

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

**MINUTES**

**October 27, 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: Paul L. Bendigo, Nicoleen Kleffel, Linda R. Lash, David E. Moll, Bryan J. O'Donnell, Alfonso F. Rossi, Kelly J. Steinke, Daniel B. Weyandt

Board Member Franklin M. Ammarell was not physically present but participated via speakerphone until 7:34 p.m. Mr. Ammarell arrived in person at 7:36 p.m.

Secretary: Linda R. Lash

Recording Secretary: Azucena Macedo

Administrative Staff Present: Dr. Cathy Taschner, Dr. Gabryluk, Jennifer Godtfring, Jason Hansen, Jenny Rexrode, Jackie Rivas, Michael Sobczak, Louisa Trumbore, Dr. Patrick Winters,

Solicitor: Alicia Luke, Esq., Fox Rothschild LLP

**1.3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Linda Lash to approve the minutes of the special meeting of October 8, 2025, and the regular meeting of September 22, 2025, as presented.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**1.4 EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Moll reported that the Board held a budget retreat on October 8th 2025, and second budget retreat on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.

**1.5 RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF**

The Board recognized Schuylkill Valley Food Service Department personnel Stacey Lehman, Amanda Wessner, and Barbara Hill for their dedication and hard work in supporting the successful completion of 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Camp.

Dr. Taschner recognized Board President David E. Moll with a certificate of Recognition from the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) in honor of his 10 years of dedicated service to the Schuylkill Valley Board of School Directors.

**1.6 PRESENTATIONS**

2025 Annual Library Association Conference Presentation

Presented by: Nadine Poper and Stephanie Jacobs

Mrs. Nadine and Mrs. Jacobs shared highlights from the Annual Library Association Conference held in Philadelphia from June 26-30. They described meeting several authors and book

characters, including The Pigeon and Jasper Rabbit, as well as authors and illustrators John Schu, Mac Barnett, Erin Yun, Akira Hikekawa (Manga series), Katherine Applegate, Erin and Philip Stead and Ben Clanton. In addition to networking with authors and vendors, they attended a variety of programs and breakout sessions. Among these were Reflective Teaching as a Catalyst for Change: Inspiring New Approaches in Library Instruction and a poetry session that provided valuable takeaways for April's National Poetry Month. They noted that Artificial Intelligence (AI) was a major topic of focus at this year's conference. Sessions on fair use and academic integrity explored how schools are addressing AI through updated policies and classroom practices. They also attended a session on media literacy. The session emphasized the importance of helping students identify bias in news and digital media and become thoughtful, responsible media consumers. Mrs. Jacobs highlighted Eerdmans Books, a publishing company known for its high-quality illustrations and artistic design. She also spoke about Demco, a leading library supply vendor, and praised the modern, colorful signage displayed in their exhibits; ideas she hoped to incorporate to enhance the visual appeal of Schuylkill Valley's library spaces. Dr. Taschner thanked Mrs. Poper and Mrs. Jacobs for sharing their experiences and for their continued efforts to foster a love of reading among students through engaging library programming and resources.

Field House Presentation:

Presented by: David Schrader and Ben Clements from the Schrader Group

Mr. Schrader provided a design development update and discussed the project design, current project status, proposed alternates, geotechnical findings, budget and next steps in the overall process. He explained that the design identified the most appropriate location for the new building based on school usage. The existing softball field would be relocated to the area of the other current softball field, and that portion of the project had already been placed out to bid to accommodate the new facility's footprint. Mr. Schrader reviewed the concept floor plan and its primary components, which included a gymnasium, turf field, team rooms, trainer room, and concession stand. The concept featured two pre-engineered buildings with a total area of approximately 43,000 square feet, including a 3,000 square foot mezzanine designated for mechanical and electrical systems. He shared precedent images illustrating what the interior spaces are expected to look like. He also provided a visual walkthrough of the building specifications, layout and amenities. The base bid included the team rooms, bathrooms, fitness rooms, primary gym, and concession area. A second bid option covered the turf field building. Mr. Schrader noted that the heating and ventilation systems were budgeted separately so that each building could operate as a standalone facility. Regarding geotechnical findings, he reported that soil testing revealed loose fill and karst (limestone) conditions. The geotechnical engineer recommended grout injection to strengthen the foundation area, and Mr. Schrader presented images showing the proposed drill hole locations within the buildings. The remediation cost, estimated at \$550,000, had been included in the overall project cost estimate. Mr. Schrader reviewed the budget assembled by Fidevia, which included the turf field, construction costs for both buildings, soft costs, and equipment. He also presented a proposed project schedule, outlining the anticipated start and completion dates.

