

W-E-M BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES REGULAR MEETING

Monday, November 24, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

The WEM Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, November 24, 2025 at the Waterville Building. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Gary Michael at 6:30 p.m.

Board Members Gary Michael, Jon Bakken, Jay Schneider, Brenda Heuss, Troy Tolzman, Grace Bartz, and Jocelyn Brown attended the meeting. Also present at the meeting was Superintendent Mark Winter, High School Principal Brandon Tagg, and Business Manager Margaret Jewison.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Tolzman to approve the agenda as presented. Four members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bakken and seconded by Michael to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from October 27 meeting and the Special Meeting from November 13. Four members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bakken and seconded by Schneider to approve the October-November Financial Report. The bills and payroll from the report were \$4,126,397.31, deposits were \$1,931,388.51, and transfers of \$416,910.00. Comments included a payment of \$69,724.75 to South Central Blue Bird for a bus and the acknowledgment of numerous county and state aide payments.

Four members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bakken and seconded by Schneider to approve a related party transition of \$250 to T-N-T Flooring.

Four members voted in favor - Tolzman abstains - motion declared passed.

RECOGNITION

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bakken to approve the resolution to receive the following monetary donations:

- Elysian American Legion Post 311 donated \$1,000 to WEM Advanced P.E.
- Waterville Lions Club donated \$675 to Travis' Trades Scholarship, \$1,300 to Vocational FACS, and \$2,025 to the 5th grade Eagle Bluff Trip.
- SWWC Service cooperative donated \$1,000 to the WEM PBIS Program.

Five members voted in favor by roll call voted - motion declared passed.

PRESENTATIONS

WEM High School Principal Brandon Tagg gave an update on the Achievement and Integration Progress Report which was presented last month in the board regular meeting agenda.

The three year period of this program will end at the end of 2026. New goals need to be presented for the next three-year cycle by March of 2026.

WEM Superintendent Mark Winter gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) Program, which was formerly called World's Best Work Force. School boards that govern districts and charter schools are required to develop comprehensive,

long-term strategic plans that address five CACR goals.

See attachment.

VISITOR COMMENTS

Scott Condon came forward with concerns about the state of the track and field program, which he feels is there is no investment in and no excitement in the program.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bakken to approve the consent agenda which included the following items:

- Approve the following 2025-2026 coaches:

Boys basketball - Dennis Androli (varsity volunteer), Blake Seesz (junior high - \$2,575), and Brody Holicky (junior high - \$2,575).

Girls basketball - Kristalyn Morris (2nd assistant - \$3,420), Adam Hackney (junior high - \$2,575), Ashley Bauer (junior high 85% - \$2,188.75), and Pam Heniz (junior high 15% - \$386.25).

Wrestling - Volunteers John Miller, Morgan Skidmore, and Michael Lambert.

- Approve the following new hires:

Lidia Dorantes Collin, Student/Peer tutor - \$12/hour

Tasha Kilen, Administrative Assistant Morristown - BS23/Step 3, \$16.23/hour.

Sam Stier and Matthew Van Houdt, Open Gym Supervisors - \$25/night (participants are charged \$3 per person at the door).

Five members voting in favor - motion declared passed.

REPORTS

WEM K-4 and Junior High Principal Myles Knutson submitted the following reports.

Greetings School Board Members,

Here are a few updates from the Middle School:

- Conservation Crew: Our 7th and 8th grade Conservation Crew is back this year and already doing great work to help our community through environmental projects and hands on learning experiences. This impressive group of 72 students has officially adopted a two-mile stretch of highway between Waterville and Morristown, and they took their first trip out this month to work together cleaning up the ditch areas. Keep an eye out for their “Adopt-a-Highway” sign the next time you’re driving by! Throughout the year, the crew is also looking forward to touring the fish hatchery, going ice fishing, and building birdhouses. We are proud of Mr. Androli and his hardworking crew!

- One Site Conversations: We’ve begun our initial discussions about what 5th–8th grade will look like next year as we prepare to bring all grade levels together on one site. Teachers and administration have been meeting to brainstorm ideas, explore instructional models, and consider what will best support student learning. We value this collaborative process and appreciate the thoughtful insight each team member brings. Our goal is to ensure that every voice is heard as we work toward a smooth, positive, and beneficial transition for all students.

