

Minutes for the Board Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District held in the High School Auditorium on Wednesday, November 20, 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, November 20, 2024, is now called to order.

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

Highland Elementary Student Council

Andromeda Hardison Kilvington

Jude El Hayel

Isaac DeLuigi

Cora Bitts

Reiland MacMiller

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, Treasurer

Mrs. Cathy Fischer

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

Mrs. Michelle Amadio, Business Manager / Director of Operations

Ms. Megan Turnbull, Solicitor

Mrs. June Mueller, Board Secretary

V. Mrs. Mueller read the following Sunshine Law

The Board of School Directors held an Executive Session on Wednesday, November 13th and Wednesday, November 20th to discuss:

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

- Salary schedule and labor relations

VI. Correspondence

No Correspondence

VII. Motion to accept or correct the Minutes of Wednesday, October 9th Meet and Discuss Voting and Non-Voting Meeting and Wednesday, October 16th Board Meeting

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

VIII. Motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report dated: October 2024

Miss Fitsko moved to accept the treasurer’s report, seconded by Mrs. Scott. All in favor.

IX. Amendment/Addendum to Agenda/Approval of Agenda

Amended item 1 under Building and Grounds to approve the evaluation of the purchase of a baggage scanner.

Mrs. Kehoe moved to amend the agenda. All in favor.

X. Recognition/Presentation

Congratulations to Kailyn Turko, 12th Grader, for receiving the following Scholarships through the Beaver County Career and Technology Center:

- **Challenge Program’s Academic Scholarship**
- **Bender Leadership Linda Dickerson Scholarship**
Kailyn has recently designed a menu for Buzzi’s Pizza in Rochester, PA and has achieved over 25 business/IT certifications in the program. Through Bender Leadership, Kailyn was given the opportunity to take classes with the CLO in Pittsburgh.

Beaver County Career and Technology Center October Student of the Month

Karissa Schneider, 12th Grade
Madison Coley, 12th Grade

Congratulations to the selected Ambridge Football 2024 All-Parkway All-Conference Teams

First Teams Offense

Dante Prentice, 12th Grade – Offensive Tackle

First Team Defense

Adam Fernandez, 12th Grade – Defensive Back

Second Team Defense

Dante Prentice, 12th Grade – Defensive Tackle

Blaize Kolar, 12th Grade – Inside Linebacker

Second Team Offense

Adam Fernandez, 12th Grade – Offensive Wide Receiver

Quinn Tkatch, 11th Grade - Offensive Guard

Honorable Mention Offense

Blaize Kolar, 12th Grade - Center

Zavion Lewis, 12th Grade – Running Back

Darold Cain, 11th Grade - Athlete

Honorable Mention Defense

Marley Moore, 12th Grade – Defensive Line

Congratulations to the selected Ambridge Girls' Volleyball 2024 Class 3A Section 4 All Stars**Second Team**

Natalie Korol, 10th Grade

Third Team

Brooke Boronski, 9th Grade

Noella Jaworczykowska-Edwards, 10th Grade

Congratulations to the selected Ambridge Boys' Soccer WPIAL AAA Section 4 All-Section Team

Anthony Powell, 12th Grade

Alex Lusty, 10th Grade

Preston, Harper 12th Grade – Honorable Mention

Students of the Month**High School October Student of the Month**

Madison Curry, 9th Grade

Parker Eisel, 10th Grade

Lily Carpenter, 11th Grade

Madelyn Palmer, 12th Grade

High School October Extra Effort Award

Anna Simpson, 9th Grade

Maren Uvodich, 10th Grade

Abby Smith, 11th Grade

Daniel Runner, 12th Grade

Middle School October Student of the Month

Militza Hernandez De Dios, 6th Grade
 Logan Barton, 7th Grade
 Elizabeth Speicher, 8th Grade

Economy Elementary October Student of the Month

Carly Belkot, 5th Grade

Highland Elementary October Student of the Month

Isadora Jones, 5th Grade

State Street Elementary October Student of the Month

Jackson Payne, 5th Grade

Employees of the Month**High School Employee of the Month.**

Sarah Burns, Math Teacher

Middle School Employee of the Month

Greg Becker, Music Teacher

Economy Elementary Employee of the Month

Melissa Ramer, 4th Grade Teacher

Highland Elementary Employee of the Month

Michelle Wilson, 5th Grade Teacher

State Street Elementary Employee of the Month

Melissa Paulos, 2nd Grade Teacher

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.

