

West Plains R-VII Board Meeting
November 18, 2025

Opening Items

- Call to Order by President Tyree (5:00 PM)
- Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum
- Approval of Agenda - Approved 7-0

Motion to move to Closed Session - Approved 7-0

Motion to move to Open Session - Approved 7-0

- Call to Order by President Tyree (6:00 PM)
 - President Tyree read the following statement:
 - The West Plains R-VII Board of Education is aware of the recent controversial social media post made by an individual board member.
 - We want to clearly state that the opinions, beliefs, and statements expressed by any individual Board of Education member on their private social media accounts or in other personal capacities are not the official position, opinion, or policy of the West Plains R-VII School District Board of Education or the District itself.
 - The Board operates as a unified body, and its official actions and stances are determined only by majority vote during properly noticed meetings. While individual members have their rights as private citizens, no single board member speaks for the entire Board or the district outside of official communications.
 - The West Plains R-VII Board of Education remains committed to serving all students, staff, and families in our diverse community with equity, respect, and professionalism. We are dedicated to maintaining a learning environment focusing on our primary mission: providing the highest quality education for every student.
 - We encourage the community to direct all questions regarding official district policy or Board actions to the Superintendent's Office or the Board President.

- Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Tyree

Student/Staff Spotlight



- West Plains Elementary School - Virginia Uphaus
 - Virginia Uphaus highlighted the 4th Grade Leadership Team at this month's board meeting. Mrs. Jennifer Shipley leads the combined 3rd and 4th Grade Leadership Team, a new initiative this year that has been very successful. The team occasionally meets with the high school Student Council to brainstorm ideas and share lunch together. They also assist with various school projects and community events, including Veterans Day and a recent school assembly.
 - This month, team members Kennedi Weaver, Aabriella Mead, Jude Bates, Dacoda Roberts, and Ezekiel Prantl were spotlighted. While more students are part of the team, some were attending a music program at WPE during the meeting. Shipley noted that the leadership team rotates each quarter based on student votes, and by the end of the school year, 48 students will

have the opportunity to serve. A short video on “What is a Leader” was also presented by Shipley as part of the spotlight.

Requests to Address the School Board

- Five patrons had requested to address the board and each were allotted 5 minutes:
 - Erin Rigdon
 - Stevie Miller
 - Kristen Davis
 - Kourtney Waggoner
 - Alison Woodruff

Consent Agenda - Approved 7-0

- Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting(s)
- Approval of Monthly Finance Reports
- Approval Request for employments, resignations, retirements, terminations, transfers, and volunteers of individuals as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools
- New Hires – Board Action Required
 - Certified Positions
 - Matthew Orchard - Deputy Superintendent
 - Keeli Holden - Elementary Teacher
 - Non-Certified Positions
 - Courtney Clark - Paraprofessional
 - Jordan Letterman - WPHS Head Girls Tennis Coach
 - Jordan Letterman - WPHS Asst. Boys Tennis Coach
 - Melissa Thompson - Paraprofessional
 - Alison Jones - Substitute Bus Driver
 - Shawnee Pauly - Paraprofessional
 - Ezra Grantham - Custodian
 - Radis Smith - Full Time Bus Driver
 - Aldrick Drennen - Custodian
 - Cody Willbanks - Custodian
- Transfers – Board Action Required

- Nathan Wages - SOMO Tech Welding Inst. to SOMO Tech. Evening Welding Inst.
- Emily Jennings - WPMS 6th Grade ELA to WPMS 6th Grade Mathematics
- Marc Hubbell - ZPA Instructor to WPMS Paraprofessional
- Brenton Bush - Paraprofessional to ZPA Instructor
- Volunteers - Board Action Required
 - Julie Stewart
 - Shelley Martin
- Resignations – Board Action Required
 - Elias Woodard - Custodian (10/28/2025)
 - Kasey Brooks - Paraprofessional
 - Christopher Rosenbum - Full Time Bus Driver (11/21/2025)
 - Heidi Schneider - WPHS Head Girls Tennis Coach
 - Brandi Hunt - Paraprofessional (11/10/2025)
 - Samantha Stiner - Paraprofessional (11/7/2025)
 - Devin Dewitt - Custodian (11/6/25)
 - Thayden Moore - Custodian
 - Raymond Leonard - Custodian (11/14/25)
 - Shawnee Pauly - Paraprofessional
 - Gavin Hurst - Custodian (11/28/25)
- Retirements - Board Action Required
 - Martha Williams - WPES Music Teacher
 - Scott Heidi - SOMO Tech. Commercial & Advertising Art Teacher
 - Christy Heidi - SOMO Tech. Health Science Teacher
- Terminations - Board Action Required
 - None at this time
- Approval of Program Evaluation(s)
- Approval of CSIP Update(s)
- Approval of Special Education Local Compliance Plan

Previous Business

- None at this time

Regular Agenda

- Payment of Bills - Approved 7-0
- Payment of Buro Bill - Cindy Tyree - (RG Abstain) - Approved 6-0-1
- Reimbursement of Cindy Tyree MSBA Travel Expense - Cindy Tyree - (CT Abstain) - Approved 6-0-1
- Reimbursement of Reid Grigsby MSBA Travel Expense - Cindy Tyree - (RG Abstain) - Approved 6-0-1
- Reimbursement of Sam Riggs MSBA Travel Expense - Cindy Tyree - (SR Abstain) - Approved 6-0-1
- Reimbursement of Sheilia Harper MSBA Travel Expense - Cindy Tyree - (SH Abstain) - Approved 6-0-1

New Business

- Approve 2024D Board Policy Updates - Dr. Davis reviewed the policy updates - Approved 7-0
- Approve Board Filing Dates - Dr. Davis reviewed the board filing dates and times - Approved 7-0 (The spots of Coleman, Grigsby, and Purgason are up for election).
 - Filing begins on December 9, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. and will continue during the district's regular business hours; which are Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., except for the last day of filing in which the office will be open until 5:00 p.m. Filing will not occur on days that the school district is closed due to inclement weather. Filing will also not occur on days in which the district is closed for the holidays, (December 23rd - 26th). Filing on December 30, 2025 will begin at 1:00 p.m. and conclude at 5:00 p.m.
- Approval of City of West Plains Parking Lot Agreement - Matthew Orchard reviewed this agreement. This allows the school district to monitor and control the parking lot north of the sports complex during the school day. - Approved 7-0
- Approve Surplus Property - Matthew Orchard presented a list for approval. Approved 7-0
 - 8' Tennsmith Metal Brake
 - 2015 Ford Fiesta
 - 2010 Chevrolet Malibu
 - 3 spools of electric wire

- Organ Donation Program Video - Dr. Davis shared a video on organ share donation. The district will share the video on an as needed basis in high school courses.

Updates & Reports to the Board

- Student School Board Member Report - McKrae Brewer
 - Student School Board Member McKrae Brewer reported that senior parking spots were officially completed on October 31. Students were able to reserve and personalize a spot for \$30, and the event organized by the Student Council along with Miss Peterson and Mr. Smith was a great success. The goal is to continue this tradition for future senior classes. McKrae also highlighted the recent “Portrait of a Zizzer” assembly, which she and Camille Coleman led to help students engage more deeply with the initiative and its character-building traits. Additionally, she shared that the district’s Unified Champion School efforts are going strong; the unified class has a basketball game planned, and Student Council members visit the class every Thursday to participate in games and sports activities together.
- Administrative Reports
 - Amy Ross - Special Ed/Federal Programs
 - Amy Ross reported that the Portrait of a Zizzer assembly went well at the high school and will be presented to the Middle School on Friday, led by the Middle School Student Council.
 - Dr. Ross shared a picture of the Unified Champion jerseys, and announced a game is scheduled for Friday, December 12, where Student Council members will play alongside Special Olympics athletes. Ross expressed gratitude to Ozark Independent Living for covering the entry fee for the Special Olympics.
 - She also provided an update on the district’s Annual Performance Report (APR) under MSIP 6, Cycle 2. The APR uses a 70/30 scoring model, with 70% based on student performance outcomes (achievement, growth, attendance, graduation, and other key indicators) and 30% based on Continuous Improvement, which evaluates how effectively the district implements systems,

processes, and strategies aligned to the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). Dr. Ross has completed all required components, compiled evidence demonstrating compliance, and submitted all documentation to the state supervisor, Mike Whitaker, to ensure requirements are met and to maximize APR points for Continuous Improvement. The submission includes evidence of data analysis, CSIP goal monitoring, stakeholder engagement, implementation of improvement strategies, and systematic evaluation of district processes. Overall, adherence to MSIP 6 ensures the district maintains accountability, transparency, and continuous progress toward improved outcomes for all students.

