

SCHUYLKILL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
929 Lakeshore Drive
Leesport, PA 19533-8631

MINUTES

July 28, 2025

1.0 The Regular Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Board President, David E. Moll, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School.

1.1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

1.2 ROLL CALL

Members' Present: Franklin M. Ammarell, Nicoleen Kleffel, Linda R. Lash, David E. Moll, Bryan J. O'Donnell, Daniel B. Weyandt

Board Member Paul L. Bendigo was not physically present but participated and voted via speakerphone.

Members Absent: Alfonso F. Rossi, Kelly Steinke

Secretary: Linda R. Lash

Recording Secretary: Azucena Macedo

Administrative Staff Present: Dr. Cathy Taschner, Robin Brightbill, Jennifer Godtfring, Jason Hansen, Jacqueline Rivas, Michael Sobczak, Louisa Trumbore, Kristin Wallace, Dr. Patrick Winters,

Solicitor: Alicia Luke, Esq., Fox Rothschild LLP

1.3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 23, 2025, as presented.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

1.4 EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Moll reported that the Board met in executive session on July 21, 2025, following the Committee meetings, for personnel and legal matters.

1.5 RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS & STAFF

Recognition will be held in the August Meeting.

1.6 PRESENTATIONS

2024-25 School in Review:

Human Resources:

Presented by: Robin Brightbill, Human Resources Director

Robin began her presentation by sharing data on applications received between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025. During this period, the District received a total of 765 completed applications, averaging approximately 15 per week. The data reflects new applications only, including those for

substitute positions, mentor roles, and other open positions. The most effective recruitment method was the District Website, which generated the highest volume of applicant interest.

- She noted that the Human Resources Department transitioned to a different section of the building known as “the HR Suite,” which better meets the District’s operational needs. Key benefits include enhanced confidentiality, increased storage for employee files, a more professional interview experience, and improved office space flexibility freeing up space in both the District Administration Office and the SEIP room.
- Badges/Access Control: The HR Department now submits new employee badge photos to the Buildings & Grounds Department, which ensures that only individuals with approved clearances are issued a badge. This process also guarantees that all employees receive their access badges in a timely and secure manner.
- Robin also highlighted the success of the Employee Retirement & Service Award Dinner. Now in its third year, this event saw record-high participation and attendance.
- Throughout the year, the Human Resources Department drafted 102 extracurricular and advising job descriptions.
- In addition, the DocuSign forms were implemented for distributing extracurricular advisor contracts. Benefits of using DocuSign include faster dissemination to employees and improved tracking of documents.

Information & Technology:

Presented by: Michael Sobczak, Director of Technology

Mr. Sobczak presented an update on the Technology Department’s accomplishments and key focus areas for the year. The department identified a couple primary goals: improving software processes and ticketing tool usage, enhancing data centers and cybersecurity, and upgrading VOIP systems. These goals were addressed through timely software renewals, administration through ClassLink, data collection, proactive device updates via MDM, increased use of Incident IQ, hardware inventory management, and a strong emphasis on customer service.

- ClassLink and Account Automation - Mr. Sobczak highlighted improvements in account management, including the automation of the account creation process. He also provided an overview of ClassLink usage, reporting 1,445 unique users and 10,313 logins just for the current month. This demonstrates consistent engagement with the platform. He noted that for the month of May, the most visited websites included Schoology, Google, and Google Docs, which underscores the high utilization of the District’s learning management system and supporting tools.
- Incident IQ Ticketing System - Since July 1, 2024, the department has received 5,624 support tickets and successfully closed 5,422 of them. Mr. Sobczak emphasized that the introduction of the new ticketing system in November has improved the quality of requests by reducing duplicates, increasing detail, and allowing the team to focus on more purposeful support. He also discussed the asset tracking feature which has helped strengthen equipment usage and configuration management.
- Technology Deployment at SV Education Center - Mr. Sobczak shared an update on the Schuylkill Valley Education Center Project, completed in collaboration with Dr. Winters. The project involved evaluating internet connectivity options (as existing county connections were not usable) and ultimately designing and deploying an enterprise-level firewall with integrated wireless control.

The new setup includes:

- A 24-port switch
- Five Wi-Fi 6-capable wireless access points
- Two multifunction printers
- Four Voice over IP (VoIP) phones

- 30 Chromebooks
- Four staff laptops
- All equipment is remotely monitored and maintained by the District's network administrators.
- HUDL for Baseball & Livestreaming - Mr. Sobczak briefly discussed efforts to implement HUDL livestreaming for baseball.
- Cybersecurity Efforts - The department participated in the BCIU Consortium's Cybersecurity Initiative, which includes two security scans per year. All technology team members are eligible for cybersecurity training aligned with the CompTIA Security+ certification. The training is delivered through a hybrid model consisting of a self-paced Canvas course and in-person sessions.

