

Yelm Community Schools, District No. 2

107 First Street North • Yelm, WA 98597 • (360) 458-1900 • www.ycs.wednet.edu

MINUTES

of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday, January 22, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Bill Hauss, Denise Hendrickson, Ryan Jewell, Frank King

Excused – Casey Shaw

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Sofie Miera, Kailey Slevin, Ayden Williams

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Holly Ackerman, Mark Bowden, DeeDee Buckingham, Lisa Cadero-Smith, Ellen Cavanaugh, Curtis Cleveringa, Craig Curry, Kurt Fourre, Becki Fowler, Jodi Jarmin, Kendall McNutt, Traci Schultz, Starla Watson, Chris Woods.

CALLED TO ORDER

Vice President Bill Hauss called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

AUDIENCE

Board Recognition

District Office administration recognized the following individuals:

<u>Outstanding Operational Excellence Award</u>		
<i>Recognizing district office staff who provide exceptional support, ensuring seamless operations, accuracy, and a positive, efficient workplace for the entire district.</i>		
Jennifer Brownell <i>Business Services</i>	Kari Polzin <i>Human Resources/Payroll</i>	Tami Kirkham <i>Human Resources/Payroll</i>
Ellen Cavanaugh <i>Student Support</i>	Kula Roupe <i>Student Learning</i>	Lisa Walker-Anderson <i>Superintendent's Office</i>

School Board Appreciation

Superintendent Chris Woods recognized School Board Appreciation Month and publicly thanked the Yelm Community Schools Board of Directors. The board members were acknowledged for their extensive volunteer service, long hours, preparation, and willingness to engage in difficult decisions that have a lasting impact on students and the community. The superintendent noted that much of the board's work occurs behind the scenes and is often thankless, often drawing criticism despite thoughtful, student-centered decision-making. Personal appreciation was expressed for the board's support, trust, and leadership, emphasizing that their commitment to doing what is best for students strengthens the district and community.

Superintendent's Comments

The superintendent provided an update on athletics for the 2026–27 school year, explaining that due to the levy failure and financial constraints, the district will offer only high school varsity and JV athletics next year. C-team sports, transportation, and all middle school athletics will be suspended. The decision followed extensive meetings with coaches and board members to preserve student opportunities while reducing costs. Board members emphasized the importance of athletics as a key engagement tool that helps keep students connected to school and expressed commitment to working with the community to support programs and counter misinformation. Communication to staff and families will be sent districtwide, and booster and community groups may help provide additional opportunities, particularly for middle school students.

The superintendent also shared updates related to binding conditions and budget mitigation efforts. Approximately \$340,000 in eligible technology expenditures will be shifted from the general fund to capital funds to relieve pressure on the operating budget. In addition, a resolution will be brought forward to transfer approximately \$1.1 million in accumulated capital fund interest (2015–present) into the general fund as a one-time measure to offset the current deficit and stabilize next year’s starting position. The board discussed the long-term implications of using these funds and the need to develop future policy for facility replacement reserves.

A draft 2026–27 school calendar has been completed and shared with labor groups for review. The proposed calendar begins September 9 and ends June 16, with limited flexibility for snow days. Staff are exploring whether an earlier start date is feasible under existing collective bargaining agreements. Final approval will be requested in February.

The superintendent concluded by thanking district labor groups for productive recent labor-management meetings and reaffirming the district’s commitment to continued collaboration, transparency, and rebuilding trust through ongoing dialogue.

Community Comments

No comments were presented.

SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES - APPROVED

December 18, 2025 – Regular Board Meeting

M/Denise Hendrickson; S/Frank King; Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTS – APPROVED

New Hires		
Name	Position	Effective Date
Betty Bent	Food Service YMS Cafeteria Worker	1/13/2026
Nicole Evans	SW Paraeducator SPED Program 1:1	1/26/2026
Stephanie Johnson	SW Paraeducator SPED Program 1:1	1/21/2026
Ashley Zalesny	Food Service YMS Cafeteria Worker	1/13/2026
LEAVE OF ABSENCE		
Name	Position	Effective Date
No Report		
RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS/TERMINATIONS		
Name	Position	Effective Date
No Report		
STIPENDS/SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRACTS		
\$1,812.00		

M/Denise Hendrickson; S/Ryan Jewell; Motion carried unanimously.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS – APPROVED

Lackamas PTO, Floor hockey gear for PEFMV \$500.00
 YHS Connects, YHS Boys Basketball..... \$1,090.00

M/Frank King; S/Denise Hendrickson; Motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION 02-25-26 – INTERAGENCY AGREEMNT WITH WASHINGTON STATE

DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS (DES) - APPROVED

M/Denise Hendrickson; S/Frank King; Motion carried unanimously.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

District staff presented the first strategic plan progress update of the school year. The superintendent reminded the board that the strategic plan was developed last spring with broad community participation and is intended to be a living document guided by measurable data, with progress reports scheduled three times annually.

Dr. Lisa Cadero-Smith reviewed the structure of the five-year plan, centered on the pillars of learning, belonging, and community, and noted that schools are aligning improvement efforts to the plan. The strategic plan team reconvened in November to review communication efforts, examine baseline metrics, and provide feedback as the district continues to build systems and refine implementation.

Community representative Tonya Edwards and teacher Daryn Walter shared reflections on early progress. Data shows overall student performance remains aligned with state benchmarks despite financial challenges, while key pressure points include special education needs and attendance. Schools are focusing on attendance and motivation through targeted incentives, counselor monitoring, and engagement strategies. Efforts to strengthen belonging include Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports, student voice initiatives, and instructional collaboration across staff. Teacher recognition programs were highlighted as a way to retain strong educators.

Presenters emphasized priorities moving forward: improving communication and trust, expanding family partnerships, increasing community involvement in schools, and maintaining transparency about challenges and progress. The next strategic plan data review meeting is scheduled for March 2026. Staff will return with a mid-year data update to guide adjustments for the remainder of the school year.

VOUCHERS AND PAYROLL - APPROVED

A. General Fund	# 70153441 – 70153549	\$1,202,261.56
B. ASB Fund	# 70410004 - 70410023	\$13,284.89
C. Capital Projects Fund	# 70401868 - 70501869	\$15,458.04
D. Comp Tax	# 112300025 – 202100172	\$358.86
E. General ACH	# 9000000041- 9000000048	\$692.30
F. December Payroll		\$6,415,185.74

M/Denise Hendrickson; S/Frank King; Motion carried unanimously.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Custodial Supervisor Paul Manwiller provided an update on the district’s new organic waste collection process, which began on January 5, following updated requirements. Over winter break, staff implemented new tools and trained employees, with strong collaboration among administrators, custodial teams, and food service staff. Each school has adapted the system to fit its site, with staff actively helping students learn to sort liquids, compost, and trash. Early implementation has been positive, with elementary students adapting quickly and high school students making steady progress. Paul Manwiller commended facilities and school teams for their teamwork and highlighted student leadership efforts to promote proper sorting through instructional materials and a student-created video.

Public Works: APPROVED

<u>Project #</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor/Reason</u>
14.25	\$1,509.39	Sound Home Maintenance LLC – Backflow Assembly Repairs – PR, MK, & YHS
16.25	\$1,325.92	Bell & Bell Builders & Overhead Doors LLC – Backdoor Opener Repair – TRANS
17.25	\$1,576.80	Bell & Bell Builders & Overhead Doors LLC – Commercial Lube, Oil & Adjustment Limits on 4 Doors – TRANS