Mr. Moll thanked everyone for their participation, attention to detail, and the effort put into the project thus far. He stated that the project represents an important opportunity for the community, not only for the district's athletic programs but also for youth activities.

Mr. Bendigo noted that many hours have been dedicated to this project. He stated that the committee met with all the coaches and members of the support group that manages the concession stand, receiving valuable input that guided several design adjustments. He expressed hope that the final product would meet the needs of the school district. Mr. Bendigo also expressed appreciation that the project components were divided into two (2) separate segments, allowing the new Board the flexibility to proceed with the entire project or select portions that best meet the district's needs.

Sheds and Storage:

Presented by Dr. Winters

Dr. Winters provided an overview of the District's various storage sheds, noting that they differed in shape, size and age. He outlined their current uses, which include junior high softball, junior high field hockey, track sheds one (1) and two (2), tennis, concessions, and two (2) sheds currently used for youth sports - soccer and football. Dr. Winters presented photos showing both the exterior and interior conditions of each shed. He also presented options for standardizing the sheds and shared examples from other school districts within the area. The proposed options included metal storage sheds and shipping containers, and he provided a cost comparison among metal sheds, pre-engineered buildings (pole barns) and shipping containers. The estimated costs were metal sheds \$3,500.00 to \$4,000.00, pre-engineered buildings (pole barn) \$22,000.00 to \$30,000.00. The district did have a current quote from Shirk's Pole Barn in the amount of \$22,000.00. He noted that consideration such as permanence and cost would be key factors in decision-making. Dr. Winters also recommended further discussion regarding the existing concession shed, explaining that if the Board moved forward with the fieldhouse project, a separate concession shed would no longer be necessary. Dr. Winters suggested that the Building and Grounds Committee visit other school districts to view sample shed options firsthand and determine which designs and placements best met the district's needs. Additional factors to consider include potential shed donations or rental fees, standardization of color and design and overall durability.

Mr. Rossi inquired whether the cost of the metal sheds included delivery and setup or delivery only.

Dr. Winters clarified that the price reflected delivery only.

Mrs. Steinke cautioned the committee to be careful when considering shipping containers, noting that they could create condensation issues because they seal tightly, which could lead to moisture problems. She stated that she preferred the building with four roll-up doors if shipping containers were selected, as it allowed for better air circulation and temperature regulation. She also questioned the feasibility of a centralized pole building, given that the district's athletic sheds were used across multiple campuses. She recommended conducting further research on shipping containers before moving forward and added that incorporating shelving and better organization systems would help maximize space and efficiency.

Mr. Weyandt requested the square footage of the existing sheds be obtained to allow for comparison with proposed options and to ensure that future structures adequately meet the district's space needs.

PSBA Conference Attendance Presentation and Discussion:

Dr. Taschner provided an overview of the 2025 School Leadership Conference, which she attended along with Board Members Mrs. Lash, Mr. O'Donnell and Dr. O'Donnell. The Conference was jointly organized by the Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA) and the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA). She shared that the keynote speaker was Christine Porath, author of "Mastering Civility" and "Mastering Community". Dr. Taschner summarized Ms. Porath's message, which emphasized the importance of civility, self-awareness and community building. The keynote highlighted how individuals can foster belonging and connection in a society often divided by social media and polarization. Dr. Taschner also discussed several of the sessions she attended, including those focused on policy and governance, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity. The cybersecurity sessions examined how one district response to a cyberattack, outlining the incident's timeline and the steps taken to restore systems. She also attended the School Law Legal Highlights session, which addresses legal updates regarding cell phone use, social media and cyberbullying in schools.