Email security statistics were also shared:

- 3,127 emails were reported
- Approximately 1,000 of those were simulated phishing tests
- About 2,000 were real threats
- In total, the District received over 102,000 emails, with more than 21,000 blocked by the security filter

Digital Media & Communications:

Presented by: Dr. Taschner on behalf of Melissa Manzer, Digital Content & Marketing Specialist
Mrs. Manzer has continued to maintain an active and positive presence for the District on social media platforms. The District currently has over 4,200 followers on Facebook, 1,450+ on Instagram, and 244 on X (formerly Twitter). She has worked closely with the team to strengthen the SVSD brand both internally and externally through online platforms as well as printed materials, including templates and event signage. Dr. Taschner praised her efforts, noting that people are increasingly recognizing the SVSD logo and associating it with the District, even when the name is not prominently displayed.

- Website – One of Mrs. Manzer's major projects this year was the development and launch of the new District website. She spent approximately eight (8) months preparing for the launch. The new website now provides current, relevant, and useful information for public access and communication.
- Communication – Next on her project list is Finalsite Connect, the District's mass email communication system. She has already been actively supporting this tool, troubleshooting user issues, creating email templates, and assisting with crisis communications when needed.

Mrs. Manzer has also been developing monthly highlight presentations and distributes a Board Briefing following each voting meeting. She created the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) Guide, which is now available for all administrators and secretaries. Additionally, she has been highly involved in community and school events, regularly visiting buildings, classrooms, and special events. She is one of the lead organizers of the Winter Festival and plays a key role in planning and coordinating the event, helping to bring the community together during the winter season.

Curriculum & Learning

Presented by: Dr. Taschner on behalf of Jennie Rexrode, Director of Curriculum & Learning.
Jennie could not attend the Board Meeting because she was with the FFA team, who received an award that night for the Student Environmental Organization of the Year Award.
Dr. Taschner provided curriculum updates for several subject areas.

- In English Language Arts, the district successfully implemented new curriculum for grades K–10 in its first year. New curriculum for grades 11 and 12 will begin this school year.
- In Mathematics, the K–12 Curriculum Committee met regularly throughout the year, finalized curriculum frameworks, selected instructional resources, and approved the

offering of Algebra I to seventh-grade students. This change addresses prior scheduling concerns at the high school, where students were previously required to double up on math courses.

- For Science, the K–12 curriculum documents have been completed and aligned to the upcoming STEELS standards. Curricular resources have been selected and are scheduled for implementation in the 2025–26 school year. All ninth-grade students will now participate in Biology.
- PIMS - Jennie completed the New PIMS Administrator course through the Data Quality Curriculum and joined the statewide PIMS Administrator work group. A submission manual was developed to support future data reporting efforts.
- Standardized testing was successfully conducted online for PSSA and Keystone Exams in grades 3, 5, and 8, as well as Algebra I for grade 8 and high school students. A semester-long Algebra I course was provided for students who did not meet proficiency in grade 8. All students enrolled in the course improved their scores. Additionally, students enrolled in Animal Science and Plant and Soil Science participated in the National Occupancy Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) exam on-site for the first time.
- The district is collaborating with Kutztown University to launch a technology coaching program at the high school in July. Four (4) Schuylkill Valley students graduated from Kutztown's Early College Program this year, and nine (9) students have been accepted into the program for the fall. A dual enrollment partnership in Agricultural Science has also been established with SUNY Cobleskill.

Superintendent District Accomplishments:

Presented by: Dr. Taschner

Dr. Taschner reported that the district successfully completed the Comprehensive Planning Process, which involved collaboration with over 20 stakeholders, including representatives from every employee group. The resulting three (3) year comprehensive plan outlines district goals and includes a revised Induction Plan that meets the two-year requirement set by the State of Pennsylvania.

- The Field House Project progressed with the selection of an architect and the initiation of planning meetings with the Buildings and Grounds Committee. A concept design was presented at the April Board Meeting, and Board approval for construction project management was granted in May. The concept phase is now complete, and a bond presentation was held in June.
- Staffing levels were maintained at the elementary and high school levels to support low class sizes. Additional staffing was added at the middle school to reduce class sizes. Vacancies in the food service and custodial departments were filled. The district also filled the Director of Curriculum & Learning position and the Assistant Superintendent vacancy and completed Business Office staffing based on audit recommendations.
- The district launched the Teacher Leadership Academy through a School-University Partnership. The elementary school received national recognition from the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NASUP), with 17 teachers graduating. Planning for cohort two has been completed and will begin in the coming school year. The high school cohort launched in July.
- The Early College Academy was integrated with the Special Education Pipeline Grant and received statewide recognition. Students were featured in a video presented by Dr. Clancy from the Bureau of Special Education at both a statewide conference and the PASA Conference. The program was also acknowledged by the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators (PACTE), NASUP, the Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA), and the PSBA Journal.