18.25	\$5,157.45	Holiday-Parks, INC. – Pump Seal Replacement – YHS
31.25	\$10,755.98	Hermanson Co LLP – Walk-In Freezer Repairs – YHS
33.25	\$7,774.50	Holiday-Parks, INC. – Glycol Installation – YHS
34.25	\$327.49	Yelm Glass Company – Ticket Booth Window Replacement – YHS
40.25	\$617.26	Yelm Glass Company – P2 Window Repair – PR
42.25	\$2,291.72	NWAP, Inc. – Operable Wall Partition Diagnostics – MK
45.25	\$4,723.97	NWAP, Inc. – Operable Wall Partition Repairs – MK
46.25	\$2,295.96	NWAP, Inc. – Operable Wall Partition Diagnostics – PR
47.25	\$1136.59	Hermanson Co LLP – Walk-In Cooler Troubleshoot & Repair – RMS
50.25	\$4,966.37	Drain-Pro – Oil Water Separator & Catch Basin Cleaning – TRANS
51.25	\$1,083.00	Drain-Pro – Drain Cleaning Service Call – LK
54.25	\$328.50	WA Fire Protection LLC – Troubleshoot Mod 010 Supervisory Trouble – RMS
55.25	\$1,204.50	WA Fire Protection LLC – Troubleshoot Random Ground Faults & Replaced Outdoor Speaker Strobe – SW
56.25	\$410.63	WA Fire Protection LLC - Troubleshoot Side Door False Alarms & Installed New Surface Mount Wide Gap Contact – DO
57.25	\$432.40	WA Fire Protection LLC – Troubleshoot & Repair System Service Call - Ground Faults – MK
58.25	\$1,423.50	WA Fire Protection LLC – Troubleshoot Motions False Alarms & Partitioned Asst Bldg. Alarm Panel as its own System– DO
59.25	\$969.95	Hermanson Co LLP – Daikin System Errors - Not Maintaining Heat Troubleshoot – MP

M/Frank King; S/Denise Hendrickson; Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

No additional report. A study session to continue budget conversations will be held on Thursday, February 19, 2026.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT REPORT

Jan 2026	5526 HC	5336.42 FTE (202.78 < 5443.00)
Dec 2025	5347 HC	5226.19 FTE (191.42 < 5443.00)
Jan 2025	5785 HC	

BOARD COMMENTS

Board members expressed appreciation for district office staff, noting that much of their work occurs behind the scenes and can be thankless despite ongoing public criticism. Members thanked staff for their dedication and service to the district. Coaches were also recognized for collaborating with district leadership to help develop a workable path forward for athletics, emphasizing that their input was critical to decision-making.

Board members expressed appreciation for the strategic plan update and reaffirmed the importance of regularly revisiting data-driven goals rather than allowing the plan to sit unused. Several members highlighted the personal time and effort being invested by board members to support athletics and broader district priorities, noting financial challenges and the need for continued community collaboration. Members expressed hope that increased community involvement will help the district emerge stronger.

Additional thanks were extended to fellow board members and student representatives for their service and perspectives, and it was recognized that student voices help keep decision-making centered on what matters most to students.

Student Representative Comments:

Several student representatives expressed strong appreciation and relief that high school athletics will continue next year. Students described athletics and extracurricular programs as central to

student identity, motivation, academic engagement, and mental health. One student noted that many athletes rely on sports as a reason to stay academically eligible and connected to school, while others emphasized that programs such as sports medicine, arts, and athletics help students discover career paths and personal passions. Speakers noted that athletics build community, belonging, and mentorship across grade levels, and can open doors to college opportunities.

Student representatives also encouraged accurate communication within the community, acknowledged the impact of misinformation, and emphasized the need for continued support of district decisions. In addition, speakers thanked district office staff and board members for their work during a difficult period and recognized the challenges leaders face in responding to levy impacts while continuing to support students.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent Chris Woods thanked building administrators for their ongoing collaboration and commitment, highlighting a pre-meeting discussion focused on improving student discipline systems. Administrators shared site practices, including RMS procedures, and engaged in cross-building problem-solving, demonstrating strong teamwork and professional learning across grade levels. Woods emphasized the demanding nature of administrators’ roles, noting their around-the-clock responsibilities, including overnight coordination with law enforcement in response to a student safety incident, and expressed appreciation for their dedication to students, staff, and families.

Woods also thanked student representatives for their articulate input, emphasizing that their perspectives meaningfully inform district decisions and contribute to continuous improvement.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Approved by:

/S/Chris M. Woods
Secretary to the Board

/S/Casey Shaw
Board President