

**WATERFORD UNION HIGH SCHOOL
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Monday, December 16, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by President Schoenfeld at 6:35 p.m. Board members present at the meeting were: Gary Beck, Kelly Datka, Dennis Purtell, Mike Schoenfeld, and Doug Schwartz.

Official notice of the meeting was made by way of publication in the *Waterford Post* on Thursday, December 12, 2024, was posted at the District Office (Door #7) and at Entrance #19, and was published on the District's website. Minutes from the regular board meeting of October 7 and from the special meeting of October 29 are posted on the District's website.

President Schoenfeld led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. Treasurer's Report
- B. Minutes - Regular Monthly Meeting of Nov. 25, 2024
- C. Minutes - Special Meetings of December 2, 2024 and December 6, 2024
- D. Library Media Center 5-Year Plan.
- E. Written Evaluation and Certification of School Safety Drills 2024

There was a motion by Datka, seconded by Beck to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of Item B - Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of Nov. 25, 2024. Mrs. Datka noted that the minutes did not reflect that Bylaw Policy 0166 – Agenda was to be placed on the following meeting agenda with language modifications for board action. Roll call vote taken; all ayes. The motion carried.

There followed a motion by Datka, seconded by Purtell to approve the minutes of November 25, 2024 as amended. Roll call vote taken; all ayes. The motion carried.

RESIDENT COMMENTS

No residents were present who wished to address the board.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Student Council Report

Sergeant at Arms Owen Hoffman reported that Student Council is hosting a winter spirit week Dec. 16-20 and shared the various dress-up day themes. CHASE members have accrued over 1,400 service hours since the start of the school year. In addition to baking cookies with residents of Waterford Senior Living, CHASE helped with the German Christmas Market hosted by local businesses as well as the Waterford Rec. Department's Winter Fest. FFA baked treats and assisted with the FFA Alumni Craft Fair and bake sale. Eleven CLAW members spent an afternoon shopping for two families they adopted for the holidays. NHS raised over \$2,000 to donate to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and \$420 for a local family in need during their "Miracle Minute" fund-raiser at the Dec. 10 basketball game. NHS will again collect "Toys for Tots" at the Dec. 17 home basketball game and will hold another "Miracle Minute" fund-raiser. Lastly, plans are underway for the annual NHS "Waterford's Got Talent" show scheduled for January 29.

Unite Academy Research

Joel Molitor, Unite Academy teacher, introduced students Myah Basquez, Riley Degrave, Tyler Dilbeck, Keanu Kennelly, Evelyn Laux, and Dylan Van Ruden, who were tasked with identifying a problem in their lives and researching a solution for it. Mr. Molitor noted the numerous competencies of the research project and shared how the students collaboratively arrived at their topic of students' use of earbuds to listen to music while in school. Each of the Unite students spoke about an aspect of their research as it related to mental health, stress reduction, and productivity. They shared survey results from both WUHS staff members and students, and shared their recommendation for rewriting the student handbook to allow for this privilege as well as consequences for misuse. Following their presentation, students were applauded for their hard work as well as for their ability to think on their feet in fielding numerous questions from the board.

Transition Readiness Grant

WEC Director of Special Education and Pupil Services Mike Rosandich reported that the WUHS District is one of 28 schools to be awarded funding through the Transition Readiness Grant program established under the 2017 WI Act 59. This was the first year that the WUHS District received this grant (\$66,000) due to the efforts of Special Education Transition Coordinator Susie Thomas. Ms. Thomas noted that the purpose of the grant is to support evidence-based practices related to the successful transition from high school for students with Individualized Education Programs. Grant monies can be used for transportation options, competitive Integrated Employment Training (CIE) programs, post-secondary tuition or supports, as well as transition training for staff members. The grant monies have been used to purchase a 7-passenger van for the PAC House program, to purchase transition curriculum to enhance a student-led business, to increase opportunities for students to access classes that support their post-secondary goals, and to provide transition training to the special education team. Superintendent Francois thanked Ms. Thomas for her work in writing this grant application and receiving the funds to provide better opportunities for WUHS students.

ACTION ITEMS

The following items were presented for Board action.

A. NEOLA Policy Updates - District Policy 2340 District Sponsored Trips

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Datka to approve Policy 2340 – District Sponsored Trips as presented. All ayes; motion carried.

B. NEOLA Policy Updates - District Policy 5460 Graduation Requirements

Proposed policy updates for graduation requirements include removing the 0.25 credit requirement for the Information & Technology Literacy course and adding 0.5 credit requirement for the Personal Financial Literacy class, required of all students starting with the class of 2028. The total number of credits required for graduation will remain at 24, which includes 8.5 credits of elective courses.

Technology & Engineering Education Teacher Joe Datka, who was present at the meeting, was invited to speak, having served on the graduation requirements committee during the 2022-23 school year along with board member Schwartz. Mr. Datka expressed his opposition to decreasing the total number of elective credits from 8.75 to 8.5 and shared his rationale for increasing the number of elective credits required for graduation. Board discussion followed, which included a suggestion that the graduation committee reconvene, whether the Financial Literacy course is better suited as an offering under Business Ed. or in Social Studies, the variety of ways students are made aware of elective courses offerings and career pathways, and that each year there exists a number of students who struggle to meet the minimum 24 credits required for graduation. Superintendent Francois noted that the graduation committee would best not be reconvened until after the current cohort of students graduate. Board member Datka asked how many students struggle to meet the minimum 24 graduation credits.

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Beck to table this agenda item. All ayes; motion carried.

Additional discussion continued regarding the personal finance course requirement and at what grade level should students be expected to take the class. There was a question whether the course might be incorporated into an existing course such as economics, in order that the number of elective credits might be increased to 9.0 instead of 8.5. Mrs. Datka expressed concern that students are not well-rounded and that they should be required to take more elective courses while in high school.

Superintendent Francois located data regarding the number of students who struggle to meet the 24 credit requirement, and noted that most WUHS students earn over and above the minimum number of credits to graduate, on average 27-28 credits. About 10% of WUHS students have exactly 24 credits or less upon graduation.

Board member Purtell noted that the proposed referendum includes funding for enhancing the Technology & Engineering classrooms to provide greater opportunities for preparing students for careers or apprenticeships upon graduation.

The ACT prep class will again be offered as an elective starting with the 2025-26 school year.

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Beck to reconsider retracting the earlier motion to table this agenda item. All ayes; motion carried.

Board member Datka expressed her concern that there was no consensus from the graduation requirements committee and asked Principal Foster to also comment on his feedback provided on this topic, especially relative to alternative diploma pathways. Principal Foster cited the variety of ways that students may earn a non-traditional WUHS diploma, and noted that the number of credits taken by students is reflected on their transcripts.

At the conclusion of the board's discussion, there was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Beck to approve Policy 5460 – Graduation Requirements as presented. Upon the vote, four board members voted aye with Datka opposed. Motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Francois invited board members to the staff holiday luncheon on Wednesday, December 18 starting at 10:30 a.m.

A meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 19 at 11:30 a.m. with Nexxus Solutions and interested community members in order to answer questions regarding their work for the district and fee structure.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Schoenfeld wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday.

ADJOURN FROM OPEN MEETING

There was a motion by Beck, seconded by Schwartz to adjourn the meeting. All ayes; motion carried. This done at 7:50 p.m.

The next regular board meeting will be held Monday, January 20, 2024. The meeting will be held in the LGI beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas P. Schwartz, Board Clerk