

Board of Education Minutes

January 28, 2026

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held in hybrid format on January 28, 2026, beginning at 6:30 PM. Present were Mrs. Wagner, Mrs. Main, Mr. Stefanowicz, Dr. Towle-Weicksel, Mr. Burdick, Mrs. Mello, Mr. Austin, and Mrs. Friend. Also, in attendance were Mr. Hopkins, Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Trammell, Business Manager, Randy Rumrill, Facilities Director, Greg Cormier, IT Coordinator, and Anna Zeeman, Student Ambassador.

Summary:

The Board of Education meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM with no public comment or correspondence. The Board received updates on student activities, instructional benchmarks, financial trends, and district operations, including technology upgrades following the cyber incident, facilities maintenance needs, and equipment safety concerns.

The Board reviewed the NEASC accreditation report, noting commendations and priority areas for improvement, and discussed ongoing budget considerations and anticipated insurance reimbursement. The Board voted to serve as the Executive Search Committee for the Superintendent and approved issuing an RFP for a search consultant. Contract negotiations with paraeducators and custodial staff were scheduled to begin, and a stipend committee was formed. Discussion of the Bring Your Own Device policy was tabled pending further administrative review.

The consent agenda was approved, and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

1. Call to Order

- Mrs. Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comment

Please be advised that our meeting structure does not allow for two-way dialogue during public Comment, but the Board uses this information to guide their decision-making. Depending on the topic, they may ask the Superintendent or another District employee to follow up with you. Likewise, public comments might lead to a topic being added to a future meeting agenda.

- There was no public comment.

4. Correspondence

- There was no correspondence.

5. Reports

a. Superintendent

- Superintendent Hopkins provided an update on district operations and ongoing initiatives, including financial monitoring and contract discussions.

b. BOE Chair

- The Chair reported on the Board's continued review and understanding of district financials.

c. Student Ambassador Report

- Quarter 3 has begun; report cards will be issued soon and midterms have been completed.
- A "Screenagers" screening with a mixed panel discussion will be held on February 5 at Wheeler Library; RSVP is required.
- A school lunch survey indicated positive feedback on food quality and diversity; suggestions included more reusable items, additional recycling, and composting.
- Elementary benchmark assessments are underway using IXL for math and tools for ELA; teams are meeting monthly to review data and plan instruction.
- Upcoming activities included a school-wide spelling bee.
- Student teaching placements were noted.
- Clubs and activities updates included:
 - Debate team considering hosting a debate at Wheeler.
 - Travel Club traveling to Rome in two weeks with fundraising events including a soup night.
 - Model UN scheduled for March in New York City at the UN headquarters.
- No specific concerns were reported regarding overall student experience.

d. Financial Report

i. End of Year Projection – Kathy Trammell

- Medical benefits and unemployment costs are trending favorably.
- Special education out-of-district costs remain unfavorable.
- FMLA usage continues to impact staffing.

- Fewer staff enrolled in medical benefits than anticipated.
- The district is awaiting approximately \$100,000 in insurance reimbursement related to the cyber incident, which has otherwise been resolved.

ii. Technology – Greg Cormier

- Greg Cormier provided a comprehensive update on district IT modernization efforts following the cyber incident:
 - Replacement of classroom desktops with laptops.
 - Smartboard upgrades.
 - Implementation of the camera and door security system.
 - Network switch and Wi-Fi upgrades in collaboration with LEARN.
 - Transition to cloud-based storage using OneDrive.
 - Implementation of multi-factor authentication.
 - Use of Securly for student device monitoring.
 - Removal of compromised printers and transition to centralized printing.
- Upcoming and planned initiatives include:
 - Upgrading the elementary school camera system to match the high school and eliminate blind spots.
 - Completing hardwired network upgrades, likely over summer break.
 - Replacing outdated printers with centralized multifunction devices.
 - Implementing tiered Wi-Fi access (staff, student, guest).
 - Upgrading Wi-Fi access points from Wi-Fi 5 to Wi-Fi 7.
 - Reconfiguring computer labs.
 - Evaluating secure printing options, including badge or PIN access.
 - Continued Chromebook replacement with a goal of full replacement within approximately one year.

e. Facilities Report – Randy Rumrill

- Installation of recycling bins with signage at the elementary and high school; usage is increasing.
- Staffing updates related to maintenance coverage and personnel.
- Collaboration with the Highway Department during snow events.

- Installation of the softball tunnel.
- Results of generator shutdown testing, which showed limited systems are currently powered during outages (heat but not AC, limited refrigeration, minimal lighting).
- A generator test at Wheeler scheduled for February 17 to assess coverage.
- Safety concerns with the 22-year-old Kubota tractor due to structural deterioration and lack of storage; supply chain delays may affect replacement timelines and cost.
- Exploration of used tractor options and potential storage solutions.
- Discussion of the need for an additional custodian for coverage.
- Discussion regarding the approved and existing floor cleaning machines.
- Need for additional commercial vacuum cleaners.
- Discussion of connecting additional systems to the existing generator and associated cost estimates.

6. Old Business

a. Update on Cyber Incident Insurance Reimbursement

- The Board continues to monitor reimbursement status.

b. Non-Lapsing

- Administration advised it is premature to bring spending requests forward until budget and reimbursement details are clearer.

c. Meal Quality and Sourcing

- Student feedback was shared.
- Adult meal participation remains very low.
- Staff have not yet been surveyed regarding participation or logistics.

d. NEASC Accreditation Report

- The Board reviewed the NEASC report noting numerous commendations and priority areas:
 - Alignment of instruction and assessment practices with the vision of the Graduate
 - Curriculum documentation.
 - Technology and infrastructure improvements with budget implications.

- Potential areas of growth include the outdoor track and the tunnel used to cross the road.

7. New Business

a. Superintendent Search Process

- The Board discussed options for conducting the superintendent search and community involvement.

Motion to name the Board of Education as the Executive Search Committee for the Superintendent. Motion made by Mrs. Main and seconded by Mr. Burdick.

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea:8 Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

Motion to issue an RFP for a Superintendent Search Consultant, with proposals due by February 6. Motion made by Mr. Stefanowicz and seconded by Mr. Burdick.

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea:8 Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

b. BOE Retreat

- The retreat will address goals, public communication, the superintendent search process, and will be open to the public.

c. Paraeducator and Custodial Negotiations

- The Board agreed to proceed with negotiations for new contracts beginning February 10 at 3:30 PM, with an intent to separate the contracts.

d. Stipend Committee

- Members appointed: Mrs. Main, Mr. Burdick, Mrs. Mello, Mr. Austin

e. Policy Review

- Discussion focused on cybersecurity risks, aging district devices, and student access concerns.

Motion to retire policy 6141.328. Motion made by Mr. Stefanowicz and seconded by Mrs. Main.

After discussion

Motion to table prior motion made by Mr. Stefanowicz and seconded by Mrs. Main.

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea:7 Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1 (Mr. Burdick)

8. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes

i. 1/14/2026

Motion to approve the minutes from 1/14/2026 with the adjustment for section 12 to read -

12. Executive Session

a. Personnel Matter

- The Board entered executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

Motion made by Mr. Stefanowicz and seconded by Mrs. Main

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea:7 Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1 (Mr. Burdick)

9. BOE Comments on Future Agenda Items

- There was discussion on district calendar formats.

10.Public Comment

- No public comment

11.Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. Motion made by Mrs. Main, and seconded by Mr. Stefanowicz.

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea:8 Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1 (Mr. Burdick)

- Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm