

Sections 7.8.1 and 7.8.2
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
WILLCOX UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD
OF MEETING HELD JUNE 2ND, 2026

A public meeting of the Willcox Unified School District Governing Board was convened on Tuesday, June 2nd, 2026 at 6:00 P.M in the District Education Center Board room, located at 480 N. Bisbee Avenue, Willcox, AZ 85643

Present at the meeting were the following members of the Governing Board:

Homer Hansen

James Allan

Steve Marlatt

Terri Kibler

Bill Ryan

Absent were: [no members absent].

The following matters were discussed, considered, and decided at the meeting:

- I. Opening of the Meeting
 - A. Call to Order and Roll Call. Mrs. Kibler called the meeting to order, and took roll of members.
 - B. Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Kibler led the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - C. Invocation for the Governing Board. Mr. Ryan prayed for the Board.
 - D. Adoption of the Agenda. Mr. Marlatt moved to adopt the agenda. Mr. Ryan seconded. No Discussion. In favor: [Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Kibler, Mr. Marlatt, Mr. Allan, Mr. Hansen] Opposed: [None]

- II. Call to the Public—No public response.

- III. Presentations
 - A. WUSD Maintenance Dept. — Todd DeBaun
The Maintenance and Transportation Director provided an overview of his background and long-term involvement in the district, noting his previous roles in coaching, groundskeeping, transportation, and contracting. He reported that upon assuming the position, he reorganized staff assignments

to address complacency, improve morale, and increase accountability. The department has focused on timely completion of work orders, improved communication with school sites, and more efficient use of district funds. He highlighted numerous campus improvements completed since the start of the year, including removal of outdated fencing, repainting parking lots and trash cans, updating signage, improving landscaping, repairing lighting with newly acquired lifts, and addressing deficiencies in cafeteria equipment. The director also described safety enhancements to the middle school bus loop, which now separates bus and parent traffic and provides a safer crosswalk system for students. He reported reductions in the district's vehicle fleet to eliminate unnecessary insurance and maintenance costs and noted progress toward early completion of annual bus certifications. Additional projects included installation of a volleyball court at the middle school, upgrades to athletic facilities, and improvements to the preschool playground area. The director introduced maintenance, custodial, transportation, and summer staff assisting with district projects and emphasized the department's continued commitment to efficiency, safety, and districtwide facility improvements.

- IV. Administrative reports/Summary of current events.
 - A. The Superintendent provided an update on ongoing construction and weatherization projects, noting that work is progressing on schedule. Crews have moved into the classroom areas, and while some previously started items are temporarily on hold, all work remains on track for completion in October. The goal is to finish the primary classroom buildings over the summer, with the agricultural building scheduled for completion near the end of the project timeline. He clarified that all work is funded through grants and includes upgrades such as painting, new window seals, door replacements, door hardware, and other needed improvements across all older buildings.
 - B. The Superintendent also reviewed the district's annual spending analysis, highlighting continued increases in classroom instructional spending. The district's lowest instructional spending year was 2012, and the percentage has risen each year since, reaching 56.6% in the most recent report. Teacher salary averages were also reviewed, with the district's average of \$57,816 remaining within approximately \$2,000 of the state average for comparable certified positions. He noted that the district has made consistent efforts to remain competitive in compensation.

V. Consent Agenda

Mr. Ryan moved to approve the consent agenda. Mrs. Kibler seconded. No discussion. In favor: [Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Kibler, Mr. Marlatt, Mr. Allan, Mr. Hansen] Opposed: [None]

VI. New Business

- A. Mr. Ryan moved to approve the proposed FY 2026-2027 Maintenance and Operation (M&O) and District Additional Assistance (DAA) Budgets. Mrs. Kibler seconded.

Discussion: The Superintendent reviewed the proposed budget forms, noting that the figures are preliminary and may require revision once the state legislature finalizes its budget decisions. At this time, the district's M&O budget is projected to increase by approximately \$110,000, bringing the total to \$12,125,000. The capital budget is projected to increase by nearly \$21,000, for a total of \$782,000. He also reported that the district's tax rate has decreased again this year, from 5.918 to 5.89, marking eleven consecutive years of tax rate reductions. He emphasized that despite inflation, increased teacher salaries, the passage of both an override and a bond, and ongoing operational needs, the district has continued to lower its tax rate while maintaining financial stability and reserves. He noted that this is an important point for the community to be aware of.

