

**Minutes for the Meet and Discuss Voting and Non-Voting Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District held in the High School Auditorium on Wednesday, September 11, 2024.**

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

The Meet and Discuss Board Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District is held on Wednesday, September 11, 2024. This meeting is being held to review the agenda for the regular monthly Board Meeting that will be held on Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium.

**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

Mr. William Metz, Vice President

Ms. Valerie Young, Treasurer

Mrs. Cathy Fischer

Miss Amy Fitsko

Mrs. Mary Jo Kehoe

Mr. Garrett Kovacevic

Mrs. Kelly Romasco

Mr. Mathew Zatchey

Others Present:

Dr. Joseph W. Pasquerilla, Superintendent

Dr. Amy Filipowski, Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Megan Turnbull, Solicitor

Mrs. Michelle Amadio, Business Manager / Director of Operations

Mrs. June Mueller, Board Secretary

**V. Mrs. Mueller Read the following Sunshine Law:**

The Board of School Directors held Executive Session(s) on Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss:

- Personnel matter(s)
- Matters subject to attorney-client privilege and other confidentiality laws
- Informational Matters

**VI. Correspondence**

No correspondence.

**VII. Amendments to the Agenda/Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Kovacevic moved to table items 3 and 4 under Personnel, seconded by Mr. Metz. All in favor.

**VIII. Recognition/Presentation**

**IX. 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.

Rodger Kowal, Economy Borough

- Is the Board having discussions on purchase or lease of real estate
  - That was not one of the topics for discussion under the sunshine law

**X. LEGISLATIVE ACTION FOR THIS MEETING**

**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. Permanent Contracts

It is recommended the following professional employee, who has completed three years of satisfactory service in the Ambridge Area School District as of the effective date designated, be given permanent professional contracts:

Ashley Schmidt – September 8, 2024

2. Open Position

A. It is recommended to hereby approve the creation of the following position:

1. English as a Second Language Teacher (ESL), District-wide K-12

**TABLED** 3. Posted Positions: Clubs / Activities

It is recommended the following individuals who have applied for the specified posted positions for the 2024-2025 school year be approved at the rate of pay as per the collective bargaining agreement, provided the school year allows and sponsors can hold activities as normal.

**ACTIVITY/CLUB (High School)**

**SALARY**

Senior High School Play Director	Jessica Patterson	\$2,050.00
JR Drill Team	Emily Gregory	\$1,200.00
Thespian Club	Jessica Patterson	\$ 470.00
Ecology Club	Pamela Green	\$ 470.00

<u>ACTIVITY/CLUB (Middle School)</u>		<u>SALARY</u>
MathCounts	Noah Rinker	\$1,100.00
TSA Club	Scott Setzenfand	\$ 470.00

**TABLED** 4. Clubs / Activities Co-Sponsor Ratification

It is recommended to ratify Pamela Green as an additional co-sponsor, in addition to Ben Holmes and Kristen Holmes who were previously approved, for the Technology Student Association (TSA) Club. The stipend should be split as follows:

- Pamela Green - \$450.00
- Ben Holmes – \$450.00
- Kristin Holmes - \$450.00

5. Paraprofessional

It is recommended to approve the following Paraprofessionals, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Support Professional Association (ESPA/PSEA/NEA), pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

- Mu Kler, Highland Elementary PreK – effective August 26, 2024, retroactively
- Donavan Hopkins, Highland Elementary PreK – effective September 10, 2024, retroactively
- Shannon Kennedy, Economy Elementary – effective August 28, 2024, retroactively
- Heather Stimmel, State Street Elementary – effective September 23, 2024

6. Hall Monitors

It is recommended to ratify Tim Richards as a Hall Monitor at the middle school, effective September 9, 2024, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Support Professional Association (ESPA/PSEA/NEA), pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

7. Economy Elementary Before and After School Childcare

It is recommended to approve Kate Kuczma as a caregiver at the Before and After School Child Care Program at Economy Elementary School at a rate of \$15.00 per hour, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and compliance with Act 168. The hours are 6:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. before school and 3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. after school.

8. Geneva College Field Placements

It is recommended to approve the following Geneva College students, to complete observation hours within the Ambridge Area School District, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

Carmen Medvit, Economy Elementary – to be placed with Carrie Keber, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA  
Karlen Honey, Economy Elementary – to be placed with Sean Beighley, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA

9. 2024-2025 Winter Coaches

It is recommended the following individuals be ratified to fill the designated winter coaching positions 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 winter sports as normal.

