

WILLOWS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regular Meeting – June 25, 2026

Regular Session 7:00 p.m.

Willows City Council Chambers

201 N. Lassen Street, Willows, CA 95988

MINUTES

1. OPEN SESSION – CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Roll Call – Jeromy Geiger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Gina Taylor, Kirsten Gray, Lourdes Ruiz, Jeromy Geiger and Jered Shipley.

1.2 Welcome Visitors

1.3 Flag Salute was led by Evelyn Niehues.

2. AGENDA/MINUTES

2.1 Approve the Agenda for June 25, 2026.

Jeromy Geiger explained Action item 8A2, should be an informational item.

Moved by Jeromy Geiger, seconded by Gina Taylor to approve the Agenda for June 25, 2026 as amended.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

2.2 Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 7, 2026.

Moved by Gina Taylor, seconded by Jeromy Geiger.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

3. RECOGNITION OF RETIREES

3.1 EVELYN NIEHUES

Jeromy Geiger recognized Evelyn Niehues for her 39 years of service to the School District. Emmett Koerperich presented her with a plaque.

Jeromy Geiger called for a 5-minute recess at 7:02 p.m. Open session resumed at 7:04 p.m.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

5. INTRODUCTION OF NEW ADMINISTRATOR

5.1 James Lothschutz – Willows High School Principal

Introduced himself and shared his background in education, including experience as a teacher overseas, assistant principal, athletic director, and principal. He explained that his family relocated to California to be closer to their children, who live in San Francisco, and that he appreciates living in a smaller community. He expressed enthusiasm about joining the district and his commitment to supporting school improvement efforts.

6. REPORTS

6.1 Employee Associations (WUTA & CSEA)

WUTA – No Report

CSEA – No Report

6.2 Principals

MES – Staci Lanzi reported school finished with attendance of 481. She reviewed and highlighted areas of CAS. Every single area improved. Murdock is welcoming a new Kindergarten teacher and Librarian. The team will be participating in Capturing Kids Hearts training.

WIS – No report

WHS – No report

WCHS – Emmett reported: click [here](#) for report.

- 6.3 **Director of Food Services** – Mike Bottarini provided a follow-up report.

Kirsten Gray asked what the max number of meals they could serve for the summer meal program was and Mike said 450 due to storage space.

- 6.4 **Director of Business Services** – Diana Baca provided a follow-up report.

Kirsten Gray asked when the 5 year master plan would be complete. Diana said hopefully before October.

- 6.5 **Director of Community Schools** – Julie Carriere provided a follow-up report.

- 6.6 **Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment** – Michelle O'Dell provided a follow-up report. Click [here](#) for handout.

- 6.7 **Superintendent** – Emmett Koerperich reported: click [here](#) for report.

- 6.8 **Board of Education Members**

Kirsten Gray reported:

- She attended all three graduation ceremonies and enjoyed herself.
- She attended the Spring band concert and enjoyed that as well.

Lourdes Ruiz reported:

- She attended the EL certification ceremony and enjoyed the performance.
- She attended the Community Schools graduation. Said it was nice to see more graduates than last year.

Jered Shipley reported:

- He attended the WIS and WHS graduations and MES promotion ceremony and enjoys attending graduation as Board member.

Gina Taylor reported:

- She attended the Friday Night Live presentation, Scholarship Night, Band Concert, graduation ceremonies, the Golden State Risk Management meeting, and a City Council meeting regarding law enforcement.
- Encouraged district participation in the GSRMA conference and preparation for a potential stalemate at the start of the school year.
- Reviewed the Board's five primary responsibilities, setting the district's direction, establishing an effective and efficient structure, providing support, ensuring accountability, and serving as community advocates for children, the school district, and public education.

Jeromy Geiger reported:

- He was unable to attend the WHS graduation due to family responsibilities. Said graduation is the best part of the job, Gina agreed.

7. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. GENERAL

1. Accept donation from Willows Community Thrift Shoppe for \$500.00 for the WHS Golf Team.
2. Approve the WUSD Obsolete Wood Shop Equipment List.
3. Approve the WUSD Obsolete WHS CTE Life Management Equipment List.
4. Approve the WUSD Surplus Technology Equipment List.
5. Approve the WUSD E-Waste Technology Equipment List.

