

**WHITEFORD SCHOOLS
OTTAWA LAKE, MICHIGAN 49267**

August 11, 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 August 11, 2025. Mr. Hillard led the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present were Shane Hillard, Dave Dixon, Jeff Bunge, Janelle Young, Brandon Iott, Jason Vida and Tom Wenzel.

Also present were Superintendent Scott L. Huard, Director of Finance & Business Services Marisa Tebbe-Cousino, Director of Human Resources Cathy Machcinski, MS/HS Principal Jeremy Fielder, and Elementary Principal Samuel Marsh. There was one visitor present.

Amendment to and Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Jeff Bunge, seconded by Dave Dixon, to amend the agenda to include new item 13-g Approval of Revised L-4029 Tax Rate Request Form/Tax Levy Forms and approve the August 11, 2025, Regular Meeting Agenda as amended. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Special Presentations

The Nutrition Group – Libbie O'Connell, Director of Food & Nutrition of The Nutrition Group, attended the meeting and reported the following to the Board:

- This year is the 50th anniversary for The Nutrition Group and they just acquired their 300th school account.
- She gave an overview of the number of meals served for breakfast and lunch, and ala carte and adult sales for last school year.
- TNG will be rolling out "Nutrition Expedition" and "Take Nutrition Global" programs this year for elementary and middle/high school students, respectively. Students will visit a new country every month to learn about the food, the culture and try a dish from that country.
- New chef-crafted recipes and products will be offered this year.
- Will continue to conduct online surveys with students to gather input on items served.
- A 3-day "Nutrition for Life" program will be offered to TK/K students to help them learn the benefits of a balanced diet for healthy growth and development, and become familiar with the cafeteria.
- TNG is required to comply with the Federal Buy American Provision in which no more than 10% of total foods purchased may be from non-domestic sources. This will create limitations on fruit, juice, and fresh produce items when they are not available from the U.S. due to growing seasons.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

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Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Dave Dixon, seconded by Jason Vida, to approve the consent agenda items as presented:

- Minutes of the July 14, 2025, Regular Meeting and Closed Session Meeting
- Treasurer's Report and Check Register (July 2025)

Motion approved - 7 yes.

Administrative Reports

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

- There is no news from the state on the school aid budget.
- Free breakfast/lunch will be served for all students through September 30th (end of the state's fiscal year). We are awaiting word on what will happen after that date.
- Revised L-4029 Tax Rate Request and Tax Levy Forms will need to be approved which takes into account the Headlee Rollback.

Director of Human Resources – Mrs. Cathy Machcinski:

- It's been a busy summer again with new hires: 5 new staff members either new to the district or their role with the district (2 teachers, 1 administrator and 2 bus drivers) and we have 1 teaching position yet to fill. Ten (10) coaches have been hired since June, and we have 2 positions to fill (MS volleyball and JV baseball).
- Mr. Marsh was trained on the old 2020 Title IX Sexual Harassment regulations as the 2024 regulations were repealed by the Trump Administration. Mr. Huard, Mr. Fielder, and I were already trained on the earlier regulations; however, I sat in on the training with Mr. Marsh as a refresher.
- Vector Solutions annual training assignments were rolled out on 8/1/25 to all staff members. Staff have until 9/5/25 to complete the training modules.
- The window has opened for the Registry of Education Personnel report. Staffing changes are required to be made regularly on the site with final certifications made in December and June annually. At June 30, 2025, we had 253 staff members reported, with 92 being regular "Whiteford" staff. Others are contractors, coaches, and substitutes.
- Handbooks are still a work in progress – working on one for substitute teachers, substitute operational staff and one of regular district employees.
- Starting out the year with a staff member on FMLA and two more scheduled during the school year.

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

- Transportation:
 - All buses have been state inspected and are ready for the 25-26 school year.
 - We have a full bussing staff with 2 new Gen Ed drivers this year: Natasha Brown and Melinda Casey.
 - Currently working on bus routes for this upcoming school year.
 - Athletic and field trip bussing starts next week.
- Buildings:
 - Classrooms are very close to being ready for teachers in both buildings.
 - 5th grade was successfully moved to the Middle School wing.
 - All other room moves are in place; just have some fine tuning to do.
 - Remodeled the Elementary Office to accommodate a 2nd administrative assistant and copier.

