

West Plains R-VII Board Meeting

May 19, 2026

Opening Items - 5:00 PM

- Call to Order by President Tyree
- Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum - all members present
- Approval of Agenda - Approved 7-0
- Motion to enter into Closed Session - Approved 7-0

Closed Executive Session

- Adjournment to Closed Executive Session
- Motion to return to Open Session - Approved 7-0

Open Session - 5:30 PM

- Call to Order by President Tyree
- Pledge of Allegiance led by President Tyree

Consent Agenda - Approved 7-0

- Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting(s)
- Approval of Monthly Finance Reports

<https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/be29ef6d-ae0f-441f-ad6b-1be8142f37cf>

<https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/6220ccf5-e204-4d21-9d77-a2dd6710d56b>

<https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/8d1d7784-667a-40e3-9bee-9f54ed9ecf52>

- Approval of Request for employments, resignations, retirements, terminations, transfers, and volunteers of individuals as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools

- **New Hires – Board Action Required**

- Certified Positions*

- Dayla Decker - WPES Kindergarten Teacher
 - Linda Smith - WPES 1st Grade Teacher
 - Natalie Martin - WPES 4th Grade Teacher
 - Sam Appleby - WPMS ELA Teacher
 - Bailey Geissinger - WPHS English

- Erica Reid - WPMS/WPHS Vocational Agriculture Teacher
- Cassandra Thompson - WPMS Special Education Teacher

Non-Certified Positions

- Abigail Hausback - Paraprofessional
 - Sheila Ogle - Paraprofessional
 - Elizabeth Richardson - Paraprofessional
 - Jordan Olivera - WPHS Asst. Baseball Coach
 - Sam Appleby - WPHS Asst. Girls Basketball Coach
 - Nina Williams - Full Time Bus Driver
 - Leah Tidwell - WPHS Student Council Co-Sponsor
 - Mary Roark - District Lead Nurse
 - Kyler Stowers - WPHS Asst. Baseball Coach
 - Hailea Martin - Speech-Language Pathologist
 - Brian Hodges - Custodian
 - Gabe White - Substitute Bus Driver
- **Transfers – Board Action Required**
 - Tim Smith - WPMS Teacher to District Paraprofessional
 - Amanda Collins - WPMS Special Education Teacher to District Process Coordinator
 - **Volunteers - Board Action Required**
 - None at this time
 - **Resignations – Board Action Required**
 - Dianne Spears - Speech-Language Pathologist
 - Bradley Carter - Custodian
 - Jed Montgomery - Paraprofessional/WPHS Asst. Baseball Coach
 - Vanessa Doss - District Lead Nurse
 - Coy Crites - WPHS Asst. Baseball Coach
 - Sebastian Agnew - Paraprofessional
 - Rachel Brotherton - Vocational Agriculture Teacher
 - Rachel Smillie - Paraprofessional
 - Stephanie Barker - SPED Process Coordinator
 - Brooke Waggoner - WPMS ELA Teacher
 - Christian Martin - WPMS/WPHS Choir Teacher

- Brooke Berry - Paraprofessional
- **Retirements - Board Action Required**
 - None at this time
- **Terminations - Board Action Required**
 - None at this time
- Approval of Program Evaluations
- Approval of CSIP Update
 - <https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/75c085cd-4add-4880-8b8e-b87370f810ae>
- Approval of OSBA Participation Agreement
 - <https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/e2284cb1-8a59-4a25-8fa1-b880188b1c8a>

Previous Business

- Discussion of 2026-2027 Non-Certified Hourly Salary Schedules - Discussion Only
 - Dr. Davis discussed ideas for the non-certified hourly salary schedule. He asked for the approval to come in the June board meeting. He mentioned raises but also the possibility of reducing/combining columns for making the salary schedule easier to access for the future.
- Discussion of 2026-2027 Budget - Discussion only
 - Dr. Davis reviewed the upcoming budget and provided comparison to the current 2025-26 budget and also the 2024-2025 actual budget.
 - His proposed budget is based on the following information:
 - Staff members that were employed by the district on 5.7.26
 - Step movement for certified and non-certified staff
 - Paid health insurance that was approved at the previous board meeting
 - An updated certified salary schedule that the Salary Committee and he had been working on that he would ask for approval on during the meeting

