

**VAN WERT CITY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 26, 2026 - 4:00 p.m.
First Federal Lecture Hall - Niswonger Performing Arts Center
10700 State Route 118 South, Van Wert, OH 45891**

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call - **Time in: 4:00 p.m. Board Members Present - Anthony Adams, Greg Blackmore, Julie Burenga, Thaison Leaser. Absent – Debby Compton. Others Present - Sam Shriver, Mark Bagley, Troy Bowersock, Bob Priest, Justin Bragg, Haley Michaud, Chris Covey, Chuck Rollins, Tracy Wehner, Ruth Ann Dowler, Nicole Gamble, Alycia Lindeman, Natalie Ungruhn, Crystal Boroff, Jason Boroff.**
- II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America - **Recited by attendees in unison**
- III. Vision / Mission - **Recited by Julie Burenga**

Our Vision

In partnership with our community, Van Wert City Schools will ensure that all students develop the knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to thrive in post-secondary education, careers and civic life.

Our Mission

Van Wert City Schools will continue to be a source of Cougar Pride while providing each student a quality education through innovative instructional methods and technology.

- IV. Public Participation – **None**

In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an effective and efficient fashion, a maximum of thirty (30) minutes of public participation will be permitted at each meeting.

Each person addressing the Board will give his/her name and address. If several people wish to speak, each person will be allotted three (3) minutes until the total time of thirty (30) minutes is used. During the period, no person may speak twice until all who desire to speak have had the opportunity to do so. Persons desiring more time should follow the procedure of the Board to be placed on the regular agenda. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the Board.

26.02.009

- V. Set Agenda

Motion was made by Greg Blackmore and seconded by Thaison Leaser to accept the agenda as presented. Vote: Anthony Adams, yes; Julie Burenga, yes; Greg Blackmore, yes; Debby Compton, absent; Thaison Leaser, yes. Motion carried 4-0 with 1 absent.

- VI. Curriculum and Instruction / Educational Impact Presentation
Ruth Ann Dowler, Special Services Coordinator - Special services and instruction update and discussion
- VII. Treasurer's Section
Business and Records - Mr. Bowersock shared with the Board of Education the January financial statements, checks issued, summary of cash balances by fund, and monthly revenue and expenditure summary. Mr. Bowersock also reviewed with the Board of Education the February 26, 2026 fiscal year 2026 "amended" permanent appropriations, presented an updated Eggerss Stadium project budget, and reviewed the district's "February" financial forecast.
- VIII. Assistant Superintendent's section - *Mr. Priest discussed ongoing buildings and grounds, equipment, and maintenance planning to address the district's future needs and provided an update on the High School/Middle School chiller project that is underway. He also reviewed the district facilities and equipment planning budget that has been compiled and presented for approval. Lastly, Priest informed the Board of Education of upcoming interviews for the Director of Maintenance to replace Gregg Scheidt who is retiring.*
- IX. Public hearing - 2027-2028 School Calendar
A. The Van Wert City School District Board of Education hereby gives public hearing in accordance with section 3313.48(B) of the Ohio Revised Code, regarding the school calendar, including a presentation by the Superintendent/designee on the total number of hours in the school year, length of the school day, and the beginning and end dates of instruction in the calendar. **The school calendar for the 2027-2028 school year was presented by Mark Bagley, Superintendent. No public comment offered.**
- X. Superintendent's section - *Mr. Bagley provided an update on staffing plans for the 2026-2027 school year. He also shared activities taking place throughout the district highlighting a collaborative effort between the Niswonger Performing Arts Center and the Elementary School for an upcoming Van Wert Live performance event and indicated that contract negotiations are underway with the certified employees. Lastly, Bagley discussed the Eggerss Stadium restoration project and closed his report with a legislative update including ongoing property tax reform discussions.*
- XI. Board Member Section / Reports from Board Representatives (discussion only)
A. Vantage – No report
B. VWAPAF – No report
C. VWASIG – No report
D. Athletic Council – *Reported that Van Wert High School is a tournament hosting site for district boys and girls basketball.*
E. Safety Team – *Announced that the district is the recipient of a safety grant from the Ohio Attorney General's Office and informed the Board of an upcoming district Safety Team meeting.*

26.02.010

- XII. Consent Resolutions
Motion was made by Julie Burenga and seconded by Greg Blackmore to approve the consent items "A through V" as presented. Vote: Anthony Adams, yes; Julie Burenga, yes; Greg Blackmore, yes; Debby Compton, absent; Thaison Leaser, yes. Motion carried 4-0 with 1 absent.
- A. Approve a supplemental contract for Ben Hemming as high school musical pit orchestra director, effective the 2025-2026 contract year as presented.