- Professional learning initiatives included sessions on artificial intelligence, Title IX training for administrators, performance management, trauma-informed training, SRP training, participation in the Superintendent Study Council, new superintendent mentorship, and the Max Schachter safety event. Additionally, assistant principals in grades K–8 received Olweus Anti-Bullying “train the trainer” certification.
- Buildings and Grounds projects included completion of the pool and high school auditorium stage, high school kiln installation, middle school tree removal, pressure washing, completion of generator installations, implementation of the landscaping program, middle school cooling tower repairs, and high school HVAC improvements.
- In Athletics, the tennis court project was completed, HUDL cameras were installed at the baseball and softball fields, and maintenance was performed on both fields, including dugout repairs, new pitching mounds, and infill replacement. Equipment was purchased for junior high teams, and the district developed a field resting and overseeding schedule for the soccer fields. Repairs to the network cable in the stadium and upgrades to the athletic office and storage areas were also completed. Two end-of-season athletic celebrations were held, and a partnership with State Farm was established to recognize a State Farm Player of the Week.
- Lastly, the district completed revisions to multiple board policies and administrative regulations, which are now being used consistently.

High School 2024-25 School Year Accomplishments

Presented by: Jennifer Godtfring, Assistant Principal

Mrs. Godtfring shared several accomplishments from the high school during the 2024–2025 school year. Four students graduated from the Kutztown University Early College Program in the spring of 2025, with three continuing their studies at Kutztown University to pursue degrees in education. Nine additional students are enrolled in the program for the fall of 2025.

- The high school's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program marked its second year of the agricultural pathway, which continued to demonstrate growth and success. The 2nd Annual Tractor Day was held on May 23, 2025, and featured a variety of FFA activities, competitions, and awards.
- The CISCO Networking Academy was introduced during the 2024–2025 school year. Several members of the Class of 2025 completed coursework and are currently interning with the district's IT Department over the summer.

Middle School 2024-25 School Year Accomplishments:

Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Gabryluk, Assistant Principal

Dr. Gabryluk highlighted the success of the 2024–2025 Middle School Musical and praised the return of the program under the direction of music teacher Andrew Santoro. Mr. Santoro led a dedicated team of teachers and parent volunteers who supported a talented cast of students in delivering two sold-out performances. Dr. Gabryluk commended Mr. Santoro's passion and enthusiasm, noting that the district looks forward to another outstanding production in the 2025–26 school year.

Elementary School 2024-25 School Year Accomplishments:

Presented by: Jacqueline Rivas, Assistant Principal

Jackie highlighted the success of the Teacher Leadership Academy and the district's ongoing partnership with Kutztown University. Elementary teachers from Cohort I had the opportunity to present their work at a national conference held in New Orleans. 16 teachers from the cohort also earned Pennsylvania Department of Education Coaching Endorsements upon completion of the program. Additionally, Dr. O'Donnell and Dr. Norris were honored with the PK20 Boundary Spanner

Award from the National Association for School-University Partnerships in recognition of the SVES/Kutztown University collaboration.

- Mrs. Rivas provided an update on the SVES Gardening Club, sharing seasonal highlights from student participation. In the fall, students harvested vegetables and prepared garden beds. Winter activities included crafting grapevine wreaths, creating decorative bows, and planting indoor grass. During the spring, students planned the garden layout, started seeds at indoor grow stations, and transplanted seedlings outdoors. The garden produced fruits and vegetables including watermelon, zucchini, cucumbers, tomatoes, pumpkins, peppers, and eggplants, along with flowers such as sunflowers, zinnias, and marigolds. The club also participated in Farm City Day at the PA Farm Show Complex.
- The Kindergarten team completed a book study focused on purposeful play. Through this approach, students reenacted stories, explored academic concepts, negotiated classroom rules, and developed collaboration, social-emotional skills, and growth mindsets. Teachers implemented strategies to connect play with academic goals and structured their classrooms to support varied types of play throughout the day.
- The Elementary School secured funding for 24 Classroom Cruisers to be implemented during the 2025–2026 school year. These tools are intended to support student wellness by enhancing self-regulation, attention, and energy management during the school day.

Dr. Taschner thanked all volunteers, parents, students, staff, and Board members for their contributions throughout the year and expressed her excitement for the upcoming school year.

2.0 REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

2.1 PRESIDENT – *David E. Moll*

Mr. Moll took the time to thank the faculty, staff and administration for all they had been working on throughout the year. He also expressed his excitement at the work beginning for the fieldhouse, the swimming pool being updated, bringing back the Middle School Musical and the Drone Program.

2.2 SECRETARY – *Linda R. Lash*

No report.

2.3 BERKS COUNTY I.U. BOARD – *Linda R. Lash*

Mrs. Lash reported that they do not have a meeting in July, and her next report will be in August.

2.4 BERKS CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER – *David E. Moll*

Mr. Moll reported that they do not have an official report but that their focus for July was hiring instructors and staff. They are also beginning several major construction projects at BCTC so a lot of rehab and things to align the programs to where they have a need. They have 2,100 kids enrolled in the BCTC for this upcoming year, up by 300 from previous years. The students have completed their second year of doing NASA and plans are coming for their third year.