<u>Middle School Girls' Basketball</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Lethera Harrison	\$1,750.00
Craig Wiltrek	\$1,750.00

10. Retirement

It is recommended to accept the resignation of Dave Murphy, due to his retirement from the position of Maintenance Worker at Highland Elementary, effective September 16, 2024, with regret.

11. Resignation

It is recommended to accept the resignation of David Smith, from his position as a Paraprofessional at the middle school, effective August 21, 2024, with regret.

12. Resignation

It is recommended to accept the resignation of Virginia Jamery, from her position as a Union Kitchen Worker at Economy Elementary, effective August 27, 2024, with regret.

13. FMLA

It is recommended to approve Employee #462 taking an intermittent leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave, beginning September 20, 2024, not to exceed sixty (60) days.

14. FMLA

It is recommended to approve Employee #821 taking a leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave, beginning September 11, 2024, not to exceed sixty (60) days.

15. FMLA

It is recommended to approve Employee #2576 taking an intermittent leave of absence under Board Policy 535, Family and Medical Leave, beginning October 1, 2024, not to exceed sixty (60) days.

16. Credit Recovery

It is recommended that the following individuals be approved as instructors for the Credit Recovery Program at the high school. Teachers will be paid as per the collective bargaining agreement.

- Jodi Musser – Math
- Kent Withrow - Math
- Kim Bogati - English
- Christina Briola – English
- Paul Hladio - Science
- Shane Newhouse - Social Studies
- Nicole Connolly – Social Studies
- Jennifer Sirianni – Health and Physical Education

17. High School After-School Detention

It is recommended that the following individuals be approved as supervisors of the after-school detention at the Ambridge Area High School. The teachers will be paid as per the collective bargaining agreement.

- Nicole Connolly
- Stephen Rodgers

Ms. Young moved to approve items 1-17, as amended, seconded by Mr. Metz. The vote in favor was unanimous.

**XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS (NON-VOTING AGENDA ITEMS)**

**Education and Technology**

**Mrs. Romasco**

1. Sweetwater Center for the Arts Program

It is recommended to approve a program between the Ambridge Area High School and Sweetwater Center for the Arts in Sewickley, PA to bring digital arts to the district’s high school art students. This is at no cost to the district.

**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 \$1,693,400.58 and the monthly school district personnel salaries in the amount of \$983,552.28 be paid.

2. Cafeteria Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly cafeteria bills in the amount of \$142,074.76 and the monthly cafeteria personnel salaries in the amount of \$ 14,774.94 be paid.

3. Tax Exoneration

It is recommended to approve the tax exoneration regarding the collection of Real Estate Tax, conditioned upon mutual municipal and county reciprocal exoneration for the same years, relevant to the following property:

- a) Tax Parcel 13-005-0318-000, 391 Prospect Street, Baden, PA, for the real estate taxes for 2022 and 2023, purchased by Baden Borough.

4. Tax Exoneration

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 the following tax parcels, 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.

- a) Tax Parcel 12-006-0101-010, 0 Merchant Street, Ambridge, PA
- b) Tax Parcel 12-006-0101-002, 1401 New Economy Drive, Ambridge, PA

**Building and Grounds****Mr. Metz**1. Economy Elementary HVAC Units

It is recommended to accept the proposals received from Building Control Systems, Inc. to replace and program two existing Trane Rooftop Units at Economy Elementary. This is at a total cost of \$36,420.00 through the State bidding process (Co-Stars).

**Athletics****Mrs. Fischer****Public Relations****Miss Fitsko****Steering and Rules****Mrs. Kehoe**

**Legislative****Miss Fitsko****1. PSBA Officer Elections**

It is recommended the Board Secretary be directed to cast the vote of the Ambridge Area School Board for the election of the following PSBA Slate of Candidates for 2025:

President-elect     Sabrina Backer, Franklin Area School District

Vice President     Matt Vannoy, Sharon City School District

Western Zone       Kristy Bolte

Insurance Trust    Nathan Mains  
                           Richard Frerichs  
                           William LaCoff

**President's Address**

Mr. Carpenter stated he appreciated all that came out to the meeting this evening. We agree to disagree but we all have the best intentions.

**XII. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Pasquerilla appreciates ABC Transit coming out to speak at tonight's meeting. Agrees that transportation has been a struggle. Thanked Dr. Filipowski for her work and doing her best to rectify and improve the transportation situation.