- Dr. Davis referenced only a very few projects in the budget. He mentioned that the projects will be the least the district has realized since at least 2015
- Same FY26 and FY 27 Tuition collections
- Supply budgets are reduced
- Supply budgets based on student enrollment
- School business days are reduced
- Travel budgets are reduced
- Custodian supplies are increased (increasing costs)
- Property insurance - 10% increase
- Advertising budget reduced
- Bus lane on West Side of WPHS
- Pavillions at SFES, WPES, BallPark, and Tennis Courts
- Chromebook replacement has been reduced

Regular Agenda

- Payment of Bills - Approved 7-0
<https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/0439fbdd-75c9-41fe-b193-94d98b3508d7>
- Payment of Buro Bill - Approved 6-0-1
<https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/2912baad-6754-4e58-8772-e739c14c6e28>

New Business

- Approval of 2026A MSBA Board Policy Updates - Approved 7-0
- Approval of certified and non-certified salary schedule step advancement for 2026-2027 school year. Approved 7-0
- Approval of of 2026-2027 Certified Salary Schedule - Approved 7-0
 - It meets the state requirement as displayed below:

Minimum Salary Requirements

The minimum teacher's salary for FY 2025-26 is \$40,000 and the minimum salary for a full-time teacher with a master's degree with at least ten years public teaching experience is \$46,000.

FY 2026-27 - \$40,000 and the minimum salary for a full-time teacher with a master's degree with at least ten years public teaching experience will be \$47,000.

FY 2027-28 - \$40,000 and the minimum salary for a full-time teacher with a master's degree with at least ten years public teaching experience will be \$48,000.

FY 2028-29 and subsequent school years minimum salary shall be adjusted annually by the percentage increase in inflation using the CPI report for January of a given year. If the adjustment over the previous year is at least one percent (1%), the minimum salary shall be adjusted by the same increase in inflation except no minimum salary increase shall exceed three percent (3%).

- It will also move 50% of “West Plains Longevity Index” (WPLI) amount into salary column
 - Dr. Davis mentioned this last year with the board in preparation for this
 - He also said the salary committee was supportive of this
 - He recommended moving the remainder over next fiscal year
 - Less confusion
 - Less contracts
 - More attractive salary schedule to outside views
 - He said It does have a minor effect on staff indexes and those staff with extended weeks
 - It will be placed on the website after July 1
 - Approval of Transportation Collective Bargaining Agreement - Approved 7-0
- <https://zizzers-org.community.highbond.com/home/document/d7879400-0cab-4675-aa2f-ce9e23af70a5>

Updates & Reports to the Board

- Salary and Welfare Committee Report
 - The Salary and Welfare Committee, represented by Sylvia Fleming, Becky Wersing, and Lanetta Stirewalt in attendance, expressed appreciation to the Board for approving the new board-paid insurance plan, noting that it provides reassurance and stability for staff moving into the next school year.

Mrs. Fleming thanked Dr. Davis and Mr. Orchard for their continued efforts working on the health insurance plans for the district. The committee also thanked the Board for approving the movement to update the salary schedule, sharing that the revised indexed salary schedule will be less confusing for applicants considering positions within the district and will simplify contract processes for the Central Office. Mrs. Fleming asked the board to consider moving all of the Longevity Index over this time instead of just 50% now and 50% next year. The committee again discussed the importance of increasing pay for paraprofessionals, emphasizing the vital role paras play in supporting students and schools and the importance of retaining quality staff in those positions. Additionally, the committee requested that the Board consider adding a mentor stipend to the tiered salary schedule, recognizing the significant amount of time and support mentor teachers provide.

