

**WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR MARCH BOARD MINUTES
MARCH 11, 2026
In Person and Zoom**

The Regular March 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 7:11 p.m. by President Kamus. The following Board Members answered present to roll call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Bellio, Nicholson, Levesque, 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 the teachers' contract and a bus contract.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD – Rhiley Castro

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Good evening Spartans, I want to take a moment to recognize and celebrate something I truly believe with all my heart. We have the best students in the world right here at Wyoming Valley West. Every day our students continue to impress us with their dedication, talent, and commitment to excellence across all facets of education; academics, the arts, athletics, and extracurricular activities. Their achievements are a reflection of their hard work, the support of their families, and the dedication of our outstanding teachers and staff. Last week from March 4th - 6th, ten of our talented Wyoming Valley West High School orchestra students had the honor of performing at the PMEA Region Orchestra Festival held at Carbondale Area High School. These students worked incredibly hard as they performed challenging musical repertoire from legendary composers such as Beethoven. After auditioning during the festival, we are extremely proud to share that one of our students will be advancing to the All-State Orchestra Festival at Kalahari this April. This is an outstanding accomplishment and a testament to the talent and dedication of our music students and educators. Congratulations to all ten students. Our students are also excelling academically at the highest levels. Recently, sixteen students in grades 7-12 represented Wyoming Valley West at the 65th Regional Meeting of the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science at Wilkes University, where more than 550 students from 44 school districts competed. Our Spartan Mathletes researched, prepared, and presented projects in mathematics, and our district was honored for earning the highest percentage of first place awards in our category. This is an incredible achievement and speaks volumes about the commitment our students have to learning and discovery. I would also like to extend a special thank you to Mrs. Konopke for her dedication and leadership as the sponsor of the students. Additionally, nineteen of our talented high school math students competed in the 78th Annual Wilkes Math Contest, where they faced strong competition from 12 different school districts in a challenging two-part examination. I am incredibly proud to share that two of our students placed first overall in their respective divisions, each earning a full scholarship to Wilkes University. Our teams also performed exceptionally well, with the junior team placing second overall and the senior team placing third overall. Congratulations to all of our Wyoming Valley West Mathletes for representing our district with excellence and pride. Moments like these remind us that the success of our students goes far beyond the classroom. Their accomplishments in music, science, mathematics, and so many other areas demonstrate the limitless potential that exists within our Spartan community. I would also like to remind our community that Friday, March 13th, 2026 will be a full-day in-service for staff, and there will be no school for students on that day. Our educators will be participating in professional learning and collaboration as they continue working to strengthen instruction and enhance the educational experience for every student in our district. A special congratulations to Wyoming Valley West High School SAP Team. They have been recognized as the Distinguished

Secondary SAP Team by the Pennsylvania Association of Student Assistance Professionals. The team works hard every day to identify and reduce barriers to learning and promote mental, emotional, and physical wellness. Great teamwork by Wyoming Valley West. We are also proud of the continued success of our Adult English as a Second Language Program funded through the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant. Through three cohorts, the program has served nearly 90 adult participants, helping families strengthen English language skills while learning how to better support their children's education and connect with their school resources. The program has built stronger relationships between families and our schools, supported workforce opportunities, and empowered parents to become more engaged partners in their children's education, all of which directly supports student success. At the conclusion of the superintendent's speech, Mr. Wincek will be calling key stakeholders up to honor and acknowledge their hard work and dedication to the program. Thank you to our students, families, teachers, staff, Board members, and community members for continuing to support and uplift one another. When we work together great things happen for our children. Wyoming Valley West is and will continue to be a destination district and as always, Go Spartans!

Mr. Wincek presented certificates to members of our Adult English as a Second Language Program.

Amended Item on Agenda:

Motion made by Bellio, seconded by Cussatt, to **Table Item #13** under General Recommended Action.

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Bellio, Nicholson, Levesque, 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.

(none)

MINUTES APPROVED

Moved by Cussatt, seconded by Dubaskas, that the Board of School Directors approve the minutes of the Regular **February 11, 2026** Board Meeting.

