

MERCER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 15, 2025 BOARD MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT:

ARTHUR AMOS
MATTHEW HAZI
SHANE NUGENT
DEREK STOTSKY
J. JARRETT WHALEN

RODNEY BOBBY
DAVID LENGEL
AIMEE PETERS
STEVEN VanWOERT

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

DR. RONALD R. ROWE, JR, SUPERINTENDENT
DR. MICHAEL G. PIDDINGTON, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
ERIC MAUSSER, MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
CHARLES BIGELOW, MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ASST. PRINCIPAL
GREGORY ACRE, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
AMANDA SIMPSON, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
MICHAEL STABILE, BUSINESS MANAGER/BOARD SECRETARY

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. David Lengel, at 7:35 p.m. in the high school library. The Pledge of Allegiance followed. There were nine members present.

MINUTES:

On a motion by Rodney Bobby, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approved the minutes of the regular meeting on August 19, 2024 and the committee meeting for Curricular and Extra Curricular Activities on September 11, 2025. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approved the Treasurer's Report, all bills as listed and financial reports. On a roll call vote, members Amos, Bobby, Hazi, Lengel, Nugent, Peters, VanWoert, and Whalen voted yes. Member Stotsky abstained.

Motion: Passed

PERSONNEL:

Hire:

On a motion by Aimee Peters, second by Matthew Hazi, the Board approved the following hires. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

Approved the hiring of Miss Melanie Zeitler as a secondary Guidance Counselor, prorated on step 1 of the Masters scale, pending clearances, effective September 22, 2025 with full benefits.

MINUTES FROM SEPT. 15, 2025 BOARD MEETING (Continued):

Personnel (Continued):

Granted approval to hire advisors for the 2025-26 school year, as attached.

Granted approval to hire Mrs. Tonya Vechnak as a van driver at a rate of \$80.00 per day to the Hope Center, Mars, PA, pending clearances.

Granted approval to hire Mr. Michael Julock as a substitute van driver at a rate of \$80.00 per day, pending clearances.

Volunteer(s):

Granted approval of the following Cross-Country volunteer coaches pending clearances.

Eric Zimmerman

Jennifer Mausser

Jennifer Jewell

Granted approval for Mr. Christopher Noble (from Commodore Perry) as a volunteer band announcer and chaperone, pending clearances.

FMLA:

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Derek Stotsky, the Board approved Mrs. Brittany Milliren to take a 10 - day family medical leave, beginning August 29, 2025 and returning September 15, 2025. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

EDUCATIONAL STAFFING SOLUTIONS (ESS):

Hires/Resignations:

On a motion by Rodney Bobby, second by Shane Nugent, the Board granted approval to hire substitute teachers, aides & paraprofessionals and/or accept, with regret, the resignation of such employees submitted by Educational Staffing Solutions, as attached. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

On a motion by Matthew Hazi, second by Steven VanWoert, the Board approved the following requests for professional development. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

Approved Miss Kylie McElrath to attend Safety Care Training at MIU4 on September 22 & 23, 2025. Total cost to the district is \$185.00

Approved Mrs. Allyson Rust to attend the Mercer County Counselors meeting on October 17, 2025. This professional development network will be held at Penn State Shenango. There is no cost to the district.

Approved Mrs. Maggie FERENCE and Mrs. Andrea Crooks to attend School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Regional Coaches Days on October 23, 2025 and February 19, 2026. Two substitutes are requested for two days. (\$400)

MINUTES FROM SEPT. 15, 2025 BOARD MEETING (Continued):

Professional Development (Continued):

Approved Mrs. Korina Yanak, Mrs. Lydia Sipe and Miss Kylie McElrath to attend the Speech Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings on October 28, 2025, February 12, 2026 and April 15, 2026. There is no cost to the district.

FACILITIES REQUEST:

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approved the following requests for facilities. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

Approved Sankey Financial to use the middle/high school auditorium on Saturday, November 15, 2025 for a workshop on PSERS pension systems. All aspects of the facilities policy will be followed.

