MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY27 BUDGET AND OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF WEST CENTRAL COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #235 IN THE ELEMENTARY CAFETERIA ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY27 DISTRICT BUDGET**

The meeting was called to order by President Schaley at 5:30 p.m., in the elementary cafeteria. The following Board members answered roll call: Chockley, Clark, Higgins, Lenahan, Schaley, and Vancil. Board Member Gullberg was absent. President Schaley declared a quorum present. Also present were Superintendent Lawson, B. Taylor, B. Helt, J. Kirby, J. Hennings, M. Allen, E. Schaley, K. Haynes, T. Kaup, J. Johnson and several new staff members.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC REGARDING FY27 DISTRICT BUDGET

President Schaley asked the members of the audience if there were any comments or questions regarding the district's FY27 Budget. There were no questions to come from the audience.

ADJOURN THE PUBLIC HEARING

President Schaley declared the budget hearing adjourned at 5:31 p.m. Motion by Chockley, seconded by Vancil. Majority of Ayes by Voice Vote. Motion carried.

**RECONVENED**

The Board reconvened at 6:00 p.m, in the elementary cafeteria. The following Board members were present: Chockley, Clark, Higgins, Lenahan, Schaley, and Vancil. Board Member Gullberg arrived at 7:30 p.m. President Schaley declared a quorum present. Also present were Superintendent Lawson, B. Taylor, B. Helt, J. Kirby, J. Hennings, M. Allen, E. Schaley, K. Haynes, T. Kaup, and J. Johnson.

President Schaley then led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

GOOD NEWS ITEMS

- Our partnership with the Farm Bureau is appreciated. They sponsor events such as Safety Day and Ag Days for our elementary students.
- WCMS new windows were installed and look amazing.
- The new elementary playground drains well after the most recent work.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Vancil, seconded by Chockley to approve the agenda as presented. Majority of Ayes by Voice Vote. Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present to address the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Higgins, seconded by Vancil to approve the consent agenda including the following items:

- The minutes of the regular meeting of August 19, 2026;
- The Special Meeting of September 8, 2026;
- Closed session minutes of September 8, 2026;
- The payment of all bills;
- All activity accounts;
- The treasurer's report;
- Approved the Delabar CTE Intergovernmental agreement;

- WCHS FFA Trip to attend the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis;
- Approval of WCHS Student Eli Vancil to graduate at semester pending all requirements have been met.

On roll call the following members voted aye: Lenahan, Schaley, Vancil, Chockley, Clark, and Higgins. 6-0 Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Superintendent Lawson explained the District received five FOIA requests since the last meeting. All requests were responded to in the needed timeline.

Superintendent Lawson provided an update to the Board on our 6th Day Enrollment. As of the 6th day of school, we had 729 students enrolled in the district. Our enrollment decreased by 19 students from last year's 6th day enrollment.

The Board was given a short update on the Elementary Playground project. The PTC Fall Festival is coming up on October 16.

The board had a discussion about the rising health insurance costs to our staff. The board would like the district to look into something more affordable. Board Member Vancil mentioned Christian Health Share Ministries as an option.

Superintendent Lawson plans to explore different options for energy cost savings. The Board was informed that our contract with IEC expires in December.

A discussion was held in regards to the current pay structure for bus drivers which is an hourly rate of pay creating a loss in wages for some drivers who drive the shuttle and out of district students. The District is currently deficit spending of $300,000 in transportation. The hourly rate is competitive with surrounding school districts. Some of our retired drivers are at risk of exceeding the 600 hour IMRF cap under the hourly model. An internal audit will be conducted to review driver utilization, vehicle to ratio, and software capabilities.

A lengthy discussion was held about the district's lunch program. Board Member Schaley presented findings on nutrition and lunch quality since 2018. The concerns raised were insufficient portions, especially for high school athletes, high school pays 35 cents more per meal than elementary for similar serving sizes, menu inconsistencies between north and south campuses, free/reduced students asked to pay for seconds, high carb- low protein ratio current meals far below the 40g of protein target. Neighboring school districts are a part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). If West Central decided to go this route we would need 30% more participation at breakfast and lunch for it to be beneficial for the district so we didn't lose reimbursement. With making the switch to CEP the district could potentially lose $10,000 to $12,000 per month of reimbursement. At the end of FY26 the lunch program was $200,000 deficit spending. It was also mentioned that the WCHS student council purchased a vending machine for $500 and was not yet operational. The vending machine would need to be stocked with smart snack compliant items to operate during the school day. It was proposed to do a 90 day lunch review to track calories, protein, menu consistency, food waste and account notifications.

Jordain Johnson High School Guidance counselor made a presentation to the Board in hopes to implement a weighted GPA beginning with the 2027-28 school year with no retroactive application.

Dual credit and designated accelerated courses like A&P, Chemistry, Physics, and Calculus to carry weighted value. Valedictorian/Salutatoria criteria to shift to highest cumulative weighted GPA. Amy Thompson (Erin Dowell Scholarship) willing to fund dual credit courses for Henderson County students unable to afford them. The board already approved up to $600 reimbursement per student for dual credit. The next steps would be for the curriculum and policy committee to evaluate courses and make recommendations to the board.

REPORTS

The Board reviewed and heard reports from the Building Principals B. Taylor, B. Helt and J. Kirby. District Technology Coordinator Jeremy Hennings, WCHS Athletic Director E. Schaley, and School Psychologist and Special Education Coordinator Mallory Allen.

The Administrator and Teacher Salary Benefit Report for the 2025-2026 school year was presented. This is an annual requirement from ISBE and will be posted on our District website.

ACTION ITEMS

Motion by Chockley, seconded by Higgins to approve the FY27 District Budget as presented. The following are our unaudited fund balances, effective July 1, 2026: Education - $9,268,000, Operations and Maintenance - $1,415,100, Debt Services - $472,200, Transportation - $912,100, Municipal Retirement and Social Security - $379,400, Capital Projects - $14,000, Working Cash - $63,000, Tort - $103,000, and Fire Prevention and Safety - $8,121,000. On roll call the following members voted aye: Schaley, Vancil, Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, Higgins, and Lenahan. 7-0 Motion carried

Motion by Clark, seconded by Lenahan to approve the District Absenteeism and Truancy Policy as presented. On roll call the following members voted aye: Vancil, Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, Higgins, Lenahan, and Schaley. 7-0 Motion carried.

Motion by Higgins ,seconded by Lenahan to approve the District's AI Policy as presented. On roll call the following members voted aye: Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, Higgins, Lenahan, Schaley, and Vancil. 7-0 Motion carried.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Board was reminded to contact President Schaley or Superintendent Lawson for requested future agenda items.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Chockley, seconded byHiggins to adjourn to closed meeting pursuant of the Illinois Open Meetings Act - 5 ILCS 120/2 at 8:49 p.m., to discuss the following subjects:

a. Personnel - The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.
b. Negotiations - Collective negotiating matters between the school board and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees

Majority of Ayes by Voice Vote. Motion carried.

The Board took a short break and reconvened in the District Office conference room at 8:53 p.m. On roll call the following members answered roll call: Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, Higgins, Lenahan, Schaley, and Vancil. Also present was Superintendent Lawson.

Motion by Higgins, seconded by Vancil to return to open session at 9:36 p.m. On roll call the following members answered roll call: Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, Higgins, Lenahan, Schaley, and Vancil.

:The Board took a short break and reconvened in the West Central Elementary Cafeteria at 9:39 p.m. On roll call the following members answered roll call: Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, Higgins, Lenahan, Schaley, and Vancil.

Motion by Chockley, seconded by Higgins to approve the personnel items as presented.

| **West Central School District<br>School Board Meeting<br>Personnel Items for Board Approval<br>Tuesday, September 22, 2026** | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Please note: the following new appointments are pending completion of all certifications, requirements, and clearance on the state required background investigation.* | | |
| **Personnel Changes** | | |
| **Name** | **Title** | **Salary** |
| **Volunteers:** | | |
| Travis Weimer | WCHS Football Coach | N/A |
| Amanda Corzatt | WCMS & WCHS Softball Coach | N/A |
| Kaleb Thompson | WCMS Football Coach | N/A |
| Kyle Lafary | WCMS Football Coach | N/A |
| **New Appointments:** | | |
| Vaughn Vakrosky | WCMS Instrument Music Activities | WCATS |
| Vaughn Vakrosky | WCHS Instrumental Music Activities, Vocal Activities, and Assistant Play/Musical Director | WCATS |
| Robert Fleming | Freshman Class Sponsor (Permanent) | WCATS |
| Conner Hill | Freshman Class Sponsor (Rotating) | WCATS |
| Tom Williams | Sophomore Class Sponsor (Rotating) | WCATS |
| Renata Conway | Senior Class Sponsor (Rotating) | WCATS |
| Drew Brown | WCMS 7th Grade Boys' Basketball Coach | WCATS |
| Chelsea Livermore | WCMS 7th Grade Girls' Basketball Coach | WCATS |
| Steve Lumbeck | WCMS Head Football Coach | WCATS |
| Johanna Sterett | WCMS Cheer Coach | WCATS |
| Rose Garner | District Bus Driver | Current Pay Structure |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Heather Hinshaw | Long-term Substitute WCHS PE Teacher | $175/day |
| Misty Huston | Part-time Paraprofessional | WCATS |
| Payton Clark | Homebound Tutor | |
| **Leaves:** | | |
| Alyssa Smith | Maternity Leave | N/A |
| Mallory Allen | Maternity Leave | N/A |
| **Board acknowledges the following resignations/retirements** | | |
| Rose Garner | District Custodian | N/A |
| Jackie Kendall | District Bus Driver | N/A |
| Heidi Crane | WCHS Sophomore Class Sponsor | N/A |
| Robert Fleming | WCHS Rotating Senior Class Sponsor | N/A |

On roll call the following members voted aye: Higgins, Lenahan, Schaley, Vancil, Chockley, Clark, and Gullberg. 7-0 Motion carried.

Motion by Chockley, seconded by Higgins to amend the bus driver pay structure as presented. On roll call the following voted aye: Lenahan, Schaley, Vancil, Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, and Higgins. 7-0 Motion carried.

Motion by Higgins, seconded by Gullberg to compensate Edward Santos and Eric Vancil the full regular season stipend in accordance with the WCATS contract. On roll call the following board members voted aye: Schaley, Vancil, Chockley, Clark, Gullberg, Higgins, and Lenahan. 7-0 Motion carried.

FUTURE MEETING DATE

The Board was reminded that the regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Vancil, seconded by Chockley to adjourn at 9:41 p.m. Majority of Ayes by Voice Vote. Motion carried.

THESE MINUTES ARE APPROVED AS WRITTEN THIS 21st DAY OF OCTOBER, 2026.

Brendan Schaley, Board President

Malinda Clark, Board Secretary