WEST ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

September 16, 2026

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

The West Allegheny Board of School Directors met in regular session on Wednesday, September 16, 2026, in the District Office Board Room located at Wilson Elementary School. The President, Mr. Robert Ostrander, presided. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call of Directors

Present -	Robert Ostrander – President	Tracy Pustover – Vice President
	Tammy Adams McBain	George Bartha
	Steven Pons	Steve Psomas
	Seth Tomei	
Absent -	Vicki Bozic	
	Dr. Mildred Johnson	

Also Present -
Mr. Anthony Giglio, Solicitor
Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert, Superintendent
Dr. Christopher Shattuck, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Shana Nelson, Assistant to the Superintendent
Dr. Lynn Utchell, Assistant to the Superintendent
Mr. George Safin, Director of Finance
Mrs. Karen Ruhl, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator
Dr. Vladimir St. Surin, Athletic Director
Mrs. Chelsie D'Amico, Director of Human Resources/Board Secretary

Mr. Ostrander announced that the Board met in executive session on September 9, 2026, and prior to tonight's meeting on September 16, 2026, regarding legal and personnel matters.

3. Public Comment

No comment.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 The board secretary previously distributed a copy of the minutes from the August 19, 2026, meeting to the Board. On a motion by Mrs. Pustover, seconded by Mr. Psomas, and unanimously carried, it was moved to approve the minutes as distributed.

5. Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report from last month was read by Mr. George Safin, Director of Finance, and accepted by the board indicating a balance on August 31, 2026, of $63,077,431.16.

6. Communications

No report.

7. Acknowledgements/Distinguished Achievement Award

Ms. Ruhl and Dr. Shattuck recognized Christa Swartz from Monark Transportation for her contribution to the "Stuff-A-Bus" food drive and her role with the implementation of the Stopfinder app for the buses.

8. Reports of Superintendent and Administrators

Dr. Lippert shared information on the following:

- Welcome to the Student Board Representatives for the 2026-2027 School Year
- Open Houses
- Visual Arts Program recognition for the 8th consecutive year
- Middle School Walk-a-thon is 9/25
- State Representative Gaydos filmed a video at the Wilson log cabin with Dr. Grey and Cooper to celebrate the 250th Birthday of the United States
- Portrait of a Graduate website is live for feedback from parents and the community
- Therapy dog website is live
- Stopfinder App has 3600 primary subscribers, and overall, 5800 subscribers using the app to monitor school bus location for their students.
- Securley Home has 953 parents signed up to monitor access on District devices at home.

9. President's Report

Mr. Ostrander welcomed students and staff back for the school year.

Student Representative's Khalil Jones and Max Kuzio introduced themselves to the Board. Alicia Alwine is the third representative but was not in attendance due to an athletic commitment.

The Board welcomed the new representatives and encouraged them to bring new ideas and feedback from their peers.

10. Unfinished Business

None.

11. Solicitor's Report

No report.

12. Personnel

On a motion by Mrs. Pustover, seconded by Mr. Psomas, and unanimously carried, it was moved to approve items 12.1 through 12.12 on the Personnel agenda.

12.1 Approving the list of professional and support substitutes as presented.

PROFESSIONAL SUBSTITUTES - $135/day
Brandon Haas
Taylor Herman
Elizabeth Kramer
Nicole Kreutzman
Zachary Marshall
John Ridilla

SUPPORT SUBSTITUTES - $15/hour
Scott Barber
Nancy Barner
Lea Blatz
Mackenzie Bollman
Elizabeth Curtin
Amanda Drummond

12.2 Approving the following student interns at a cost of $11/hour:

Student Athletic Director - Avery Martis
Student Athletic Trainer (Sports Medicine) - Muslimakhon Bakhodirova & Rakan Talab
Marketing, Communications, & Broadcast Media Specialist - Faith Haley & Eva Rushlander
Student Sports Broadcasting - Nathan Buffington & Garrison Greiff
Student Strength & Conditioning Coach - Jason Cosnek & Allie Dixon
Technical Theater Specialist - Tyler Donovan, Wyatt Kilbourn, & Kiera Smith
Student Youth Leadership Supervisor - Laksha Gounder, Ruby Hughes, & Justin Stein

12.3 Approving a temporary leave of absence for Trevor Kerr from his teaching position as a middle school mathematics teacher begining October 5, 2026, through the end of the 2026-2027 school year.

12.4 Approving Trevor Kerr as acting high school assistant principal effective October 5, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

12.5 Accepting the resignation of Rachelle Gove, Donaldson Paraprofessional, effective August 17, 2026.

12.6 Approving hiring Ella Gardner as a Class III paraeducator assigned to Donaldson Elementary effective September 9, 2026, conditional upon the successful completion of the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Credential of Competency for Special Education Paraeducators program by the end of the 2026-27 school year at a salary of $23.61/hour.

12.7 Approving hiring Melinda Crossley as a Class V bus aide effective date with the start of the 2026-27 school year. Salary, $21.69/hour.

