

**WATERFORD UNION HIGH SCHOOL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, December 15, 2025  
Regular Meeting - 6:30 PM**

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 11, 2025, by posting 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 31, 2025, are also 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. Review of Paid Bills
- B. Minutes – November 17, 2025 Regular Meeting
- C. Minutes – December 2, 2025 Special Meeting
- D. Staffing Updates
  - 1) Letter of Retirement – Lynn Davis, AP Coordinator
  - 2) Resignation – Jurnee Engle, Special Education Paraprofessional
  - 3) Resignation – Ron Przybysz, Technical Education Teacher
- E. Written Evaluation and Certification of School Safety Drills 2025

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Purtell, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Roll call vote taken; all ayes. The motion carried.

**RESIDENT COMMENTS**

Community member Dawn Aron and daughter, Alexandra addressed the board regarding the proposed curriculum change to require AP Seminar for all students. Mrs. Aron expressed concern about students who are “in the gray area” with grades, and stated that she does not feel this course is a good fit for all students due to their level of maturity and self-discipline at the sophomore level. Alexandra, a current student at WUHS, also shared her sentiments against this requirement.

Bobby Jo Leskow, a school counselor and spouse of WUHS English teacher Michael Omo, expressed concerns regarding the proposal to mandate AP Seminar for all tenth-grade students. Drawing on her professional background, she questioned the impact of requiring high-rigor courses for students facing social and emotional challenges. WUHS staff member Mike Omo also expressed his concerns on behalf of their son, whom he feels does not have the self-confidence needed to be successful. Mr. Omo expressed appreciation to the administration and school board for their leadership, but asked that students be given a choice to take the standard English 10 course in lieu of AP seminar during their sophomore year.

Board member Datka asked Mr. Omo for his perspective as a teacher, whether he feels there are other students who should not be in this class. Mr. Omo noted that the class requires a lot of work outside of class and often heard, “When can I drop?” from students. He noted that this is a rigorous class dictated by the AP College Board. He noted that as a teacher, he cannot provide individual help to students, but can reteach concepts to the class as a whole.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Technical Education Equipment Budget Clarification**

At the November 17 board meeting, board member Datka asked for greater detail regarding Tech Ed equipment associated with FIM ED-4, which was included in the original referendum total. Superintendent Francois noted that some adjustments were made during the project design development to better balance instructional needs and project scope; however, the project does retain \$96,200 dedicated for Tech Ed

equipment. To ensure alignment between referendum intent, current instructional priorities, and budget capacity, a joint review is scheduled with the Tech Ed department, Nexus, and the project team on January 9, 2026, to finalize the equipment list, confirm dollars held, and to prioritize needs.

Project Manager Kyle Robers (Nexus Solutions) remarked that the board reviewed and awarded contractor bids in November. Mr. Robers confirmed that \$96K is earmarked for Tech Ed, however, most work in that area is scheduled for Summer 2027. Nexus will reconvene with stakeholders in Spring 2027 to finalize spending priorities.

Board member Datka requested a reconciliation between FIM (Facility Improvement Measure) summaries and work scopes to ensure the \$24.9M referendum goals are met. Mr. Robers explained that because the project involves multiple contractors and over 1,300 pages of design plans, Nexus oversees the entire lifecycle to ensure cohesion. He committed to providing Member Datka with a detailed contractor-to-project map once construction is further underway to avoid scheduling delays.

### **Math Department PLC**

Math teacher Joe Bianchi presented an overview of the Algebra 1 Professional Learning Community (PLC), highlighting how the team—including Mandi O'Dwyer, Stephanie Nelson, Joe Kloiber, and Rana Freeze—collaborates to improve student outcomes. Mr. Bianchi detailed the essential standards aligned with ACT, state, and other benchmarks, explaining the team's methods for assessing student mastery. Additionally, he shared specific intervention strategies used to support students based on the assessment data collected.

### **Career Day 2025 Review**

Associate Principal Adam Bell and School Counselor Niki Werner updated the Board regarding the success of the second annual Career Day held at WUHS on Wednesday, November 19. An overview of the day and how it was organized was shared, along with feedback from students and the speakers. Students' overall experience rating increased from 3.1 in 2024 to 3.7 in 2025, and 97% of students responded that they learned something new as it related to a career field of interest to them. Plans are underway for providing this opportunity to students again next year. A special shout-out was given to DW Coffee in Rochester for donating the coffee this year, as well as to Milwaukee Pretzel for providing snacks.

### **Audit Overview**

Superintendent Francois reported that the District's independent audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, has been completed by Baker Tilly. The auditors issued an unmodified ("clean") opinion of the District, which is a key component to the District maintaining its current bond rating. Two minor accounting entries needed adjustment, but did not reflect missing funds or operational errors. The audit will be posted to the District's website.

### **10-Year Facility Plan — Phase 2. Update and long-range planning.**

Superintendent Francois noted that six years ago, a ten-year facility plan was developed to ensure that the District buildings and grounds remain efficient, well-maintained, and support future educational growth and functionality. With the passage of the most recent referendum held in April 2025, the District is currently in Phase 1 of the long-range plan. While the current building project is on target, there remain two additional phases of building improvements that will need to be addressed in the future.

Phase 2 identified a right-sized competition gymnasium as the next major facility need. The current WUHS gymnasium is the smallest in the conference, and is restrictive for the size of events the district might otherwise host. Dr. Francois cited graduation as one such example, noting that WUHS families are limited to a set number of tickets each year due to limited seating in the gym for commencement.

