The Board of School Trustees of the Nettle Creek School Corporation met in regular session on April 8, 2026 at Hagerstown Elementary LGI Room.
The following board members were present: Mike Banning, Sandi Schraub, Ruthie LaMar, Shaun Lieberman, Julie Blaase, Marcie Houghton (6:32 pm) and Cody Sankey.
Guests present were: Belinda Locke, Jordan McCaslin, Maria Tinkle, Janelle Richards, Glen Meek, Lisa Bane and Michael Barron.

CALL TO ORDER OF BOARD MEETING

The regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees was called to order by Mr. Lieberman at 6:30 p.m. at Hagerstown Elementary LGI Room.
Mrs. Schaeffer certified compliance with the open meeting law.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Blaase/Sankey moved to approve the Regular Board meeting minutes on March 11, 2026. Motion carried 6/0.

SUPERINTENDENT SPOTLIGHT

Mrs. Schaeffer recognized Hagerstown Jr. Sr. High School students who qualified for the live round for the Wayne County Civics Bee. The Wayne County Civics Bee is a regional competition designed to encourage middle school students to engage with the concepts of American democracy, civic duty, and community problem-solving. It is part of a national initiative by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation to strengthen civic knowledge in future generations. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 submit a 500-word essay identifying a community problem and proposing a solution based on civic principles. The top 20 essayists are invited to a live, multi-round event. This includes a “game-show style” quiz on civil history and government, followed by a presentation where finalists defend their essay solutions before a panel of local judges.

Hagerstown Junior High had 7 students who qualified for the live round. Those students are: Briella LaMar, Chloe Morris, Anistyn Stapleton, Elliott Gray, James Bruce and Karlee Koontz.

FINANCIAL ITEMS

Banning/Sankey moved to approve Payroll totaling $658,459.43, claims totaling $521,994.74, HJSHS ECA’s totaling $60,573.05 and HES ECA’s totaling $0.00. Motion carried 7/0.

Mrs. Schaeffer reviewed the impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1. Property tax revenue is 57% of our 3.7-million-dollar revenue in our Operations fund. Our operations fund is used for building maintenance and repairs, technology equipment and systems, furniture, fixtures, and systems, all costs associated with transporting students to and from school including bus driver salaries, bus purchases, fuel, equipment, and repairs. In 2026, we will lose $101,000 from our operations fund due to the property tax credits for homeowners. Another reduction in funding due to Senate Bill 1, is the removal of local income tax funding to schools. For Nettle Creek Schools, that’s an additional $80,000 to be cut from the operations budget.

Enrollment has continued to decline as well. Since the 2020-2021 school year, Nettle Creek Schools has lost 106 students. That is a decrease in approximately $742,000 year after year. While per student tuition has increased slightly over the years, we have taken on additional expenses of curricular material and legislation mandates of increasing the total compensation for teachers. While these actions have great benefits, they come at the expense of decreasing funding. Traditionally, when an employee has resigned, we have filled that position. Due to the decline in enrollment, the increase in cost coming from the education fund, and the minimal per student tuition increase, we need to cut $600,000 out of our educational budget this year to not spend down our cash balance.

A demographic study was completed for Nettle Creek Schools in 2014 by McKibben Demographics. Declining enrollment factors include: the baby boom generation has passed through prime childbearing ages by 2003, thereby reducing the overall proportion of the population at risk of having children; a significant proportion of the over 70 population will downsize their housing units and subsequently move out of the district; and the locally born 18 to 24 year old population, in prime childbearing ages, will continue to leave the area to go to college or to other urban areas. The enrollment decline has aligned with the 2014 study through 2024. Now we face additional challenges of online schools, virtual schools, charter schools and micro schools.

Mrs. Schaeffer shared that we are going to have to work really hard and make some budget cuts. These factors, that are really out of our control, are why some of the decisions are being made, including before school care, not filling open positions, etc. If you

pay attention to local media sources, every school in Indiana is facing these same challenges. We are being asked to offer more to students and families with fewer dollars to work with.