Josh Gill, Freedom

- Baggage Scanner – Why is this not being purchased for all school buildings?
- The district needs to be proactive not reactive.
- Who will operate the scanners, the current employees? What will the training look like? Are the scanners working properly?

- The district received s Stronger Connections grant in March 2024, will funding from this grant be used for he equipment?

- Ms. Turnbull

- Stated the amendment to item 1 under Building and Grounds was to evaluate the baggage scanner to look at the practicality, how, where, assess a component, and to look at state contracting polices

Rodger Kowal, Economy

- Will there be training implemented for the baggage scanner.
- How long will it take to get the baggage scanner into the school?

- Mr. Carpenter

- The Board and Administration are considering all things in the name of safety.
- The scanner is an exploratory item and the Board and Admin will take the advisement of law enforcement when considering.

Heather Colington

- With the clear backpacks, what are the protocols for female menstrual products? Are small pouches permitted or do they keep products in the main office?

- Dr. Pasquerilla

- at the middle and high school level, small purses are permitted.
- we are encouraging the students to limit to necessities and items that are absolutely needed.

XI. Committee Reports

Education and Technology

Mrs. Kelly Romasco

1. Ambridge Area High School Course Selection

It is recommended that the 2025-2026 Ambridge Area High School Course Selection Book be approved.

2. Ambridge Area Middle School Course Selection

It is recommended that the 2025-2026 Ambridge Area Middle School Course Selection Book be approved.

3. Memorandum of Understanding

It is recommended the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Ambridge Area School District and Western PA Psych Care to provide prevention, assessment, and treatment services to district students.

4. Preferred Home Health Care School Contract

It is recommended to approve a School Staffing Agreement between the Ambridge Area School District and Preferred Home Health Care & Nursing Services to provide nursing services.

5. Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School

It is recommended that a settlement agreement be approved with the Ambridge Area School District and Pennsylvania Cyber Charter Academy to end litigation at the Court of Common Pleas in Beaver County, Pennsylvania.

Mrs. Fischer moved to approve items 1-5, seconded by Miss Fitsko. The vote in favor was unanimous with Mrs. Romasco abstaining from item 5.

Finance and Budget

Mr. Matthew Zatchey

1. School District Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly school district bills in the amount of \$4,063,844.10 and the monthly school district personnel salaries in the amount of \$1,316,899.91 be paid.

2. Cafeteria Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly cafeteria bills in the amount of \$115,861.75 and the monthly cafeteria personnel salaries in the amount of \$ 58,994.19 be paid.

Mr. Zatchey moved to approve items 1-2, seconded by Miss Fitsko. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Building and Grounds

Mr. William Metz

1. Baggage Scanner

It is recommended to approve the evaluation of the purchase of one baggage scanner from Rapiscan Systems for the middle school at a total cost not to exceed \$25,000.00 through State contracting pricing. Subject to Solicitor review.

Mrs. Kehoe moved to approve item 1, seconded by Mrs. Romasco. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Athletics

Mrs. Cathleen Fischer

1. W.P.I.A.L

It is recommended that Marena Baker be approved to represent the Ambridge Area School District as an independent/individual W.P.I.A.L gymnast. The Board further authorized Terri Gazda to serve as her sponsor/coach at all practices and meets.

Mrs. Fischer moved to approve item 1, seconded by Mrs. Scott. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Public Relations

Miss Amy Fitsko

Point of Information

In-Person Kindergarten and Pre-K Registration Dates, 2025-2026 School Year

Children who turn five on or before the first day of school are eligible to register for Kindergarten. For the Pre-K Counts Program, we accept three and four-year-olds whose birthday is on or before the first day of school. Online registration is available on our District's website at www.ambridge.k12.pa.us.

