

**Minutes for the Board Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District held in the High School Auditorium on Wednesday, August 21, 2024.**

**I. Mr. Carpenter called the meeting to order at approximately 7:10 p.m.**

The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District Board of Directors on Wednesday, August 21, 2024, is now called to order.

**II. Mr. Carpenter asked all present to rise for the flag salute.**

**III. Mr. Carpenter read the following notice** This meeting is being recorded for District purposes. It is or may be published in part or in its entirety on the District's website without the express permission of meeting participants.

**IV. Roll Call**

Mr. John Carpenter, President  
Ms. Valerie Young, Vice President  
Mrs. Cathy Fischer  
Miss Amy Fitsko  
Mrs. Mary Jo Kehoe  
Mr. Garrett Kovacevic  
Mr. Matthew Zatchey

Others Present:

Dr. Joseph W. Pasquerilla, Superintendent  
Ms. Megan Turnbull, Solicitor  
Mrs. Michelle Amadio, Business Manager / Director of Operations  
Mrs. June Mueller, Board Secretary

**V. Mrs. Mueller read the Sunshine Law**

The Board of School Directors held an Executive Session on Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss:

- Personnel matter(s)
- Matters subject to attorney-client privilege and other confidentiality laws
- Litigation or threatened litigation matters

**VI. Correspondence**

No Correspondence

**VII. Motion to accept or correct the Minutes of Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting**

Miss Fitsko moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Mrs. Kehoe. All in favor.

**VIII. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report dated: July 2024**

Miss Fitsko moved to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Ms. Young. All in favor.

**IX. Amendment/Addendum to Agenda/Approval of Agenda**

Ms. Turnbull amended items 2 and 9 under Personnel.

Tabled item 5 under Finance and Budget.

Mr. Kovacevic moved to table item 5, seconded by Miss Fitsko. All in favor.

**X. Recognition/Presentation****Elementary School PTA/PTO Reports**

Melinda Arlof, Economy PTA

Some of the past and scheduled events held by Economy PTA

- Santa Shop
- Holiday pictures with Santa and the Easter Bunny
- Read-a-thon
- Story Walks
- Holiday Hugs – helped 65 families in the past two years
- Birthday room – underprivileged students can pick treats for their classmates on their birthday.
- Fun and Field Day
- Family nights
- Promote health and fitness
- Science events
- Field Trips
- PreK and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation
- Gaga Ball Pitts
- Princess Ball

Cathy Samarko, Highland Elementary PTO

Some of the past and scheduled events held by Highland PTO

- Book Fair
- Gave 600 free books away
- Cookies and Coco
- Holiday Pictures
- Royal Ball
- Teacher Appreciation Lunch
- Every Student receives a free yearbook
- Makers Space
- Dances
- Cookies with Hearos with local Police and Fire

Mr. Zatchey read a statement and dismissed himself from the meeting. Below are some of the bullet points from the statement.

- Started as a Board member wanting the best for the district faculty, staff, and children, and believes the Board has yet to do that and it is not for the lack of trying.
- Ambridge has a proud history that dates many decades.
- Graduated from Ambridge Area School District 24 years ago and believes the legacy and culture have not stayed the same.
- Feels the leadership is not capable of continuing on the district's legacy.
- Ran for election to stand for the students.
- Board members are on there for selfish reasons and are not standing for the students.
- Recently have seen a mass exodus of the district's best teachers and most recently three administrators and feel there is more to come.
- We need to spend our time and resources to retain our staff.
- Showing we care is far less expensive than a revolving door.
- For my Board colleges shouldn't we take a page in the book we have been promoting "Bridges Build Up!"
- Asked for the voluntary resignation of Superintendent Dr. Joseph Pasquerilla.
- Class scheduling and transportation are failures and someone should be held accountable.
- No confidence for the school year in its entirety.

