

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2025 @ 6 PM

Members Present: Nathan Briggs, Kayla Hughes, Joanne Powers, Robert Weir, Casey Whorff

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Patrick Bowdish, Emily Thompson, and a student guest

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Superintendent Thompson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Board Chair Nominations and Election:

Mrs. Thompson called for nominations for board chair. Mr. Weir nominated Mrs. Whorff. This was seconded by Ms. Powers. There were no further nominations. There was no further discussion. (Vote 4-0-1).

Vice Chair Nominations and Election:

Mrs. Whorff called for nominations for vice chair. Mrs. Whorff nominated Ms. Powers, who said she would serve, but that it is her final term and would defer the role to another member if others wished to serve. Ms. Powers nominated Mr. Weir. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. There were no further nominations. There was no further discussion. Vote (5-0).

Comments from the Chair:

Mrs. Whorff began by thanking Mrs. Werner for her time served on the board. She said that she was a wonderful board member, and that her service had been appreciated. She welcomed Mrs. Hughes to the board.

Executive Session:

Mrs. Whorff made a motion to enter into an executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405,6,F. of the M.R.S.A. for the purpose of discussing confidential records at 6:04 PM. This was seconded by Mr. Briggs. (Vote 5-0).

The board returned to regular session at 6:31 PM.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 8/20/25:

Mr. Briggs made a motion to approve the minutes of 8/20/25. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. (Vote 5-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

None

Public Comment

None

Committee Reports:

1. Finance Committee:
 - a. Payroll warrants were signed by Mrs. Whorff on 8/29, 9/12, 9/26, 10/24, and 11/7.
 - b. AP warrants were signed by Mr. Weir and Mrs. Whorff on 9/4, 9/15, 10/15, 11/5, and 11/19.
2. Policy Committee:
 - a. The policy committee met in both October and November. It was reported that they are working on required policies which will be discussed later in the agenda. Additionally, they have also had conversations about JFABA – School Choice Policy. There are some updates due to the new contract and also some questions regarding assessments that the committee is working with the state on to help to clarify before changing the policy. They’ve also had some preliminary conversations about naloxone policies. Both of these policies need more work before they are brought forward.

Superintendents’ Report

1. Financial Report – Mrs. Thompson stated that with 62% of the year remaining, currently 70% of the budget remains. She stated that cost centers are tracking as they should be.

She said that the only unanticipated costs have been expenses in building maintenance, which will cause the lines to be overdrawn, but will be made up in other areas. She explained that she had needed to have new electrical wiring run to the parking lot lights, a project that was just completed in Monday in time for this week’s evening activities.

2. District Updates:
 - a. Opening of school – Mrs. Thompson said that they’re actually ending the first trimester, and it’s gone very quickly. It had been a smooth start to the year, with several new staff members, and that has given the school a good chance to review and in some cases revamp procedures to be sure that everyone is on the same page with operations. Mrs. Thompson reported that the fall had been relatively predictable, which was a good thing.

She said they’d had a seamless fall testing window, completing the required fall

assessments in September and October. They had held their annual safety drill with the support of the sheriff's office and the county communications office. 5th grade students had started their boat building program, and actually had finished their first big project, and had a very successful week at their Chewonki encampment.

- b. Harvest Meal – Mrs. Thompson said that the school had hosted its harvest meal that day, and Mrs. Labbe and Ms. Moreau had hosted approximately 235 students, staff members, and family for a Thanksgiving lunch. She said it was a lovely way to kick off the winter season, and she thanked Mr. Weir for helping with the lunch service.
- c. Afterschool Crew – Mrs. Thompson said that she wished to give a shout out to Mrs. Moore and Mr. Bowdish who have brought back the concept of after-school clubs after a long absence. The concept is that they and other staff members will host a variety of different themed after school groups once a week for a few weeks at a time, geared at different grade levels. They've recently kicked off "after school crew", with 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade with a board game crew. She again thanked Mrs. Moore and Mr. Bowdish.
- d. Enrollment – Mrs. Thompson said that the student count is the same as last year, and K-12, also is exactly the same. They have had an influx of middle school students enroll, but that was offset by some departing high school families. In terms of budget numbers, the counts are as planned for, and the board will await tuition costs next month to get a sense of how lines will track.
- e. Quarter 1 Attendance: Mrs. Thompson shared the quarter 1 attendance with the board, and discussed truancy and chronic absenteeism data.
- f. Upcoming Events:
 - i. 11/25 - Student-Led Conferences
 - ii. 12/6 - West Bath School Craft Fair - hosted by the Community Crew @ 9 AM-1 PM
 - iii. 12/8 - 4th and 5th Grade Winter Concert @ 5:30 PM
 - iv. 12/12 - Celebration of Learning @ 1-1:30 PM (Kindergarten), 1:30-2:00 PM (Grades 1& 2), 2-2:30 PM (Grades 3-5)
 - v. 12/15 - K-3 Winter Concert @ 5:30 PM
 - vi. 12/18 - Little Elf Shop