- Student School Board Member Report
 - The Student School Board Member Report given by McKrae Brewer included a presentation and slideshow highlighting a variety of student leadership experiences and activities that she was able to experience through her role as student board member throughout the school year. Topics shared included the senior parking spot project, participation in the Legislative Luncheon, Portrait of a Zizzer awards organization and leading assemblies at both the high school and middle school, numerous radio station trips, and volunteer opportunities within the community. Additional highlights included judging the talent show and Zizzer volleyball talent show, the Senior Impact shirt initiative, involvement with the Senior Leadership Team, speaking engagements at Sunrise Rotary, participation in the overpass grand opening, and the many connections and mentorship opportunities gained through serving in the role. She thanked the board for giving her this opportunity.

<https://canva.link/i0e4bivu9j2295t>

- Administrative Reports
 - Amy Ross - Special Ed/Federal Programs

- Dr. Amy Ross shared several exciting accomplishments and updates as the school year comes to a close. She highlighted the success of students participating in the Howell County Job Olympics and advancing to the State Job Olympics on May 12, where students earned numerous first and second place finishes. Dr. Ross also celebrated the district's first Special Olympics Zizzer Track Meet, noting the beautiful weather and the tremendous support provided by Student Council volunteers. Financially, Dr. Ross reported that budgets remain in good standing and encouraged board members to contact Dr. Ross for more detailed budget information if needed.
- She also shared that 162 preschool and kindergarten students were screened this year, with approximately \$16,000 in PAT reimbursement connected to those screenings, though the district is still awaiting confirmation on the full reimbursement amount. Additionally, Dr. Ross distributed Lynn MaGuffee's literacy update to the Board. She also highlighted a special book signing event in Hannah Beaulieu's preschool class, where students received copies of a published book featuring their stories and illustrations at the end of the school year. She brought a copy of the book to share with the board.
- Briana Link - Communications
 - Mrs. Briana Link shared highlights from several district-wide celebrations and events. She noted a memorable experience in which the district was honored to serve as the Grand Marshal for the opening of the new bridge, with West Plains Schools also having the distinction of being the first bus to officially cross the bridge. The bus was filled with Zizzer students and staff representing each building, showcasing strong district pride and leadership.
 - Mrs. Link also shared that Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week was very successful, with each building doing an excellent job of recognizing and celebrating their staff in meaningful ways, helping to maintain strong morale during the busy end of the year. She concluded by highlighting the district's end-of-year staff celebration, which

brought together more than 400 employees and was a positive and well-attended event to close out the school year.

- Joby Steele - WPMS

- Dr. Joby Steele shared appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the WPMS faculty and staff throughout the school year. He highlighted the successful completion of state testing and the many engaging activities planned to keep students involved and active during the final weeks of school. Dr. Steele also recognized the smooth and successful graduation ceremony and shared that two student groups traveled to Silver Dollar City at the end of the year. During the 8th grade trip, several faculty members received compliments from others at the park regarding how polite, respectful, and well-behaved the students were throughout the visit. As this marked Dr. Steele's final board meeting, the evening included a special cake celebration in honor of his service and leadership at WPMS.



- Josh Cotter - SMTI

- Dr. Josh Cotter reported that SMTI has completed their periodic Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment for federal Perkins funding. This assessment reviews: Student Performance, Program Quality and Market Alignment, and other indicators such as recruitment and retention of staff and equity and access requirements. There was a review of stakeholder survey results and DESE Performance Data. Each area must be met for two of the last three years and all areas and subgroups met that requirement. He also reported on senior completion of industry-recognized and stackable credentials. Of the 116 seniors 91% accomplished a credential. This included 94% of West Plains High School seniors. This represented a significant increase over the previous year and is tied to the Missouri School Improvement Program and workforce needs. Cotter also informed the Board that the upcoming Council on Occupational Education reaffirmation of accreditation visit will have its first on-site visit on July 6th. A COE Fellow will conduct a preliminary visit to determine the school's preparedness to host the full reaffirmation visit in October.
- He also shared that final expenditure reports have been submitted for state Enhancement Grant and CTE Base & Performance funding. Enhancement Grant final expenditures exceeded \$92,000 and offset the purchase of a new backhoe, nursing simulator, vision & hearing screeners, rescue mannequin, charbroiler, abdominal surgery simulator, and other items. Over 60% of the total purchase cost of \$153,000 was reimbursed through this grant. For CTE B&P funding, the district received almost \$470,000 which was all applied toward instructor salaries. This covers almost 50% of the cost of adult and block base teacher salaries.
- The Practical Nursing Progression ceremony was held for 41 students that are entering Level 2 clinicals at Baxter Health, Ozarks Healthcare, and Texas County Memorial Hospital. A preliminary count for high school block programs next year currently stands at 301 students with