Mr. Carpenter

- Moved back to the district 10 years ago, deep connection to the community, and feels we all feel it is different than it was years ago.
- Stated that he believes all of the Board members are there for the right reasons.
- Believes the same of the Administrators and every signal staff member all knew it would be a difficult situation with the financial situation the district was in and all knew there would have to be sacrifices, which everybody had done to move forward.
- And now we are at the point that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, financially.
- All staff are given the challenge to do more with less.
- Nationwide there are the same struggles that school districts are seeing.
- We have not raised taxes and if we did we would still lose teachers to other schools because this is not the same tax base as some schools.
- Every Board member gets every single email and every single phone call.
- The Administrators have been putting hours in to rectify the transportation email.
- Believes we should concentrate on Building Bridgers UP instead of tearing Bridgers down.
- In the short 10 years I have seen 5 or 6 Superintendents, were all bad, or did all have a bad deal?
- Retention starts with having the stability of leadership.

**Public Comment (Regarding Agenda Items Only)**

At this time, DISTRICT RESIDENTS may come forward to comment on agenda items only. Each person must state their first and last name and address prior to speaking. Each resident will be allowed three minutes and can speak only once. This period for public comment prior to the standing committee reports will be limited to one-half hour. Although not required, board members desiring to address questions or concerns may do so after the residents' comments/questions or at the conclusion of the committee reports. There will still be an opportunity for residents to comment on any business relevant to the Ambridge Area School District under Old and New Business at the end of the meeting.

Kasi Devinney, Economy Borough

- The Board should have tabled Dr. Pasquerilla's contract.
- Lack of employees, and employees taking on more job duties.
- Bus schedules should have been done weeks ahead.
- The superintendent's contract should not have been approved for five years.
- Our leadership's salary is top-heavy.

Rodger Kowal, Economy Borough

- Average salary for Assistant Superintendent is \$114,000.00
- School Code – allows for a three-year Assistant Superintendent Contract
  - Ms. Turnbull checked the School Code and it is five years.
- Busing not done.
- Will the district hire a Special Education Director?

Melinda Arlof, Economy Borough

- Concerned with the Assistant Superintendent having six job titles.
- Who is doing the work for special education?
- Why doesn't the district hold exit interviews?
- Why are there so many resignations?
  - Miss Fitsko agreed there should be exit interviews done within the district.

**XI. Committee Reports****Education and Technology**

**Mrs. Romasco**

1. Adagio Health (AHI) Memorandum of Understanding – PowerUp

It is recommended to approve an MOU between the Ambridge Area School District and Adagio Health to implement the PowerUp Eat Right Nutrition Education Program.

2. WIDA Virtual Conference

It is recommended Sarah White attend the virtual WIDA Conference from October 16 – October 18, 2024. The registration will be paid as per Board Policy 431, Job Related Expenses. The total cost will be approximately \$225.00.

3. Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit (BVIU) Title I Agreement

It is recommended to approve a Service Agreement between the Ambridge Area School District and the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit. The BVIU will provide Title I reading services.

4. Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) Title I Agreement

It is recommended to approve a Service Agreement between the Ambridge Area School District and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. The AIU will provide Title I reading services.

5. Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV Nonpublic School Title Services (MIU IV) Title I Agreement

It is recommended to approve a Service Agreement between the Ambridge Area School District and the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV. The MIU IV will provide Title I reading services.

6. Cheer Team UCA Regional

It is recommended to approve the student attendance and application of the student discipline code for the high school varsity cheerleaders to travel to Olentangy High School, in Delaware, Ohio to participate in the Universal Cheerleaders Association Regionals Cheerleading Competition from October 26-27, 2024. Reimbursement for expenses shall be governed by Board Policy 240 – Student Contests/Competitions and conditioned on attendance and event participation. Parents and/or guardians will be required to sign permission and release forms. Chaperones will be required to have current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

Mr. Carpenter moved to accept items 1-6, seconded by Miss Fitsko. The vote in favor was unanimous.

**Finance and Budget****Mr. Zatchey**1. School District Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly school district bills in the amount of \$1,444,526.07 and the monthly school district personnel salaries in the amount of \$1,121,946.43 be paid.