2.5 TAX COLLECTION COMMITTEE – *Nicoleen M. Kleffel*

Mrs. Kleffel reported that the committee met at the end of June and reviewed the mid-year financial reports. Overall, figures appear consistent with those from the previous year. Earned income tax, business privilege tax, and local service tax distributions have all increased, however, there was a slight decline in occupational assessment distributions, and per capita tax distributions also decreased.

2.6 PA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION LIAISON – *Linda R. Lash*

Mrs. Lash reported that the federal government will be releasing previously withheld funds allocated to school districts, including Title program monies.

2.7 SCHUYLKILL VALLEY EDUCATION FOUNDATION – Linda R. Lash

Mrs. Lash reported that Dr. Taschner and Courtney Grey are scheduled to meet in the upcoming week to discuss planning and priorities for the 2025–2026 school year.

3.0 PERSONS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

1. Carol Weyandt – Bern Township – Administrative positions, duties / mental health position
2. Louis Shucker – Bern Township – Literacy impacts on students/Artificial Intelligence
3. Joe Brown – Bern Township – School Resource Officer

4.0 BOARD

There were no items for Board approval.

4.1 SOLICITOR’S REPORT

Mrs. Luke stated that the Board would note two agreements listed under Buildings & Grounds related to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Reitnouer, as well as construction and easement agreements and accompanying documents. She explained that she worked closely with the Board to ensure that all terms in the agreements were mutually acceptable. The versions presented on the agenda for approval are those that have been fully vetted, negotiated, and agreed upon. Mrs. Luke also provided clarification regarding the Ethics Act. While true that a board member must abstain from voting if the matter presents a conflict of interest, she emphasized an important exception often referred to as the "class exception." This exception distinguishes between actions that affect a single individual versus those that impact an entire class of individuals, which may include a board member's family member. She explained the legal obligations associated with abstention in such cases.

5.0 SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Taschner commented on recent shifts in administration and emphasized that the District's top priority has been ensuring classrooms are fully staffed and class sizes are reduced. The second priority was stabilizing the buildings, and she expressed pride in the progress made toward that goal. She highlighted the continuity and experience of the administrative team at the elementary and middle schools, noting Mrs. Crater's return and Mrs. Rexrode's promotion to the District Administration team. Dr. Taschner also expressed her appreciation for the stability in both the Technology and Human Resources departments, which have remained consistent over several years. She noted that this level of stability has been encouraging for the District. Additionally, Dr. Taschner discussed the new Mental Health Specialist position, emphasizing the importance of consistent, in-district support for the small number of students who will receive treatment. She pointed out the significant benefits of having a District employee in this role, particularly in maintaining compliance with HIPAA, securely managing student records, and fostering trusted relationships with students and parents. She referenced the Board's review of presentations from various outside firms and stated her belief that, after careful consideration of all information, the District has taken the best course of action for the well-being of its students.

Monthly Reports

5.1 The following monthly reports have been provided to the Board:

- 5.1.1** Enrollment Year-To-Date
- 5.1.2** Principals' Dashboard Reports

5.2 Superintendent's Update

Dr. Taschner provided district highlights from the past month. Dr. Taschner began her presentation of July's highlights by congratulating Coaches Allyson and Terry McKechnie for being named the BCIAA 2025 Spring Girls Track & Field Coaches of the Year. She then provided an update on Back-to-School planning, noting that books and materials were ordered, class schedules and lists are being finalized, and preparations are underway for Back-to-School Night events to welcome students and families. Dr. Taschner also shared an update on the Field House project, offering a snapshot of the current plans and its progress to date.

6.0 POLICY, PERSONNEL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Paul L. Bendigo

The Policy, Personnel and Public Relations Committee met at 7:19 p.m. on Monday, July 21, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, August 18, 2025.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

The Board consolidated items 6.1 through 6.3.13 as presented.

- 6.1** Accepts, with best wishes for the future, the following resignation due to retirement effective with the last day of the 2025-2026 school year unless otherwise noted:

Mrs. Joan Groves, School Counselor, effective August 7, 2025.

- 6.2** Accepts, with regret and best wishes for the future, the following resignations:

Ms. Samantha Baker, Special Education Teacher, effective June 6, 2025

Ms. Danielle Green, Special Education Teacher, effective June 6, 2025

Mrs. Heather Gring, Special Education Teacher, effective June 6, 2025

Mrs. Kristi Harrison, Speech & Language Pathologist, effective June 6, 2025

Ms. Corie Kehr, Extended School Year Professional, effective June 26, 2025

- 6.3** Approves the employment of the following (all elections are contingent upon receipt and district approval of all necessary pre-employment forms, certification, state-mandated physical examinations, clearances, etc.):

- 6.3.1** Approves Ms. Madalyn Barbon, Speech & Language Pathologist PK-12, Master's Step 1, \$61,455.00, effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Mrs. Kathleen Gwiazdowski.

- 6.3.2** Approves the transfer of Ms. Dana Heins, from Social Studies Teacher to Elementary & Secondary School Counselor, effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year.

