

WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR JANUARY BOARD MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2026
In Person and Zoom

The Regular January 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 7:10 p.m. by President Kamus. The following Board Members answered present to roll call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Bellio, Nicholson, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus. Superintendent Suppon, Finance Manager Kachurak, Attorney Messinger, and Board Secretary Bullock were present.

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

President Kamus announced an executive session was held prior to this meeting to discuss contracts and personnel items.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD – Emily Bolan; Rhiley Castro

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

It is truly an exciting time to be a Spartan. Every day I am reminded of the pride, resilience, and momentum that define Wyoming Valley West School District. From our classrooms to athletic events, and from safety enhancements to innovative academic investments, Wyoming Valley West continues to move forward with purpose and positivity. You have my word we will continue to aggressively pursue funding opportunities through Mr. Wincek and our administrative team to ensure resources are invested directly back into our students, staff, and community. We remain laser focused on securing grants and external funding so that the local tax dollars are maximized and our students benefit from the very best educational environments possible. Since July, we have made significant security and safety enhancements across the district, nearly all of which have been made possible through grant funding. Our district wide push-to-talk radio communication system has been delivered. These radios will allow for direct real time communication among administrators, maintenance staff, security personnel, and school resource officers. Over the coming weeks, these units will be programmed and distributed to buildings and assigned staff. In addition, the district has approved the purchase of two X-ray machines that will be utilized at the high school during morning entry procedures and athletic events. These units will work in conjunction with our existing weapon detection system to scan backpacks and athletic bags. Delivery is expected within four weeks and training will be provided to guards and designated staff upon installation. We have also received approval to move forward with PA system upgrades at Dana, Chester, and Third Ave. These critical upgrades will ensure clear and reliable emergency announcements and supplement existing classroom phone systems. Installation schedule will begin shortly. We are waiting for the start date of our second school resource officer at the high school. The civil service test has been reopened, and the borough anticipates hiring within the next four to six weeks. Once filled, Patrolman Ray Glova will be reassigned back to the building. We are nearing the assignment of a vendor to complete the installation of electronic door access and camera systems at Third Avenue, bringing the building security infrastructure fully online. Tonight's agenda reflects even more positive momentum with several items that are 100% grant funded. An additional safety and security scanner for the high school that is fully funded through the BSCA Grant, will further enhance our ability to keep contraband out of our schools and maximize student opportunity for success and the purchase of an Anatomage Table for the high school STEM lab using the RTL Block Grant funds. This cutting-edge resource offers a digital cadaver experience along with embedded lessons and experiments for biology, chemistry, and physics. We anticipate it will be up and running by mid-February. At the middle school, we are moving forward with our AV project that includes 200-inch commercial grade TV's, a sound system, and multiple connection ports for ease of instruction and presentations, 100% grant funded. We are also excited to have CMTA ICS on the agenda to conduct a district wide feasibility study

which will help start the conversation around future infrastructure improvements that create environments where students, staff, and the community can thrive and take pride. In conjunction with that work, Sundance will be supporting the district with enrollment projections to ensure any future infrastructure appropriately supports growth and long-term planning. We will always remain committed to making data-driven decisions by continually analyzing student performance, safety metrics, enrollment trends, and operational needs, where we are able to clearly identify areas of need and take intentional actions to address them. We will remain passionate and determined in doing everything we can to meet the needs of our students, staff, and community while also being fiscally responsible and respectful of our taxpayers. The future of Wyoming Valley West is bright, and it is truly an exciting time to be a spartan. January is School Board Appreciation Month, and I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank our dedicated School Board Directors. Their countless hours, thoughtful leadership, and unwavering commitment to enhancing opportunities for our students, staff, and community do not go unnoticed. Our Board is dynamic, forward thinking, and deeply invested in the success of this district. Their hard work, collaboration, and support are a major reason why Wyoming Valley West is such a special place and why our future is so bright, thank you. Beyond academics and facilities, I want to strongly encourage our community to attend and support our co-curricular events. Our students are phenomenal, passionate, and incredibly proud of what they do. I had the pleasure of attending wrestling and girls' basketball last week and it was truly awesome to see the passion and support our students show for one another. We will continue to analyze data, identify district needs, and do everything in our possible power to secure funding that places our students in the best educational environments possible. Wyoming Valley West is and will continue to be a destination district. Thank you for your continued support, belief, and Spartan pride, and as always, Go Spartans!

Amended Item on Agenda:

Motion made by Wilson, seconded by Dubaskas, to **Amend Item #9** under General Recommended Action: Accept bid from CMTA ICS for a District-Wide Feasibility Study, \$8,900; pending solicitor approval of the contract.

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Bellio, Nicholson, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes.
Motion Carried.

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.

Dwayne McDavitt, Larksville, asked about Vice Principal Jarski, it has been 4½ months. He was told it is a process and there should be a review next week from the State Police. Mr. McDavitt stated how much society has changed over the years now having to X-ray bags entering sporting events.

Amy Carrozza, Forty Fort, is happy to see the addition of the numerous grant funded items on the agenda. She questioned what CMTA ICS stands for with the feasibility study. She asked about the Lower South Valley Land Bank.

MINUTES APPROVED

Moved by Wilson, seconded by Cussatt, that the Board of School Directors approve the minutes of the Regular **December 17, 2025** Board Meeting.

Voice vote. **Motion Carried.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Brian Dubaskas, Athletics, tonight we are hiring our head football coach. He thanked all the applicants. It is not an easy job to figure out who is going to be the next leader to help our team. He appreciates the effort of all the coaches who applied. Thank you and congratulations.

