

**WHITEFORD SCHOOLS
OTTAWA LAKE, MICHIGAN 49267**

December 8, 2025

Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance / Roll Call

A regular meeting of the Whiteford Agricultural School Board of Education was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Shane Hillard on December 8, 2025. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Hillard. Members present were Shane Hillard, Jeff Bunge, Janelle Hauser, and Brandon Iott. Dave Dixon, Jason Vida and Tom Wenzel were absent.

Also present were Superintendent Scott L. Huard, Director of Finance & Business Services Marisa Tebbe-Cousino, Director of Human Resources Cathy Machcinski, Director of Transportation & Buildings and Grounds Charlie Butz, Athletic Director Mirandia Green, MS/HS Principal Jeremy Fielder and Elementary Principal Samuel Marsh. There were 3 visitors present.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Janelle Hauser, seconded by Brandon Iott, to approve the December 8, 2025, Regular Meeting Agenda as presented. Motion approved – 4 yes (3 absent-Dixon/Vida/Wenzel)

Special Presentations

Student Participation – Student Council Vice President Mallory Bahls attended the meeting and presented the following to the board:

- They currently have six families they are sponsoring through their Angel Tree fundraiser. All of the gift tags have been removed from the tree except for a few Kroger gift card tags. Just waiting on the gift cards to be returned.
- Hosting Mr. and Miss Whiteford on January 9 which is still in the planning stages. The crowning will take place during halftime of the boys' varsity basketball game January 9 with the Winterfest Dance taking place on January 10 from 7-10:00pm.
- Shared her favorite part of the recent DC trip was visiting the Arlington Cemetery and witnessing the changing of the guard. It was a fun learning experience she will not forget.

Leski Wittman Insurance Agency Staff Member of the Month – Mrs. Kris Schroyer, Bus Driver, was recognized as Staff Member of the Month for November. Meghann Borgelt from Leski Wittman Insurance Agency attended the meeting and presented Mrs. Schroyer with a \$100 gift card. Kris was nominated by Elaine Thieman for her long-term service and daily dedication that truly exemplifies what it means to put students first. Charlie Butz seconded Mrs. Thieman's sentiments adding he appreciates all she does for the district. Sam Marsh added it is a lot to take control of 5-year old's all the way to high school and keeping them safe all the way home. Cathy Machcinski thanked Kris for her positivity and added she sets an excellent example for the new and younger drivers.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Jeff Bunge, seconded by Brandon Iott, to approve the consent agenda items as presented.

- Minutes of November 10, 2025, Regular Meeting and Closed Session Meeting

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- Treasurer's Report and Check Register (November 2025)

Motion approved – 4 yes (3 absent-Dixon/Vida/Wenzel)

Administrative Reports

Director of Finance & Business Services – Mrs. Marisa Tebbe-Cousino:

- Attending weekly meetings/trainings on our new food service module through Infinite Campus with the MISD.
- Had insurance renewal meetings. An insurance provider was chosen and voted on by the WEA union.
- Provided an update on the the 31aa Mental Health and Safety Funds Grant.
- Reported we have a returning Food Service Director, Karen Winkler.

Director of Human Resources – Mrs. Cathy Machcinski:

- Our current health insurance provider came in with a 47% increase in monthly premiums for the 2026 calendar year. After securing five additional bids, the district will be changing health insurance carriers to MESSA insurance effective 1/1/26. We are currently working with the MESSA field representative to facilitate an Open Enrollment prior to the Christmas Break as eligible staff members will have three options of HSA plans to choose from. Premium increases with MESSA insurance range from 3.93% to 14.43% depending on the plan chosen.
- Central Office staff provided the WEA Union with three proposed calendars for the 2026-2027 school year. The union will be voting on two of those calendars – one starting prior to Labor Day and one starting after Labor Day. All calendars have the first semester ending prior to Christmas Break.
- Working with the Transportation Office on the steps necessary to certify a current driver to become a bus trainer for new drivers for the district.

Director of Transportation & Buildings and Grounds – Mr. Charlie Butz:

- Gave a brief updated on the Turf Tank field painting system. Reiterated it will save a lot of time that he would normally have to spend painting the fields which will allow more time to complete other projects/tasks.
- Our Special Ed bus lease is coming up for renewal this June. He has already reached out to Hoekstra and Midwest to check on pricing.
- The new dugouts are done structurally and electrically. The metal roof will go on shortly. The ceilings are currently being installed.
- The Parking Lot RFP went out. Three contractors have already come out to look at it. Decided to add an amendment to the RFP. Bids are due December 19 by 9am with the opening at 9:15am.
- Working on the water RFP per the state that requires filters on anything you drink water from. Monroe Plumbing came out to go through what we would have to do.
- RFP for the cleaning company will be going out the first of the new year.
- Working on the electrical for the Kiln for the art teacher.
- The baseball field drainage is complete. Expressed his appreciation for Nick Wahl and Terry Creque who donated their time on a weekend to assist with some of this work.