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. Approve Interdistrict Requests for Students #25-26-66 through #25-26-69 to attend school in another district for the 2025/26 school year.
2. Approve Interdistrict Requests for Students #26-27-23 through #26-27-26 to attend school in the Willows Unified School District for the 2026/27 school year.
3. Approve Interdistrict Request for Students #26-27-14 through #26-27-24 to attend school in another district for the 2026/27 school year.
4. Approve the Overnight Field Trip Request for WHS students to attend the Cross-Country Camp at Camp Tehama on July 26-29, 2026.
5. Approve the Overnight Field Trip Request for WHS ASB Officers to attend the CASC Summer Leadership Conference in Santa Barbara, CA on July 27-30, 2026.

6. Approve the Overnight Field Trip Request for WHS FFA Officers to attend the Chapter Officer Leadership Conference in Nevada City, CA on August 23-25, 2026.
7. Approve the Overnight Field Trip Request for WHS band students to attend The Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Festival in Chicago, Illinois on December 15-18, 2026.

C. HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Accept resignation of Daniel Zintzun, WHS Teacher, effective June 5, 2026.
2. Accept resignation of Walter Sanchez, Custodian, effective June 12, 2026.
3. Accept resignation of Gloria Cruz Barragan, After School Program Activity Assistant, effective May 21, 2026.
4. Accept resignation of Carol Martin, WHS Volleyball Coach, effective May 4, 2026.
5. Accept resignation of Samantha Parisio, WHS Softball Coach, effective May 11, 2026.
6. Approve employment of Judith Munoz, MES After School Program Activity Assistant, effective June 2, 2026.
7. Approve employment of Elizabeth Reyes, MES After School Activity Assistant, effective August 4, 2026.
8. Approve employment of Hugo Palacios, MES Wellness Coach II, effective May 28, 2026.
9. Approve employment of Courtney Guenther, MES Yard Duty Supervisor/Crossing Guard, effective August 4, 2026.
10. Approve employment of Maria Portillo Araujo, MES Yard Duty Supervisor/Crossing Guard, effective August 4, 2026.
11. Approve employment of Meagan Burt, MES Library/Media Specialist, effective August 4, 2026 (pending clearance).
12. Approve employment of Manuel Robles, District Groundskeeper II, effective June 2, 2026.
13. Approve employment of Leticia Barajas De Reynoso, WHS Custodian – Site, effective June 22, 2026.
14. Approve employment of Dario Renteria Quezada, District Temporary Summer IT Student Helper, effective June 8, 2026.
15. Approve employment of Ron Bazan, Temporary Grant Funded Family, School and Community Engagement Coordinator, effective August 1, 2026.
16. Approve employment of James Lothschutz, WHS Principal, effective July 15, 2026 (pending clearance).
17. Approve employment of Candice Pierce, MES Teacher, effective August 4, 2026.
18. Approve employment of Navin Esperanto, WIS History Teacher, effective August 4, 2026.
19. Approve employment of Jessica Alchin, MES & WIS Teacher on Special Assignment, effective August 4, 2026 (pending clearance).
20. Approve employment of Jana Baber, WHS Child Development Teacher, effective August 4, 2026.
21. Approve employment of Walter Sanchez, WHS Culinary Arts Teacher, effective August 4, 2026.
22. Approve employment of the following Expect Success Summer Camp positions (June 8 – July 10)

Counselors	Karli Lanzi, Hugo Palacios, Veronica Martinez, Hanne Porter, Elizabeth Reyes, Judith Munoz, Ariana Garcia De Anda
Lead Cook	Cristina Ocampo
Assistant Cook	Rene Laughlin
Teachers	Jennifer Flowerdew, Dylan Cronin
23. Approve employment of the following Summer School Credit Recovery Teachers, effective June 8, 2026.

Teachers	Michaela Soeth, Patrick Sears
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24. Approve employment of Dwight Hendrix, MES Summer Teacher (ELOP) Shed Project, effective June 8, 2026.
25. Approve the following 2025/26 WHS Fall Coaches:

Varsity Football – Assistants	Kysean Green
Varsity Volleyball – Head Coach	Lisa Pence Chavez (pending clearance)
Varsity Girls Tennis – Head Coach	Victor Jauregui
Cheerleading – Head Coach	Freddy Vargas
Cheerleading – Volunteers	Heather Grill, Jessica Sandoval
Swimming – Head Coach	Jennifer Flowerdew
Swimming – Volunteer	Luke Hernandez
Cross Country – Head Coach	Rachel LaGrande

D. BUSINESS SERVICES

1. Approve warrants from 5/4/26 through 6/22/26.

Moved by Gina Taylor, seconded by Lourdes Ruiz.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

8. DISCUSSION/ACTION CALENDAR

A. GENERAL

1. **(Action)** Approve Resolution #2025-26-11 Ordering Governing Board Member Election.

