Wayne Regional Educational Service Agency
Board of Education · 33500 Van Born Road · Wayne, Michigan

Regular Meeting
April 15, 2026

MINUTES

A. Call to Order
The Regular Meeting of the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency Board of Education was called to order by President Mary Blackmon on April 15, 2026, at 8:35 a.m.

B. Roll Call
Members Present: Mary Blackmon, Danielle Funderburg, and James Petrie
Excused Absence: James Beri and Lynda Jackson

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Approval of Agenda
Member Petrie, with support from Member Funderburg, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed with a voice vote of 3-0.

E. Public Participation – No public comments were made.

F. Introduction of New Staff and Acknowledgment of Promotions/Internal Moves:
- Qasem Yousef – Building Operations Assistant
- Josie Pike – Student Application Business Analyst

G. President's Remarks and Board Comments

Member Petrie shared reflections from his attendance at the MACUL Conference in Grand Rapids, highlighting the value of ongoing professional learning and the Board's commitment to continuous improvement. He noted strong attendance and emphasized the growing role of artificial intelligence in education, sharing that the conference focused on how AI can be used as a positive and impactful tool to support teaching and learning.

He also highlighted a powerful presentation by an individual who is autistic and deaf, who demonstrated how technology and strong support systems can remove barriers and expand opportunities. Key takeaways included the importance of inclusivity, ensuring all individuals benefit from support, and using technology to reach and uplift underserved populations. Member Petrie concluded by noting Wayne RESA's active involvement in this work and the energy and innovation of educators and students, expressing appreciation for the opportunity to attend.

Member Funderburg reported on attending the National School Boards Association Conference in San Antonio, Texas, along with fellow board members. She highlighted key themes from the conference, including the growing role of artificial intelligence in education and the importance of preparing students for evolving career pathways. She shared insights from featured speakers, sharing that one of her key takeaways was that AI is a tool created and guided by people, and as it continues to evolve, individuals will need to adjust and find new ways to use their skills within that changing landscape.

She also reflected on a keynote presentation by Brandon P. Fleming, nationally acclaimed educator, award-winning author of *MISEDUCATED*, former debate coach at Harvard University, and Founder & CEO of The Veritas School, that emphasized the impact of educators in changing student life trajectories, underscoring the importance of relationships, mentorship, and recognizing student potential.

Member Funderburg also noted the value of engaging with board members from across the country and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn, collaborate, and represent Wayne RESA.

President Blackmon shared that she attended the Urban League's Distinguished Warriors Tribute, where former Detroit Board of Education member Edna Bell was recognized for her leadership and service, noting the event as a meaningful acknowledgment of community impact. She also highlighted an upcoming tribute by Central High School honoring the late former City Council member Joanne Watson, recognizing her contributions and legacy.

President Blackmon also shared the following highlights from Wayne County Schools –

- **Crestwood** - Congratulations to Crestwood High School Senior Fatme K. on her acceptance into Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania, Georgetown University, and the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. Fatime holds a 4.40 GPA, has excelled in 11 Advanced Placement and 2 Dual Enrollment courses, and is one of 25 of the 17.000 applicants nationwide to qualify as a National Finalist for the prestigious National Honor Society Scholarship.
- **DPSCD** – Congratulations to MaKayla G., an honors student at Cass Technical High School, who has made history as the first female student-athlete in Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) to earn a Division I scholarship in women's soccer.
- **Grosse Pointe** - Congratulations to Serafina M., violinist and concertmaster of the Grosse Pointe North Symphony Orchestra who earned a perfect 100 on her Proficiency II violin solo, an exceptionally rare and remarkable achievement, and who was also nominated as an Outstanding Soloist with the opportunity to compete in the MSBOA Outstanding Soloist Competition.
- **Plymouth-Canton** - Congratulations to Plymouth-Canton Education Park students and brothers Druheen and Dron A. on their outstanding performance at the Michigan Chess Association's Junior Championship. Druheen earned an impressive second-place finish, while Dron secured third place, an incredible achievement for both. They are now preparing to compete at the national level.
  The award-winning Plymouth-Canton Education Park Culinary Program cooked up another incredible showing at the 2026 Michigan ProStart Invitational. The restaurant management and design team took home the state championship with their creative concept, "Tanuki's Table," earning a spot at the national competition in Baltimore.
  River Rouge - The River Rouge Pink Panthers Academic Games Team brought home big wins at the Division 1 State Championship: State Champions in Elementary Basic On-Sets, and 3rd Place, Bronze Medal– On-Words.
- **Van Buren** - Congratulations to Belleville High School student athlete Sydney S. on being named the 2025–26 MaxPreps Michigan Girls Basketball Player of the Year.

