Sports

Voice of the Columbus Wildcats and CJ area sports

WILDCAT CROSS COUNTRY

Boys second, Girls fifth at Mount Pleasant Invite

Columbus' boys cross country team finished second at the Mount Pleasant meet on Tuesday.

11th-ranked WACO defeated the 5th-ranked Wildcats 64-48, with 2A #20 Mediapolis third and 1A No. 7 Louisa-Muscatine fourth.

"We knew that WACO was going to put it all together at some point, and they did tonight," Coach Steve Riley said. "We can run better, but I don't think we ran badly."

Columbus was led by its strong pack of Ryan Villa (10th), Kevin Villa (12th), Drake Marin (13th), Victor Tovar (14th), and Cade Storm (15th). Elias Gonzalez-Bravo was the 6th runner with 16th place.

The Columbus girls placed fifth, led by Gabi Duran's 19th place PR time of 23:48.

"Gabi ran great," Riley said. "Our girls have been hit hard by illness and injury."

Columbus had a total of four athletes set personal records.

Girls team scores – Mid-Prairie 24, Louisa-Muscatine 50, Central Lee 75, Mediapolis 86, Columbus 126.

Columbus girls results – 19. Gabi Duran 23:48; 20. Iris Garza 23:48; 42. Ellie Valencia 29:16; 49. Naomi Allchin 30:10; 50. Jenelis Panchillo 30:29.

Boys team scores – WACO 48, Columbus 64, Mediapolis 73, Louisa-Muscatine 92, Mid-Prairie 112, Central Lee 137, Danville 165, New London 241, Holy Trinity 274.

Columbus boys results (92 total runners) -- 10. Ryan Villa 17:58; 12. Kevin Villa 18:05; 13. Drake Marin 18:07; 14. Victor Tovar 18:09; 15. Cade Storm 18:24; 16. Elias Gonzalez-Bravo 18:30; 25. Elias Duran 19:01; 26. Alan Miranda 19:03; 58. Silas Falk 21:59; 62. Tyson Corneille 22:46; 67. Noah Razo 23:18; 78. Christopher Neri 26:20; 81. Griffin Robertson 26:48; 83. Jeremy Hurlbut 27:42; 86. David Garcia 29:57; 91. Donovan Garcia 32:52; 92. Mwenebato Tcheo 35:47.

Junior high girls results – 14. Nadia Keller 14:04; 77. Daniela Hernandez 21:32.

Junior high boys results – 35. Bryson Lawson 14:19; 47. Mala'khi Rodriguez 15:07; 72. Dante Vergara 17:53; 84. Jaidev Alva 24:13.

Iris Garza (600) and Gabi Duran (598) finish one-two for the Wildcats in Thursday's Mt. Pleasant Invitational.

SUMMER ALCHIN PHOTO

PUBLIC NOTICE

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION
COLUMBUS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Monday, September 22, 2025

The Board of Directors of Columbus Community School District convened its regular monthly board meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, September 22, 2025, at the Administration Building in Columbus Junction, Iowa.

Present were President Carol Zuniga, Vice-President Todd Heck and directors Andy White, Dan Heindel and Darin Mapel.

In addition, Superintendent Dr. Michael Volk and Business Manager and Board Secretary Neil Mills were present.

Board Meeting

Agenda

Andy White moved to approve the agenda.

Seconded by Dan Heindel.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

Citizen's Comments

There were no citizen's comments at this meeting.

Presentations

Tessa Pugh, Lana Arts-McComb from Louisa County Conservation and Samual Hollingsworth from Prairie Roots Landscaping presented information on a proposed project to transform Columbus High School courtyard into an outdoor learning classroom.