Approved the Mercer Community Band to use the high school auditorium and cafeteria on Sunday, November 30, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. for their annual Christmas concert.

Approved Mercer Elementary Student Council and the Positivity and Kindness Krew (PAKK) to host a holiday feast dinner for elementary families in the elementary cafeteria, on Wednesday, December 17, 2025 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

STUDENT TRAVEL:

On a motion by Rodney Bobby, second by J. Jarrett Whalen, the Board approved the following student travel requests. On a voice vote all members voted yes.

Approved Miss Emily Peffer and Mrs. Danielle Ross to accompany students to College and Career Fair at Thiel College on Thursday, October 2, 2025. The cost to the district is transportation and a substitute teacher for the day. (\$100)

Approved Mrs. Courtney Smithco to accompany members of the AEVIDUM club to attend the Youth Leadership Conference through Mercer County BHC on Thursday, October 2, 2025 at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Sharon. The only cost to the district is transportation.

Approved Ms. Kelly Heffern to accompany band students on the following dates:

- Honors band auditions – October 28, 2025 at Westminster College. Cost to the district is transportation and a substitute for the day. (\$100)
- Honors band – December 11-13, 2025 at Westminster College. Cost to the district is transportation and a substitute for two (2) days. (\$200)
- District Orchestra - Jan. 22-24, 2026 at Indiana Area HS. Cost to the district is transportation, a substitute for two days, and lodging for two days.
(Based on # qualified)
- District Band - Feb. 4-6, 2026 at Sharon HS. Cost to the district is transportation and a substitute for two days. (\$200)

MINUTES FROM SEPT. 15, 2025 BOARD MEETING (Continued):

Student Travel (Continued):

Ms. Kelly Heffern accompanying band students on the following dates: *(continued from pg. 3)*

- Region Orchestra - March 5-7, 2026 at Heinz Hall, Pittsburgh. Cost to the district is transportation, a substitute for two days, and lodging for two days.
(Based on # qualified)
- Region Band - March 19-21, 2026 at Upper St. Clair. Cost to the district is transportation, a substitute for one day, and lodging for two days.
(Based on # qualified)
- Junior High District Band - March 24, 2026 at Blackhawk. Cost to the district is transportation and a substitute for the day.

Approved Mr. Dan Heckman and Mr. Eric Mausser to accompany student/athletes to the District 10 Sportsmanship/Leadership program on Thursday, October 23, 2025 at Grove City High School. The only cost to the district is for transportation.

Approved Ms. Kelly Heffern and Mrs. Courtney Smithco to accompany members of the 5M band, cheerleaders and homecoming court to the elementary school on Friday, September 26, 2025 for an assembly. The only cost to the district is transportation.

Approved Mrs. Amy Neugebauer to accompany five (5) students to the Middle Schooler Civics Summit at Penn State Shenango on November 21, 2025. This experience is tied to the Mercer County America250PA program. One van is requested for transportation. One substitute is requested for the day and is the only expense to the school district. (\$100)

Approved Ms. Lisa Wishart and Mrs. Nicole Walzer to accompany students to the following Academic Games Tournaments at Slippery Rock University. One bus is requested for each of these days for transportation. One substitute is requested for each date. (\$200/day)

October 25, 2025	On-Sets Tournament
November 12, 2025	Propaganda Tournament
December 17, 2025	LinguiSHTIKs Tournament
January 7, 2026	Presidents Tournament
February 4, 2026	Equations Tournament
February 18, 2026	World Events Tournament

Approved the fourth-grade class (approximately 95 students) to travel to Oil Creek State Park, Oil City, PA on October 8, 2025. Two busses are requested for transportation. Transportation costs will be paid for by the PEP Association. There is no cost to the school district.