H. Communications – Communication was shared from the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB), highlighting that a total of 47 school board members earned 80 awards through MASB in 2025, recognizing their commitment to professional development and student achievement. The Wayne RESA

Board of Education was also recognized as a 2025 Distinguished Achievement Award recipient, and an overview of Wayne County school boards' individual and whole-board training levels was provided.

I. Special Presentations

1. **Project SEARCH: From Training Room to Employment** was presented by Nicole Chubb and Lyndsay Knapp, and student Ayden Christy (Lincoln Park Public Schools), and Mona Mallad, Angela Beauchamp, and student Tamujin "TJ" Boyd (Wayne-Westland Community Schools). The presentation provided an overview of Project SEARCH, a transition-to-work program designed to support students with disabilities through total workplace immersion, including approximately 700 hours of hands-on training, multiple job rotations, and the development of employability and independent living skills.

   Presenters highlighted strong employment outcomes across both districts, with students securing positions in healthcare, education, retail, and service industries, as well as continuing postsecondary training. The program's success is supported through partnerships with organizations such as Corewell Health and Michigan Rehabilitation Services, and emphasizes real-world experience, skill development, and meaningful pathways to competitive employment for participating students.

2. **Unlocking Potential: Personalized Learning through Curriculum and Alternate Assessments** was presented by Dr. Joseph Musial, Kate Pearson, and Cindy Taraskiewicz. The presentation highlighted the development of a Wayne RESA-designed MI-Access Social Studies alternate assessment pilot to support students with significant cognitive disabilities through accessible, standards-aligned measures of learning. The pilot, implemented across multiple Wayne County districts, addresses identified gaps in instructional consistency, assessment resources, and educator support, while demonstrating strong reliability and alignment to state expectations.

   Presenters also shared the integration of the TeachTown enCORE curriculum to provide consistent, differentiated instruction aligned to the assessment. Early data indicates measurable student growth and increased access to grade-level content, supported by ongoing professional development and coaching for educators.

3. **Preliminary Budget Presentation** was delivered by Drew McMechan, Assistant Superintendent of Financial Services, providing an overview of key assumptions and projections for the 2026–2027 budget. The total proposed Wayne RESA budget is approximately $845.9 million, with $731.3 million (86%) directly distributed to local districts, public school academies, and other entities. The presentation outlined modest revenue assumptions, including projected increases in taxable values, while noting no increases in State Aid due to ongoing uncertainty. Planned expenditures reflect contractual salary adjustments, stable retirement rates, and a 2.9% increase in healthcare costs.

   The preliminary budget also reflects a planned use of fund balance to support operations and one-time capital needs, including facility improvements and program investments. Operating funds represent approximately 7% of total expenditures, with the majority of resources directed toward direct services to districts. Additional highlights included adjustments within the Act 18 and other funds to align with district needs, including increased payments to districts and reduced one-time special education payments, while maintaining a focus on long-term financial stability.

J. Superintendent's Report

Senior Executive Director of Legislative Affairs, Mike Latvis

Mr. Latvis provided a legislative update, noting that activity in Lansing and Washington, D.C. has been relatively quiet due to recess, though budget work continues. He expressed cautious confidence that a state budget will be finalized by the July 1 deadline, emphasizing that timely passage is critical to ensuring more favorable outcomes for K–12 funding.