- 6.3.3** Approves Ms. Amelia Herbert, Special Education, K-12 Teacher, Bachelor's Step 6, \$60,920.00, effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Aaron Gentry.

- 6.3.4** Approves Mr. Bryan Hess, Special Education PK-12 Teacher, Bachelor's, Step 1, \$56,303.00, effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ms. Heather Gring.

- 6.3.5** Approves Ms. Bethany Kehs-Rossi, School Based Mental Health Specialist, and the corresponding updated job description, at an annual salary of \$54,625.20 (prorated for actual days worked), effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the newly created position.

- 6.3.6** Approves the transfer of Ms. Rachel Wade, from Digital Citizenship Education Teacher to Elementary Education K-6 Teacher, effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year.

- 6.3.7** Approves the following extracurricular appointments for the 2025-26 school year:

Shannon Furst – Soccer Girls Junior High Assistant Coach - \$1,750.00

Jeremy Grim – Football Junior Varsity Head Coach - \$7,210.00

- 6.3.8 Approves the extended school year (ESY) staff, with teachers to be paid the professional hourly rate of \$40.00 per the SVEA Collective Bargaining Agreement, paraprofessionals and substitute paraprofessionals to be paid at their regular hourly rate:

Charles Moody – Substitute Paraprofessional
Abby Wrenfrow – Speech & Language Pathologist

- 6.3.9 Approves the following substitute for the 2025-26 school year:

Julie Flowers – Guest Teacher

- 6.3.10 Approves the following volunteers for the 2025-26 school year:

Sue Christman – ES
John Dever – HS (Student Internship Alvernia University)
Lee Schlappich – HS (Student Internship Schlappich Farms, Inc.)
Nikki Murry – HS (Student Internship Berks County Living)
Makayla Bowers – MS/HS

- 6.3.11 Approves the following game workers for the 2025-26 school year, to be paid \$40.00 per event:

Christine Wysocki
Kelly Musket

- 6.3.12 Acknowledges the following Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave of absence:

Bobbi Behm, Custodian at the middle school, effective July 14, 2025, through approximately September 1, 2025.

- 6.3.13 Approves issuing a professional employee contract to the following temporary professionals who have served for three (3) years and have received a satisfactory rating, in accordance with Section §1108 of the Pennsylvania School Code:

Christina Diltz
James Fisher
Stephanie Good
Danielle Green
Bailey Miller
Cassidy Reel
Daniel Savage
Taylor Serafin
R. Keith Worrell

Moved Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Franklin Ammarell to consolidate and approve 6.1 through 6.3.13 as presented.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.4 Discussion on the 2025-26 substitute teacher's rate of pay.

BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTION: Mrs. Brightbill presented a proposal to the Board to increase substitute teacher rates of pay. She requested a county-wide survey of current rates across districts within Berks County. Currently, Schuylkill Valley School District offers a base daily rate of

\$160.00. Additionally, substitutes receive \$170.00 per day after ten cumulative days of service, and \$180.00 per day after six or more consecutive days in the same assignment. A separate rate of \$195.00 per day is available for PSERS-retired substitutes. Based on preliminary findings from the survey, compiled by the Berks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU), Mrs. Brightbill recommended a \$10.00 increase to each of the District's current rates. This adjustment would place Schuylkill Valley third among county districts for the minimum daily rate. She noted that there is an ongoing substitute teacher shortage nationwide. The District's partnerships with the BCIU's guest teacher program, as well as its own in-house guest teacher program, have been effective in supporting substitute success in the classroom. Dr. Taschner added that the District does not use a substitute agency because doing so would place it in direct competition with other schools drawing from the same limited candidate pool. By managing its own hiring, the District allows substitutes to choose their assignments directly with Schuylkill Valley. Mrs. Brightbill stated that substitute positions are advertised year-round across multiple platforms, and hiring is ongoing. At the Board's request, this proposal will be added to the August agenda for further discussion and guidance.

- 6.5 Approves the appointment of Dr. Patrick Winters as the Assistant Superintendent for a period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030. In approving this appointment, the Board of School Directors approves an employment contract for Dr. Winters with a starting salary of \$165,000.00.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Bryan O'Donnell to approve the appointment of Dr. Patrick Winters as the Assistant Superintendent for a time period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030. In approving this appointment the Board of School Directors approves an employment contract for Dr. Winters with a starting salary of \$165,000.00.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.6 Approves the elimination of the position of Chief Education and Operations Officer.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approve the elimination of the position of Chief Education and Operation Officer.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.7 Approves the updates to the organization chart.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Linda Lash to approve the updates to the organization chart.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.8 Approves of an Agricultural Literacy Advisor with a base stipend of \$1,080.00, effective for the 2025-26 school year.