2. Cafeteria Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly cafeteria bills in the amount of \$31,230.02 and the monthly cafeteria personnel salaries in the amount of \$15,719.32 be paid.

3. Disposal of Textbooks at Ambridge Area Middle School

It is recommended to dispose of unusable textbooks with copyright dates of 2018 (see Appendix A), which are no longer used in the District curriculum at the Middle School, as per Board Policy 706-1 - *Disposal of Surplus Property and Obsolete Equipment*.

Appendix A

4. Grant Acceptance

It is recommended to accept the following Fresh Fruit and Vegetable grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition. This award is to provide free fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. Leigh Anne Holman and the Food Service Group were instrumental in securing the grants.

- a) Total amount of \$20,262.00, awarded to Highland Elementary School.
- b) Total amount of \$16,500.00, awarded to State Street Elementary School.

5. Tax Exoneration - TABLED

It is recommended to approve the Borough of Ambridge's request dated August 6, 2024, to exonerate delinquent 2024 school taxes pursuant to the Pennsylvania Property Donation Statute for tax parcels 12.006.0101-010 and 12.006.0101-002 with the condition that should either property sell in the future to a non-tax exempt entity, a pro-rata share of the proceeds will be remitted to the District, less the Borough's direct costs of acquisition.

Mr. Kovacevic moved to accept items 1-4, as amended, seconded by Miss Fitsko. The vote in favor was unanimous.

**Building and Grounds****Mr. Metz**1. State Street Freezer

It is recommended to ratify a quote from Richard Refrigeration, LLC to replace the freezer at State Street Elementary cafeteria at a total cost of \$10,321.00 through the State contract pricing (Co-Stars).

2. Crossing Guards

It is recommended that crossing guards be placed at locations throughout the Ambridge Area School District for the 2024-2025 school year as listed below:

10<sup>th</sup> Street and Duss Avenue  
 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Duss Avenue  
 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Duss Avenue  
 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Church Street  
 State Street and Harmony Road

Mr. Carpenter moved to accept items 1-2, seconded by Mrs. Fischer. The vote in favor was unanimous.

**Athletics****Mrs. Fischer****Public Relations****Miss Fitsko**

**Steering and Rules****Mrs. Kehoe**1. Policy 200 – Enrollment of Students – Third and Final Reading

It is recommended, as a third and final reading to revise School Board Policy 200 – *Enrollment of Students*, to include the requirements for advanced enrollment of children of military families.

2. Policy 202 – Eligibility of Nonresident Students – Third and Final Reading

It is recommended, as a third and final reading to revise School Board Policy 202 – *Eligibility of Nonresident Students*, to include the requirements for advanced enrollment for students experiencing educational instability.

3. Policy 217 – Graduation – Third and Final Reading

It is recommended, as a third and final reading to revise School Board Policy 217 – *Graduation*, for legal liability purposes regarding the adoption and posting of graduation requirements in compliance with state law and regulations.

4. Policy 254 – Educational Opportunity for Military Children – Third and Final Reading

It is recommended, as a third and final reading to adopt School Board Policy 254 – *Educational Opportunity for Military Children* to include the requirements for advanced enrollment of military families.

Mrs. Kehoe moved to accept items 1-4, seconded by Mrs. Fischer. The vote in favor was unanimous.

**Legislation****Miss Fitsko****Salary Schedule and Labor Relations****Mr. Kovacevic****Personnel****Ms. Young**

**\*ALL NEW HIRES, PENDING RECEIPT OF SATISFACTORY AND CURRENT CLEARANCES, SATISFACTORY DRUG SCREENING, TB TESTING, RESPONSES BY CURRENT/FORMER EMPLOYERS TO ACT 168 SCREENING, AND PDE CERTIFICATIONS IF APPLICABLE.**

1. Administrative Positions

A. It is recommended to close the following positions, effective August 21, 2024:

1. Assistant to the Superintendent
2. Director of Special Education

B. It is recommended to open the following positions, effective August 21, 2024:

1. Assistant Superintendent
2. Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

2. Resolution 2024-2025-04 - Appointment

It is recommended to approve resolution No. 2024-2025-04, a resolution appointing Dr. Amy Filipowski to the position of Assistant Superintendent for a term up to five (5) years beginning August 21, 2024 at a salary of \$150,000.00; and authorizing its related terms as permitted by law.