In-Person Registration Dates

- Wednesday, December 4th, from 4:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. at Ambridge Area High School
***Santa will be at the high school to greet and welcome our young scholars with a treat.**
- Tuesday, January 28th, 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. at Highland Elementary
- Wednesday, January 29th, 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. at Economy Elementary
- Thursday, January 30th, 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. at State Street Elementary

Steering and Rules

Mrs. Mary Jo Kehoe

1. Reorganization Meeting

It is recommended the Reorganization Meeting be scheduled on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium.

2. December Board Meeting

It is recommended the monthly Meet and Discuss Meeting and Board Meeting be scheduled on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, immediately following the Reorganization meeting.

3. Policy 103 – Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students – Second Reading

It is recommended, as a second reading to revise Policy 103 – *Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students* to provide updated definitions for sex, religious creed, and race.

4. Policy 104 – Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Staff – Second Reading

It is recommended, as a second reading to revise Policy 104 – *Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Staff* to provide updated definitions for sex, religious creed, and race.

5. Policy 233 – Suspension and Expulsion – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to revise School Board Policy 233 – *Suspension and Expulsion* to make revisions to the compulsory school age regarding attendance/school work after expulsion.

6. Policy 803 – School Calendar – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to update School Board Policy 803 – *School Calendar* to address the alteration of the school calendar in cases of emergency to reflect the current School Code provisions.

7. Policy 805 – Emergency Preparedness and Response – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to revise School Board Policy 805 – *Emergency Preparedness and Response* to update policy language addressing law enforcement agencies to reflect the current School Code terminology.

8. Policy 805.1 – Relations with Law Enforcement – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to update School Board Policy 805.1 – *Relations with Law Enforcement* to update policy language and legal citations to reflect the current School Code provisions addressing school safety and security incident reporting and coordination with law enforcement agencies.

9. Policy 805.2 – School Security Personnel – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to update School Board Policy 805.2 – *School Security Personnel* to update language addressing the training requirements for the School Safety and Security Coordinator and terminology related to incident reporting to law enforcement and PDE was updated in accordance with current School Code provisions.

10. Policy 806 – Child Abuse – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to update School Board Policy 806 – *Child Abuse* to update the language on reporting to law enforcement to reflect the current School Code provisions.

11. Policy 819 – Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to revise School Board Policy 819 – *Suicide Awareness, Prevention, and Responses* to address the correlation between threat assessment teams and crisis response/intervention teams when addressing suicide prevention and response and to reflect current terminology.

12. Policy 903 – Public Comment in Board Meetings – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to revise School Board Policy 903 – *Public Comment* to change the title from Public Participation in Board Meetings to Public Comment in Board Meetings to focus on the purpose of the Sunshine Act requirement for residents and taxpayers to be provided with a reasonable opportunity to comment on matters of concern.

13. Policy 904 – Public Attendance at School Events – Second Reading

It is recommended, as the second reading to update School Board Policy 904 – *Public Attendance at School Events* to update the language on reporting to law enforcement to reflect the current School Code provisions.

Mrs. Kehoe moved to approve items 1-13, seconded by Miss Fitsko. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Legislation

Miss Amy Fitsko

Salary Schedule and Labor Relations

Mr. Garrett Kovacevic

Personnel

Mrs. Valerie Scott

***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. Club Sponsor Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Brandie Johnson from her position as the sponsor of the middle school Interact Club, effective November 18, 2024, with regret.

2. FMLA Amendment

It is recommended to amend the approval of Employee 734 taking an intermittent leave of absence to approve Employee 724 taking a leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave, beginning January 6, 2024.

Mrs. Scott moved to approve items 1-2, seconded by Mrs. Fischer. The vote in favor was unanimous.

XII. President's Report

Mr. Carpenter

- The community and district have been facing trying times these last couple of weeks, but I still have failed in the community and the district.
- As parents and board members we would all like to know what exactly happened and what is being done but this is an ongoing police investigation therefore, information/details cannot be shared.
- We do not want to put all of the details of our safety protocols out there because there are perpetrators out there who are listening closely.
- We cannot speak to the perpetrator or the victim in this incident due to the laws in place.'

- Believe that the staff who are working the doors and hallways are taking this very seriously.
- We cannot forget all of the great things that are happening in our schools and all of the students accomplishing. Look closely at the folks who are doing great things.