Moved by Jeromy Geiger, seconded by Lourdes Ruiz. (Roll Call Vote was Taken)

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

Jeromy explained there are 4 board member seats up for election this year, one 2 year term, and 3, 4 year terms. Jered is on a 2 year term as he was appointed to fill out the remainder of a seat that was vacated.

2. **(Action) Information** First Reading of the following additions/deletions/changes to Board Policies per CSBA's Policy Guide sheet Recommendations:

BP 4119.21	Professional Standards
BP 4119.24	Maintaining Appropriate Adult-Student Interactions
BP 4156.3	Employee Property Reimbursement
BP 4219.21	Professional Standards
BP 4219.24	Maintaining Appropriate Adult-Student Interactions
BP 4256.3	Employee Property Reimbursement
BP 4319.21	Professional Standards
BP 4319.24	Maintaining Appropriate Adult-Student Interactions
BP 4356.3	Employee Property Reimbursement
BP 5144.1	Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process
BP 5145.2	Freedom of Speech/Expression
BP 6142.7	Physical Education and Activity
BP 6146.1	High School Graduation Requirements
BP 6146.4	Differential Graduation and Competency Standards for Students with Disabilities
BP 6173	Education for Homeless Children
BP 6173.1	Education of Foster Youth
BP 6173.2	Education of Children of Military Families
BP 6173.4	Education of American Indian Students
BP 6175	Migrant Education Program
BB 9320	Meetings and Notices
BB 9320.1	Remote Meetings and Attendance
BB 9322	Agenda/Meeting Materials
BB 9323	Meeting Conduct
3. (Action) Second Reading of the following additions/deletions/changes to Board Policy.	
BP 6146.1	High School Graduation Requirements
BP 5141.75	Weather Safety
BP 5142	Safety
BP 7110	Facilities Master Plan

Moved by Lourdes Ruiz, seconded by Kirsten Gray.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

4. **(Action)** Authorize the Superintendent to approve the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant 2026/27 Application for Funding upon completion.
Moved by Gina Taylor, seconded by Jeromy Geiger.
AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley
NOES: None
ABSENT: 0
MOTION PASSED: 5-0
5. **(Action)** Approve notification of intent to GCOE to assume operation of the Mild/Moderate Special Education Program beginning in the 2027/28 school year.
Jeromy explained this allows the district approximately 6 months to determine whether or not it would be beneficial to the district to take the Mild/Moderate Special Education Program back from GCOE or have them keep it and we pay the bill.
Moved by Gina Taylor, seconded by Jeromy Geiger.
AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley
NOES: None
ABSENT: 0
MOTION PASSED: 5-0
6. **(Action)** Approve the Schedule of WUSD Regular Board Meetings for the 2026/27 school year.

Moved by Gina Taylor, seconded by Kirsten Gray. Jered Shipley had a question. He asked if the board has ever considered moving the start time of the meeting to 5:30 p.m. or 6 p.m. Jeromy Geiger said in the past there were more members who could not make it. Jered asked if currently that was the case. He said he was taking into consideration the district faculty and staff who had to stay in town in order to staff the meeting. He wanted to look at if it should be looked at going forward. Jeromy stated it would need to be added to an agenda in the future. Gina Taylor would like it added to the agenda.
AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley
NOES: None
ABSENT: 0
MOTION PASSED: 5-0

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. **(Information)** FNL vs. Thirdhand Smoke
Three students and their advisor presented about the dangers of third hand smoke and the residue left by smoke on surfaces. They spoke about vape detectors and how they don't always go off. They left bracelets in some of the bathrooms on the high school campus, then had them tested at a lab in San Diego. They came back with moderate levels. Jeromy Geiger asked Emmett Koerperich to ask the maintenance department to leave the bracelets in the bathrooms. Lourdes Ruiz asked why the male bathrooms weren't tested as much. It was an access issue and one was marked as female when it should be male. Eric Chavez recommended wiping the top of the smoke detectors to get a better sample.
2. **(Information)** Presentation of proposed ELOP funding plan for 2026/27.
Julie Carriere presented.
3. **(Information)** Local Performance Indicators for the CA School Dashboard.
4. **(Action)** Approve Memorandum of Understanding Between Willows Unified School District and Northern Valley Indian Health, Inc. to provide school-based outpatient mental health services to children and youth enrolled in the Willows Unified School District for the 2026/2027 school year.
Moved by Lourdes Ruiz, seconded by Jered Shipley.
AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley
NOES: None
ABSENT: 0
MOTION PASSED: 5-0
5. **(Action)** Approve expulsion of Student #25-26-01 for the remainder of the 2025/26 school year and the fall semester of the 2026/27 school year.
Moved by Jeromy Geiger, seconded by Gina Taylor.
AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley
NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

6. **(Action)** Approve the 2026/27 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) which includes the LCAP Annual Update and Local Performance Indicators for the CA School Dashboard.