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- Grounds:
 - Multiple dead or dying trees were removed from campus. Only one living healthy tree was removed that was encroaching on the building.
 - Working on getting athletic fields and stadium ready for fall sports to begin
 - Working with local community members to try and resolve our drainage issues at the Baseball and Football fields.
 - Received bids for installing a Basketball/Pickleball court outside of the Auxiliary Gym for recess/classes to use. Hoping to have it done soon.
 - Having parking lots restriped in the next two weeks as it is fading.

Middle/High School – Mr. Jeremy Fielder:

- Classroom shuffling has taken place to move older students out of MS hallway as 5th grade moves to the building. Fifth grade students will have to share lockers.
- Athletic Director's old office will now be MS Office, which should balance traffic between MS and HS offices and make things more convenient for MS students/parents.
- New hire of Mirandia Green as AD - looking forward to continuing athletic success and building our programs at Whiteford.
- Amanda Kelly is officially hired as HS Art after student teaching for Mrs. Seiser and being a long-term substitute for Mrs. Valdez and Mrs. Seiser in 24-25.
- Mrs. Seiser has retired and the position is posted.
- New TCI curriculum for Social Studies 6-12 and Science 6-8 have been received and delivered to teacher classrooms. Initial training for staff will take place on August 27th PD day.
- New desktop computers were installed in MS/HS computer lab: we are up to 3 graphic design classes and have added a "Technology Exploration" elective course for 7th grade students to expand use of new technology.
- Updated Cell Phone guidelines for HS students: Cell phone caddies are to be in place for HS classrooms and will remain there for the duration of class unless expressly permitted by teacher. Cell phones can't be taken on restroom breaks for HS students. Medical exemptions will be honored. The caddies were purchased with the financial assistance of the WPA.

Elementary School – Mr. Samuel Marsh:

- Our latest numbers put us at 387 students at the elementary this year (up from 379 last year).
 - Kindergarten has 65 students (3 sections of 21-22 students)
- Teachers are in and out getting their rooms back together for the new year!
- We have received our new Elementary Everyday Math Curriculum for K-5, and will be continuing to use Amplify CKLA for our ELA instruction. Training will take place on August 27th.
 - Grades 3-5 will be transitioning from the NWEA reading and math assessments to the MDE Smarter Balance assessments for student growth.
- Our August/Early September at the Elementary:
 - 8/19 – 10AM: Playdate with Principal
 - 8/20 – 5-6:30PM: WPA Welcome Back Picnic (where students and families learn who their teacher is)
 - 8/20 – 6PM: 5th Grade Orientation (students will be brought over to their new classrooms). Parent Q&A to follow.
 - 8/27 – 8AM: Teacher Professional Development
 - 8/27 – 5-6:30PM: 1st-5th Open House
 - 8/28 – 5-6:30PM: TK/KG Open House
 - 9/2 – 12PM: SCHOOL STARTS
 - 9/9-9/12: 5th Grade camp
- Our September Value of the Month will be "Kindness".
- We are still in the market for a new art teacher for TK-8.

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Superintendent's Report

1. Resignations – Mrs. Amy Guthrie resigned from her position as assistant women's basketball coach, effective immediately. Her time with the program has been such a wonderful and rewarding experience and she is thankful for the opportunity to be a part of the team. Mrs. Ali Lake resigned her position as a regular route bus driver but plans to stay on as a sub bus driver. Mrs. Nora Pello resigned as 8th grade volleyball coach. Mrs. Tara Pawson resigned as library and title aide to pursue another opportunity. Mrs. Christine Seiser has retired effective 8/31/25 from her elementary/middle school art position after 28 years with the district.
2. Volunteer Coach Appointments – The following have been appointed as volunteer coaches:
 - Oberle, Renee MS/HS CC and Track & Field
 - Oberle, Steven HS CC and Track & Field
 - Ondrovick, Robert HS Football
3. Acknowledgement of Gifts/Donations – Donations were received from the following individuals/organizations:
 - Joshua Holzemer \$250.00 Staff Meals (Opening Day)
 - Matt Holzemer \$250.00 Staff Meals (Opening Day)
 - Nick Puhl All Costs Associated Staff Meal (Staff PD Day)
 - Leski Wittman Insurance \$250.00 Staff Meal (All Staff PD Day)
4. Announcements / Reminders / Informational Items
 - August 11 High School Fall Sports Practices Begin
 - August 19 Playdate with Principal 10-11:00am
 - August 19 All Sports Parent Meeting (7-12th Grade) 6:30pm
 - August 20 WPA Elementary Back to School Picnic 5-6:30pm
 - August 20 5th Grade Orientation 6-7pm
 - August 25 Middle School Fall Sports Practices Begin
 - August 27 1st-12th Grades Open House 5-6:30pm
 - August 28 TK/Kindergarten Open House 5-6:30pm
 - September 1 Labor Day
 - September 2 First Day of School (12pm start for students)
 - September 8 Board of Education Meeting 6pm Board Rm
 - September 9-12 Fifth Grade Camp Michindoh Trip
 - September 10 WPA Meeting 6pm
 - September 16 Elementary Picture Day
 - September 17 Constitution Day
 - September 20 Collin Emerson Courtyard Dedication 11am
 - September 23-October 9 WPA Cookie Dough Fundraiser TK-5th Grade
 - September 29-October 4 Homecoming Week