Voice vote. **Motion Carried.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Brian Dubaskas, Athletics, Good luck to our swimmers who are at Bucknell today and tomorrow for the state tournament. Spring sports are starting practice games in the next few weeks. Good luck to our sports teams.

Rick Kamus, Contracts & Personnel, there was a negotiation meeting with the teachers' union on March 9th, 2026 in Dr. Suppon's conference room. The teachers seem a little upset. The Board is asking teachers to contribute towards their healthcare with a 5% premium share. Everybody in this world is paying for healthcare. We are asking our teachers to contribute a little bit to negotiate this matter. They refuse to talk about it. It is almost impossible to talk about salary. We are almost at a stalemate.

Nick Wilson, Finance, the district is consistently keeping revenues ahead of expenses. Mr. Kachurak and the Finance Committee transferred \$1 million of budgeted money from our general funds to our capital funds project this past month. It is imperative to continue to build our capital fund for future infrastructure needs for the district. In February, the district received cash inflow of over \$5.2 million from the sale of our delinquent real estate taxes. We are in the process of finding the best possible option, so it compounds and

grows as much as it can. He respects our teachers; they are wonderful. The hardest working people in our district. Most of them taught him and are still here. The Board proposed numerous fair and equitable packages for our teachers. Their salaries are one of the highest in the area if not the Commonwealth, located in a low-income area of Luzerne County's average salary of \$48,000. Our teachers are some of the best and deserve a fair raise. Healthcare for full family coverage will cost over \$41,000 a year per employee. Our teachers do not contribute a dollar towards that. Police, firemen, and nurses all contribute towards their healthcare. What was proposed on Monday would equate to \$70 a paycheck for full family coverage or \$24 a pay for single coverage. The Board has and will continue to propose a fair and equitable package for our teachers. The ball is in their court, our door is always open to continue the conversation.

Mark Kobusky, Education/Policy, thanked Mr. Novrocki and his team for working on the Guidance Plan to be approved tonight.

Rick Kamus, Building and Grounds, next month the roof project will be on for approval.

GENERAL RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

1. Approved **Real Estate Property Tax Exemption** through the Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission to the following:
 - ❖ Frank P Magistro
 - ❖ Janice M Quinn
 - ❖ Irmgard U Zabretsky
2. Approved the PDE Required **339 Guidance Plan**.
3. Approved the District committing to a **25% match** to any funding awarded by the state through the Public School Facility Improvement Grant.
4. Approved the **Resolution** requesting a Public School Facility Improvement Grant to be used for a Gymnasium Renovation at Middle School and designate Dr. Charles R. Suppon Jr., Superintendent of Schools, and Jennifer Bullock, School Board Secretary, as the officials to execute all documents and agreements between the District and the Commonwealth Financing Authority to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant.
5. Accepted a donation from **Topp Business Solutions** in the amount of \$1,000. The donation will be used toward the purchase of the Daktronics Digital Scoreboards.
6. Approved payment to **Apollo Group** for construction management services rendered through January 2026, \$48,751.44.
7. Approved Agreements between **KDP Digital Photography** and Wyoming Valley West School District for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 High School Yearbook Photography.
8. Approved **Settlement Agreement** pursuant to File ODR 32229-25-26 KE.
9. Approved **Settlement Agreement** pursuant to File 01161-25-26.
10. Accepted quote from **JFO Energy Solutions** to replace the hot water heater at Dana Street, \$22,308.24 (COSTARS)
11. Approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Wyoming Valley West School District and Wyoming Valley West Education Association to create the position of **Elementary Department Chairperson** for the academic areas of Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts (ELA), and Social Studies, and to establish the terms and conditions applicable to that position.
12. Approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeastern Pennsylvania** and Wyoming Valley West School District for participation in the College Bigs Program at Middle School and Chester Street Elementary School.

- TABLED 13.** Accept bid from **Vertex Roofing Contractors, Inc.** to complete the Wellness Center Roof Replacement Project, \$134,940. (pending solicitor approval)
- 14. Approved payment to **TKE** for elevator material storage through June 22, 2026, \$8,422.