Key updates included:

- State Budget Process:
  - Senate budget expected imminently; House budget anticipated by late April, though timing remains uncertain.
  - Ongoing advocacy to reduce the proposed transfer of School Aid Fund dollars to higher education and instead increase the foundation allowance and restore funding supports for districts.
  - Continued engagement with legislators on multiple budget sections, with positive collaboration noted, particularly in the Senate.
- School Safety Funding:
  - Ongoing work to revise language tied to school safety funding that currently requires waiver of certain privileges.
  - Anticipated compromise language in the Senate to maintain required investigations while addressing concerns raised by districts.
- Legislative Priorities and Advocacy:
  - Coordination with the K–12 Alliance to support advocacy efforts, including a planned June convening of district leaders in Lansing.
  - Expectation that budget negotiations will intensify following the May revenue estimating conference.
- Policy Updates:
  - Continued discussions regarding the proposed LETRS literacy training mandate, with concerns related to cost, flexibility, and implementation; estimated costs have increased significantly.
  - Limited movement on other policy initiatives, with most activity expected later in the year.

Mr. Latvis noted that overall focus remains on the state budget, with ongoing efforts to advocate for funding priorities that best support school districts.

Superintendent Dr. Daveda Colbert

Dr. Colbert shared:

- During the month of April, several national observances are recognized and celebrated that reflect a commitment to inclusion, wellness, and excellence across Wayne RESA and Wayne County.
  - Autism Acceptance Month is recognized alongside World Autism Awareness Day on April 2, honoring and uplifting individuals with autism by embracing their strengths, promoting understanding, and ensuring supportive learning environments where every student can thrive.
  - Arab American Heritage Month is also celebrated, recognizing the rich culture, history, and contributions of Arab American students, families, and educators who help shape the vibrancy of the community.
  - As National Deaf History Month is observed through April 15, the achievements and advocacy of the deaf and hard of hearing community are honored, while reaffirming the responsibility to ensure accessibility and equitable opportunities for all scholars.
  - World Health Day, observed on April 7, serves as a reminder of the importance of physical,

mental, and emotional well-being for students, staff, and families, as wellness is foundational to success in classrooms, schools, districts, and across the organization.
    - Throughout School Library Month, the vital role of school libraries and media specialists is celebrated, recognizing how they foster literacy, curiosity, and lifelong learning while serving as hubs of knowledge and opportunity for every scholar.
    - Financial Literacy Month is also recognized, emphasizing the importance of equipping scholars with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed financial decisions, build independence, and prepare for future success.
    - National Assistant Principals Week, celebrated during the first full week of April, provides an opportunity to recognize the critical role assistant principals play in supporting school leadership, culture, student success, and daily operations.
    - National School Bus Driver Appreciation Day, observed each year on the fourth Tuesday in April, recognizes and thanks school bus drivers for their dedication, safety, and the critical role they play in ensuring students arrive to and from school safely each day, as well as to extracurriculars and extended learning opportunities.
    - On Administrative Professionals Day, April 22, appreciation is extended to individuals who are often the first point of contact in schools, offices, and across the organization. Their dedication, organization, and care ensure that systems run smoothly and that every person feels welcomed and supported.

