

Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Minutes Special Meeting
Tuesday, March 10, 2026

The WEM Board of Education met in a work session on March 10, 2026 . Board Chairman June Rezac called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Board members: Rezac, Gary Micheal, Jon Bakken, Brenda Heuss (arrival 6:47 pm), Troy Tolzman, and student board members Jacelyn Brown, Grace Bartz attended the meeting. Members Jay Schneider, and Jeff Stangler. Also, in attendance was Superintendent Mark Winter.

Motion by Micheal and seconded by Tolzman to approve the meeting agenda. Motion passed 4-0.

First Reading of Policies:

- 205 Open Meetings and Closed Meetings
- 207 Public Hearings
- 401 Equal Employment Opportunity
- 714 Fund Balances

Discuss 504 Student Dress and Appearance Policy: A request had been made by students to through a board member to be allowed to wear hats during class. Through exploring this it was discovered that the student handbook & Policy 504 were not in alignment with regard to wearing headwear. Rezac expressed that she disagreed with students being allowed to wear hats but wanted to hear from student board members. Bartz advised that some students are wearing them now dependent on staff allowance. Winter was directed to poll staff regarding this issue and would add to the agenda for regular meetings to bring policy and student handbooks into alignment. Whatever decision was reached, policy/handbook would take effect 26/27 school year.

Discuss 513 Student Promotion, Retention, and Program Design: Board had discussed the possibility of early kindergarten admission with administration. An outdated policy on the topic was rescinded by the board. Staff reviewed other district’s policies on this topic and presented an addition to policy 513. Michael proposed some language changes to the section for “Reconsideration for Kindergarten Admission.” The changes would be presented at the regular meeting with the full policy for approval.

Budget

Winter presented some recommended reductions and efficiencies for the 26-27 school year. Projected deficit for 26/27 is \$723,594.00, projected fund balance is 76 days for the same period. Current policy for fund balance is 45-60 days.

Recommended reductions:

Fund Balance Spend down (5 days)	\$140,000
Transfer of Maintenance funds to LTFM	<u>\$130,000</u>
	\$270,000

Morristown Closure:

Shuttle Busing	\$55,605
Staff Mileage Between Buildings	\$4,000
Clerical	\$35,152
Nurse Asst.	\$37,523*
Maintenance	\$63,163
Tech Savings	<u>\$15,500</u>
	\$210,943

*possible add time back in or reorganize Secretaries.

Food Service	\$24,000	estimated**/different fund
Additional Utilities Unknown	??	

General Savings:

FY Budget Adjustment	\$68,409	retirements/read act
.5 HS Maintenance	\$42,699	
Elementary Reduction (2nd Grade)	\$66,280	
.5 HS Teacher Retirement	\$35,000	estimate** *.5 remains as Overloads
AD savings	\$30,000	estimate**
Printed Calendar	\$3,825.31	
Star Assessments	\$11,000	
School Supply Budget	\$5,000	
Athletics	<u>\$10,000</u>	
	\$272,213.31**	

**based on estimated savings

Total recommendations	\$753,156.31
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Other possibilities:

3rd Grade Teacher Reduction	\$72,142
School Counselor Reduction	\$52,397
Student Success Coord. Reduction	\$83,568
.2 Teacher to EL FTE shift	\$17,994
More to supply budget	??

Possible one time cuts:

- Teamworks
- Bus Purchase
- Tech Purchase

Winter presented the following: moving the \$130,000 from Maintenance could delay projects or the funds would then need to be taken from LTFM vs. having them in the General Fund. Per direction from the board at the previous board meeting, spend down some of the fund balance keeping in mind that negotiations have not

been finalized. He also expressed that 67 students will be graduating with an estimated 40 entering into kindergarten. This would leave approximately \$200,000 of loss occurring due to student influx alone.

In the general savings portion, Winter advised that several of the “savings” amounts are estimates based on retirements. These amounts could vary. He also stated that he understands that many enjoy the printed calendar but it is essentially a communication tool that is incorrect as soon as it’s printed. STAR assessments will be eliminated and CAPTI Readbasix, which is also already in use, will be utilized for testing. The athletics savings would be maximizing the bussing to away events.

He also covered the other possibilities. Board members had asked if these items were possibilities: 60% of the Student Success Coordinator is covered by a grant, he compared our Counselor vs. JWP who utilize social workers both have cost impacts to the district, Grade 3 reduction would mean a larger class size. Member Bakken asked how many are in the upcoming 2nd (44) and 3rd (48) grade classes. Member Heuss asked if a solution had been found for teaching a second language. No specific solution had been found at the time of the meeting. Winter also praised support staff for their contributions to our district. Tolzmann asked what the cost of a bus purchase would be, Winter advised \$60,000-70,000 based on previous numbers. Member Bakken expressed that he still feels having Student Success Coordinator makes the administrative bucket top heavy, even with grant monies due to students all in one building, and cited that negotiations are not completed. Rezac and Winter expressed concern regarding the unknown State budget and compensatory funds in the next biennium. Bakken asked when the final decision needed to be made in order to notify impacted staff? Winter advised April 1. The board recommended using recommendations from Winter leaving off the other recommendations and one time cut category at this time. A final vote would be completed at the regular March meeting to give time for staff notifications.

Adjournment by Micheal, seconded by Tolzman to adjourn. Motion passed at 7:44 pm.

Attest: June A. Rezac, Board Chair

Gary Michael, Vice Chair