Approved Mrs. Maggie Ference to accompany four (4) elementary student council members to the Student Leadership Summit at Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV on October 3, 2025. One van is requested for transportation. One substitute is requested for the day. (\$100)

MINUTES FROM SEPT. 15, 2025 BOARD MEETING (Continued):

Student Travel (Continued):

Approved the First-grade class (approximately 54 students) to travel to Irons Mill Farmstead, New Wilmington, on October 17, 2025. Two buses are requested for transportation. Cost of admission and transportation will be paid by the PEP Association. There is no cost to the school district.

MENTOR TEACHERS:

On a motion by J. Jarrett Whalen, second by Aimee Peters, the Board approved the following teacher to serve as mentor for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

Mrs. Joni Kostelnik for Mr. Justin Reno

MERCER BACKPACK PROGRAM:

On a motion by Rodney Bobby, second by Arthur Amos, the Board approved participation in the Mercer Backpack Program at Mercer Elementary School for the 2025-26 school year. This backpack program is in conjunction with numerous local churches. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

RESCHINI GROUP/AFFORDABLE CARE ACT:

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Matthew Hazi, the Board approved of an Engagement Agreement between The Reschini Group and Mercer Area School District to fulfill reporting requirements mandated by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the Internal Revenue Service for 2025. On a roll call vote, members Nugent, Peters, Stotsky, VanWoert, Whalen, Amos, Bobby, Hazi, and Lengel vote yes.

Motion: Passed

ACCEPT BIDS FOR NEWMAN S248 WOOD SHOP PLANER:

On a motion by Steven VanWoert, second by Shane Nugent, the Board granted approval to accept bids for the sale of the Newman S248 wood shop planer. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

HIGH SCHOOL TUITION STUDENT:

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by J. Jarrett Whalen, the Board approved permitting one ninth grade student to attend Mercer High School as a tuition student at the rate of \$5,000.00 per year for the 2025-2026 school year. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

LONGMORE ACADEMY & ERDOS TRANSPORTATION:

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Arthur Amos, the Board approved an agreement with Erdos Transport Services, Inc. to transport two (2) students to Longmore Academy for the 2025-26 school year, as attached. On a roll call vote, members Peters, Stotsky, VanWoert, Whalen, Amos, Bobby, Hazi, Lengel, and Nugent voted yes.

Motion: Passed

MINUTES FROM SEPT. 15, 2025 BOARD MEETING (Continued):

HOPE ACADEMY:

On a motion by Aimee Peters, second by J. Jarrett Whalen, the Board approved an agreement between the Mercer Area School District and Hope Academy to provide special education services and programming to two (2) students for the 2025-2026 school year, as attached. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

MERCER TOUCHDOWN CLUB-FREE ADMISSION:

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Rodney Bobby, the Board approved a request by Mercer Touchdown Club to allow pee wee, midgets and junior high football players free admission into a football game, if wearing their team jersey. The date of the game to be approved and coordinated between the Athletic Director and Mercer administration. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

PSBA NOMINEES:

On a motion by Aimee Peters, second by J. Jarrett Whalen, the Board approved the following list of candidates for PSBA, all nominees are running unopposed. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

- 2026 President-Elect (one-year term)..... Holly Arnold, Tunkhannock Area School District
 - 2026 Vice President (one-year term)..... Matt Vannoy, Sharon City School District
 - PSBA Insurance Trustee (three-year term) Kathy K. Swope, Roberta M. Marcus
- (Choose up to two)*

CONCESSION STAND AND BOYS' BASKETBALL:

On a motion by Aimee Peters, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approved the concession stand rights for boys' basketball games to be split evenly between the boys' basketball boosters and the band boosters for the 2025-26 school year. The boys' basketball boosters will have concession stand rights for all boys' basketball games in the 2026-27 school year.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no additional business, Shane Nugent motioned to adjourn the meeting, Arthur Amos seconded. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

Michael H. Stabile, Board Secretary

David R. Lengel, Board President