

A budget framework for the 2025-26 school year that includes a 3 percent salary increase for staff members and the pre-authorization for several summer construction projects was approved by the Neenah Joint School District Board of Education at its March 4 meeting. The Board also reviewed the staffing recommendation for 2025-26.

The budget is in very early stages with many variables that are difficult to predict, however, the framework provides an overview of the plan for 2025-26. The 3 percent salary increase aligns with the current CPI of 2.95%. The district is also moving away from staff stipends based on district report cards in order to develop a system that is more predictable for staff and sustainable for the district.

A significant portion of the early authorization of projects includes a new roof and boiler at Alliance. Other projects include pavement, flooring, energy efficiency and door replacement projects throughout the district and some smaller projects at the middle school.

The staffing proposal reduces the overall staffing by 2.27 full-time equivalents (FTE), primarily due to scheduling changes at the middle school, resulting in a savings of \$225,000. No staff members will be cut or laid off as reductions will be made through retirements and attrition. Additionally, there will be an increase of three special education teachers and the district will contract out occupational therapy and physical therapy positions that have been difficult to fill. The staffing proposal will be finalized and voted upon at the March 18 meeting.

The Board approved resignations of occupational therapist Kara Fitzgerald, effective March 26, and Spring Road teacher Lori Jage, effective June 6. Policies were approved in the areas of student records and school visitors. Policies that were approved earlier this school year in regards to non-discrimination were rescinded due to federal executive order changes.

Senior Drew Gaerthofner was honored by the Board for two state runner-up finishes at the recent WIAA state boys swimming championships.