EASTERN
CENTER FOR ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

BOARD BRIEF

June 2025

A report from the June 2025 meeting of EASTERN's Joint Committee. EASTERN is a part of the school districts of Abington, Bryn Athyn, Cheltenham, Hatboro-Horsham, Jenkintown, Lower Moreland, Springfield, Upper Dublin and Upper Moreland.

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Coming Events

Joint Committee Meeting
Seminar Room 8 PM

August 13, 2025
September 10, 2025
October 8, 2025
November 12, 2025
December 10, 2025
January 14, 2026,
February 11, 2026
March 11, 2026
April 8, 2026
May 13, 2026
June 17, 2026

Get the Board Brief by email contact Amy Shields for more information at ashields@eastech.org 215.784.4806

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June Student of the Month

Paul Bilotta, an Upper Moreland High School senior is the June 2025 Student of the Month at Eastern Center for Arts and Technology (EASTERN) in Willow Grove. Paul is recognized for his outstanding work in EASTERN's Automotive Technology program. The Student of the Month Award is sponsored by EASTERN's faculty, the Joint Operating Committee (JOC), and the Willow Grove Rotary Club to highlight student excellence, success, and service. Ten students each year are selected for this honor.

Before attending EASTERN, Paul was already familiar with its opportunities through his sister, a 2024 graduate of the Cosmetology program. He learned more about EASTERN at the 10th Grade Career Expo presentation at Upper Moreland High School and took part in the visit. After exploring several programs, he found Automotive Technology the most compelling and chose to pursue it.

At Upper Moreland High School, Paul was a member of the lacrosse team. At EASTERN, he serves as a student ambassador for the Automotive Technology program, speaking at recruitment events and fundraisers to promote the school. Through the Automotive Technology program, he has earned industry-recognized certifications, including multiple S/P2 (Safety and Pollution Prevention) certifications, which focus on workplace safety and environmental responsibility, as well as the Valvoline Motor Oil 101 certification. At EASTERN's May 2025 Awards Night, Paul received the Attendance Award, the Colony Club of Ambler Scholarship, the Straight A Award, and the Willow Grove Rotary Scholarship (Service Above Self).

Outside of school, Paul works as a Detailer at Thompson Lexus in Willow Grove, where he cleans and details vehicles to ensure showroom readiness and assists with valet operations as needed. Before this role, he worked at Jacksonville Auto in Hatboro, performing routine maintenance tasks, setting car lifts, driving vehicles, and supporting the team with troubleshooting issues.

He works for a nonprofit organization founded by his sister, The ChrisSanthemum Project, created in memory of their Aunt Sandy, who passed away from leukemia, and their cousin Christian, who died by suicide—both in 2017. The organization holds fundraisers to support The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and The Peyton Heart Project.

Paul has already been accepted to the Pennsylvania College of Technology for Heavy Equipment and Power Generation.

Awards Night

On May 21, 2025, EASTERN honored 224 students at its annual Awards Night at Upper Moreland High School, awarding nearly $64,000 for academic and technical achievement. Special thanks to the EASTERN Foundation, staff, sponsors, and local partners for making the event possible.

June 2025 BOARD BRIEF

Personnel

Joint Operating Committee Treasurer

The JOC approved Marta Mecray, EASTERN Accountant, as JOC Treasurer for the 2025 – 2026 school year.

Practical Nursing Adjunct Instructor

Javier Vazquez, RN, CRNP, DNP has been appointed Practical Nursing Adjunct Instructor for the 2024 – 2025 school year.

Training Supervisors Approved

The JOC approved the following faculty and staff to supervise 6 interns selected to work at EASTERN over the summer:
Gary Felmey, Electrical Technology Instructor, and Fred Fox, Facilities Manager, will supervise Lelia Johnson from Robotics/Cheltenham, Molly Smith from Electrical/Upper Dublin, Jack Bender from Electrical/Springfield, Anthony Negron from Electrical/Hatboro-Horsham, and Juliana Stigliano from Welding/Upper Moreland.

Lou Geld, Technology Services Manager, will supervise Ethan Hromisin from Networking and Cybersecurity/Cheltenham.

Compensations

The JOC approved Administrative, Professional, Classified, Practical Nursing, and Continuing Education salaries for the 2025-2026 school year.

Student Registration and Program Status

The administration reported that 790 students have registered and 701 have been enrolled for EASTERN's programs for the 2025-2026 school year. All programs will run at full-time status for the 2025-2026 school year.

Summer Cosmetology

The JOC has approved the enrollment of 48 students—26 in Cosmetology I and 22 in Cosmetology II—for the Summer Cosmetology Program. The program will run from June 17 to July 22, 2025, with classes held Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Please note: no class on June 19.) There are currently 5 students on the waitlist, who will be allowed to enroll as space becomes available.

Continuing Education

The JOC approved the 2025–2026 Continuing Education programs, tuition, adjunct faculty, compensation, and substitutes.

Perkins Grant

The JOC authorized the development and implementation of the Perkins Grant for $368,648 for the 2025-2026 school year.

Practical Nursing Affiliation Agreements

The JOC approved the Affiliation Agreements between EASTERN and Holy Redeemer Lafayette and an updated contract between EASTERN and Saint Joseph Manor.

2025-2026 School Goals

The JOC approved the 2025-2026 school goals.

- Climate and Culture: Create and maintain a positive school climate where students and staff feel safe, respected, heard, and valued.
- Educational Programming: Continuously improve current programming and expand based on labor market need and student interest.
- Student Achievement: Foster student achievement and outcomes in completing the program and transitioning to post-graduation career plans.

Advisory Committee Appointments

The JOC approved Eric Martin, a Hatboro-Horsham High School student in the Automotive Technology program, as the 2025–2026 EAC student representative. They also approved EAC memberships, new OAC members, OAC student representatives, and the full membership list for 2025–2026.

Program Equipment

The JOC has approved the equipment purchases outlined in the 2026–2027 budget proposal, based on recommendations from the Executive and Occupational Advisory Committees. Approved equipment purchases will support the following programs: Allied Health, Construction Technology, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Electrical Technology, HVAC, Networking and Cybersecurity, Protective Services, and Welding Technology.

Lease Agreement with Upper Moreland School District

The JOC has authorized Dr. Cathleen Plesnarski, EASTERN's Executive Director, to negotiate a lease agreement with the Upper Moreland School District for approximately 6,200 square feet of space at 2900 Terwood Road in Willow Grove, pending Solicitor approval. If finalized, EASTERN's Practical Nursing program will relocate to this new site, creating available space at the main campus for the new Building Trades program.

The JOC approved Breslin Architects to proceed with design and bid specifications for both the Practical Nursing program's relocation and the development of the Building Trades program.

Boiler Replacement

The JOC approved Breslin Architects to develop design plans and manage the bidding process for the replacement of EASTERN's boilers.