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

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

- 1. Approved **excused absences** February 1, 2026 – February 28, 2026.
- 2. Accepted the following **resignations**:
 - ❖ **Amanda Davies**, Classroom Aide, State Street, effective February 12, 2026.
 - ❖ **Nevah Dupras**, Cleaner, State Street, effective February 6, 2026.
 - ❖ **Tyler Pierson**, Cleaner, High School, effective February 20, 2026.
 - ❖ **Zakiyah Whittle**, Classroom Aide, effective January 30, 2026.
 - ❖ **Erica Phillips**, Classroom Aide, State Street, effective February 11, 2026.
- 3. Appointed the following **new hires**; \$16.00/hour:
 - ❖ **Catherine Young**, Cleaner, State Street, effective February 25, 2026.
 - ❖ **Michele Sheppard**, Cleaner, State Street, effective March 2, 2026.
 - ❖ **Logan Murnock**, Cleaner, State Street, effective March 4, 2026.
 - ❖ **Dawn Littman**, Cleaner, High School, effective March 9, 2026.
 - ❖ **Marlene Guminsky**, Cleaner, High School, effective March 9, 2026.
- 4. Approved the following **transfer of positions**:
 - ❖ **Richard Fox**, Custodian, High School to Utility, High School, effective March 12, 2026.
 - ❖ **James Skoniecki**, Cleaner, State Street to Custodian High School, effective March 12, 2026.
- 5. Approved **long term status** for the following substitute teacher:
 - ❖ **Tegan Shortlidge**, effective March 6, 2026.
- 6. Approved the following **2026 Spring Coaching Positions**:

2025-2026 School Year

<u>POSITION</u>		<u>SALARY</u>
<u>Boys and Girls Track</u>		
Assistant 7-9	Kathy Butwin	\$2143
<u>Boys Volleyball</u>		
Assistant Varsity 9-12	Casey Shipman	\$1949
<u>Volunteer Coaches</u>		
<u>Softball</u>		
Victoria Carey		
Leonard Davies Jr.		
<u>Baseball</u>		
Eric Raitter Jr.		

- 7. Approved Professional **Contract Status** (Tenure) to the following teachers:
 - ❖ Jordan Gangemi
 - ❖ Jacob Weston

8. Appointed **Marylillian Stepanski**, Guidance Counselor, Middle School, \$51,000 effective TBD.
9. Appointed **Ian Jones**, District Wide Maintenance, \$17.50/hour, effective March 30, 2026.
10. Approved to adjust the salary column placement of **Employee #353858** from B+18 to B+24 consistent with Article 26 of the CBA, effective the original date of hire, with retroactive compensation as calculated by the Business Office.
11. Appointed **Andrew Feldman**, Learning Support Teacher, State Street, \$46,500, effective TBD.
12. Appointed **Melissa Budd**, Interim Head Teacher, Dana Street, effective March 12, 2026.
13. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **Eugene Terry**, Spanish Teacher, High School, effective the last day of the 2025/2026 school year.
14. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **Donna Chajko**, 4th Grade Teacher, Chester Street, effective the last day of the 2025/2026 school year.
15. Accepted resignation, with regret, due retirement, **Michelle Briggs**, Attendance, High School, effective the last day of the 2025/2026 school year.
16. Approved Child-Bearing Leave, **Emp. #734856**, effective April 17, 2026; returning TBD.

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

FINANCE RECOMMENDED ACTION

Moved by Wilson, seconded by Cussatt, 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, Levesque, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt, and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

NEW BUSINESS

During Read Across America Week,

Mrs. Cussatt read at Chester Street.

Mr. Dubaskas read in Kindergarten at State Street.

Dr. Suppon read at many schools throughout the district.

Mr. Wilson read at State Street and Chester Street.


Mr. Nicholson read at State Street.

President Kamus announced the next scheduled meeting, Work Session/Regular April Meeting, Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Middle School.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Adjourned: 7:34 p.m.


Jennifer Bullock, Board Secretary