Recognizing that the paint hasn't yet dried with the current building project, Dr. Francois proposed that the board might wish to discuss addressing future facility needs identified in the ten-year plan. The District is in a financial position to either defease existing debt or support additional capital improvements without increasing the mill rate. There also exist certain construction efficiencies that could be realized by aligning a potential 2027 gym addition with ongoing project work. Board members were reminded that school districts are limited to holding only one referendum per year, and the window for considering an additional

referendum in April 2026 has passed. To avoid holding a referendum with neighboring municipalities that are planning referenda in 2027 through 2029, the November 2026 election represents the next clear window should the Board wish to preserve the option for timely Phase 2 implementation.

Board member Purtell asked for clarification on what would be considered a “right-sized” competition gym. Dr. Francois explained the difference between a field house, which would typically be comprised of four courts surrounded by an indoor track with limited seating, versus a competition gymnasium. The latter would consist of three courts, without the walking track, and would have seating on two to four sides. The competition gym is more in line with gymnasiums found at other conference high schools.

The consensus of the board members is that they are open to having a discussion at a future time to address long-term facility needs. If a referendum question is anticipated or desired to be on the ballot in conjunction with the November 2026 general election, the WUHS board must make the decision at least 70-days prior to the election, or mid- to late-August.

#### **ACTION**

The following items were presented for board action

#### **District Calendar 2026-27 and 2027-28 School Years**

Principal Foster noted that the calendar for the 2026-27 school year is being presented for Board action, as well as the proposed calendar for the 2027-28 school year. Mr. Foster had met with the Continuous Improvement Team to solidify the start and end dates, winter and spring breaks for the next two school terms. The 2026-27 calendar is one day short of the 190-day teacher contract, and the 2027-28 calendar is short by three days. The Administration is hoping to adjust the calendars to include additional professional learning days for staff.

Board member Datka asked if the calendars were shared with the feeder schools so that the high school calendar might align more closely with the elementary districts. Superintendent Francois noted that the WUHS calendars have been built with the building construction project in mind, and may not align exactly with the elementary districts. He also noted that the minimum number of required minutes of student instruction time differs between the high school and elementary schools. Member Datka asked whether WUHS has more minutes of instruction or a higher number of instruction days in comparison to other high schools. In addition, Mrs. Datka asked why students are required to attend school virtually on inclement weather days if the District already exceeds the minimum requirements of instructional time.

Following board discussion, there was a motion by Datka, seconded by Schwartz, to table the calendars until all dates are finalized. All ayes; motion carried.

#### **New Course Offerings and Curricula Revisions 2026-27**

Principal Foster presented proposed changes for the 2026-27 school year, guided by the Continuous Improvement Team’s new four-year review framework. This model supports the District’s mission of high-level learning for all students. Current data shows 80% of WUHS students pursue post-secondary education, yet only 30-40% currently enroll in AP courses. Key updates and new offerings include the following:

##### *English*

- Required AP Seminar for sophomores (with junior-year exceptions for foundation support)
- AP Literature and AP Language open to both juniors and seniors
- New AP Research capstone course
- Removed specific Composition graduation requirements

##### *Math*

- New Course Math 142 – PIE: A one-semester college algebra course for college credit

##### *Agriculture*

- New courses aligned with Academic Career Planning, focusing on apprenticeships and specific career paths

### *Business Ed*

- New coursework restructured into three pathways: Marketing, Business Administration, and Finance

Principal Foster reported that the Science Department is currently reviewing its curriculum with the goal of introducing students to Advanced Placement (AP) coursework earlier in their academic careers. Additionally, the Social Studies Department plans to phase out the Consumer Economics course in the future.

A discussion ensued regarding the English Department's curriculum. Board Member Datka expressed concern regarding the requirement for all sophomores to take AP Seminar to fulfill their tenth-grade English credit. In response, Principal Foster noted that 38 states, including WI, have adopted this course as an appropriate grade-level standard for tenth graders. The administration anticipates that Waterford Union High School English Language scores on the DPI State Report Card will increase from below average and exceed the state average growth rate as a result of these transitions. To assist students with the rigorous coursework, several support systems have been implemented, including:

- The strategic realignment of Mrs. Tolbert's role within the department.
- Targeted support from Reading Specialist Mrs. Grisius.
- Utilization of Lunch & Learn resource time.

Following the discussion, the Board reached a consensus that the District's core belief—that all students can learn at high levels—mandates a robust curriculum and higher academic standards.

President Schoenfeld called for a motion to approve the proposed curriculum changes and new courses for the 2026-27 school year. There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Purtell to approve the curriculum changes and new courses for the 2026-27 school year as presented. Four ayes; Datka opposed. Motion carried 4-1.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Francois gave a shout-out to the Theatre Production class members, along with WUHS Drama Teacher Leigh Birmingham, for their outstanding performance at the state one-act play competition held in Stevens Point.

Board member Datka asked that the Guiding Coalition team be invited to a future board meeting to provide a synopsis of its role at WUHS.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Schoenfeld thanked the community members and student who were present to speak at the meeting. The Board appreciates various viewpoints when holding its discussions, and the Administration is to be commended for insisting on excellence.

There was a motion by Beck, seconded by Schwartz, to adjourn the meeting. All ayes; motion carried. This was done at 9:12 p.m.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, January 19, 2026. The meeting will be held in the Large Group Instruction Room beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Douglas P. Schwartz, Board Clerk