Rick Kamus, Contracts & Personnel, met with the teachers' union on Monday, January 12th to continue negotiations and set future meeting dates.

Nick Wilson, Finance, as of November, 85% of our budget real estate taxes were collected. We received approximately \$481,331 in interest income since July 2025. Interest rates on bank accounts range from 3.35% to 3.85% and cash balance and capital project is 33% higher this year. Overall cash balance in the general fund is 16% higher than it was this time last year. He will continue to work with Mr. Kachurak to continue the financial stability of the district.

Rick Kamus, Building and Grounds, a quorum of the Board met at Middle School on Wednesday, January 7th for informational items only and interviewed CMTA ICS. Mr. Bellio, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Perfetto, Mr. Kobusky, and Mr. Kamus were present.

GENERAL RECOMMENDED ACTION

Mr. Kobusky made a motion to table Item #10 under General Recommended Action. Motion did not have a second.

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

1. Approved Memorandum of Understanding between the Wyoming Valley West School District and the Wyoming Valley West Education Association for a temporary Trauma/Cyber/Third Ave. Counselor position; 100% grant funded.
2. Approved payment to **Apollo Group** for construction management services rendered through November 2025, \$33,190.37.
3. Accepted proposal from **SB & Company, LLC.**, Certified Public Accountants, for professional advisory services to Wyoming Valley West School District for year ended June 30, 2025; not to exceed \$49,540.
4. Approved Work Session and Regular Monthly **School Board Meeting dates for 2026**.
5. Appointed **Charles Kamus**, Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18 Representative, for the remainder of term ending June 30, 2027.
6. Approved purchase of two (2) **Safety and Security Scanners** for the High School; 100% grant funded.
7. Approved purchase of **Anatomy/Stem Table** for the High School Stem Lab; 100% grant funded.
8. Accepted bid from **FiberTel Inc.** to complete the Middle School A/V Project in the amount of \$52,345.15; 100% funded using Middle School Title Funds.
9. Accepted bid from **CMTA ICS** for a District-Wide Feasibility Study, \$8,900; pending solicitor approval of the contract.
10. Approved Wyoming Valley West School District joining the **Lower South Valley Land Bank**.
11. Accepted proposal from **Sundance** for District enrollment projections, \$9,500.

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Bellio, Nicholson, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes.
Motion Carried.

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

1. Approved **excused absences** December 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025.
2. Approved additions to the Substitute Teacher list: **Daniel Pape** and **Morgan McAndrew**.
3. Accepted the following **resignation**:
 - ❖ **Sumayah Haya** – Computer Aide, State St., effective January 5, 2026.
4. Appointed the following **new hires**:
 - ❖ **Lisa Hunsinger** – Clerk, Third Ave., \$16.00/hour, effective January 5, 2026.
 - ❖ **Jessica Norton** – Nurse Assistant, Floater, \$155.00/day, effective February 2, 2026.
 - ❖ **Amy Lewis Fox** – Cleaner, State Street, \$16.00/hour, effective January 5, 2026.
 - ❖ **Samara Vanderhoff** – Life Skills Aide, State Street, \$16.00/hour, effective January 12, 2026.
5. Approved the following **transfer of positions**:
 - ❖ **Monika Miller** – Computer Aide, State Street to Cleaner, State Street, effective January 12, 2026.
 - ❖ **Joseph Lech** – Utility Worker to Lead Utility Worker, effective January 15, 2026.
6. Medical Leave **Emp. #958745**, effective December 18, 2025; returning TBD.
7. Medical Leave **Emp. #921267**, effective December 5, 2025; returning TBD.
8. Medical Leave **Emp. #378325**, effective December 23, 2025; returning TBD.
9. Approved the following **Co-Curricular Position** for the 2025/2026 school year:
Wardrobe/House Managers **Alysha Barber & Rachel Kislin** \$1336
10. Approved the following **terminations**:
 - ❖ **Emp. #782733** – effective November 25, 2025.
 - ❖ **Emp. #829181** – effective January 2, 2026.
11. Appointed the following **Mentor** for 2025/2026:

<u>Teacher (Middle School)</u>	<u>Mentor</u>
Laura Olexy	Joanne Derwin
12. Accepted resignation, with regret, **Jenna Dixon Black**, long-term substitute, Science/High School, effective immediately.
13. Appointed **Brydon Rukstalis**, Varsity Head Football Coach, effective immediately, \$8,892.
14. Appointed **Brydon Rukstalis**, Weightlifting Coach, effective immediately, \$7,609.

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Bellio, Nicholson, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes.

Motion Carried.

FINANCE RECOMMENDED ACTION

Moved by Cussatt, seconded by Bellio, 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, Bellio, Nicholson, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes.

Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Wilson, the feasibility study is a real big step in the right direction towards the future. We all recognized infrastructure issues in our district and up until now it has just been a discussion. This is the real first step into analyzing and being provided a comprehensive overview of our district and buildings. He is excited and looking forward to seeing the results.

Mr. Dubaskas, congratulated Coach Rukstalis. He will be the youngest head football coach at Valley West in our history. He is going to do a great job, congratulations.

Dr. Suppon acknowledged Auggie Piazza who recently passed away. Auggie Piazza was a former Superintendent. He made a big impact on our district. I want to acknowledge all he did for Valley West and let his family know we are thinking of him. We appreciate his time here and the impact he had on the district.

President Kamus announced the next scheduled meetings, February Work Session, Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. and the Regular February Meeting, Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Middle School.


There will be a Special Meeting called at the end of the month to fill Mr. McGinley's vacancy.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion Carried.

Adjourned: 7:41 p.m.



Jennifer Bullock, Board Secretary