Athletic Director – Ms. Mirandia Green:

- MS boys' basketball will be done next week.
- JV girls and boys' basketball will be starting this week.
- MS competitive cheer will have a competition on December 17.
- Varsity competitive cheer competed this past Saturday at Leslie. Currently have 6 girls on the team.

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- MS girls' basketball will be starting in January.
- Had to shorten up the JV season due to participation numbers.
- A lot of events going on this winter.
- Working on a project with Terry Pant to update the scoreboard designs and also purchase new cheer matts.

Middle/High School – Mr. Jeremy Fielder:

- P/T conferences were November 13 and were better attended than last year.
- The NHS's blood drive met their goal.
- Continuing diagnostic testing with Exact Path through December.
- Dec 3 the MS attended a Walleye Game as a reward trip.
- They have started scheduling for the 2026-2027 school year.
- The HS band choir is December 14 at 3pm.
- The MS band choir is December 16 at 7pm.
- The MS/HS safety team met in November and will be meeting again this Thursday morning before school. Trying to expand the TEAMS program this year.
- Cell phone caddies are working pretty well with some rooms better than others. Working with the WPA for rewards for those following the cell phone rules. They have seen an overall improvement with the HS students staying off of their cell phones.
- Planning on an OK to Say presentation again this school year. It would be the same presenter and remote like last year's presentation.

Elementary School – Mr. Samuel Marsh:

- The WPA Cookie Dough Fundraiser was a huge success with record breaking sales.
- November 13 was Parent Teacher conferences which they had over 90% of families attend.
- Student council's Michigan versus Ohio State can drive collected 1067 food items (Michigan won with 539 items) which were donated to Zion Lutheran Church in Ottawa Lake.
- December is Gratitude Month where they will be focusing on gratitude all month long.
- The Elementary Christmas Concert is December 11 with TK-2nd grade starting at 6:00pm and 3rd-5th at 7:15pm.
- Holiday Spirit Week is next week.
- Santa's Work shop going on this week.
- Exact Path diagnostic testing. January Testing will be MDE Early Literature and Math for K-2nd grades and Smarter Balance for 3rd-5th.
- Expressed how much the LINKS program has been beneficial with the older students helping the younger students in grades TK-6th.

Superintendent's Report

1. Holiday Wishes - As we move into this special time of year, I want to extend warm holiday wishes to all our students, families, staff, alumni, and community members. The holiday season is a moment to pause, reflect, and appreciate the many gifts we enjoy as a school community—among them, the compassion of our students, the commitment of our educators, and the unwavering support of our families and community members. At Whiteford Agricultural Schools, these strengths shine brightly every day, and the weeks ahead give us even more opportunities to celebrate them together.

This season naturally invites us to slow down and take stock of what matters most. For many, it is a time to reconnect with loved ones, to express gratitude, and to find joy in traditions both old and new. In schools, it also becomes a chance to celebrate learning, creativity, and community spirit in ways that bring people of all ages together. I encourage everyone to take a moment to enjoy the small joys of the season. Over the next several weeks, our buildings will host several holiday-themed

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events designed to bring our community together in celebration. These programs highlight the talents of our students and the dedication of the staff who support them. They also serve as reminders that, while academic rigor is always a priority, cultivating connection and belonging is just as important in helping our students grow.

Our concert performances, art displays, and classroom activities offer moments of joy and pride for everyone involved. Whether students are taking part in their first elementary performance, showcasing their musical growth in middle or high school, or volunteering to support younger Bobcats, these events reflect the heart of who we are as a district. I hope you will join us whenever you can, your presence means more to our students than you may know. Families play an essential role in creating a positive, encouraging environment, and your participation helps make each event even more meaningful. These events are listed on our district website or can be found in the weekly building newsletters.

As we move through the busy weeks ahead, I also want to acknowledge the care and effort of our staff. Their dedication ensures that our students experience a season filled not only with celebration, but with meaningful growth. Please take a moment to thank a teacher, paraprofessional, bus driver, office assistant, custodian, coach, or any staff member who has made a difference in your child's school experience this year. Their daily contributions are truly appreciated.

Finally, as we look ahead to winter break, I hope you each find time to rest, recharge, and enjoy moments of peace. Whether you are traveling, hosting loved ones, or simply taking time to reflect at home, I wish you a season filled with health, happiness, and connection. From our Bobcat family to yours, may your holiday season be joyful, safe, and memorable.