- Briana Link - Communications
 - During the communications update, a highlight was the introduction of the district's new magazine, #ZizzerNation, produced in partnership with Ozark Marketing and the Horse Trader. The publication is made possible through the support of local businesses and the work of Ozark Marketing. The October Teacher Proud Tuesday honorees—Gabe White and Jordan Letterman—were recognized, along with the Zizzer Champions for October, Alison Jones and Jamie Kingsolver. Appreciation days celebrated throughout the month were also noted, including Principal Appreciation Month and Boss's Day, both of which provided opportunities to show gratitude for district leaders.
- Joby Steele - WPMS
 - WPMS principal Dr. Joby Steele shared ongoing efforts to strengthen school culture and climate, emphasizing the building's continued focus on improvement. He provided an update on reading proficiency, noting that 54% of 5th graders, 39% of 6th graders, 42% of 7th graders, and 42% of 8th graders are currently reading at grade level. Steele also highlighted strong academic progress, reporting that students have completed 4,418 content standards masteries so far this year.
- Matthew Orchard - Facilities/Human Resources

- Matthew Orchard reported that the district has posted a job vacancy for the Director of Operations—a new title that reflects the same responsibilities previously held under the Director of Human Resources and Student Services. Hiring has already begun for next school year, with three teaching vacancies created by upcoming retirements.
- He noted that after-school meal service remains strong, with 2,308 free meals served in October thanks to creative efforts by OPAA! and building administrators. During the recent professional development day, 27 additional staff members received first aid training, bringing the district total to approximately 300 employees trained in first aid and first responder skills.
- Orchard also reviewed ongoing facilities improvements, including ADA-compliant entrance work, new concrete in front of the stadium, replacement of the FEMA building’s back doors, a new walk-in freezer door at the elementary, and new middle school-side bleachers installed with an upgraded concrete pad. A secured entrance is being added at the Central Office to improve safety and allow guests to be greeted more formally, with KidAccount to be implemented there as well.
- Orchard noted that district wellness funds returned through insurance continue to support staff copays at the Zizzer Clinic, with 203 visits covered in October 2025.
- Michael Davis - ZPA
 - Mr. Michael Davis expressed appreciation for the support of the School Resource Officers. He shared that several students are preparing to take the ACT, with some planning to attend Missouri State University. Students in Mrs. Rhoads’s class visited Dollar General to practice real-world budgeting skills, and ZPA students also participated in a reading activity with elementary students. Davis reported that the program anticipates 21 graduates in December, with the possibility of a 22nd student completing requirements.

- Ryan Smith - WPHS
 - Mr. Ryan Smith highlighted several recent initiatives and events at WPHS. Counselor Mrs. May organized a college fair on October 22, where juniors and seniors engaged with approximately 40 organizations to explore post-graduate opportunities. Additionally, the National Honor Society organized a blood drive, collecting 114 units that could potentially save up to 330 lives. Counselor Ms. Hollis also facilitated a sophomore career fair at MSU-WP. Smith gave a shoutout to McKrae Brewer and Camille Coleman for their work on the “Portrait of a Zizzer” assembly and noted that a follow-up assembly will take place on December 2 to recognize students nominated, with nearly 150 student survey responses collected.
 - The school recently held a Veterans Day breakfast and assembly, with support from the local VFW, Student Council members, and 4th-grade student leaders; Jeff Conger was a special guest speaker.
 - He spoke about the Elite Zizzer Trophy, a traveling award recommended by Melissa Rutledge, where each week a teacher nominates another teacher and explains why they are being recognized.
- Seth Huddleston - SFES
 - Dr. Seth Huddleston reported that October was one of the busiest months of the year at SFES. The Parent Teacher Conferences and Book Fair were successful, followed by the Fall Festival/Carnival sponsored by the PTO, which drew 300–400 participants for games, inflatables, face painting, and a live auction led by Billy Sexton and Justin Kraft. The event also celebrated the King and Queen and helped raise funds for both the PTO and St. Jude’s.
 - Huddleston praised the faculty, noting their dedication to updating and writing curriculum, as well as adopting a new ELA curriculum. He also highlighted that all 3rd–6th grade students met their ALEKS goals for the semester, demonstrating strong academic progress.
- Tiffany Young - Teaching/Learning