12.8 Approving a salary adjustment for Colleen Barnes, Middle School Math teacher, from Master's Step 17 ($118,875) to Master's Step 17 +30 ($120,875) effective August 17, 2026.

12.9 Approving a Family Medical Leave of absence for Harold Nation, Wilson Custodian, effective upon exhaustion of sick days, not to exceed 60 days.

12.10 Approving a Family Medical Leave of absence for Wallace Darbous, High School Custodian, effective upon exhaustion of sick days, not to exceed 60 days.

12.11 Approving a Family Medical Leave of absence for William Suchar, Wilson Custodian, effective upon exhaustion of sick days, not to exceed 60 days.

12.12 Approving a Family Medical Leave of absence for Jordan Sinclair, School Counselor at Wilson Elementary, effective upon exhaustion of sick days, not to exceed 60 days.

13. Property & Supply

On a motion by Mr. Pons, seconded by Mrs. Adams McBain, and unanimously carried, it was moved to approve item 13.1 through 13.2 on the Property & Supply agenda.

13.1 Approving Marie Dabat, Kevin Farley, Philip Gates, Sean McCool, Earl Schweinsberg, and Marlana Brown as bus drivers for the District. All requirements have been met.

13.2 Approving the Demographic Study proposal provided by MGT Impact Solutions, LLC to conduct a thorough analysis of residential development in the District and impact on enrollment as presented

14. Finance

On a motion by Mr. Bartha, seconded by Mrs. Pustover, and unanimously carried, it was moved to approve items 14.1 through 14.5 on the Finance agenda.

14.1 Approving the payment of bills from the General Fund as per the lists presented to Board Members.

14.2 Approving the Construction Fund and Construction Treasurer's Reports as presented to the Board Members.

14.3 Accepting Activity Reports as presented to the Board Members.

14.4 Approving the appeal settlement with SCA Tree 1, as recommended by the solicitor.

14.5 Approving the appeal settlement with Horizon DSG Associates, as recommended by the solicitor.

15. Policy & Programs

On a motion by Mr. Tomei, seconded by Mr. Pons, and unanimously carried, it was moved to approve item 15.1 on the Policy & Programs agenda.

15.1 Approving Policy 719 Therapy Dogs. This represents the second of two required readings.

16. Athletics & Activities

On a motion by Mr. Psomas, seconded by Mrs. Pustover, and unanimously carried, it was moved to approve item 16.1 through 16.4 on the Athletics & Activities agenda.

16.1 Amending the basketball coach positions previously approved in July 2026.

Boys Basketball– 1st Asst. (shared) Charles Murphy* $5,700.00
Boys Basketball– 2nd Asst. (shared) Thomas Samosky* $5,000.00
Boys Basketball– 4th Asst. (MS 8th Head) Johnny Camelo $4,500.00

16.2 Approving hiring the following Flag Football coach, all clearance requirements have been met.

Flag Football Head Coach, Robert Rainis, $6,568.86

16.3 Approving a request from Varsity Head Coach Troy Reaghard for the wrestling team to attend the King of the Mountain tournament at Central Mountain HS in Mill Hall, PA from December 17-19, 2026, at a cost to the district of $450 for tournament entry fee.

16.4 Approving a request from Varsity Head Coach Troy Reaghard for the wrestling team to attend the Mid-Winter Mayhem at Indiana University of PA from January 8 - 9, 2027 at a cost to the district of $500 for tournament entry fee.

On a motion by Mr. Psomas, seconded by Mrs. Pustover, it was moved to approve item 16.5 on the Athletics & Activities agenda.

16.5 Approving Jamie Schumacher as a football volunteer for the 2026-2027 school year, all requirements have been met.

Ayes: Adams McBain, Ostrander, Pons, Psomas, Pustover, Tomei
Nayes:
Abstain: Bartha
Absent: Bozic, Johnson
The motion passes 6-0 and 1 abstained.

17. Federal Programs & Legislation

No Report.

18. Student Representatives

Student Representatives Khalil Jones and Max Kuzio reported on the following activities and events:

1. Academics

1.1 Midterm for the first quarter is next Friday, September 25

1.2 First Advisory is tomorrow, September 17 - Celebrating US Constitution Day and Reflecting on Portrait of a Graduate Life Ready Competencies

1.3 Ms. Birnie recently visited all senior English classes to discuss college readiness including applications and financial aid

1.4 ACT School Day - October 5

1.5 Career & College Assessment Day - October 14–Students will participate in the PSATs, SAT School Day, the ASVAB, or Career Activities

1.6 College Rep visits have begun! Reps from different schools host tables in the cafeteria during lunch periods to share information about their institution.

