

MINUTES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
WILLIAMSON COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

September 12, 2025

Regular

WCES Conference Room

8:00 A.M.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

PRESENT

ABSENT

Josh Pietrantonio, Unit I
Becky Moss, Unit II
Sy Stone, Unit III
Nathaniel Wilson, Unit IV
Sarah Barnstable, Unit V
Chris Cullum, Unit I
Kristen Whiteford, Unit II (via Zoom)
Heather Dwyer, Unit III
Steve Robinson, Unit IV

David Schwartz, Unit IV

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Jami Hodge, WCES Director
Jenny Malanowski, Treasurer
Amanda Segers

Chairman Nathaniel Wilson called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Roll call was taken with Mr. Pietrantonio, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Stone, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Barnstable, Mr. Cullum, Mrs. Heather Dwyer, and Mr. Steve Robinson were in attendance.

There was no visitor participation.

Kristen Whiteford entered the meeting via Zoom at 8:01 a.m.

Mr. Stone made a motion to accept the minutes of the previous Governing Board meeting, as presented. Motion was seconded by Mr. Pietrantonio.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson, Barnstable, Cullum, Dwyer, and Robinson voted "yea". Motion carried.

Mr. Cullum made a motion to accept the Employment of Personnel, March 2025 - August 2025. Mr. Stone seconded the motion.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson, Barnstable, Cullum, Dwyer, and Robinson voted “yea”. Motion carried.

Mr. Cullum made a motion to accept the Minutes of WCES Executive Board, March 2025 - August 2025. Mr. Stone seconded the motion.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson, Barnstable, Cullum, Dwyer, and Robinson voted “yea”. Motion carried.

Mr. Cullum made a motion to accept the Minutes of WCECC Executive Committee, March 2025 - August 2025. Mrs. Moss seconded the motion.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson, Barnstable, Cullum, Dwyer, and Robinson voted “yea”. Motion carried.

Mr. Stone made a motion to accept the Minutes of WCCTE Board of Control, March 2025 - August 2025. Mrs. Barnstable seconded the motion.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson, Barnstable, Cullum, Dwyer, and Robinson voted “yea”. Motion carried.

Mrs. Barnstable made a motion to accept the FY26 WCES Budget. Mr. Cullum seconded the motion.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson, Barnstable, Cullum, Dwyer, and Robinson voted “yea”. Motion carried.

Mr. Cullum made a motion to accept the FY26 WCCTE Budget. Mrs. Moss seconded the motion.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson, Barnstable, Cullum, Dwyer, and Robinson voted “yea”. Motion carried.

Mr. Wilson recognized Mrs. Hodge for director’s remarks:

PreK:

- State grant funded program
- WCES has received the grant since 2012

- Enrollment continues to decline in most districts
- Early Childhood Block Grant has only been a 1% increase
- Quality Improvement Program award given last year was less than 1% = \$180,000 (covers salaries and benefits)
- WCES has the 3rd largest Preschool for All in Illinois
- All WCES PreK programs received a Gold Circle Quality Rating
- Discussion over parents wanting full day classes and the possibility of wrap-around services
- Discussion over Universal PreK = PreK through 12th grade
- Johnston City will begin their wrap-around program in January 2026
- Reviewed Local Contributions Chart for each district
 - covered all salaries and benefit
 - supplies were the only items not covered
 - PreK spends little on professional development as most of the PreK trainings are free
- Crab Orchard provides transportation in the mornings and afternoon for PreK
- Discussed concerns about declining birth rates across the nation and state
- WCES has to fill at least 80% of PreK slots or a portion of grants fund have to be returned

Special Education

- Strict mandates, rules, guidelines, procedures and policies
- Districts pay 75% of budget (local money) and remainder are grants
- EBF = state funding and now special education rolled in
- 20% budget increase since last year
- 5% salary increase
- Insurance premiums increased
- WC claims increased
- Negotiations will start in the Spring for the following school year
- WCES employs 366 employees

Career and Technical Education

- \$500,000 for all of Williamson County; meant to buy extra supplies
- Requires Jami to write grants and complete several reports
- CTEi = State grant
- Perkins = Federal grant
- Construction Expo - SIBA event on September 23, 2025 in DuQuoin with all of Williamson County CTE students

Mrs. Moss made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Robinson seconded the motion.

Members Pietrantonio, Moss, Stone, Wilson and Barnstable voted “yea”. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

Nathaniel Wilson, Chairman of the Board

Becky Moss, Vice Chairman
