

CASHMERE SCHOOL DISTRICT #222
Regular Board Meeting
March 23, 2026

Call to Order: Chairman Nick Wood called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Declaration of Quorum: Board members Sara Pipkin, Aaron Bessonette and Aaron Lowers were present. Board member Roger Perleberg was absent. There were eleven others in attendance including Superintendent Johnson.

1.0 Flag Salute – Chairman Nick Wood led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.0 Approval of the Agenda – Chairman Aaron Bessonette stated both agenda action items 6.2 and 6.3 would be bumped up to be addressed at the conclusion of the Student Report.

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Sara Pipkin, the Board approved the agenda as modified.

3.0 Reports, Correspondence and Program

3.1. Board Report – Chairman Nick Wood stated that spring sports have kicked off. Vice-Chairman Sara Pipkin thanked all of the principals for the recent school tours they facilitated for the Board. She added that these visits are enjoyable and are her favorite Board activity each year, noting that it is always rewarding to see the students and the work being done at each school.

3.2. CHS Student Report – ASB Vice President Hadley Westlund updated the Board on recent CHS activities and sporting events. Ms. Westlund shared that there is a lot happening at the high school. She noted that Career Week is currently underway, featuring various speakers who are sharing their experiences with students on Friday. She also reported that spring sports are officially underway and went on to highlight the various team records and statistics, providing a recap of recent games and scores. Additionally, she summarized ongoing club activities, including the National Honor Society Annual Father-Daughter Dance recently held on February 20.

3.3. Superintendent Report –

3.3.1. Special Recognition – National Board Certification and Renewal – Superintendent Johnson reported that several teachers recently achieved National Board Certification for the first time, with one teacher completing the renewal process. He noted that this accomplishment requires significant time, effort, and dedication, as well as the completion of multiple rigorous components. He further emphasized that teachers who pursue this certification demonstrate a strong growth mindset and commitment to continuous professional learning. Superintendent Johnson congratulated and thanked the teachers for their achievement and invited those present to briefly share their own experiences.

Vale Elementary teachers Leah Hammond and Farrah Dotson both described the process as rigorous expressed appreciation for the support they received from colleagues who were also completing the certification. They specifically recognized Vale Elementary music teacher Kristen Umbarger-Keene for her mentorship throughout the process. Ms. Umbarger-Keene serves as a Cashmere School District NBCT Cohort Facilitator and is an experienced National Board Certified Teacher who has received training through OSPI. Ms. Hammond and Ms. Dotson concluded by sharing that, while demanding, the experience also prompted deep reflection on their teaching practices and challenged them to further strengthen their instructional approaches.

- 3.3.2. OSPI District Recognition – “Award for Educational Excellence” – Superintendent Johnson reported that the district was recently recognized as one of 25 districts statewide to receive the 2026 State Superintendent’s Award for Educational Excellence for Achievement, presented by the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). He explained that this award honors districts demonstrating high levels of student achievement, growth, and a sustained commitment to educational excellence across multiple measures. He noted that the recognition has generated significant interest, including numerous inquiries regarding the district’s systems, practices, and approach to continuous improvement.

Superintendent Johnson expressed appreciation to the Board for its leadership and ongoing support, particularly in prioritizing collaboration time and professional development, which have contributed to this achievement.

- 3.3.3. Enrollment / Fiscal Update – Business Manager Bo Charlton reported a slight decrease in enrollment, noting fluctuations due to students moving in and out of district. He also shared that a small number of high school students transitioned to Running Start, contributing to the decline. He indicated that the current 5.19 FTE difference will be reflected in the district’s budget status report. Overall, the budget remains stable, with expenditures within less than \$10,000 of where the district was at this same time last year.

Mr. Charlton went on to report that the transportation fund currently stands at approximately \$120,000. He then discussed recent changes at the state level under ESSB 6260, which extend the school bus depreciation schedule by increasing the minimum service life of buses from 13 to 15 years. He explained that this new adjustment spreads state reimbursement over a longer period, delaying full replacement funding for districts. Mr. Charlton added that in spite of the new changes, the district intends to maintain its current practice of purchasing one new bus every other year.

- 3.3.4. Legislative Session – Business Manager Bo Charlton provided an update to the Board on the current state of the legislative session. Discussion included proposed changes to the state’s tax structure, including a “Millionaire’s Tax”,

and potential implications for K-12 funding and programs such as Running Start. Additional adjustments to Local Effort Assistance (LEA) were also noted. He further reported that the Legislature continues to address ongoing education funding issues, including Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC), Special Education (SpEd), transportation, LEA reductions, and bus depreciation.

- 3.3.5. Student Well-Being and Belonging Survey Report – Building Principals – Superintendent Johnson reported the district administers the Student Universal Screener (SUWS) twice annually, in the fall and spring. He asked building administrators to return, as they did in the fall, to provide a recap of the survey results.

Vale Elementary assistant principal Rhett Morgan, and middle school and high school principals Sara Graves and Craig MacKenzie presented the [attached PowerPoint](#). The presentation included an overview of the purpose of the survey, as well as comparisons between district and national averages in areas such as academic, social and emotional behavior. Additional information included school-level snapshots identifying the number of students to whom the survey was administered, identified areas of concerns and strength, as well as each school's response to the survey and their next steps.