Consent Agenda

Todd Heck made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Seconded by Dan Heindel.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

Consent items were:

a. Financial Report

b. Minutes for August 25, 2025, meeting.

c. Bills

d. Personnel

• Resignation – Wendy Watson – BLT Member and Mentor Teacher

• Resignation – Nicole Kitchen - Mentor Teacher

• Resignation – Michelle Tolub - Mentor Teacher

• Hire – Hannah DeWolf – Mentor Teacher (for Emilee Rooney)

• Hire – Tom McGehearty – Mentor Teacher (for Taylor Stogdill)

• Hire – Tamela Olson-Riley – Long-term ESL Sub

• Hire – Tammy Blakley – L2 SPED HS Associate

• Hire – Merari Lagunas – Jumpstart Associate

e. Fundraisers

• Pool – Schlutz Family Foundation Grant Request – Scott Dennler

• Pool – Louisa County Foundation Grant – Scott Dennler

• Girls Basketball – Schlutz Family Foundation Grant Request – Kasey Keltner

• Girls Basketball – Sell Clothing – Kasey Keltner

• BPA – Sell Shirts – Lori Beenen

• SPED Strat 2 – Sell Halloween Popcorn Mix and Regular Popcorn – Stephanie Ruiz

School use Fundraisers:

• Girls Basketball – Tammy Virzi Photography (BB Program) – Kasey Keltner / Athletic Boosters

• Girls Basketball – Meet the Wildcats @ Thirsty Camel 11/6/25 – Kasey Keltner / Athletic Boosters

Reports

Written administrative reports were submitted by Michael Aragon, Liz Goodwin, Randy Phillips, Cassie Stewart, Paul Kissell and Dr. Volk.

Administrative Summary Reports - Sept 2025

Michael Aragon - Activity Director

Summary: Mr. Aragon reported that Homecoming week is slated to be a terrific success, with broad community partnerships helping to make the event memorable. Activities include coronation, Powder Puff Football, volleyball, and the Homecoming football game, with schedules shared on the district's Facebook page. Fall sports teams are performing well, with boys' cross country winning two invitationals, volleyball undefeated in conference play, and football showing steady improvement. Aragon also highlighted his ongoing efforts to strengthen community connections by engaging with local organizations.

Liz Goodwin - Director of Instruction

Summary: Ms. Goodwin reported that Professional Learning Communities are active across all grade levels, with teams focusing on prioritizing standards, aligning assessments, and planning interventions. Beginning-of-year assessments have been completed, with data being used to guide instruction and interventions at both elementary and secondary levels. The district is reviewing new ELA curriculum options, with plans to pilot two programs this winter and adopt one by spring. Goodwin also noted the positive classroom visits, collaboration with staff, and the strong commitment to student learning across the district.

Randy Phillips - Operations Director

Summary: Mr. Phillips reported that the school year started smoothly, with only minor IT issues that were resolved quickly. All summer projects are complete, and planning has begun for next summer. The athletic field continues to improve, with regular maintenance and favorable weather aiding growth. Work orders have been reduced significantly, repairs to building systems are underway, and transportation and nutrition services are operating well. Phillips also noted continued technology upgrades and preparations for winter snow removal.

Cassie Stewart - Elem Principal

Summary: Ms. Stewart reported a strong start to the year at Roundy Elementary, with students and staff settling into routines. A new Behavior Intervention Team is launching to support Tier 2 and 3 student needs, and new At-Risk Counselor and Liaison positions are providing added support for students and families. Staff successfully completed fall benchmark testing, and intervention planning is underway. Building operations, including new Pre-K drop-off and pick-up procedures, are running smoothly. Stewart noted progress in aligning teacher evaluation practices with districtwide standards.

Paul Kissell - Secondary Principal

Summary: Mr. Kissell shared that the district continues to enhance student learning and teacher collaboration through PLCs focused on standards, assessment, interventions, and enrichment. The Teacher Quality Team has streamlined K–12 evaluation cycles to create consistency across the district. Attendance policies have been updated for state alignment, with additional training provided to ensure accuracy in coding. Kissell also highlighted the impact of new core teachers, who have expanded intervention labs, added new course offerings including college-level options, and enriched the teaching culture. Homecoming Week was also noted as a celebration of school spirit.

Michael Volk - Superintendent

Summary: Dr. Volk reported that Raker Rhodes Engineering recently conducted a structural assessment of the middle school, with a comprehensive report on the building's condition expected in the coming weeks. Volk noted that the November 4 school board election will include four open seats, with ten candidates filing—eight for the four-year terms and two for the two-year term. The board will also conduct a first reading of updated IASB-aligned board policies at this month's meeting. Volk highlighted the work of the District Leadership Team, which is establishing clear goals, norms, and professional development priorities while celebrating the strong systems already in place. Volk further emphasized progress on finalizing both the At-Risk Team and Crisis Response Teams in each building, underscoring the district's commitment to proactive strong supports for students and families. Overall, Volk commended the collaborative spirit across the district and the forward momentum in aligning best practices to best serve students needs.

A board report was given by Todd Heck with handouts to the board of a contractor registration form and scope of work document.

Unfinished Business

One information item was discussed; Darin Mapel was administered the oath of office to fill the board vacancy on September 2, 2025, by Board Secretary Neil Mills, witnessed by Tashia Wheeler and Tamber Mapel.

New Business

Todd Heck moved to accept the Mincer Ford Inc. low bid for a 2026 Ford F250 (with a snowplow) for $53,027.00

Seconded by Dan Heindel.

Ayes: four Nays: none. Carried. Darin Mapel abstained.

Andy White moved to table the consideration of an agreement for the athletic field grow in and maintenance until next month.

Seconded by Todd Heck.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

Todd Heck moved to approve the first reading of the updated board policies.

Seconded by Andy White.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

The New Updated IASB-Aligned Policies are available on the district website.

Todd Heck moved to approve the request for allowable growth and supplement aid for a negative special education balance for the FY25 school year of $155,464.26.

Seconded by Dan Heindel.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

Darin Mapel moved to approve out-of-state travel and use of school vehicles.

Seconded by Todd Heck.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

FFA - Indianapolis IN for National Convention October 28 through November 1.

FCS and Work Based Learning - Moline IL for Jr. Achievement on December 16th.

Special Ed Strat 2 - Circa 21 Dinner Playhouse Rock Island IL December 14th.

Andy White moved to approve influenza shots for staff with Louisa County Public Health billing staffs' health insurance and the district paying for staff who do not have insurance.

Seconded by Dan Heindel.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

Andy White moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Todd Heck.

Ayes: five Nays: none. Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

The next meeting will be on October 27, 2025, at 6:00pm.

/s/ Carol S. Zuniga, School Board President, /s/Neil A. Mills, School Board Secretary

Approved Bills:
4-M Plumbing & Heating Purchase Service.....8,261.15
Agriland FS, INC. Fuel Purchases.....3,347.32
Ahlers & Cooney, P.C. Legal Services.....3,219.00
All American Pest Control Pest Control Services.....660.00
Alliant Energy Utilities..29,196.06
Alvarez, Marco Official.....180.50
Anderson Erickson Dairy Milk Purchases.....2,253.22
Apple Computer, Inc. Technology 249.99
Aragon-Jacques, Michael Reimbursement.....89.89
ASPi Solutions, Inc. Purchase Service.....500.00
B You Designs Supplies.....270.00
BMO Harris Bank N.A. Supplies/Travel.....14,776.74
BSN Sports Supplies.....1,707.38
Buena Vista University Scholarships.....4,850.00
Caldwell, Kevin Official.....149.64
CDW Government Inc Technology.....988.21
Central Iowa Distributing Supplies.....2,439.00
City Of Columbus Junction Utilities.....518.98
Clearfly District Telephone Services.....1,078.32
Columbus Gazette Publications 584.35
Columbus Jct. Auto Supply Supplies.....329.50
Control Installations of Iowa, Inc. Purchase Service.....2,504.00
Controlled Access of The Midwest, LLC Supplies.....195.65
Cotton, Marshall Official....181.22
Dannco Supplies.....2,515.50
Davis, Mike Official.....164.44
Dickinson Law Legal Services 23,592.70
Doors IncPurchase Service 795.00
Earthgrains Baking Co's Inc.Bread Purchases.....1,076.21
Economart Supplies.....18.78
Electronic Engineering Purchase Service.....112.50
Escher, Larry Official.....246.97
FBG Service Corporation Janitorial Services.....24,341.00
FCCLA, Lock Box Operations Membership Dues.....373.00
Fleet US LLC Supplies.....611.76
Follett Library ResourcesSupplies 29.97
Follett Software Company Supplies.....66.75
Ft. Madison CSDEntry Fee140.00
Grainger Supplies.....750.40
Greatmats.com Gaga Pit Mats 3,448.33
Hands Up Communication Purchase Service.....9,405.00
Harvestville Farm Field Trip Fees 287.00
Hawkeye Photo Booths Purchase Service.....450.00
Headington, Sylvia Reimbursement.....6.49
Heck, Eileen Reimbursemen29.60
Henning, Ralph Official.....174.43
Hill, Jordon Official.....180.11
Hudl Renewal.....13,000.00
Indian Hills Community College Scholarships.....4,000.00
Iowa Dept. Of Education Fleet Inspection Fees.....900.00
Iowa River Sanitation Garbage Services.....550.00
Iowa State University Scholarships.....4,000.00
IP Pathways Technology.....825.00
J.W. Pepper and Son, Inc Supplies 444.23
Kirk Danforth Official.....150.00
Kirkwood Community College Scholarships.....1,000.00
Kull, Leonard Official.....250.37
L & M School District Open Enrollment.....77,140.37
Liminex, Inc.Renewal.....4,440.00
Marco Technologies LLC Supplies.....106.75
Medicom District Telephone Services.....744.93
Mississippi Bend AEA 9AEA Flowthrough.....23,118.40
Mount Mercy University Scholarships.....3,500.00
Muscatine Community College Scholarships.....3,500.00
Northeast Iowa Community College Scholarships.....300.00
OPN Architects Purchase Service 8,280.94
Performance Foodservice Food Purchases.....24,380.95
Quill Corp Supplies.....3,817.01
R.M. Boggs Co. Purchase Service 973.00
Refreshment Services Pepsi Pop Purchases.....1,614.57
Rendon, Samantha Reimbursement.....32.00
River Products Company, Inc. Supplies.....312.47
RML Trucking LLC Purchase Service.....85.00
Rochester 100 Inc. Supplies200.00
Rock Valley Physical Therapy Athletic Training Services..595.00
Salazar, Shannon Reimbursement 165.00
School Bus Sales Supplies..278.35
Schwab Electric Purchase Service 10,587.98
SEI Super ConferenceMember-ship Dues.....300.00
Shettler, Brad Official.....94.83
Sigourney High School Athletics Entry Fees.....100.00
Southeastern Comm College Scholarships.....1,500.00
State Hygienic Laboratory Purchase Service.....15.50
Student CTE Curriculum.3,170.00
Symmetry Energy Solutions, LLC Utilities.....112.24
Taft Plg, Htg, & Cooling Purchase Service.....1,161.17
TCI Supplies.....50.00
Teaching Strategies, Inc Supplies 603.36
Top 20 Training Professional Development.....7,418.28
TURNITIN, LLC Renew3,844.88
University of Northern Iowa Scholarships.....4,500.00
Vetter Culligan Water Supplies 66.24
Walmart Supplies.....261.25
Wapello CSD Entry Fees....100.00
Weatherproofing Technologies, IncPurchase Service.....86,981.00
West Music Company Supplies 584.00
White, Brett Official.....210.01
Windstream District Fax Services 99.26
Winfield Builders Supplies.730.90
Winfield-Mt. Union CSD Vendor Error- Voided Check.....339.68
Woodward, Shannon Official 152.96
Zuniga, Dante Purchase Service 300.00
.....449,333.94

Published Wednesday, October 1, 2025 in the Columbus Gazette