In favor: [Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Kibler, Mr. Marlatt, Mr. Allan, Mr. Hansen] Opposed: [None]

- B. Mr. Hansen moved to approve the following construction or architectural projects and/or contracts/purchase orders and authorizing the Superintendent to sign agreements and/or contracts/purchase orders as included in the board backup material. Mr. Allen Seconded.

Wrestling Room Proposal

Discussion: The Superintendent reported that the district has attempted twice to bid the wrestling room expansion included in the bond program, but contractor pricing came back significantly higher than anticipated, with estimates around \$1.2 million. Because Canyon Building & Design is already on site completing the district's weatherization project, the district requested a proposal from them for the same work. Canyon provided a price of

approximately \$860,000, which is substantially lower and would allow the district to fulfill the commitment made to the community during the bond election. The Superintendent noted that Canyon has been performing high-quality work, communicates well, and is currently active on multiple campuses, making them the most efficient and cost-effective option for completing the expansion.

Special Services Building Proposal

Discussion: The Superintendent explained that the Special Services Building, located near the maintenance and transportation area, is an aging facility that recently received a new roof but still requires full weatherization and related upgrades. Canyon provided a proposal of approximately \$207,000 to complete this work. Because the building is not listed on the state's School Facilities Board instructional space inventory—due to its historical use as storage after the former agriculture program relocated—it does not qualify for SFB funding. The Superintendent noted that the district currently uses the building for Special Services and instructional purposes, making the improvements necessary. Given that Canyon is already mobilized on campus, the proposed contract is considered cost-effective and appropriate.

Multi-purpose Room

Discussion: The Superintendent presented the preliminary design concept for the new multi-purpose room and requested board feedback before final drawings are completed. The updated design increases the building size to approximately 12,000 square feet to accommodate a full basketball court, performance platform, music room with acoustic separation, and three dividable classroom spaces. The layout includes boys' and girls' restrooms, a front lobby facing Austin Street, and a rear student entrance near the cafeteria. An outdoor performance area is also incorporated into the design. The Superintendent noted that the building's size may require a fire sprinkler system under current codes, which could affect cost; reducing storage square footage may help avoid the threshold, though new construction may still require sprinklers regardless. Preliminary cost estimates from prior bidders fall within the district's planned bond budget, and the Superintendent anticipates Canyon will be able to complete the project for less due to their existing presence on campus. Once final drawings are received, a contract could be brought forward as early as July, with an estimated construction timeline of three to six months. Parking adjacent to

the site would be reconfigured using adjacent ways funding. The Superintendent also noted that future decisions regarding the old gym's aging bathrooms and electrical systems will depend on remaining bond funds after completion of the wrestling room and multi-purpose room.

In favor: [Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Kibler, Mr. Marlatt, Mr. Allan, Mr. Hansen] Opposed: [None]

- C. Mrs. Kibler moved to approve the buyback of vacation days and compensatory time earned, but unused by staff, as per policy and contract. Mr. Ryan seconded.

Discussion: A board member asked how many district employees would be affected by the comp-time buyback policy. The Superintendent explained that the number varies, as most affected employees are 12-month staff and teachers follow different policies. He noted that he had not yet reviewed the exact count for the current year. Under district policy, employees may carry up to 40 hours of comp time; any hours exceeding that amount must either be used or bought back by the district. He stated that the total buyback amount is typically low because employees are required to use their comp time before taking other forms of leave. Final numbers for this year are not yet available.

In favor: [Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Kibler, Mr. Marlatt, Mr. Allan, Mr. Hansen] Opposed: [None]

- D. Board Member Comments/Request for Agenda Items

Discussion: The board discussed upcoming meeting dates, confirming July 21 at 9:00 a.m., with the option of a working meeting. Board President Hansen presented a simplified version of the district survey data to replace the difficult-to-interpret original spreadsheet and will distribute the updated file to the board. The board also requested the full Excel file containing all survey comments for review. A meeting will be scheduled prior to July 7th to review survey results and begin drafting superintendent goals for the upcoming year.

- E. Future Meeting Dates

The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 7th, 2026.

VII. Adjournment

Mr. Ryan moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Kibler seconded. Mr. Hansen adjourned the meeting.

Dated this 3rd day of June 2026.

Willcox Unified School District Governing Board

By Destany Smith