Dr. Taschner noted that this is consistent with the SVEA Collective Bargaining Agreement, which allows the Elementary School Principal and Middle School Administrators to take on an after-school position if they choose to do so. The proposed position would include responsibilities related to the after-school gardening club among other duties and there is a candidate interested in this position.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Linda Lash to approve of an Agricultural Literacy Advisor with a base stipend of \$1,080.00, effective for the 2025-26 school year.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.9** Approves the employment of Dr. Alina Gostov, Music PK-12 Long-Term Substitute Teacher, Master's Step 1, \$61,455.00 (prorated for actual days worked) effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year through January 30, 2026, to fill the vacancy created by the leave of absence of Mrs. Sarah Hilpmann.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by Frank Ammarell to approve the employment of Dr. Alina Gostov, Music PK-12 Long-Term Substitute Teacher, Master's Step 1, \$61,455.00 (prorated for actual days worked) effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year through January 30, 2026, to fill the vacancy created by the leave of absence of Mrs. Sarah Hilpmann.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.10** Approves the employment of Ms. Savanna Harrison, Grades 4-8 Teacher, Master's +30, Step 1, \$61,455.00 effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Nicholas Wojciechowski.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Bryan O'Donnell to approve the employment of Ms. Savanna Harrison, Grades 4-8 Teacher, Master's +30, Step 1, \$61,455.00 effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Nicholas Wojciechowski.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.11** Approves the employment of Mr. Nils Von Bulow, Grades 4-8 (Social Studies) Teacher, Bachelor's Step 7, \$62,208.00, effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the transfer of Ms. Dana Heins.

Board Action: Moved by Frank Ammarell seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approve the employment of Mr. Nils Von Bulow, Grades 4-8 (Social Studies) Teacher, Bachelor's Step 7, \$62,208.00, effective with the start of the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancy created by the transfer of Ms. Dana Heins.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.12** Approves of a contract, subject to the review and approval of the solicitor, with DEVOPAR Consulting for Interim Administrator Services as needed for the 2025-26 school year.

Dr. Taschner explained that this agreement is intended for use in the event the District needs to appoint an interim administrator at the middle school. It would allow the District to identify and secure a qualified individual for a temporary period, as well as for any other administrative vacancies that may arise. She noted that the District has previously worked with PA Principals and that this is another third-party contractor offering similar services.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approve a contract, subject to the review and approval of the solicitor, with DEVOPAR Consulting for Interim Administrator Services as needed for the 2025-26 school year.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

7.0 CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Linda R. Lash

The Curriculum and Technology Committee met at 7:35 p.m. on Monday, July 21, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, August 18, 2025.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

The Board consolidated items 7.1 through 7.7 for Board approval as presented.

- 7.1** Approves the disposal of 60 copies of Myers' Psychology for AP textbooks, as provided.
- 7.2** Approves of the disposal of middle school ELA and mathematics textbooks, as provided.
- 7.3** Approves of ELA and Science textbooks for disposal, as listed.
- 7.4** Approves the curriculum document for PIAA Officials Training and Certification Course, which will be offered beginning in the 2025-26 school year as a Physical Education elective at the high school.
- 7.5** Approves of the agreement from Chester County Intermediate Unit for purchase of a Private Security Cloud, as presented.
- 7.6** Approves the letter of intent and service agreement renewal from Berks County Intermediate Unit for participation in the Berks Cybersecurity Consortium effective July 1, 2025, through Juen 30, 2026, in the amount of \$14,000.00, as presented.
- 7.7** Approves the renewal of the EHall Pass contract for the high school for the 2025-26 school year.

Moved by Bryan O'Donnell and seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to consolidate and approve items 6.1 through 6.7 as presented.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 7.8** Approves of a pilot online curriculum resource and the purchase of 50 Conservation Science workbooks and one online license for the high school Natural Science Course.

Dr. Taschner stated this request was recently brought to the district for a natural science course for which teachers have been developing materials. While the District already has the Discovery Science materials approved by the Board, this request stems from an initiative to incorporate local resources for field trips etc. She requested approval to pilot this program for one year in order to

evaluate how it compares to the content and resources provided through the Discovery Education Course.

Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approve of a pilot online curriculum resource and the purchase of 50 Conservation Science workbooks and one online license for the high school Natural Science Course.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

8.0 BUDGET AND FINANCE

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Nicoleen M. Kleffel

The Budget and Finance Committee met at 7:50 p.m. on Monday, July 21, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, August 18, 2025.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

The Board consolidated items 8.1 through 8.3 for Board approval as presented.

8.1 Approves/ratifies the payment of bills in the following amounts from June 9, 2025, to July 29, 2025, as presented:

GENERAL FUND	\$4,300,042.40
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FUND	\$103,013.34
CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND	\$34,728.03
CAFETERIA FUND	\$173,700.79
MS/HS ACTIVITY FUND	32,918.96
SCHOLARSHIP FUND	\$7,050.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$4,651,453.52

8.2 Approves the SVSD Audit Engagement Letter from Herbein & Company, Inc. to provide their services for the years ended June 30, 2025, and 2026.