- B. Accept the resignation of Nicole Gamble from her position as keyboarding instructor, effective at the end of the 2025-2026 contract year as presented.
- C. Approve Grace Dowler as a fifth grade teacher, pending all board policies pertaining to employment are met, effective the 2026-2027 contract year as presented.
- D. Approve Nicole Gamble as middle school family and consumer science teacher, pending all board policies pertaining to employment are met, effective the 2026-2027 contract year as presented.
- E. Approve Alycia Lindeman as a high school intervention specialist, pending all board policies pertaining to employment are met, effective the 2026-2027 contract year as presented.
- F. Approve Natalie Ungruhn as a fourth grade teacher, pending all board policies pertaining to employment are met, effective the 2026-2027 contract year as presented.
- G. Approve a leave of absence for Lydia Mendenhall, kindergarten teacher, effective March 6, 2026 through the 2026-2027 contract year as presented.
- H. Approve the following supplemental spring coaching contracts, effective the 2025-2026 contract year, as presented:
 - 1. Softball
 - a. Scott Bigham - varsity assistant coach (.5)
 - b. Matt West - varsity assistant coach (.5)
 - c. Destiny Coil - junior varsity coach
 - A. Baseball
 - a. Damian Helm - varsity assistant coach
 - b. Jalen McCracken- junior varsity coach
 - c. Mason Place - 9th grade coach
 - d. Jeremy Kitson - volunteer assistant coach
 - 3. Boys/Girls Track & Field
 - a. Kim Laudick - high school assistant coach
 - b. Gage Chiles - high school volunteer coach
 - c. Nick Pauff - high school assistant coach (.5)
 - d. Alexis Burdette - high school assistant coach (.5)
 - e. Ben Laudick - high school assistant coach
 - f. Kerry Koontz - middle school coach
 - g. Bob Spath - middle school coach
 - h. Bryce Crea - middle school coach
 - i. Noah Carter - middle school volunteer coach
 - 4. Boys Tennis
 - a. Mark Verville - high school assistant coach
- I. Approve the following supplemental fall coaching contracts, effective the 2026-2027 contract year, as presented:
 - 1. Keith Recker - head football coach
 - 2. Kannen Wannemacher - head girls tennis coach
 - 3. Bob Spath- head boys & girls cross country coach
 - 4. Kim Doidge - head golf coach
 - 5. Samantha Fleming - head fall cheerleading coach
 - 6. Rachel Black - head volleyball coach
- J. Approve an overnight trip, retroactively to February 23-24, 2026, for 7 students and 2 adults to travel to the girls bowling district tournament in Port Clinton, OH, as presented.
- K. Approve the minutes from the January 14, 2026 organizational, budget, & regular Board meeting as presented.
- L. Approve the monthly financial report as presented by the Treasurer.
- M. Approve the amendments to the fiscal year 2026 Permanent Appropriations totaling \$37,411,636.25 as presented.

- N. Approve the district facilities and equipment 5 year planning budget as presented.
- O. Authorize membership in the Ohio High School Athletic Association for Van Wert High School and Van Wert Middle School for the 2026-2027 school year as presented.
- P. Approve a Family and Children First Administrative Agent Agreement for the two year period beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2028, as presented.
- Q. Accept the Van Wert City School District tax levy amounts and rates as determined by the Van Wert County Budget Commission and authorize the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the Van Wert County Auditor for the 2027 fiscal year commencing on July 1, 2026, as presented.
- R. Approve the fiscal year 2026 Financial Forecast based upon the information and assumptions available as of February 26, 2026, as presented.
- S. Approve the following” then and now certificate.” It is hereby certified that both at the time of the making of this order and at the date of the execution of this certificate the amount required to pay this order has been appropriated for the purpose of the order and is in the treasury or in the process of collection to the credit of the fund, free from any previous encumbrance. I recommend that the following invoices \$3,000.00 and over be authorized for payment by the Van Wert City Board of Education:

Vendor - Jostens Inc. - 9/11/2025 - \$5,135.39

- T. Accept the following generous donations to the Van Wert City Schools from:
 - 1. The Van Wert County Foundation - \$42,475.13 on behalf of the following grant funds:
 - a. Gaylord and Carmen Leslie Golf Scholarship Fund - \$6,099.38
 - b. Gaylord Leslie Trust - \$2,341.92
 - c. Justin R. Lybold Memorial Fund - \$322.53
 - d. Lacy L. Trammel Memorial Fund - \$375.86
 - e. Leslie Endowment Fund - \$27,887.53
 - f. Van Wert City Endowment Fund for Educators - \$1,447.91
 - g. Wally Grimm Education Scholarship Fund - \$3,000.00
 - h. Jared Fleming Running Scholarship Fund - \$1,000.00
 - 2. Alspach-Gearhart Funeral Home & Crematory - \$150.00 to Masque & Gavel
 - 3. Laing Family Dentistry - \$150.00 to Masque & Gavel
 - 4. Van Wert Family Physicians - \$50.00 to Masque & Gavel
 - 5. Braun Custom Ambulances - \$125.00 to Masque & Gavel
 - 6. Verhoff Machine & Welding - \$50.00 to National Honor Society
 - 7. J Collection Bridal LLC - \$100.00 to Elementary Wellness
 - 8. Cooper Family Foundation - \$10,000.00 to Elementary Wellness - Luintersactive Playground System
 - 9. YMCA of Van Wert County - \$200.00 to Wrestling Activity Fund
 - 10. Jones Plumbing LLC - \$200.00 to Girls Basketball Activity Fund
 - 11. GreenWay Bank - \$150.00 to Van Wert Endowment Fund for Educators
 - 12. Leland Smith Insurance Services - \$150.00 to Van Wert Endowment Fund for Educators
 - 13. Sealscott CPA Inc. - \$150.00 to Van Wert Endowment Fund for Educators
 - 14. Edward Jones - Ryan Lindeman - \$1,834.00 to Eggerss Stadium Project - Legacy Donation
 - 15. Edward Jones - Thaison Leaser - \$1,000.00 to Eggerss Stadium Project - Legacy Donation
 - 16. Bob Priest - \$1,000.00 to Eggerss Stadium Paver Tribute
 - 17. Mark Bagley - \$1,000.00 to Eggerss Stadium Paver Tribute
 - 18. Andrew Bailey - \$250.00 to Eggerss Stadium Paver Tribute
 - 19. Eric Hurless - \$125.00 to Masque & Gavel
 - 20. Edward Jones - Eric Hurless - \$500.00 to Eggerss Stadium Project - Legacy Donation
 - 21. George Scott - \$500.00 to Cross Country Activity Fund
 - 22. Cooper Family Foundation - \$1,000.00 to Van Wert Middle School PBIS
 - 23. Cougar Pride Athletic Booster Club - \$2,258.48 to Athletic Department for Swim Caps Sideline Chairs

- U. Approve a lease agreement between the City of Van Wert and the Board of Education of the Van Wert City School District for the setting up, display, and tearing down of the July 4th, 2026 fireworks on the high school/middle school and elementary school campus for the community's enjoyment as presented.
- V. Approve a facility agreement with the City of Van Wert Parks & Recreation Department, for usage of park facilities for school athletic contests and the usage of school facilities for recreational programs offered by the Van Wert Parks Department during the 2026 calendar year. as presented.

XIII. Acknowledge notification from the City of Van Wert of a residential CRA application as presented:

- A. Elite Equity Holdings, LLC - 212 E. First St., Van Wert
- B. PHADUM, LLC - 407 and 409 S. Fulton St., Van Wert
- C. Robert Tamborski, 609 Shaffer St., Van Wert
- D. Joshua Ebbing, Crius Property Group, LLC - 138 and 140 E. 2nd St. Van Wert

26.02.011

XIV. Executive Session

- A. Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 21.22(G)(1), 121.22(G)(4), 121.22(G)(5), and 121.22(G)(8) for the purpose of discussing the employment of public personnel, for the purpose of employee negotiations, for the purpose of discussing matters required to be kept confidential by federal law, rules, or statutes, and for the purpose to consider certain confidential information, including trade secrets, of applicants for certain types of economic development assistance, or negotiations with other political subdivisions concerning such applications.

Motion was made by Thaison Leaser and seconded by Julie Burenga to go into executive session at 4:42 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the employment of public personnel, for the purpose of employee negotiations, for the purpose of discussing matters required to be kept confidential by federal law, rules, or statutes, and for the purpose to consider certain confidential information, including trade secrets, of applicants for certain types of economic development assistance, or negotiations with other political subdivisions concerning such applications. Vote: Anthony Adams, yes; Julie Burenga, yes; Greg Blackmore, yes; Debby Compton, absent; Thaison Leaser, yes. Motion carried 4-0 with 1 absent.

Meeting reconvened at 5:57 p.m.

26.02.012

XV. Adjournment

Motion was made by Julie Burenga and seconded by Greg Blackmore to adjourn the Meeting at 5:58 p.m. Vote: Ayes - 4; Nays – 0; Absent - 1

Next Meeting Date

The next scheduled regular Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 25 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be in the First Federal Lecture Hall at the Niswonger Performing Arts Center.

Board President

Fiscal Officer