- Food Drive: Our Middle School Student Council is leading a school wide food drive, and students are stepping up in a big way! To participate, students can bring in a canned food item or

donate one dollar to earn the privilege of wearing a hat for the day. The enthusiasm has been incredible. Students have already raised over \$220 in just two days, along with many donated food items. Way to go, students! Your generosity is making a real difference!

Thank you,
Myles Knutson

Greetings School Board Members,
Here are a few updates from the Elementary School:

- Parents Invited for a PBIS Assembly: We were so excited to welcome parents and families into the building this year for our Halloween Parade and PBIS assembly! It was wonderful to have them join in the fun and experience firsthand the energy and positivity our PBIS assemblies bring. As families were leaving, I loved hearing all the great things they had to say about the experience. Anytime we can bring families into our school to see the amazing things happening each day, it's a win in my book. We look forward to inviting them to even more events throughout the year!

- BUCS Pride Rewards: Staff members give out BUCS Pride tokens for a wide variety of positive behaviors, and students have been working hard to earn them! Individual tokens can be collected for personal prizes, while classroom tokens are awarded when the entire class demonstrates outstanding behavior together. It has been so fun to see classrooms filling their token jars this year, with several already earning their first awards. Way to go, students! Keep showing that BUCS Pride!

- Buddy Classrooms: Grade levels have paired up this year to form buddy classrooms, similar to traditional "reading buddies," but with even more opportunities to connect. These buddy groups will celebrate together, work on projects, read, and support one another throughout the year. It has been wonderful to see students meeting with their buddy classrooms and building relationships across grade levels. The joy and teamwork they show during these times is truly fun to watch!

Thank you,
Myles Knutson

WEM Senior High Principal submitted the following reports.

Well the spooky season has come and gone with the students participating in a costume contest and a PBIS celebration as we had a low number of student incidents for 1st quarter. Coffee, cocoa and donuts were shared by all with some praise being shared among our faculty and students. Halloween was also the last day of the quarter, as grades were due the following week for any student having an incomplete. I have been told that we had the lowest number of students not passing in a long time, so super proud of our teachers for bringing the students to a great place and for the students working hard the last couple of weeks of the quarter.

The second quarter has started as we are in the third full week with eyes on Thanksgiving Break in our sights. We were sad at how the season ended for our football, volleyball and cross country teams, but super proud at how our student body supported each other over the length of the season and are excited for basketball and wrestling to start soon enough. Our school play, Sherlock Holmes, was a great success as the cast performed for our community over two nights. It was a great event that had many audience members laughing and enjoying a night out in our school auditorium.

Conferences will be shared with tonight's board meeting. We didn't have a great showing the

first time around (it was hard to compete with an away football game on the same night), but we are hoping for a great turnout to ensure that parents, students and staff are all on the same page of this quarter's educational goals. We have had a great start of our year, and hope it continues as the snow falls and the temperatures drop.

We are in the planning stages of middle school/high school schedules for next year. We are meeting with teachers and discussing wants/needs for next year as we bring the Morristown staff and students over to the Waterville building. We have a lot of great ideas to increase choice for students and to make this K-12 building a united group as WEM heads to a new era of educational greatness. We are excited about the process and look forward to updating the school board with ideas that we have and the changes that may be coming.

Brandon Tagg

WEM High School Principal

Jeff Boran, Community Education & Activities Director

CEADR Board Report

Athletics:

Volleyball - 2025 tied with Kenyon-Wanamingo and Triton for the Gopher Conference Championship. Addison Condon, Sr. was named the Gopher Conference Player of the Year! Liza Baker, Sr., and Alix Velzke, Jr. joined Addison on the All-Gopher Conference Team! Robyn Schwichtenberg, Sr. received Honorable Mention honors and Alenka Jans, Sr. is the 2025 Gopher Conference Sportsmanship Award winner for WEM for a 2nd straight year..