8.3 Approves the budgetary transfers, as presented.

Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel, seconded by Bryan O' Donnell to consolidate and approve items 8.1 through 8.3, as presented.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

9.0 BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Bryan J. O'Donnell

The Buildings and Grounds Committee met at 7:52 p.m. on Monday, July 21, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will

be held on Monday, August 18, 2025.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

The Board consolidated items 9.1 through 9.3 for Board approval as presented.

- 9.1 Approves the proposal from Turf, Track & Court, LLC for field maintenance services of the synthetic turf field at the High School stadium beginning the Summer of 2025 through the Summer of 2027 in the amount of \$8,035.00.
- 9.2 Approves the proposal from Turf, Track & Court, LLC for G-max testing services and field analysis on the synthetic turf field at the High School stadium beginning the Summer of 2025 through the Summer of 2027 in the amount of \$2,550.00.
- 9.3 Approves of a Scheduled Service Agreement with TRANE for Schuylkill Valley Elementary School in the amount of \$18,606.90 beginning on August 1, 2025, through July 31, 2026.

Moved by Bryan O'Donnell and seconded Nicoleen Kleffel to consolidate and approve items 9.1 through 9.3 as presented.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 9.4 Approves the execution of Temporary Construction Easement, Permanent Drainage Easement and Deed-in-Lieu of Condemnation for Right of Way, and associated Secretary's Certificate, relating to construction and improvements at the Intersection of Ontelaunee Drive and Lakeshore Drive.

Mrs. Luke provided additional context regarding the documents for voting, noting that while there are multiple documents, they all pertain to the same project. The temporary construction easement and the permanent drainage easement have been consolidated into a single document. She proposed inserting language to address several key issues from a legal and operational standpoint. These included provisions related to insurance, ensuring work is performed in a workmanlike manner, requiring appropriate clearances for any individuals entering school property, and minimizing disruption to District activities to the extent practicable. She noted that all these proposed additions were acceptable to all parties. Mrs. Luke also explained that the Deed-in-Lieu of Condemnation for Right-of-Way is a standard document used to avoid the payment of realty transfer tax on the right-of-way. Lastly, she clarified that the Secretary's Certificate serves as an attestation that the Board formally voted to approve the related items during a public meeting. This certificate is a requirement of PennDOT or the Commonwealth, and she had no objections to its inclusion.

Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel seconded by Linda Lash to approve the execution of Temporary Construction Easement, Permanent Drainage Easement and Deed-in-Lieu of Condemnation for Right of Way, and associated Secretary's Certificate relating to construction and improvements at the Intersection of Ontelaunee Drive and Lakeshore Drive.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 9.5 Approves a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Reitnauer Real Estate LP relating to compensation paid to the District associated with construction and improvements at the Intersection of Ontelaunee Drive and Lakeshore Drive.

Mrs. Luke provided a brief overview of the document, explaining that it memorializes the agreement in which Reitnour will pay the District \$193,000.00 in exchange for the granting of easement rights and the deed-in-lieu for the right-of-way. This payment compensates the District for the inconvenience and disruption associated with the construction work. She noted that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was negotiated last week in collaboration with council for Reitnour and she described the discussion as amenable and productive.

Moved by Frank Ammarell and seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approves a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Reitnour Real Estate LP relating to compensation paid to the District associated with construction and improvements at the Intersection of Ontelaunee Drive and Lakeshore Drive.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

9.6 OTHER (OLD/NEW BUSINESS)

Update on Carpet and Flooring Project at MS and ES:

Dr. Winters provided an update to the Board on the progress of the carpet and flooring projects at both the Middle School and Elementary School.

Elementary School: In the B-Hallway (third-grade hallway), all Vinyl Composition Tile (VCT) has been installed, and the cove base will be the next step. The same applies to the D-Hallway (fourth grade). The C-Hallway is next in line for VCT installation.

Middle School:

○ **First Floor:**

In the cafeteria hallway, sanding and grinding have been completed. The next step is to seal the cracks and apply polish and stain. In the fifth-grade hallway, sanding and grinding have just begun. Demo has not yet started in the common hallway, but work is expected to begin shortly.

○ **Second Floor:**

All hallways have been polished and stained, except for the seventh-grade hallway, where cracks have been filled and the area is ready for staining. Dr. Winters also reported a delay in the shipment of the cove base for the Middle School. The shipment is now expected to arrive on August 21st. He explained that the standard cove base is four inches in height, but because the carpet was removed lowering the floor level the required code base now needs to be about half an inch taller, which is not a standard size. Discussions with the vendor indicated that once the cove base arrives, installation will take approximately three to four days. The vendor has agreed to bring in a second-shift crew on Thursday and Friday, along with work on Saturday and Sunday, to ensure installation is complete by August 25th. Dr. Winters noted that while there is still hope the shipment may arrive earlier, August 21st remains the confirmed date. He added that he would follow up with the vendor to confirm whether selecting a different color could expedite the order. The molding throughout the building will include three to four different color variations, considering wall colors and locker finishes. For example, two hallways with red lockers will feature black cove base, which complements the locker color and the gray flooring.