XIII. Solicitor's Report

Ms. Turnbull

- Thanked the Board for all of their work on the Cyber Charter agreement regarding an approximate overpayment of \$95,000.0. The district should see those funds within 60 days.

XIV. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Pasquerilla

- This has been a different week for the community.
- We have taken a lot of precautions for a safety today than the day before.
- With the Safer Connections Grant, we tried to get the best safety equipment for our schools.
- Thanked Chief DeLuca and the entire staff for all of their hard work.
- Thanked parents, guardians, students for their patience as we work through the new procedures and protocols.
- Thanked the entire staff for the support they have given to the students and staff each and every day.
- We appreciate all of the staff going about and beyond to make the district safe as possible.
- Recognized all of the excellent student academic, athletic and BCCTC awards.
- Recognized Economy Elementary and noted that he, Dr. Filipowski and Mrs. Ramer were honored to attend the Blue Ribbon Ceremony in D.C. among all of the schools being recognized on a national level.
- We will continue to do our best each and every day.

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.

Stefanie Priore, Economy

- Asked for the resignation of the Superintendent and all Board members who voted for the renewal of his contract.
- The leader must be responsible for what lead us to this incident.
- May of 2020 cuts to the staff and pandemic led to the cutting of student programs, larger classroom sizes and transportations issues.

Shelly Traupman, Baden

- Sister was a victim of a mass shooting so this incident of a weapon in the MS hits home.
- This is very personal to all of us.
- Afraid to send her grandchildren to school.

Kim Roppa, State Street Elementary Teacher

- Thanked the whole community for their support with the donations of clear backpacks.
- The phone calls and knocking on doors to check on the others in the community.
- The community support was heartwarming.
- Thanks all for their support and help.

Josh Gill, Freedom

- Thanked the community for their support.
- In the beginning of the school year parents receive a list of school supplies, why after the middle school incident are parents being asked to get new items.
- Be proactive not reactive.
- What is the current training to operate the metal detectors?
- What is the protocols for random and secondary screenings?
- Was the SRO present that morning the weapon came into the school. What role did the SRO play.
- Unhappy with the lack of transparency.
- The Board and public deteriorate without transparency.
- Rebuild guidelines for public relations and transportation.

➤ Dr. Pasquerilla

- The SROs are present in the middle school and high school during morning check-ins. We have one at each school.

Eric Couch, Economy

- Parent of a middle school and high school student.
- Trying to explain this incident to his children – they are now afraid to go to school.
- We need more police at our schools.
- Our students were not safe that day.
- The district failed our students.

➤ Mr. Carpenter

- I am a father first.
- Please, understand we take this very seriously.
- This is just as frustrating to us as a Board.
- As board members, we do not even get to hear information because it is protected information.
- This incident is above a district matter it is a police matter and an active investigation.
- Very interested in seeing the security gaps closed and we are exploring every possible to close these gaps.

Joe McDowell, Economy

- The district needed to acknowledge and reach out to the community.
- We are a Title I school district and families cannot afford new clear backpacks.
- Parents want communication.

Joe Musser, Harmony Twp.

- Appreciates the idea of clear backpacks for extra safety measures in the schools.
- Who decided on the clear backpacks?
 - Dr. Pasquerilla
 - A group of administrators, staff and the Police Chief met to create the new safety protocols.
 - The Chief recommended that the clear backpacks would be helpful along with other procedural measures.

Jamie Curry, Economy

- What is the plan for long check-in lines for the students during the winter months?
- What is the renewal terms for Athletic Coaches? Are the coaches renewed yearly or do they have multiple year contracts. Are they the same or different for each sport?
 - Dr. Pasquerilla
 - Some coaches have different lengths of terms.

Ian McDowell, Ambridge

- What I the safety grant being used for?
 - Dr. Pasquerilla
 - Stronger Connections Grant is used for Evolv Systems, and I do believe the system is working.
 - Also funded Rachel's Challenge Mental Health Program that is implemented throughout the district.
 - Used to sustain Counselors at the elementary level.
 - After expenditures, more funding is available it will be used for security technology and mental health.

XVI. Motion to Adjourn

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Miss Fitsko moved to adjourn back into Executive Session, seconded by Mrs. Romasco. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mrs. June Mueller
Board Secretary