Michelle O'Dell presented. Click [here](#) for the handout.

Moved by Jeromy Geiger, seconded by Gina Taylor.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

7. **(Action)** Approve Proposition 28 Report – Arts and Music Education Funding Program.
Michelle O'Dell spoke about prop 28 and why they had to apply for a waiver to use funds. She also spoke about using the funds for the Chicago band trip.

Moved by Jeromy Geiger, seconded by Lourdes Ruiz.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

8. **(Action)** Approve the 2026 CARS (Consolidated Application and Reporting System) Spring Collection.
Moved by Lourdes Ruiz, seconded by Kirsten Gray.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

C. HUMAN RESOURCES

1. **(Action)** Approve the Declaration of Need for Fully Qualified Educators for the 2026/27 school year.
Moved by Gina Taylor, seconded by Jeromy Geiger.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

2. **(Discussion/Possible Action)** Consideration and possible approval of Resolution #2025-26-14 adjusting Governing Board Member compensation and establishing an annual review practice for Board Member compensation. The current monthly compensation for Governing Board members is **\$240**. The proposed adjustment reflects the maximum allowable annual increase of 5%, which equals **\$12**, resulting in a new monthly compensation of **\$252**.
Jeromy explained that if the board decides to give themselves a pay raise, they have to make a motion and the motion has to be seconded. If it doesn't get a second then it dies, if it does then they must do a roll call vote.

Jered Shipley spoke about being very supportive of item 3 of the resolution to have an annual review practice incorporated into the board bylaws and resolution. (Roll Call vote was Taken)

Moved by Jeromy Geiger, seconded by Kirsten Gray.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger

NOES: Shipley

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 4-1

D. BUSINESS SERVICES

1. **(Action)** Approve Resolution #2025-26-13 and the 2026/27 Spending Plan for the Education Protection Account.

Diana Baca said it's what we do every year for prop 55 funds. We transfer teacher salary and benefits out of the general fund to the EPA account.

Moved by Lourdes Ruiz, seconded by Jeromy Geiger

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

2. **(Action)** Approve the Willows Unified School District's 2026/27 Original Budget.
Diana Baca asked if there were any questions. Jeromy said it's getting better; we are getting closer to the reserves they had requested. Diana said it's getting better. Jeromy said we aren't out of the woods yet. Diana said we should continue on the path of cost containment.
Moved by Lourdes Ruiz, seconded by Jeromy Geiger.

AYES: Taylor, Gray, Ruiz, Geiger, Shipley

NOES: None

ABSENT: 0

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

3. **(Information/Discussion)** Disclosure of Reserves in Excess of Minimum Requirement.
Jeromy explained that this is a requirement because years ago the board decided that the 3% reserve that the state of CA requires the district to have and not go over doesn't keep the lights on in this district for 30 days. They elected years ago, to try to make it to 10% and they have had to dip into it in recent years.
9. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 9.1 The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on August 6, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.
- 9.2 School starts on August 6, 2026.
Jeromy asked when back to school night for Murdock is and was told it had not been decided yet. Stacy Lanzi talked about possibly having a voluntary meet and greet.

10. **PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING CLOSED SESSION ITEMS** – None

At 8:20 p.m., the Board took a short recess after the Regular Meeting before going into Closed Session. Jeromy Geiger will report out into Open Session upon conclusion of Closed Session.

11. **CLOSED SESSION**

Closed session began at 8:31 p.m.

11.1 Pursuant to Government Code §54957.6: Conference with Labor Negotiator – Agency Negotiator: Emmett Koerperich. Employee Organizations: WUTA, CSEA, Management and, Confidential.

12. **RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

12.1 Announcement of Action Taken in Closed Session.

At 9:19 p.m., the meeting reconvened to Open Session. Jeromy Geiger reported:

11.1 Update given to the Board.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.