Update on the D-Hallway in high school:

Dr. Winters provided an update, stating that he is working with counsel on next steps to resolve the issue of keeping certain rooms adequately cooled. If the cooling issue is not resolved by the start of the school year, a backup plan is in place to ensure the District is prepared should that option need to be implemented.

Update on Back-to-School Night Preparations and Planning:

Dr. Winters discussed some of the preparations and planning for the event and noted that preparations are underway to ensure everything is clean and ready to go for Middle School events

during the week of August 11. Plans are in place to have custodial staff available, if needed, the weekend of August 8 to assist with final preparations. He also shared that he has been in communication with the District's contracted landscaping company. Over the next few weeks, the company will be visiting all three buildings to complete weeding in the front beds. At the Middle School, this will include the fifth-grade courtyard. In addition, fresh mulch will be applied. All landscaping work is expected to be completed in time for Back-to-School Night.

10.0 STUDENT SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Alfonso F. Rossi

The Student Services and Activities Committee met at 6:31 p.m. on Monday, July 21, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, August 18, 2025.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

The Board consolidated items 10.1 through 10.13 for Board approval as presented.

- 10.1 Approves the 2025-26 yearbook sales agreement with Lifetouch.
- 10.2 Approves the Tumble and Bounce Rental Agreement with Liability Contract with Tumble and Bounce, LLC for 5/6 Grade Back to School Night.
- 10.3 Approves the BCIU Berks County Safety and Security Consortium Services in the amount of \$6,000.00 for the 2025-26 school year.
- 10.4 Approves the student adjudication for student #4465.
- 10.5 Approves the student adjudication for student #5512.
- 10.6 Approves the Agreement with Hogan Learning Academy, LLC for the education of two students for the 2025-26 school year.
- 10.7 Approves the Contract for Reservation of two Secondary slots with River Rock Academy for the 2025-26 school year.
- 10.8 Approves the Act 48 Program Agreement for services at River Rock Academy, LLC.
- 10.9 Approves the 2025-26 SY Enrollment Agreement for two students.
- 10.10 Approves the Service Agreement with John Paull II Center for the placement of one student per Settlement Agreement.
- 10.11 Approves of the Service Agreement for Student #5107 at New Story Schools for the 2025-26 school year.
- 10.12 Approves the Contract with Access Academy for the education of three students for the 2025-26 school year.
- 10.13 Approves of participation in the CSinPA Integrated Drones Pilot Program. The program is being provided at no cost as a collaboration of PaTTAN, PDE and the Department of Agriculture.

Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Linda Lash to consolidate and approve items 10.1 through 10.13 as presented.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

- 10.14** Approves the affiliation agreement between Reading Hospital at Schuylkill Valley School District for our 2025-26 high school internship program.

Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Bryan O'Donnell to approve the affiliation between Reading Hospital and Schuylkill Valley School District for our 2025-26 high school internship program.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously

- 10.15** **THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS APPROVED AT THE JULY 21, 2025, BOARD MEETING:**
The Varsity Spirit's Attestation of Adult Supervision Ratio & Chaperone Requirements for Varsity Spirit Summer Camp waiver documents for the Schuylkill Valley School District's Cheerleading Team to attend UCA Cheer Camp at Slippery Rock University July 24-27.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Linda Lash to approve of the Varsity Spirit's Attestation of Adult Supervision Ratio & Chaperone requirements for Varsity Spirit Summer Camp waiver documents for the Schuylkill Valley School District's Cheerleading Team to attend UCA Cheer Camp at Slippery Rock University July 24-27

Yeas: Ammarell, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Rossi, Steinke, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

10.7 OLD BUSINESS

Prom Venue Payment and Discussion:

Dr. Taschner followed up on the discussion held at the recent committee meeting regarding prom venue options and requested direction from the Board. The Board expressed interest in receiving more information and a follow-up specifically on The Warehouse as a potential venue. They also discussed if a budget shortfall was a setback for this venue being selected, the Board indicated that funds could be allocated to support the event, ensuring it remains within budget for junior and senior students.

Addition of Extracurricular Positions:

The board will discuss these positions in executive session.

11.0 OTHER BUSINESS/GOOD OF THE ORDER

Connor Kleffel Memorial Back to School Giveaway

Mrs. Kleffel announced that the Connor Kleffel School Distribution will take place on Thursday, August 7, at the Leesport Farmer's Market from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. She encouraged attendees to arrive early, as items tend to go quickly, and noted that the event is open to everyone. She also shared that she has copies of the school supply lists and pamphlets to distribute for the Schuylkill Valley lunch program. In addition, Mrs. Kleffel thanked the administrators for helping to disseminate the supply lists. She noted that, based on her research, other school districts do not typically post their supply lists on their websites.

12.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Moll announced that there would be an executive session immediately following the meeting for personnel and legal matters.

13.0 ADJOURNMENT

July 28, 2025

Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Franklin Ammarell, there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.


Linda R. Lash, Secretary
Board of School Directors