3. Professional Employee

It is recommended to approve Shannon Tatman as an Elementary STEAM Teacher All Buildings at a salary of \$48,971.00 (Step 1, Bachelor), effective August 20, 2024, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEE/PSEA Agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, and PDE certifications if applicable.

4. Posted Positions: Clubs / Activities

It is recommended to amend the approval of Kelly Gregory as the Finance Director Sponsor, approved at the July 17<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, to approve Kelly Gregory and Mary Marasco as the Finance Director Co-Sponsors to be paid the following split stipend:

- Kelly Gregory – to be paid a stipend of \$1,550.00
- Mary Marasco – to be paid a stipend of \$1,550.00

5. Resignation

It is recommended to ratify the resignation of Brian Strong from his position as a Union Utility Worker at the high school, effective August 14, 2024, with regret.

6. Resignation

It is recommended to ratify the resignation of Casey Spieler from her position as a Pre-K Paraprofessional at Highland Elementary, effective August 14, 2024, with regret.

7. Resignation

It is recommended to ratify the resignation of Kathy Dunmire from her position as a Paraprofessional at the middle school effective August 16, 2024, with regret.

8. 2024-2025 Fall Coach

It is recommended the following individual be ratified to fill the designated Fall coaching position for the 2024-2025 school year at a salary as per the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, provided the school year allows coaches to hold Fall sports as normal.

<u>Girls' Tennis</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Brianna Hunt, Assistant Coach	\$1,050.00

9. Assistant High School Principal/Athletic Director

It is recommended to approve Anthony Amadio, as the Ambridge Area School High School Assistant Principal/Athletic Director at a salary of \$102,000.00 as per the terms of the Act 93 agreement, effective August 22, 2024, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

Ms. Young moved to accept items 1-9, seconded by Mrs. Fischer. The vote in favor was unanimous with Mr. Kovacevic abstaining from items 1-9.

**XII. President's Report**

Mr. Carpenter stated he is looking forward to a great school year, with the administration and staff working hard to fix a rocky start. Looking forward to all of the sporting events. Thanked all of the staff for working hard and thanked the parents for their patience.

**XIII. Solicitor's Report**

Nothing to report.

**XIV. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Pasquerilla congratulated Dr. Filipowski.

Encouraged all to attend the Rachel's Challenge event happening on August 30<sup>th</sup> from 4-6.

Spoke to what the middle school student speaker said at the Opening Day Ceremony –try and find a way to be kind, build a person up when they are down, and be sure to tell someone they did a good job. Your kindness will have a chain reaction.

Will continue to do his very best for the students and appreciates all of the staff who are working to rectify transportation issues.

Thank you to the PTA/PTO for all that you do for our students.

**XV. Old and New Business**

It is now time for old and new business. Any DISTRICT RESIDENT who desires to comment on any business relevant to the Ambridge Area School District should now come forward. Each person must state their first and last name and address prior to speaking. Each person will be allowed three minutes and can speak only once.

**XVI. Motion to Adjourn**

At approximately 8:00 p.m. Mrs. Fischer moved to adjourn, seconded by Miss Fitsko. All in favor.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Mrs. June Mueller**

**Board Secretary**

**Appendix A**

**6TH GRADE- 81 BOOKS (At least 61 - I could not get into the last classroom)**

Houghton Mifflin Science: Student Edition Single Volume Level 6 2008

ISBN-10: 0-618-49228-3 / 0618492283

**7TH GRADE- 125 BOOKS**

Glencoe Science: Level Red, Student Edition Volume Level 7 2008

ISBN-13: 9780078778063

**8TH GRADE- 275 BOOKS**

Glencoe Science: Level Blue, Grade 8, Student Edition (- integrated Science)

ISBN 10: 0078778107

Published by McGraw-Hill Education, 2008