congratulations and thank you to Coach Fithian and her staff.

STATEMENTS FROM INTERESTED CITIZENS

Citizens addressing the Board are asked to state their name and town of residence in accordance with Board Policy #903 (copy available). Statements are limited to three minutes.

(none)

MINUTES APPROVED

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Cussatt, that the Board of School Directors approve the minutes of the Regular **February 5, 2025** Board Meeting and the Regular **January 15, 2025** Board Meeting. Voice vote. **Motion Carried.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Dubaskas, *Athletics*, echoed the comments of Mr. Tosh, for Coach Fithian. We will be actively looking for someone to fill her shoes, a very large pair of shoes to fill. We started our spring sports this week baseball, softball, and boys volleyball. We are working on getting our fields ready, which is never easy, especially with a hard winter with ice. It is finally thawing out. We are planning to run our JV, 7th and 8th grade programs, up at State Street. We previously used Swoyersville Field, our coach wants to move the 7th and 8th up to State Street because there are locker rooms, cameras, and a whole bunch of things we could use. One of the things required, a backstop, but there is no fencing for the dugout areas for the kids to sit in. Dave Cordes got a proposal from a local fencing company for fences on both sides to protect the benches where the players sit. (\$1850) We will need them very soon. We cannot have a game there until we put up fences to protect the people on the bench. Our baseball coach had his whole staff up there on Monday digging out. Dave got several tons of dry mix dirt needed for the field and they tore up the whole infield to redo the pitcher's mound. They are going to make it a very playable field. We just need to get the fencing to protect them while they are on the bench.

Mr. Kobusky mentioned Community Park in Plymouth had a new back stop put up when WWV was using it years ago. Plymouth would be happy to let the district use it if Mr. Gill is looking for another field.

Mr. Keating, *Contracts & Personnel, Finance*, it is very difficult to sum up in a word or phrase the accolades that Coach Fithian and her staff deserve. What they have done for this program, the success of it, thank you for everything, really special to our school for everything that they have done. He thanked Dave Novrocki and the department chairs for a job well done on the Comprehensive Plan. He reported after discussing with Rob that our General Fund has grown by \$5.5 million from where it was last year at this time. There is \$4.6 million in our Capital Projects Fund as of February 28, 2025. He is going to work very hard with Rob and the committee before he gets off the Board later this year, to reserve a substantial amount of this fund balance built over the last couple of years, for dedicated capital projects in our school district and to make sure the money is not spent irresponsibly. There has been a lot of work by this whole entire Board and the staff that has been a part of growing this money. There is wonderful opportunity for our school district to do great things in the future. Rob has done a tremendous job with getting us to where we are at today with what he has been handed off. Our accounts, in the economy that we are in and the

instability, are still earning a steady fixed 3.95% and overall across all funds, total growth up \$9.1 million from where it was last year at this time. Things are looking up for the school district in terms of our financial future and as for the Personnel Committee, lots of balls in the air, big ticket items with the superintendent, operations manager and 11 teaching positions that are going to need to be filled before the beginning of the next school year. Lots of good things and lots of work to be done.

Mr. McGinley, *Education/Policy*, the Comprehensive Plan presented tonight is something most people are not aware of, something behind the doors, but certainly an element for the school district to continue to progress and provide a proper education to our students. He thanked everyone for their work on the plan. There are a lot of new policies tonight for a first reading with a second reading next month. The committee has done a great job preparing them.

Mr. Hardwick, *Special Education*, Special Education Director, Marya Baratta, sent a newsletter around. We welcome two new teachers, Jill Webb, Autistic Support at Chester Street and Megan Small, Emotional Support at State Street. The Special Education Department is looking for donations for baskets and gift cards for their Wellness In-Service.

Mr. Dicton, *Safety*, the ID badges are moving forward. Middle School has been working hard with some of the younger kids forgetting them. Mr. Bond worked on 10 or more misses of not having your badge, not being prepared. There is a consequence for less than 10, parents are Robo called and reminded about the procedure. If it continues, students will have OSS until a parent comes in to explain why the student is not wearing their ID on a daily basis.

At Dana Street we are going to revamp the parent drop-off procedure starting on Monday. Mr. DeRocco put together a nice letter with a map he sent to all parents in a Remind, today the letter went home to all parents. We are going to be there the next two mornings to remind parents. This will be posted on the website tomorrow and on the Facebook page on Sunday. We will start this new initiative on Monday and work through some hiccups that may come forward. With the help from Forty Fort and Mr. DeRocco and his team, it should be a smooth transition as we move forward.

Mr. Dicton told the Board he has a sample cell phone locking bag with the unlocking station in his office. Previously, the state never moved forward with requiring schools to mandate the bag.