SCHOOL NEWS

Mrs. Bane provided an update on the Wonka Jr. show. The students had a total of 80 hours of practice with 30 rehearsals. To put on such an extraordinary show, it took 28 performers, 5 stagehands, 3 tech, and 2 codirectors. The community support was amazing with a total of 570 in attendance over the course of two evenings.

Ms. Johnson's Kindergarten class recently completed a collaborative project where they wrote and illustrated a book on Farm Animals. To celebrate the publication, the class held a "Red Carpet" reading. While the book was impressive, the culture of the classroom was the real star. As Ms. Johnson read each page, the students clapped and praised their peers' contributions. We are building a community of supporters and a community of learners.

Our students learn best when they are not hungry. We took a big step in supporting our families with the opening of the outdoor food pantry at HJSHS. This project represents the best of Hagerstown—students, staff, and community members coming together to meet at need. Whether you need a little help this week or you have extra to share, the pantry is open to everyone at any time. You can find it on the North side of the school by Door 2. At any time, grab what you need or drop off what you have to share. It is not locked. We are incredibly grateful to Will Herr for the craftsmanship, the Hagerstown FFA for the finish, and the HHS Baseball team for the initial food funding. Together, we are making sure no Tiger goes hungry.

Our Tiger Golf Challenge is Sunday, April 26th at Winding Branch Golf Course. The event is open to the first 18 teams who sign-up. This is our sole fundraising event to support our End of the Year Teacher and Staff Celebration. This fundraiser allows us to provide a meal at Willie and Red's for all staff where we also recognize retiree's, years of service, and exceptional dedication to our mission.

Hagerstown Senior, Katee Cowan, was recently named a Top 9 candidate of the Keystone Cooperative SEED Program. There were over 40 applications across the state of Indiana and Katee is the first HHS recipient. Katee's success is no accident—from her course selection, her FFA involvement, and her work-based learning opportunities, it is the result of her being intentional about her education. The SEED program is a two-year, full-time paid career-launching initiative for recent high school graduates. It offers benefits, mentorship, and rotations through agronomy, energy, grain, and swine/nutrition divisions. It is also great to see Hagerstown graduates who are now part of the Keystone Cooperative team, Lindsay Sankey, Director of Public Relations, and Kaitlyn Lacey, SEED Coordinator.

HHS Senior Isaac Schmitz was highlighted by the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce for his intern opportunity at the Chamber. He stated he took the opportunity to be a part of a formational experiences along with making connections that could be great resources for the future. He stated that it has done just that! It's great to see students participating in meaningful career building experiences.

Mrs. Scheaffer shared that Boys and Girls Club of Wayne County will be offering a summer program at the Wayne Bank Unit in Cambridge City. We are excited to have a closer option for our community than Richmond. Registration is currently live.

At the March meeting Mrs. Schaeffer shared that we were hosting the ISTAR banquet. Nettle Creek had three of our top students who were recognized along with a teacher hose made an impact on their learning. Those were: Halle Pruitt recognized Mr. Chirs Oliger, Zada Kersey recognized Mrs. Julie Arnold, and Sophia Senese recognized Mrs. Beth Overfield. Mr. McCaslin was the mc and host for the evening and did a fantastic job!

The Indiana Department of Education finalized the new accountability model at the state board of education meeting in March. We've not had a school letter grade in 7 years. Every student matters. Initial points are based on academic mastery. Additional points for other knowledge, skills, and experiences. Keeps the focus on reading and math in early grades; elevates work-based learning and credentials of value in high school. We will receive a school letter grade for the 25-26 school year in late 2026. That school letter grade will evaluate us in areas we didn't even know we would be evaluated on. Areas that have not been a factor in the calculations model in prior years. We are currently working with our teams, now that the model has been finalized, to set our teachers and students up for future success.

Mr. Bruce Swallow, 5th grade teacher, has been leading All Pro Dads one Friday each month. Last Friday there were 62 in attendance. Retired HHS principal, Mr. Mark Childs, spoke to the group about patience. It is great to see community members continue to give back to our schools. All Pro Dads has been a great program to bring children and adults together in a positive way. We appreciate what Mr. Swallow has provided to our families.