  Together, these observances remind us of the power of community, the importance of honoring one another, and a shared commitment to creating inclusive, supportive environments where everyone can succeed.
- At Wayne RESA, there is intentional focus on recognizing everyone as the fourth quarter begins. It remains imperative to stay grounded in the mission and vision while continuing to serve at the highest level. Excellence is the operating system, and that expectation must be consistently modeled in all work.
- As the educational community carries significant weight during the current state assessment window, scholars and educators are encouraged to remain calm, focused, and steady. RESA continues to provide full support and encouragement as scholars demonstrate proficiency, mastery, and best effort.
- As impact work continues, reflection remains critical. Consideration is being given to key questions, including how to ensure that Wayne RESA's work truly meets the needs of internal and external stakeholders, recognizing that this is not a question to be asked once, but continuously throughout the year.
    - There is ongoing reflection on how to ensure continuous improvement; being recognized by Cognia as a System of Distinction is honorable, yet it does not conclude the work.
    - The focus remains on continuing to improve in service to others, with an intentional emphasis on measuring what matters most. Through data, questions are asked, clarity is sought, and efforts are made to ensure the work being done is highly regarded, supported by ongoing evaluation that includes both daily self-reflection and continuous assessment of progress and impact.
    - Consideration is given to what constituents are experiencing in terms of services, supports, and overall work, including how they are feeling, what they are saying, and how they are using the supports RESA provides.
    - Reflection also continues on whether success is being measured based on effort or meaningful outcomes. While effort is important, emphasis remains on identifying and demonstrating meaningful outcomes.
    - There is ongoing reflection on where intentions may be strong, but impact may be falling short, as these are essential considerations to ensure alignment between actions and purpose.

  These reflections remain critical as work continues through the remainder of the school year and planning begins for the 2026–27 school year, with a continued commitment to serving with clarity, intention, and a relentless focus on impact.
- Excitement was shared around upcoming school events over the next several weeks, including opportunities to recognize and honor educators and support staff.

  - Board members were encouraged to mark their calendars for Tuesday, April 21, and Monday, May 11, for school site visits to witness Career Technical Education scholars in action across the county.
  - The Wayne County Parent Advisory Committee recognition event will highlight and honor educators.
  - Transportation specialists will be recognized at the Excellence in Transportation event, celebrating their important contributions each year.
  - The first cohort of Eastern Michigan University Cognitive Impairment and Autism Spectrum Disorder candidates will be celebrated at Wayne RESA, recognizing their contributions to the education profession.
  - Teachers and educators across the county will be honored during National Teacher and Educator Appreciation Week in early May.
- Wayne County has much to be proud of, and it remains important to continue celebrating and supporting students, families, educators, and the community. As always, appreciation was extended for the continued support of excellence in education in Wayne County.

K. Approval of Consent Agenda

Member Petrie, with support from Member Funderburg, moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented.

Items include approval of:

1. Superintendent's Recommendations
2. Minutes from March 18, 2026, Regular Board Meeting
3. March WRESA Check Register
4. Outstanding Investments, Revenues & Expenditures
5. Pre and Post Travel – April 2026

The motion passed with a voice vote of 3-0.

226-25-26

The Board approved the following internal applicant(s) for the position(s):

- Josie Pike, Student Application Business Analyst, effective March 23, 2026

227-25-26

The Board approved the following return from leave(s):

- Dr. Angela Jack, Director of Continuous Improvement, Family/Medical Leave, effective April 13, 2026
- Daymon Tabako, Building Operations Lead, Family/Medical Leave, effective March 16, 2026

228-25-26

The Board approved the following actual and necessary expenses incurred by Wayne RESA Board members in discharging their official duties and in performing functions as authorized by the Board, March 1, 2026 – March 31, 2026:

Mary Blackmon	$ 55.83	Lynda Jackson	$148.63
Danielle Funderburg	$ 49.01	James Petrie	$ 49.30

229-25-26
The Board authorized administration to enter into an agreement with Christina Endres to provide support for the Michigan Department of Education under the terms of the MDE-WRESA ISD Collaboration Grant in the amount of $40,000 for the period of April 16, 2026 through September 30, 2026.

230-25-26
The Board authorized administration to enter into an agreement with Michigan Public Health Institute to provide support for Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) to develop a Companion Guide to the GSRP Implementation Manual in the amount of $66,573 for the period of September 3, 2025 through September 2, 2027.

231-25-26
The Board authorized an amendment to Board Recommendation #165-24-25 to amend agreements with the following districts to support K-5 schools in the purchasing and implementing high-quality mathematics instructional material programs in the amounts indicated, for a total amount not to exceed $1,552,759.75 for the period October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2026.