Old Business

There was no old business.

**Minutes Continued
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Closed Session

A motion was made by Dave Dixon, seconded by Tom Wenzel, pursuant to Section 8(c) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act to go into closed session for the purpose of strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiations of a collective bargaining agreement and material exempt from disclosure due to attorney/client privilege at 6:46 p.m. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Regular Meeting Resumed

The regular meeting resumed at 7:14 p.m.

Ratification of WESPA Master Agreement 2025-2027

A motion was made by Jeff Bunge, seconded by Dave Dixon, to approve the 2025-2027 WESPA Master Agreement that was ratified on 8-11-25. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Approval of Employment Conditions for Paraprofessionals

A motion was made by Tom Wenzel, seconded by Brandon Iott, to approve the Employment Conditions for Paraprofessionals as presented. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Recommendation to Hire MS/HS Athletic Director

A motion was made by Jeff Bunge, seconded by Janelle Young, to hire Mirandia Green as the new MS/HS Athletic Director, contingent upon favorable previous employer conduct and FBI/State of Michigan background checks, and approve the contract as presented. Contract length would be one year beginning August 4, 2025 through June 30, 2026, at the salary of \$66,000.00. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Recommendation to Hire Assistant Women's Basketball Coach

A motion was made by Janelle Young, seconded by Tom Wenzel, to contract with Edustaff to hire Mark Keeling as the new Assistant Women's Basketball Coach at the rate of \$800.00 per the terms of the current 2025-2026 WEA Master Agreement, contingent upon favorable previous employer conduct and FBI/State of Michigan background checks. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Recommendation to Hire Regular Route Bus Driver

A motion was made by Shane Hillard, seconded by Dave Dixon, to hire Melinda Casey as a Regular Route Bus Driver per the terms of the current WESPA Master Agreement, contingent upon favorable previous employer conduct and FBI/State of Michigan background checks, satisfactory pre-employment physical and drug testing, and successful completion of the 4-day continuing education course. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Proposed Substitute Hourly Rate Increase

A motion was made by Janelle Young, seconded by Jason Vida, to approve the proposed hourly rates for substitute staff as presented. Motion approved - 7 yes.

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Approve 2025-2026 Elementary Student Handbook

A motion was made by Tom Wenzel, seconded by Brandon Iott, to approve the 2025-2026 Elementary Student Handbook as presented, with the understanding that minor changes/additions will occur as new information is received. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Approve 2025-2026 MS/HS Student Handbook

A motion was made by Jason Vida, seconded by Shane Hillard, to approve the 2025-2026 MS/HS Student Handbook as presented with the understanding that minor changes/additions will occur as new information is received. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Approve Asphalt Sports Surface / Equipment

A motion was made by Dave Dixon, seconded by Brandon Iott, to approve the installation of an asphalt sports court and striping by Jennite Paving and Sealing at a total cost of \$28,465, to be paid from the 2019 Capital Bond funds. Motion approved - 7 yes.

A motion was made by Tom Wenzel, seconded by Dave Dixon, for the purchase and installation of basketball backboards, rims, and poles on the sports court through Playground World at a cost of \$5,712.96 to be paid from the 2019 Capital Bond funds. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Approve Revised L-4029 Tax Rate Request Form/Tax Levy Forms

A motion was made by Jeff Bunge, seconded by Janelle Young, to approve the revised L-4029 Tax Rate Request Form and accompanying township tax levy forms as presented. Motion approved - 7 yes.

Any Future Board Calendar Items

Mirandia Green was introduced to the Board of Education.

There were no Board of Education future calendar items.

Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Minutes approved _____, President

Minutes approved _____, Secretary