93 from West Plains High School. These numbers will change, but serve as a first idea of enrollment.

- Matthew Orchard - Facilities/Human Resources

- Mr. Matthew Orchard provided several district-wide operational and program updates, beginning with a partnership with Ozarks Healthcare to host the Mobile Mammography Bus on April 29, 2026.

Approximately 20 staff members utilized the service, and he noted that the district hosts the OZH bus on campus twice each year to support employee wellness.

- He also reported on student nutrition services, sharing that the CACFP afterschool meal program served nearly 1,100 free afterschool meals to students in April 2026. Additionally, he highlighted the successful Open Enrollment period for the district's new insurance consortium, OSBA, held the week of May 4, 2026, and expressed appreciation for OSBA's strong customer service and support for staff needs.

- Mr. Orchard announced that, as part of the district's vending contract with Pepsi, which includes an annual scholarship for a WPHS senior, this year's recipient is Alex Dawson. He also provided hiring updates, noting 39 new teachers and paraprofessionals for the 2025–26 school year and 20 new hires already anticipated for 2026–27.

- Finally, he expressed appreciation for the district's maintenance and custodial teams for their summer efforts to prepare facilities for the upcoming school year. He shared several key summer projects, including the addition of a new bus lane on Howell Avenue in partnership with the City of West Plains, along with various carpet and painting updates, painting of the Bridges/Clinic building, completion of the officials' locker room at WPHS gym, construction of a new trainer's room at WPHS gym, and the track resurfacing and restriping project at Zizzer Stadium.

- Michael Davis - ZPA

- Mr. Michael Davis shared that the program reached its goal of graduating 60 students during the school year, celebrating the success and accomplishments of those graduates. He expressed

appreciation for the many opportunities provided to both him and his students throughout the year and shared that the final CARE Team meeting was held on Tuesday (5/19) for planning and preparation for next year. Mr. Davis also shared photos from a spring biology project featuring an incubator and several chicks hatching, which provided students with a unique and engaging hands-on learning experience.

- Ryan Smith - WPHS

- Mr. Ryan Smith shared that WPHS finished the school year strong with numerous events, new initiatives, and continued growth throughout the building. He highlighted the successful Chromebook distribution process for summer school students and commended Mr. Hensley for his organization and efforts to ensure students were fully prepared for online coursework and summer learning opportunities. Mr. Smith also recognized the continued success of the Day Without Hate initiative, which included an assembly and music performance that has become a staple following End-of-Course testing. Students received t-shirts for the event, made possible through generous community support.
- Additional highlights included a successful prom held at Ruby Doo's with an excellent turnout, organized by the junior class sponsors, and the positive outcome of all students returning home safely following the event. Mr. Smith also celebrated the Summa Cum Laude luncheon, recognizing 53 students who achieved a GPA of 4.03 or higher, doubling the number from the previous senior class and reflecting the strong academic achievement of this year's graduates. During Class Day awards, students were recognized with several hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships. He also shared that seniors participated in a Community Service Day on their final day of school as a way to give back to the community that has supported them throughout their education. Mr. Smith concluded by sharing that the May 8 graduation ceremony was a success, celebrating 299 graduating seniors.