Districts	Original Amount	Amended Amount
Dearborn City School District	$308,231.58	$308,231.58
Dearborn Heights School District #7	$43,481.88	$46,481.88
Ecorse Public Schools	$18,349.69	$21,349.69
Flat Rock Community Schools	$29,264.24	$32,264.24
Grosse Pointe Public Schools	$103,296.50	$106,296.50
Livonia Public Schools School District	$209,821.09	$212,821.09
Plymouth-Canton Community Schools	$232,404.16	$235,404.16
Riverview Community School District	$44,451.26	$47,451.26
School District of the City of Hamtramck	$47,179.90	$50,179.90
School District of the City of Lincoln Park	$84,339.64	$87,339.64
School District of the City of River Rouge	$33,249.49	$36,249.49
Taylor School District	$99,024.03	$102,024.03
Trenton Public Schools	$43,769.10	$46,769.10
Van Buren Public Schools	$62,295.12	$62,295.12
Wayne-Westland Community School District	$154,602.07	$157,602.07
Total:	**$1,513,759.75**	**$1,552,759.75**

232-25-26
The Board authorized an amendment to Board Recommendation #54-25-26 to alter an agreement with the Wayne-Westland Community School District for implementation of Early On activities from $304,850 to $444,405 for the period October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026.

233-25-26
The Board accepted the following grant(s) for the terms, amounts, and purposes noted:

Grant	Grantor	Amount	Term	Purpose	Responsible Party
Title III, Part A – Language Instruction for English Learners	Federal grant through Michigan Department of Education (MDE) – Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965	$624,992	07/01/2025 – 09/30/2026	The Consolidated Application supports English learners in consortium districts and public-school academies, K-12 and their parents. Multilingual Consultants serve approximately 2000 students annually.	Educational Services

L. Action Item(s)

1. **Proclamation - Board Recognition for National Teacher Appreciation Week**
   Member Funderburg, supported by member Petrie, moved that the Wayne RESA Board of Education approve the attached proclamation recognizing the commitment, effort, and leadership of all teachers and educators as a public expression of gratitude and support for their work in educating our nation's children. This recognition also highlights the contributions of educators across Wayne County who continue to improve student outcomes within the 43 communities served, including 33 local districts and 97 public school academies. On voice vote, the motion passed 3-0.

2. **Wayne RESA Board Meeting Schedule – 2026-2027**
   Member Petrie, supported by Member Funderburg, moved that the Wayne RESA Board of Education approve the 2026-2027 Board Meeting Schedule, as presented. On voice vote, the motion passed 3-0.

3. **Wayne County Five-Year Common Calendar Update**
   Member Funderburg, supported by Member Petrie, moved that the Wayne RESA Board of Education approve the extension of the five-year common calendar to include the 2030–2031 school year, as presented. On voice vote, the motion passed 3-0.

4. **First Reading – Board Policy and Administrative Regulations Updates**
   Member Funderburg, supported by Member Petrie, moved that the Wayne RESA Board of Education accept the Wayne RESA Board Policy and Administrative Regulations updates for a First Reading, as presented. On voice vote, the motion passed 3-0.

M. Informational/Discussion Items

Annual Board Retreat Dates – After discussion, based on members' schedules, the Board agreed to combine Day One and Day Two of the Annual Retreat on Wednesday, July 15, 2026, following the regular board meeting. Adjustments to the agenda and schedule will be made accordingly.

N. Closed Session – For the Purpose of Negotiations

Member Petrie, supported by Member Funderburg, moved that the Wayne RESA Board of Education move into Closed Session for the purpose of negotiations.

Roll Call Vote:
Mary Blackmon (yes)
Danielle Funderburg (yes)
James Petrie (yes)

On a roll call vote, the motion passed 3-0, and the Board went into closed session at 11:19 a.m.

The Board returned from closed session at 11:25 a.m.

O. General Board Comments – No board comments were made.

P. Adjournment

Member Petrie, with support from Member Funderburg, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with a voice vote of 3-0. President Blackmon adjourned the meeting at 11:26 a.m.

Submitted by: _____
James S. Beri, Secretary