Mrs. Locke shared the 3rd grade Math checkpoint was at 56%, which is seven points higher than the State average. Third grade students were above proficiency in four of the six standards tested. 56% of 5th grade students scored proficient or higher on

checkpoint 3. The State's average is 45%. Out of the seven standards assessed, three were above proficiency and the last four were at or near proficiency.

Mr. McCaslin shared the office staff won staff member of the month. Kailei Dale, Janet Halcomb, and Alison King go above and beyond. The Hagerstown Indoor Percussion ensemble was awarded Gold in the IPA finals at Decatur Central. The Tigerettes color guard won Gold with distinction at the Divisional State Finals and earned the highest honor possible. Spring sports are off and running and we're looking forward to watching them compete this Spring season.

PERSONNEL ITEMS

Sankey/Schraub moved to approve the following personnel items:

Stephanie Beeson	HES Instructional Assistant	$14.45/hr. (up to 29 hrs./wk.)
Krystal Shafer	HES Instructional Assistant	$14.45/hr. (up to 29hrs./wk.)
Seth Charles	Softball Volunteer	
Ben Tinkle	Boys Golf Volunteer	
Kyle King	JV/V Football Volunteer	
Lloyd Michael	Baseball Volunteer	

Accepted Meg Mayberry's resignation as HES Instructional Assistant effective April 10, 2026.
Motion carried 7/0.

APPROVAL OF A DONTATION FROM NETTLE CREEK EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND, WAYNE COUNTY FOUNDATION

Banning/Sankey moved to approve a donation in the amount of $1,524.65. Each year the Wayne County Foundation provides funds from the Nettle Creek Educational Endowment Fund. The funds must be used to support student learning at either building. Motion carried 7/0.

APPROVAL OF A DONATION FROM THE BARTEL & ROHE FUND, WAYNE COUNTY FOUNDATION

Sankey/LaMar moved to approve a donation in the amount of $2,871.05. Through the Wayne County Foundation there was a fund set-up in the name of Bartel & Rohe to provide support to the public elementary schools in Wayne County. Such support shall be used to purchase school supplies. Motion carried 7/0.

APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF CHRIS BEESON TO THE HJSHS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Banning/Blaase moved to approve the community donations in the amount of $1,025.00. Chris Beeson was a 1959 graduate of Hagerstown High School and lifelong resident of Hagerstown. He bled purple and gold and would wear his letter jacket everywhere he went. He and Barbara rarely missed a Hagerstown Tiger baseball game and loved the Tiger kids unconditionally. Chris Beeson passed on March 17, 2026 and requested memorials be made to the Hagerstown Athletic Program. Motion carried 7/0.

APPROVAL OF A DONATION FROM THE SONS OF THE AMERCIAN LEGION POST 333

Schraub/Sankey moved to approve a $500.00 donation. The Sons of the American Legion Post 333 made a $500.00 donation to offset school lunch debt for students. This donation is greatly appreciated. Motion carried 7/0.

APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY DONATIONS FOR ACT I

Schraub/Banning moved to approve the community donations totaling $4,400. Motion carried 7/0.

FIRST READING OF THE NETTLE CREEK SCHOOL CORPORATION EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS

Historically, the district has operated without centralized, formally articulated employee handbooks. While core expectations have bene understood, the lack of a singular reference document can lead to inconsistencies in communication and application of district standards. The primary goal of these handbooks is to provide our team with a reliable "road map" for their professional life within the district. By articulating these expectations in a formal document, we ensure that every employee—regardless of their role—has access to the same information, fostering a culture of transparency, fairness, and mutual accountability.

FIRST READING OF NETTLE CREEK EMPLOYEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The board had their first reading of the following job descriptions: Executive Administrative Assistant, HES Principal, HJSHS Principal, Athletic Director, Director of Technology, Director of Operations, HJSHS Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor, HJSHS Administrative Assistant, HJSHS Assistant Principal, Athletic Administrative Assistant, Meida Specialist (Librarian, and Information Technology Support Assistant.

Our employee job descriptions have not been updated since 2016. We are working with each employee to update the job description so that it more accurately reflects their job duties and responsibilities.

OTHER ITEMS OF INFORMATION

The next meeting will be May 13, 2026 at Hagerstown Elementary School LGI Room at 6:30 pm.

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Signed _____ _____ _____

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