2. Leave of Absence – Fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Peyton Shepherd, is requesting an unpaid leave of absence for the last few weeks of the 2025-2026 school year for the purpose of childcare. This leave would immediately follow the 12 weeks of FMLA Leave for the birth of her child. I will be asking the board for approval during the New Business portion of tonight's meeting.
3. Volunteer Coaches – The following people have been appointed as volunteer coaches:
 Basketball/Baseball.... Travis Pant Assistant Coach, Varsity
4. Gifts/Donations – There have been no recent donations to the district.
5. Announcements / Reminders / Informational Items
 - December 8-12..... WPA Santa's Workshop (Elementary)
 - December 11 Elem. Christmas Concert TK-2nd (6-7:00pm) 3-5th (7:15-8:15pm)
 - December 13..... HS Ensemble/Chorale Concert: Mathes Tree Farm 12-1:00pm
 - December 14..... HS Band/Choir Christmas Concert 3-4:00pm
 - December 16..... MS Band/Choir Christmas Concert 7-8:00pm
 - December 17 HS Ensemble/Chorale Concert: The Cresnet 12-1:00pm
 - December 17 HS Ensemble/Chorale Concert: Toledo Zoo 5-6:00pm
 - December 18..... HS Ensemble/Chorale Concert: Chick-Fil-A 11:30am-1:00pm
 - December 19..... Early Dismissal (Elem-10:55) (MS/HS-11:05) -Christmas Break
 - December 22-January 2 No School - Christmas Break
 - January 5..... School Resumes
 - January 10..... Winterfest Dance 7-10:00pm

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Approval of NEOLA Board Policy Updates (Second Reading)

Superintendent Huard reviewed Board Policy Updates as noted below and recommended board action as this is the second reading of the updated policies:

1. Policy 1422..... Nondiscrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Harassment **(Replacement)**
2. Policy 1422.02..... Nondiscrimination Based on Genetic Information of the Employee **(Rescind)**
3. Policy 1623..... Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Disability Discrimination in Employment **(Technical Correction)**
4. Policy 1662..... Anti-Harassment **(Rescind)**
5. Policy 2210..... Curriculum Development – Approved Courses **(Update)**
6. Policy 2260..... Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity **(Technical Correction)**
7. Policy 2260.01 Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability **(Technical Correction)**
8. Policy 2264..... Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Program or Activities **(Rescind)**
9. Policy 2266..... Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities **(Replacement)**
10. Policy 2412..... Homebound Instruction Program **(Update)**
11. Policy 3122..... Nondiscrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Harassment **(Replacement)**
12. Policy 3122.02..... Nondiscrimination Based on Genetic Information of the Employee **(Rescind)**
13. Policy 3123..... Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Disability Discrimination in Employment **(Technical Correction)**
14. Policy 3362..... Anti-Harassment **(Rescind)**
15. Policy 4122..... Nondiscrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Harassment **(Replacement)**
16. Policy 4122.02..... Nondiscrimination Based on Genetic Information of the Employee **(Rescind)**
17. Policy 4123..... Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Disability Discrimination in Employment (Technical Correction)
18. Policy 4162..... Controlled Substance and Alcohol Policy for Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Drivers and Other Employees who Perform Safety-Sensitive Functions **(Update)**
19. Policy 4362..... Anti-Harassment **(Rescind)**
20. Policy 5460..... Graduation Requirement **(Update)**
21. Policy 5517.01 Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Towards Students **(Update)**
22. Policy 7540.02 Web Accessibility, Content, Apps, and Service **(Update)**
23. Policy 7541 Electronic Data Processing Disaster Recovery Plan **(Rescind)**
24. Policy 8300 Continuity of Organizational Operations Plan **(Update)**
25. Policy 8305..... Information Security **(Update)**
26. Policy 8330..... Student Records **(Update)**

A motion was made by Janelle Hauser, seconded by Shane Hillard, to approve the NEOLA Board Policy Updates as presented. Motion approved – 4 yes (3 absent-Dixon/Vida/Wenzel)

Approval of Request for Unpaid Leave of Absence

A motion was made by Janelle Hauser, seconded by Brandon Iott, to approve an unpaid Leave of Absence for a staff member, whose identity is known by the Board of Education, pursuant to the WEA 2025-2026 Master Agreement, Article-VI, Section E, Items 4-5, Unpaid Leaves of Absence. The request

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would be effective immediately following the 12 weeks of FMLA starting February 2, 2026 through the end of the school year (June 5, 2026). Motion approved – 4 yes (3 absent-Dixon/Vida/Wenzel)

Retirement Incentive

A motion was made by Brandon Iott, seconded by Janelle Hauser, to offer a retirement incentive to all staff (with no restriction on years of service to the district), as presented. Motion approved – 4 yes (3 absent-Dixon/Vida/Wenzel)

January Organizational Meeting/Regular Board Meeting

A motion was made by Janelle Hauser, seconded by Jeff Bunge, to set January 12, 2026 (6:00 p.m.) as the date/time for the annual organizational meeting with the regular meeting to follow. Motion approved – 4 yes (3 absent-Dixon/Vida/Wenzel)

Adopt Resolution – Opt In of School State Aid Section 31aa

A motion was made by Jeff Bunge, seconded by Brandon Iott, to adopt the Resolution for the School State Aid Section 31aa as presented. Motion approved – 4 yes (3 absent-Dixon/Vida/Wenzel)

Any Future Board Calendar Items

There were no future board calendar items.

Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes approved _____, President

Minutes approved _____, Secretary