- Seth Huddleston - SFES

- Dr. Seth Huddleston shared that from May 1 through the last day of school, there was always something happening at SFES, creating a fun and exciting end to the school year for students and staff. He recognized Kendra Shankle on Administrative Professionals Day and expressed appreciation for all she does to support the school. Dr. Huddleston also highlighted a special visit from St. Jude's, which provided Tropical Snow treats for students for four hours. Representatives from the organization complimented South Fork students on being one of the most well-behaved groups they had encountered. Additional highlights included a successful basketball camp with 85 student participants. He also mentioned his excitement surrounding the future addition of a pavilion at South Fork, which will be constructed through the district's carpentry class program.
- Tiffany Young - Teaching/Learning
 - Dr. Tiffany Young shared updates regarding curriculum work, assessment efforts, and professional development opportunities across the district. She noted that additional curriculum work days were offered immediately following the end of the school year on May 14 and 15 to provide teachers with extra planning and collaboration time, as teachers consistently express the need for more time to focus on curriculum development. Attendance included 91 teachers on May 14 and 74 teachers on the second day. Mrs. Young also announced additional curriculum work sessions scheduled for June 15–19 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the high school library.
 - Dr. Young distributed a handout regarding MAP assessment data and district focus areas, explaining that she and Hannah Dougherty have been reviewing assessment numbers closely with staff. Teachers set individual goals for students, and keeping student growth and achievement as an ongoing point of conversation throughout the year contributed positively to overall progress. She also highlighted professional development opportunities, including plans to take staff members to the GOCS D Conference, and proudly shared that three

district educators: Nathan Fleming, Patricia Rodriguez, and Jenn Shipley were selected as presenters for the conference.

- In closing, Dr. Young shared that assessment season has officially concluded and expressed significant appreciation for the district counselors, who serve as school testing coordinators and play a major role in organizing and overseeing the testing process. She also recognized the counselors for planning MAP and EOC testing assemblies within each building to encourage and support students throughout the assessment season.

- Virginia Uphaus - WPES

- Mrs. Virginia Uphaus shared that the end of the school year was busy but very successful, filled with meaningful experiences and celebrations for students. She noted that students showed great appreciation for end-of-year field trips and activities, including visits to the Springfield Cardinals game, Urban Air, and Andy B's. Preschool students also enjoyed a special end-of-year celebration featuring bounce houses and pizza. Appreciation was expressed for Dr. Miller's excellent work in coordinating bus schedules and organizing transportation for the many student trips and events.
- Mrs. Uphaus also shared a special student leadership moment involving a 4th grader who independently proposed the idea of creating a hall monitor position. The student was guided to write a formal letter, participated in an interview process, and was ultimately selected for the role as a way to encourage responsibility and leadership. Mr. Minor further supported the initiative by providing the student with a vest, hat, and walkie talkie shared exclusively between him and Mr. Minor, making the experience both meaningful and motivating.

- Superintendent Report - Wesley Davis

- Dr. Davis began with a quick summary of the legislative session. He noted that some things that passed are awaiting the Governor's signature.

- MSHSAA - If signed into law, the proposal would establish the Interscholastic Oversight Athletic Commission to handle appeals following MSHSAA decisions.
- Open enrollment did not pass
- Charter school expansion did not pass
- HB 2710 (A-F) scoring did not pass; but this is not over. Dr. Davis mentioned that some form of this is coming.
- Income tax changes - August or November ballot
- Finance
 - 2025-2026 Budget Update
 - As Dr. Davis began to review budget numbers, he referenced that many expenses and revenues are yet to come in. He also feared that some of the June state payments could be partially withheld.
 - Year To Date Budget Figures (YTD) Budget as of 5.19.26
 - Total Revenues- \$32,032,480 - 90.85%
 - This includes over \$100,000 in insurance payments from 2024-2025 fiscal year
 - Still awaiting DESE payments on 5/21 and 6/22
 - Tuition Collections
 - \$4,017,818.29 invoiced
 - \$3,270,587.50 collected
 - Total Expenditures - \$29,802,079 - 82.85%
 - Payrolls Remaining
 - June 1 - 6/1
 - June 15 - 6/15
 - Summer School - 6/18
 - July 1 - 6/22
 - July 15 - 6/23

Closing

- Motion to return - Approved 7-0
- Next Regular Meeting - June 23rd, 2026 (Year end meeting)