Dr. Pasquerilla also thanked all for a good start to the school year aside from busing. It has been an excellent start with the students, activities, clubs and athletics. Special thanks to the staff.

Please come out to support our fall sports teams.

**XIII. Solicitor's Report**

Nothing to report.

**XIV. 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. This period for public comment prior to the standing committee reports will be limited to one-half hour.

Stephanie Priore, Economy Borough

- Thanked ABC Transit for coming out.
- Shout out Ms. Tony bus 105
- I am a parent, and substitute teacher in the district and I am pro teacher and pro student

- Student safety most important
- Failure of leadership
- Should have moved the start of school due to transportation issues
- No one from ABC responds
- No support at dismissal at Economy Elementary
- A kindergarten student was put on the wrong bus
- If Board members are not for the kids then they should resign

Denise Manganello, Baden, PA

- We teach our children to say, "I'm sorry". ABC did not say that this evening.
- Students' bus routes were posted publically for all Megan Law offenders to see.
- The district gave our children's information such as how many students were at the bus stop and bus numbers.
- Three administrators resigned without the district holding them for 60 days
- Why was the start of school not delayed due to transportation issues
- Covid times the district follows safety and security guidelines – why not now
- How can the district have student growth and achievement when the buses are running an hour late for school until further notice
- Fix the drop-off problem at the middle school

Jessica Patterson. Play Director

- Concerned why the Activities/Club approval was tabled

Christine Withrow, Sewickley, PA

- Thanked ABC for coming out and speaking
- Why was ABC not listed on the agenda as a presentation
- Why is transportation no on the agenda
- Middle school buses are running an hour late every day
- Had to drive my son to school the bus never came
- Why can't parents have an app to track the bus
- Parents need more communication from the administration

Doug Yingling, Resident

- Son attends a private school
- 2 years never received a letter regarding busing
- No information ever sent from the district on extracurricular activities
- Son missed 27 days of school last year due to busing
- What is being done
- ABC is not fulfilling their contract
- School starts at 8 and his son is being picked up at 8:30
- What happened to no child left behind



Jen McDowell, Ambridge, PA

- Buses need to be numbered appropriately
- No communication
- How can younger kids know what bus number to go by when bus has multiple numbers on it
- Kids are super stressed over busing

Kade McGovern, Student

- Why table Activities/Clubs
- As a member of TSA, this is a big part of student's lives
  - Mr. Carpenter stated the consensus of the board was that they need more description and it will be added to the next agenda.

Bill Kohler, Harmony Twp.

- Why cannot there be staggered start times for the buses as an option

Ian McDowell, Ambridge, PA

- Ambridge should be compensated by ABC

Kim Freeman, Economy Borough

- The board needs COMMUNICATION
- Parents need to update the district with address changes

Mrs. Kehoe

- The board looked at staggered times in the past and the feedback from secondary parents was that the time change would interfere with after-school activities.
- Elementary parents' feedback was that the time change would not work with their work schedules
- There are bigger issues that arise when looking at changing start and end times

Mrs. Romasco

- Would a tracking app be a possibility
- Do another district ever use a tracking app
  - ABC said that would not work at this time, it would be a safety issue
- Neon signs with bus numbers listed would help the district
  - Mr. Metz will see that this is done
- Would like a discussion on staggered start times
- Could rerouting be done for this school year
  - ABC is in the process of doing this
- Getting district and ABC technology to connect better
  - ABC had a learning curve on their end and is now in the process of fine tuning things to make this right and this will not happen next year
  - Infinite Campus and Transfinder did communicate and this year ABC has a new software, working with IC to fix the problem so that IC and the new software communicate

Dr. Pasquerilla

- Will work with Economy and middle school on drop-off and pickups.

- Dr. Filipowski and I wrote a grant and received approximately \$500,000.00 to fund safety and security and mental health. This grant also helped with programs such as Rachel's Challenge which is a nationally recognized program.

Mr. Metz

- Apologized and stated that the staff at ABC are working diligently to help to get the kids to school
- ABC staff cares and will fix this.
- Apologized to the board, the teachers and the community.
- We will get through this.

**XV. Motion to Adjourn**

At approximately 9:00 p.m. Miss Fitsko moved to adjourn. All in favor.

**Respectfully Submitted**

**Mrs. June Mueller, Board Secretary**