

**WATERFORD UNION HIGH SCHOOL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, June 15, 2026  
Regular Meeting - 6:30 PM**

The regular meeting was called to order by President Schwartz at 6:31 p.m. Board members present at the meeting were: Ashley Bzdawka, Dennis Purtell, and Doug Schwartz. Excused: Kelly Datka.

Due to ongoing construction and the unavailability of meeting space at Waterford Union, the meeting was held at Fox River Middle School, 921 W. Main Street, Waterford. Official notice of the meeting was made by way of publication in the *Waterford Post* on Thursday, June 11, 2026, by posting at the WUHS District Office (Door #7), and by posting on the District's website. Minutes from the regular board meeting of April 20, 2026, are posted on the District's website.

Mr. Schwartz led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Board Committee Assignments**

There was a motion by Bzdawka, seconded by Wishau, to approve the committee assignments as proposed. All ayes; motion carried. The board committee assignments for the 2026-27 term are as follows.

- *Building and Grounds*: Schwartz, Wishau
- *Finance*: Bzdawka, Datka, Schwartz
- *Personnel*: Bzdawka, Purtell
- *Curriculum and Policy*: Datka, Purtell

**Consent Agenda**

The following items were presented to the Board for approval under the consent agenda:

- A. Approve Bills
- B. Board Meeting Minutes
  - (1) May 7, 2026 - Special Meeting
  - (2) May 13, 2026 - Special Meeting Executive Session
  - (3) May 14, 2026 - Emergency Meeting
  - (4) May 18, 2026 - Regular Monthly Meeting
  - (5) May 27, 2026 - Special Meeting
  - (6) June 1, 2026 - Special Meeting
- C. Staffing Updates
  - (1) Resignation - Alexis Beilfuss, Special Education Teacher/Case Manager
- D. Overnight Field Trip Requests

Board member Purtell noted that per Robert's Rules as well as state statutes, executive session minutes must be approved during an executive session. There was a motion by Purtell, seconded by Bzdawka, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, excluding the board meeting minutes from May 13 and May 14. Approval of those minutes was postponed until a future executive session. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Resident Comments**

Karen Alexander reminded the Board of Constitution Day on September 17. She emphasized that by law, all schools receiving federal funds must observe the day and ensure students are learning about the Constitution.

**Information Items**

**AI Handbook for the 2026–27 School Year (Informational)**

Mark Peperkorn presented the Waterford Union High School AI Guidebook, developed by the Innovation Team. He shared that he is proud of the work the team did in creating these guidelines; however, because AI will continue to grow, the guidelines should be reviewed every two to three years to

stay current. Mr. Peperkorn emphasized that AI is unavoidable and must be integrated as a learning partner rather than a "cheat code." The handbook defines four levels of use: No AI, AI as a Refiner, AI as a Co-creator, and AI as the Driver. Teachers will have discretion over these levels to ensure consistency across courses.

The Board discussed the impact on staff workloads in policing how AI is used. If students are allowed to use AI, they must be monitored to ensure they are using it correctly. Mr. Peperkorn noted that student feedback indicates that students feel AI cannot replace teachers. The Board discussed the "human Oreo" approach—requiring human input, AI-generated results, followed by human verification of the AI output, as it is not guaranteed that all information is accurate.

Going forward, the team plans for parent education nights, professional lessons for staff, and advisory sessions for students. Mr. Peperkorn noted that the District may develop a page for parents on what AI is, how it is used, and how students are allowed to utilize it. Mr. Peperkorn noted that these guidelines were also shared with the WGS District Administrator so that middle school students may begin learning more about the use of AI.

#### Neola Special Update - Act 89

Superintendent Francois presented a first reading of the policy update required by 2025 Wisconsin Act 89, which mandates formal policies for appropriate employee-student communication by September 1, 2026. The law requires annual staff training on identifying "grooming" behaviors and professional boundaries. A final reading and approval are scheduled for July.

#### WUHS Construction Update – through June 2026

Superintendent Francois reported that the project remains on schedule and on budget. Key highlights included the completion of abatement in the art area, progress on HVAC and plumbing in Area A, and the upcoming installation of a new water heater. Notably, cost savings allowed the District to expand the fire sprinkler system scope to the entire school. A "street-vacate" issue regarding the loading dock is currently being resolved with the Village via a potential easement. The Village is also partnering with the school to repave Field Drive this summer.

All board members are invited to do a walk-through of the D Wing if they are interested in doing so. A video update of the renovations taking place will be filmed tomorrow, June 16.

### **Action Items**

#### Preliminary Budget Review and Adoption – 2026-27

Superintendent Francois presented a preliminary budget that holds the mill rate flat at 4.15 mills. Despite a decline in enrollment (837 students) and a decrease of roughly 15% in state general aid (down approximately \$693,000), the projected operating gap was reduced from \$1.2 million to \$139,000. This reduction was achieved through capturing Act 15 special education aid, shifting SRO and fitness center costs to the Community Service Fund (Fund 80), and in social security benefit projections. The administration recommended bridging the remaining \$139,000 gap by using the District's healthy \$6.8 million fund balance. There was a motion by Purtell, seconded by Bzdawka to approve the preliminary budget for the 2026-27 school year. All ayes; motion passed.

#### Intergovernmental Agreement — Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance (SWSA), 2026–27

There was a motion by Purtell, seconded by Wishau to consider joining the Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance for a \$3,700 annual fee. Discussion focused on the potential financial benefits, specifically regarding legislative advocacy and the creation of larger risk pools for healthcare costs. Board members requested more specific information on how the alliance has impacted member districts' finances in the past. Upon a vote being taken, the motion failed with Purtell-yes, Bzdawka-no, Wishau-no, and Schwartz abstaining. There followed a motion by Bzdawka, seconded by Wishau to table the SWSA agreement until the next meeting to gather more data. All ayes; motion carried.

**Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Francois welcomed new board member Noah Wishau. He also reported that repairs for storm damage to the baseball and tennis fencing have been completed via insurance, with the dugout roof repair pending.

**President's Report**

President Schwartz had no additional items to report beyond the welcome of the newest board member, Noah Wishau.

There followed a motion by Bzdawka, seconded by Wishau to adjourn into Executive Session under State Statute 19.85 (1) (c), considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility, and (e) deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public property, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session. All ayes; motion carried. This done at 7:45 p.m.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, July 27, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. Due to ongoing summer construction, the Large Group Instruction room (LGI) will remain inaccessible, and the meeting will again be held at Fox River Middle School, 921 W. Main Street, Waterford, WI.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dennis Purtell, Board Clerk