1.7 This Friday is a busy day for the HS!

1.7.1 The Exploring AI class will attend the AI Horizons conference in Bakery Square

1.7.2 Students in the Life Skills program and their helpers will attend the Special Olympics Torch Run at Mt. Lebanon HS

1.8 Next Friday, 9.25, student education interns will be attending the Remake Learning Assembly at the Children's Museum to share information about our program and engage the participants in 3 different student designed lessons

2. JROTC

2.1 Patriot Day - 9/11 - Wreath Laying at Flag Pole & Moment of Silence at 8:46 am

2.2 Car Wash Fundraiser @ Advance Auto Parts in Imperial - 9/20 (11:00am - 3:00pm)

2.3 Military Appreciation Game (Home Football - 9/25) - Joint Service Color Guard

2.4 Establishing two competition teams: Rifle Team & Raiders

3. Arts/Clubs/Activities

3.1 Ella's Entourage Pancake Breakfast was Sunday, Sept. 13 - the Girls Soccer Team– They raised $2312 which will be used to purchase rocking chairs for Children Hospital's NICU

3.2 Eradicate Hate Student Symposium- September 14 at David Lawrence downtown mainly focused on "getting rid of hate in society" / teaching the younger generation about the importance of loving and working together to actively combat hate in our world. Over 600 high school students attended, allowing for the sharing of ideas and collaboration between schools. The main focuses were antisemitism and racism, where speakers from around the world share their stories and encounters.

3.3 Marching band - Cavalcade of bands October 3rd

3.4 Fall Musical - My Way a musical tribute to Frank Sinatra, - Reece McCarthy, Jacoby Buckley, Ethan Wahl, Caisey Kreg - November 5 and 7 at 7:00 pm, and 8 at 2:00 pm

3.5 Equity Scholar Panel - Last year it was a great experience focused on collaboration, union, and diving into historical events. Looking forward to it starting up again this school year

4. Athletics

4.1 Alicia sends her regrets - she is currently playing Moon with the Girls Soccer team at the Riverhounds Facility in Coraopolis.

4.2 Senior Nights

4.2.1 Football, Marching Band, Cheer - We celebrated our senior class on August 28 and came out with a victory vs Chartiers Valley
4.2.2 Girls Soccer is on 10/5
4.2.3 Boys Soccer is on 10/15
4.2.4 Girls Tennis is on 10/5
4.2.5 Cross County is on 9/29

4.3 Fall Sports

4.3.1 Homecoming was this past week and football came out with a victory vs Gateway with a score of 49-10. We travel to Montour this Friday with a 7pm kickoff
4.3.2 Cross Country: Both boys and girls start 2-0 in the section with identical scores and victories over New Castle and Central Valley.
4.3.3 Golf: Congratulations to our Golf team that won their section on Monday 9/14! We then followed up with winning the MAC tournament for the third year in a row yesterday 9/15/26.
4.3.4 Boys & Girls Soccer are into section play this week
4.3.5 Girls Tennis got their first win this season against Lincoln Park
4.3.6 Volleyball had a tough match vs Mars last night and fell 3 sets to 1.

5. Culture

5.1 Senior Sunrise (9/4) – It was west and early, but there was a beautiful sunrise, and delicious donuts. Perfect for picture-taking early in the morning.

5.2 Homecoming Pep Rally (9/4) – Fun event for students to participate and compete against each other.

5.3 Homecoming Dance (9/12) - Students in Action did a great job setting up for the event. The homecoming theme was Carnival, and even though the staff had to come up with a quick solution to the inclement weather, many students have said that they had so much fun, commenting particularly positively on the carnival themed food: loaded fires, pizza, popcorn, and funnel cake.

5.4 Concern from students that there is a lot packed into the first month of school and that there is nothing to look forward to the rest of the fall season.

5.4.1 First Day of School was 8/25, Senior Night for Football was 8/28, and Homecoming was 9/12. During the first two weeks of school, the major fall events are over.
5.4.2 Dr. St. Surin shared that dates had to be adjusted this year due to stadium sharing with Moon while their athletic fields are under renovation.

5.5 Suggestions and feedback related to a DJ for Prom were discussed.

19. Library

Mrs. Pustover announced that September is Love Your Library month. Any donation up to $500 will be doubled.

Fall for the Library is September 19, 2026, from 6PM – 9PM at Celebrations. Tickets are still available.

Donations are being accepted for the in house book sale through Friends of the Library. Information on what donations are accepted can be found on the Library website.

20. Parkway West CTC

No report.

21. SHASDA

No report.

22. West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame

The Hall of Fame Banquet will be on October 17, 2026.
Doors open at 5 PM at the SNPJ. Tickets are still available.

23. West Allegheny Foundation

No report.

24. Wellness and Safe Schools Committee

No report.

25. New Business

No new business.

26. Open Forum

Dr. Abitha Ramesh and Kellie Doughty, both of Findlay Township, spoke together and shared concerns regarding their students' bus stop location. They outlined safety concerns related to the location of the bus stop and suggested contingency plans for inclement weather. They recognize that the District is not able to bring a large bus into the complex where they live, and they requested assistance from the District with communication to their association to ensure students would be safe walking to and from the bus stop in inclement weather.

Mr. Ostrander confirmed he will review the information with Dr. Shattuck and take their concerns under advisement. If there is something the District can do, and within reason, the District will make adjustments.

27. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Ostrander, seconded by Mrs. Pustover, and unanimously carried, it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

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Robert Ostrander, Board President

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Chelsie D'Amico,
Director of Human Resources/Board Secretary