- 3.3.6. Cashmere School District – CVCH Agreement – Superintendent Johnson reported that the district has been in ongoing discussions with Columbia Valley Community Health (CVCH) regarding a potential partnership to provide services similar to those previously offered through the district's former school-based clinic partnership with Confluence Health. That prior agreement has lapsed; however, the district continues to prioritize ensuring student access to medical, vision, dental, and behavioral health services. While a full school-based clinic is not feasible at this time, CVCH has proposed a phased approach to support the district by offering select services. These may include sports physicals, vision and dental screenings, and behavioral health support. Superintendent Johnson noted he will be meeting with CVCH Clinic Manager Dulce Negrete to finalize the agreement for the services outlined above.

- 3.3.7. District Employee Assistance Program – Superintendent Johnson reported on the development of a District Employee Assistance Program (EAP). He noted that employees may experience life crisis, health issues, and the loss of family members, all of which can create significant personal and professional challenges, and that the district recognizes the importance of providing support during these times.

Currently, the district provides support through Human Resources, including assistance from HR Lead Kelly Thies in helping employees navigate leave and

access available resources. However, the district has identified a need for additional support services.

As a result, the district began exploring implementation of an Employee Assistance Program in partnership with the North Central Educational Service District (NCESD), which currently contracts with AllOne Health. AllOne Health provides free, confidential support services designed to assist employees and their family members in navigating a wide range of personal and professional challenges. This benefit will be made available to district employees at no cost.

4.0 Visitors – there were no visitors present.

5.0 Consent Agenda –

5.1 Approval of Board Minutes – On a motion by Aaron Bessonette, the Board approved the February 23, 2026, the February 26, 2026 and the February 27, 2026 minutes as presented.

5.2 Approval of Warrants and Financial Reports

Pay date of March 13, 2026: Warrants #327897 - #327978 totaling \$201,059.16

General Fund	\$175,129.77
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Capital Projects	\$263.82
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ASB	\$25,665.57
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Pay date of March 31, 2026: Warrants #327993 - #328047 totaling \$324,625.94

General Fund	\$254,454.73
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Capital Projects	\$57,644.33
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ASB	\$12,526.88
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Pay date of March 31, 2026: Payroll in an amount totaling \$1,897,735.43, including benefits.

On a motion by Aaron Lowers, the Board approved the warrants and payroll as presented.

6.0 Action Items –

6.1 Personnel Report –

1. Retirements/Resignations/Releases/Terminations, etc.

Name	Position	FTE Request/Reassignment
Bill Schmidt	CSD Custodian	Resignation
Erin Kitchel	Vale – Kindergarten Teacher	Resignation

2. Requests for Leave/Transfer/Change in Hours/Additional or New Assignment

Name	Position	FTE	Request/Reassignment
Stella Day	Vale – Teacher		One-Year Leave of Absence

3. Recommendation for Employment/Transfer/Return from Leave of Absence

Name	Position	FTE	Comments
Adam Ream	CHS – Leadership Teacher		Replaces Andy Groce

3a. Contract Approvals/Renewals 2025-2026

4. Recommendation/Request for Approval of Positions to be Posted

Position	FTE	Comments
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5. Status of Staff Vacancies Posted, this date:

Position	FTE	Closes
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CO-CURRICULAR/SUPPLEMENTAL POSITIONS

1. Resignations/Releases

Name	Position	Comments
Jenny Lowers	CMS – Asst Girls Soccer Coach	Resignation

2. Non-Renewals

Name	Position	Comments
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3. Recommendations for Employment/Renewals: Co-Curricular Contracts for Activities

Name	Position	Comments
Anya Belcher	CHS – Head Girls Soccer Coach	Replaces Dennis Tronson
Rich Kowatsch	CHS – Asst Tennis Coach	0.5 to 1.0 (Due to High Participation)

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Sara Pipkin, the Board approved the Personnel Report.

6.2. Request for Out of State Travel – DECA Nationals –

On a motion by Aaron Bessonette, the Board approved the request for out of state travel for the DECA International Leadership Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

- 6.3. Bus Purchase –** Superintendent Johnson reported that, consistent with the district's stable budget position as noted in the Enrollment/Fiscal Update, the district remains on track financially and has planned for the proposed bus purchase. Business manager Bo Charlton reviewed the materials provided to the Board, including the bus depreciation schedule and the two bus quotes under consideration. He noted that, despite recent state-level changes extending the school bus depreciation timeline, the district intends to continue its established practice of purchasing one new bus every other year. Mr. Charlton shared that the transportation director for the

district, Cassidy Miller, recommends proceeding with the Schetky bus option. If approved, the district anticipates delivery of the new bus in September or October.

On a motion by Aaron Lowers, the Board approved the purchase of a bus for the district.

- 7.0 Executive Session – Superintendent Johnson requested an approximate 30-minute executive session on a personnel matter with no action to follow per RCW 42.30.100(1)(g).

On a motion by Aaron Bessonette, the Board moved into executive session at 7:50 PM.

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Sara Pipkin, the Board moved out of executive session at 8:05 PM.

- 8.0 Adjournment – On a motion by Aaron Lowers and there being no further business to discuss, Chairman Nick Wood adjourned the meeting at 8:06 PM.

Secretary

Chairman