New Business

1. ECSE Transition Cohort Readiness

Mrs. Thompson explained that in April 2024 legislation had been passed that requires that the FAPE responsibilities for 3-5 year olds shift from CDS to local school districts. Districts can choose when to take over the required to take over full responsibilities, provided they do so fully for the 27-28 school year. She expressed that a handful of students did so the first year, and about 15 more districts did so this year. She said that West Bath needs to make the choice of when they begin the process. She explained that initially she wanted to wait, but after attending workshops in October, she's interested in going through the readiness process and determine if it would make sense to begin the process next year.

She expressed that she was meeting with the Department of Education again the following day as part of a large group, and then the following week with just West Bath staff and department staff to better understand the readiness process. She said there are budget implications, and staffing, coordination, and FAPE responsibilities that would need to be worked out, but those costs are 100% reimbursable.

She explained that the risk of not moving forward is all of the remaining districts will be vying for support from the department for the transition the following year, and there will be less support, less funding, and no wiggle room. Mrs. Thompson said she wanted to be sure that the board was aware that she was going through this investigatory process, and she can provide an update in December. She also said that if anyone is interested in being part of a standing committee to help to work on this, she would welcome it.

2. First Reading of Board Policies

a. EBBD – Temperature Standards for School

Mrs. Thompson said that she had placed background information about this required policy in the board packet, and that this policy had been developed based on the MSMA template.

b. JICJ – Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices in Schools

Mrs. Thompson explained that this was another newly required policy, but that the language in the policy was not new, as it was the same rules and language from the handbook.

Ms. Powers said that she noticed in the back up in the board packet that MSMA said that staff should lead by example but that this policy was focused on students. Mrs. Thompson explained that the policy requirement is for student cell phone use, but that the committee had drafted a staff cell phone policy, and that she'd like to share it with staff before it comes to the board for first reading.

3. Approval of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

Mrs. Whorff made a motion to approve the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Mr. Briggs seconded the motion. (Vote 5-0).

4. Board Standing Committee Assignments

Standing Committees

- Facilities - Mr. Weir and Mr. Briggs
- Finance - Mrs. Whorff and Mr. Weir
- Policy - Mrs. Whorff and Ms. Powers
- Negotiations - Mrs. Whorff and Mrs. Hughes

Ad-Hoc Committees

- Wellness Council - Ms. Powers and Mr. Briggs

- ECSE - Mrs. Hughes and Mrs. Whorff

Mrs. Whorff made a motion to approve the committee assignments. Mr. Briggs seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

5. Personnel Item(s)

- a. Retirement – Lori Franklin – Special Education Teacher

Mrs. Whorff read Mrs. Franklin’s retirement letter to the board, and said that in her time at WBS Mrs. Franklin has looked out for the best interest of all children. She’s been a gift to the school. Mrs. Hughes said she wished to echo that sentiment, as she has been amazing. Mrs. Whorff thanked her for her years of service.

Public Comments

None

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

1. December 17 - Regular meeting of the WBSAU School Board of Directors @ 6 PM
2. May 4, 2026 – West Bath Town Meeting

Adjourn

Mrs. Whorff made a motion to adjourn at 7:16 PM. This was seconded Mr. Briggs. Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,



Emily Thompson