- Tiffany Young highlighted several accomplishments and initiatives in teaching and learning. She began by celebrating teacher participation, noting that 39 teachers attended the optional professional development day in October, with 52 attending on Monday, November 14. STAR Math data for grades 1–4 shows growth in student math performance. She also highlighted EduCamp, a teacher-led professional development day that offered numerous opportunities for educators to learn from and share with one another.
- Young shared results from the Spring 2025 Annual Performance Report (APR), which the state uses to measure accountability, continuous improvement, and student outcomes. Key factors include student performance and steps taken to ensure long-term improvement. District-wide APR scores were 15.7%, with WPES at 20.6%, WPMS at 16.9%, and WPHS at 27.5%. She attributed these results to renewed focus on academics, reworking curriculum when needed, and building confidence in both teachers and students. Young gave a special shoutout to principals and instructional coaches for their ongoing instructional support.
- Looking ahead, Young emphasized the importance of continuing to focus on academics while increasing student engagement through rich, enjoyable learning experiences. She stressed that a positive school culture leads to happy teachers and engaged students, and highlighted the importance of monitoring student growth throughout the year and making adjustments as needed—promoting a mindset of progress over perfection.
- Virginia Uphaus - WPES
 - Mrs. Virginia Uphaus highlighted a busy and successful month at WPES, noting the active participation of the student leadership team and events including cross country, Red Ribbon Week, and Halloween. She emphasized the strong collaboration with other buildings, including support for sports teams, ZPA reading to elementary students, and the high school Student Council.

- WPES also celebrated student reading achievements through an AR Challenge for grades 1–4, where students who read a book and passed a quiz were entered into a drawing for a Walmart shopping spree. Winners recently enjoyed their shopping experience with Mrs. Land and Mrs. Shipley, and this month, students will be treated to lunch from McDonald’s as part of the recognition program.
- Superintendent’s Report
 - Dr. Davis asked Ashley Cooley to come forward and discuss recent Athletic Accomplishments. Dr. Cooley reported that the fall sports season is winding down with an outstanding record of achievements. Highlights include Boys Cross Country, which earned both District and State Championships, and Girls Cross Country, which captured the District Championship and finished as State Runner-Up. The Volleyball team secured the District Championship, and Football also claimed the District Championship. Additionally, two members of the Boys Swim and Dive team competed at the State level, showcasing the strength of the district’s athletic programs.
 - Dr. Davis commented on the Veteran’s assembly, the parade, and the large turnouts at the high school play. He shared that “The Veteran’s assembly, this is the best thing we do. And I believe I said that last year as well. And I will say it again next year.”
 - In speaking about the state Missouri School Board Association meeting held a few weeks back, Dr. Davis asked the board members to comment on what they took away from the meeting.
 - Both Riggs and Harper commented about their participation in the safety workshops. In all six of their sessions, the West Plains School District was mentioned for their efforts on school safety.
 - President Tyree and Purgason discussed one of the speakers and how this person had struggled in life with a learning disability; but was able to be successful in her adult life.
 - Grigsby discussed the student speaker at one of the general sessions and how this young man has his life’s work built around “kindness”.

- In his financial reports, Dr. Davis mentioned that bus specs had been sent out for bid. He also stated that the 26-27 budget document had been created. His plan is to sit down with Mr. Orchard over Thanksgiving and Christmas break to start finalizing numbers in preparation for the upcoming year.
- The district is a big supporter of the Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Davis mentioned that in the year 2025, both Tiffany Young and Brandon Somoza had participated in the LEAD program through the chamber. He was excited to announce that Virginia Uphaus, Michael Davis, and Colton Hensley all had agreed to participate in the program for the 2026 school year. He commented that he felt the district needed to maintain a strong presence in not only supporting the chamber, but being active in their different activities.
- In closing, Dr. Davis mentioned the upcoming 1st ever Zizzer Special Olympics basketball game to be held on December 12th. He strongly encouraged the board members to attend. He also commented that credit for this goes to Dr. Ross and other staff members including Mrs. Peterson, WPHS Stuco, and several pe coaches. He recalled telling Dr. Ross last year “Amy, make this happen. We need this at West Plains. And now we have it.”

Adjournment

- Adjournment from Open Session - Approved 7-0
 - Next Meeting - December 16, 2025 - Cindy Tyree