The bus contract expires in the 2025-2026 school year. The language requiring buses to have cameras can be added into the next contract. We have one contractor who voluntarily put cameras on the majority of their buses (we have 13 currently running) and all their vans (50-60 currently) have cameras.

Mr. Kamus, *Buildings & Grounds*, Chief Kotchik is in the building tonight. Officer Sosnoski had a culprit in school vandalizing the new bathrooms. He thanked Officer Sosnoski for all his hard work and his dedication. Mr. Cordes received two roof estimates, the Wellness Center \$125,000 and the Rectory about \$32,000. We should consider these for the budget for next year. The basement at Third Ave. has been dry for the most part, Mr. Cordes will check it again tomorrow morning. The solicitors are setting up a meeting with SitelogIQ.

Mr. Kobusky asked about making two parking spaces in front of the main entrance to State Street School handicapped parking for staff. He asked about adding paint and carpet for some rooms at the high school into the budget, possibly doing in-house work. The high school elevator parts hopefully should be coming in this month.

GENERAL RECOMMENDED ACTION

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Wilson that the Board of School Directors act on the following General Recommended Items:

1. Approved **Real Estate Property Tax Exemption** through the Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission to the following, as presented:
 - ❖ Kevin C Havens
 - ❖ Thomas Mahavits
2. Adopted **Policy 701**, Facilities Planning. (First Reading)
3. Adopted **Policy 702**, Gifts, Grants, Donations. (First Reading)
4. Adopted **Policy 703**, Sanitary Management. (First Reading)
5. Adopted **Policy 704**, Maintenance. (First Reading)
6. Adopted **Policy 705**, Facilities and Workplace Safety. (First Reading)
7. Adopted **Policy 706**, Property Records. (First Reading)
8. Approved recommendation to retire **Policy 706.1**, Disposal of Surplus Property, Obsolete Equipment, and Real Estate. (First Reading)
9. Adopted **Policy 707**, Use of School Facilities. (First Reading)
10. Adopted **Policy 708**, Lending of Equipment and Books. (First Reading)
11. Adopted **Policy 709**, Building Security. (First Reading)
12. Approved recommendation to retire **Policy 715**, Use of Fax Machines. (First Reading)
13. Adopted **Policy 716**, Integrated Pest Management. (First Reading)
14. Adopted **Policy 717**, Cellular Telephones. (First Reading)
15. Adopted **Policy 718**, Service Animals in Schools. (First Reading)
16. Approved recommendation to retire **Policy 719**, Metal/Weapon/Security Screening Systems/Devices. (First Reading)
17. Approved the **2025-2028 District Comprehensive Plan** which includes the District Gifted Education Plan, the District Induction Plan and the District Professional Development Plan as per requirements by PDE, as presented.
18. Approved Tom Templeton with **Templeton Advantage, LLC** to conduct the search for a Director of Human Resources, at a cost of \$5,000. This fee will be an additional stipend to the district's existing contract with Templeton Advantage, LLC to conduct a superintendent search. All other terms and conditions outlined in the existing contract will remain unchanged.
19. Approved Letter of Agreement between Wyoming Valley West School District and **The Meadows** for the 2025/2026, 2026/2027, and 2027/2028 school years, as presented. (This is only in effect if a student from our district is hospitalized at The Meadows.)
20. Approved 5-year extension of current agreement with **Crown Castle** for district-wide fiber WAN service beginning E-Rate Funding Year July 1, 2025.
21. Approved **Settlement Agreement** pursuant to File ODR 30537-24-25 KE.
22. Approved continuation of the search for a new **superintendent** candidate.

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky (no #18), Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Amended Item on Agenda:

Motion made by Mr. Kobusky, seconded by Mr. McGinley to table **Item #12** under Staff Recommended Action.

Roll Call: Wilson (no), Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt (abstain), and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Dubaskas, that the Board of School Directors act on the following Staff Recommended Items:

1. Approved **excused absences** February 1, 2025 – February 28, 2025.
2. Approved addition to **Substitute Teacher** list: **Julia Franks**
3. Approved **long term status** for the following substitute teacher:
 - ❖ **Anistad Hackett** – effective, February 28, 2025.
4. Approved the following **Teacher Mentor** for 2024/2025:

<u><i>New Teacher</i></u>	<u><i>Mentor</i></u>	<u><i>Building</i></u>
Jill Webb	Tiffany Kuzma	Chester Street
5. Approved request from Allison Button, **Mickey Mouse Club Advisor**, for Junior and Senior members, to attend Walt Disney World, Orlando, Florida, November 30, 2025 – December 5, 2025. (No cost to the District)
6. Approved the following **transfer of positions**:
 - ❖ **Kim Resetar** – from General Duty Aide/Dana Street to General Duty Aide (year-round)/Central Office, effective February 19, 2025.
 - ❖ **Anthony Dietrick** – from Utility/State Street to Head Custodian/Dana Street, effective February 24, 2025.
7. Appointed the following **new hires**:
 - ❖ **Eskarlette Rivas-Polanco** – General Duty Aide-Office/Dana Street, \$12.00/hr. effective February 18, 2025.
 - ❖ **Aura Polanco** – Clerk/Dana Street, \$12.50/hr. effective February 10, 2025.
 - ❖ **Ana Celia Crisostomo-Guzman** – Cleaner/State Street, \$13.50/hr. effective February 25, 2025
 - ❖ **April Ash** – Cleaner/State Street, \$13.50/hr. effective February 12, 2025.
 - ❖ **Haylee Gillispie** – Cleaner/Dana Street, \$13.50/hr. effective February 18, 2025.
 - ❖ **Michael Robins** – Custodian (2nd shift)/Dana Street, \$13.50/hr. effective February 18, 2025.
 - ❖ **Amanda Peters-Davis** – Nurse Assistant/Floater, \$152.50/day effective March 10, 2025.
 - ❖ **Amara Rodriguez-Encarnacion** – Autistic Support Aide/High School, \$13.50/hr. effective March 3, 2025.
 - ❖ **Shawwna Washko** – Cleaner/High School, \$13.50/hr. effective February 24, 2025.
 - ❖ **Jaime Wright** – Autistic Support Aide/State Street, \$13.50/hr. effective February 24, 2025.
 - ❖ **Elvira Spiegel** – Cleaner/State Street, \$13.50/hr. effective July 16, 2024.
 - ❖ **Stacey Kase** – Emotional Support Aide/Middle School, \$13.50/hr. effective March 3, 2025.
8. Accepted the following **resignations**:
 - ❖ **Sahar Graham** – Emotional Support Aide/State Street, last day March 4, 2025.
 - ❖ **Wanda McAllister** – Emotional Support Aide/Middle School, last day February 28, 2025.
 - ❖ **Trebor Gibson** – Autistic Support Aide/State Street, last day March 8, 2025.
 - ❖ **Elvira Spiegel** – Cleaner/State Street, last day September 6, 2024.
 - ❖ **Sadie Fuller** – Emotional Support Aide/State Street, last day March 14, 2025.
 - ❖ **Matthew Yasenchak** – Cleaner/State Street, last day February 24, 2025.
 - ❖ **Jessica Swartwood** – Cleaner/High School, last day January 10, 2025.

- (TABLED)
9. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **Larena Meltzer**, 1st Grade Teacher, Dana Street, effective the last day of the 2024/2025 school year.
 10. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **Kathleen Shaw**, 3rd Grade Teacher, State Street, effective the last day of the 2024/2025 school year.
 11. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **Edward Michaels**, Physical Education/Health Teacher, High School, effective the last day of the 2024/2025 school year.
 12. Rescind resignation, due retirement, **Amy Rothschild**, Title I Teacher, State Street, effective the last day of the 2024/2025 school year.
 13. Accepted resignation agreement, with regret, due retirement, **Anna Marie Hampton**, Personnel Secretary/Central Office, effective September 2, 2025.
 14. Child-Bearing Leave, **Emp. #675875**, effective March 17, 2025; returning the first day of the 2025/2026 school year.
 15. Medical Leave, **Emp. #153552**, extension; returning the first day of the 2025/2026 school year.
 16. Approved dismissal of **Emp. #418582**, effective immediately.
 17. Appointed the recommended candidate, **Casey Shipman**, Special Education Teacher, Learning Support/High School, \$46,500, effective TBD.
 18. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **Barry Hendershot**, Cleaner/Middle School, last day May 9, 2025.
 19. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **David Tosh**, Superintendent, effective the last day of five-year contract, June 30, 2025.

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

FINANCE RECOMMENDED ACTION

Moved by Keating, seconded by Wilson, that the Board of School Directors approve the following:

1. Accepted and approved the following as presented: **Bills for Payment, Finance Manager's Reports and Treasurer's Report.**

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

Mr. Kachurak said we are in the process of beginning the budget for the 2025/2026 school year. It has been a pleasure working with both individuals (Mrs. Hampton and Mr. Tosh) for the one year and one day he has been at this District. They will be missed.

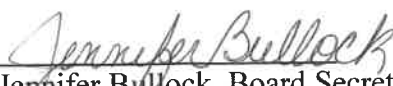
NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Cussatt, that the Board of School Directors adjourn this meeting.

Motion Carried.

Adjourned: 8:27 p.m.


Jennifer Bullock, Board Secretary

A tape of this meeting will be maintained at the District Office until the minutes are accepted at the next scheduled Board Meeting.