Football –The WEM Football Team were the Mid-South Silver Subdistrict Champion and the Section 2AA Champions. Buccaneer players earning District Football Honors were Talen Taylor (Sr.) District Most Valuable Player, Gavin Atherton (Jr.) Running Back of the Year, Kaden James (Sr.) Offensive Lineman of the Year, Avery Breyer (Sr.) Defensive Lineman of the Year, Jacob Androli Linebacker of the Year, Tarek Tolzman (Sr.) Defensive Back of the Year. Along with these players Brady Murphy (Sr.) was also named to the All-District team. WEM Head Coach Sam Stier was named the District Coach of the Year for the 2nd straight year!

Cross Country – The 2025 WEM/JWP Grizzly Cross Country Boys team won the Gopher Conference Title led by the Conference Champion Wyatt Jans who won the 5K race in a time of 17:25 on a rainy cold day in Hayfield! Joining Wyatt as All-Conference Runners were Teagan Mulder (JWP) and Honorable Mention were Auston Holicky (WEM) and Brennen Welvaert (JWP). Wesley Heinz was named WEM/JWP's Sportsmanship Award recipient! The Girl Grizzlies placed 2nd as a team. All-Conference runners are Norah Welvaert (JWP), Maddy Miller (WEM) and Lydia Coulsey (WEM). Honorable mention runners were Ellie Schlie (WEM), Kwynn Krause (JWP), Emma Huelsnitz (JWP) and Jaelyn Wilmes (WEM). Jaelyn was also named the WEM/JWP Sportsmanship Award winner. Congratulations on a very successful season to the Grizzly Runners and Coaches!

Girls Basketball began the season last Friday at Sleepy Eye St. Mary's with their first home event tomorrow night (11/25) vs. Hayfield. 21– JH GBB players, 19 – HS GBB players.

Wrestlings first meet is Thursday, December 4 at Westfield. The first home meet is Thursday, December 11th a triangular with Waseca & LSH. 53 WEM/JWP wrestlers in coop. (7th – 12th) (WEM – 26 Boys & 5 Girls) (JWP – 18 Boys & 4 Girls)

Boys Basketball's first game is Tuesday Dec. 2 at LeSueur and then Dec. 5 vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo. 17 – JH Players & 21 – HS Players.

Coops w/ Waseca – WEM Students - 4 Boys Hockey, 0 Girls Hockey & 1 Girls Gymnastics.

Twelve HS WEM students will be attending the “Together in Partnership 4.0” Statewide Conference on November 18th in Mankato. The students were Sophomores Paetyn Judd, Maddy Miller, Raelyn Eich, Autumn Schumacher, Mason Waugh and Cole Bartz. Junior attendees were Kyeria Morris, Alix Velzke, Bryella Pope, Trey Richards, Gavin Atherton and Dawson Slechta.

WEM students performed this past week “Sherlock Holmes” by Tim Kelly and arranged by Pioneer Drama. Students performing were, Laney Paulson, Sophia Harvey, Abby Crosby, Leah Meschke, Natalie Elness, Halle Anderson, Issie Bauer, Jerimy Little, Janessa Wilmes, Emma O’Brien, Madalyn Hackney, Jaelyn Wilmes, Lacey Reysack, Ryley Henning and Kayla Bronk. The play was directed by Andrew Velishek.

Community Education:

23 students finished up Driver Education Classroom this past week.

WEM Board Member Reports

There were no Board Member reports.

WEM Board Committee Reports

There were no Board Committee reports.

WEM Superintendent Mark Winter presented the following:

- Superintendent Winter commented on the the great Veterans Day Program, the Le Sueur County Historical Society arts program, the continuation of one-site planning and asking teachers to take inventory of their rooms, winter sports have started, concert season in the next three weeks, and work will take place from June 11 through August 23 in the Waterville building.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

The board had the first readings of the following policies (See attachments):

414 Mandated reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse

503 Student Attendance

505 Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees

705 Investments

If needed a Work Session will be held on December 11, 2025.

ACTION

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bakken to approve the following policies (see attachments):

515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records Redline

520 Student Survey Redline

520 FORM - Student Surveys

521 Student Disability Nondiscrimination Redline

521 - The Pledge of Allegiance

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Michael and seconded by Heuss to approve the Student Teaching Agreement between Bethany Lutheran College and WEM Public Schools to Commence Dec. 1, 2025 through June 30, 2030.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bakken to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Gary Michael, Attest

Jay Schneider, Attest