Mrs. Lash shared that one of the sessions she found most valuable focused on mental health in education. The session featured the Greg and Julia Cook Company, an essential oils company that contributed to mental health initiatives by offering free resources for parents, students and school districts. Students could access mental health support through this organization when their district participated in the program. Mrs. Lash also attended a presentation by Governor Mifflin's Superintendent Lisa Hess and Director of Teaching and Learning, Karen DeNunzio, which explored neuroscience and how the brain supports learning. She noted that Mrs. DeNunzio discussed

designing lessons that aligned with how the brain processes information. Additionally, Mrs. Lash attended a session on effective listening, which introduced the 80/20 rule, spending 80% of one's time listening and 20% speaking and encouraged participants to be present, patient and curious listeners. She also attended a session titled Trauma Smart, which examined how trauma impacts children's mental health and learning. Mrs. Lash shared that the final keynote was delivered by Sean Astin, actor in Rudy, who spoke about his mother, Patty Duke, and her experiences with mental illness and its effect on him as a student. She also attended a session titled Bridging the Governance Gap: Practical Leadership in a Distrustful Era, presented by Dr. Tom Butler from Appalachia IU8, which explored the evolution of Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian principles of governance and how differing philosophies have shaped public leadership. She noted that while the conference also covered artificial intelligence and cell phone policies, there were no universal recommendations; each district approached these issues individually.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that he attended several policy sessions and found PSBA's resources for school boards to be highly beneficial. He valued the opportunity to engage in informal discussions with other members, sharing and comparing ideas on policies related to AI, cellphones and district operations. He particularly enjoyed a discussion regarding a district that had recently launched a pre-kindergarten program. He learned about how it was staffed, implemented and sustained. Mr. O'Donnell expressed interest in exploring the possibility of developing a similar pre-kindergarten program at Schuylkill Valley in the future. He concluded by saying the conference was a valuable experience and encouraged other Board members to consider attending in the future.

## **2.0 REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND BOARD REPRESENTATIVES**

### **2.1 PRESIDENT – *David E. Moll***

Mr. Moll in his report discussed statements in the Schuylkill Valley Community and emphasized the Board's role in representing the interests of district taxpayers.

### **2.2 SECRETARY – *Linda R. Lash***

No report.

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

Mrs. Lash reported that the Intermediate Unit (IU)'s Chief Financial Officer would be retiring in the spring, and a new Chief Financial Officer-Elect had been selected to assume the role upon Mrs. Gallas's retirement. She noted that the district received notification that Schuylkill Valley's Act 1 Adjusted Index for the 2026-27 school year was 4.3%, meaning the district could not increase taxes above that percentage. Mrs. Lash expressed pride that Schuylkill Valley had not come close to reaching that limit in quite a few years. Mrs. Lash shared that the IU recently hosted a seminar titled, "Keeping Kids Safe in a Digital Age," and the theme Connected and Protected: Building Digital Awareness and Emotional Resilience in a Hyperconnected World. The event was overseen by Safety Officer Mr. Russell Del Rosario. She also reported that the IU sponsored a Career Exploration and Innovation in Agriculture opportunity for area superintendents, held at F.M. Brown's & Sons. Participants observed how flour was processed and transported to Unique Pretzel, illustrating the agricultural connection between local production and food manufacturing in Berks County. She also provided a legislative update, sharing that there were currently two (2) House Resolutions, 21 House Bills and eight (8) Senate Bills introduced. Many of these bills were reintroduced from the prior year, while others were new. She stated that, historically, approximately 90% of all bills introduced do not advance. In state news, she reported that there were eight (8) remaining session days in both the House and the Senate this year, with the possibility of an additional voting day after the election to address the state budget. Mrs. Lash highlighted House Bill 1900, introduced by Representative Rivera and referred to by the Finance Committee in October. The bill proposed allowed certified teachers to claim a tax credit equal to 100% of the amount spent on unreimbursed classroom supplies, up to a minimum of \$100.00 per taxable year. She also discussed Senate Bill 1014, introduced by Senator Rob Robinson of Allegheny County and referred to the Education Committee on October 10<sup>th</sup>. This legislation would require, no later than the start of the 2026-27 school year, that each school entity adopt a policy regulating student possession and use of mobile devices during the school day. The policy would prohibit general cell phone use on

school property and define how student access to devices would be restricted. Additionally, districts would be required to provide written notification to parents or guardians at the start of each school year, outlining how to contact their child during the school day and how to enroll in emergency notifications. Mrs. Lash added that while attending the recent conference, she saw a demonstration of locking cellphone bags that use a magnetic locking mechanism. Students place their phones inside the bags, which remain locked until they are released at an unlocking station at the end of the day. Students with medical needs use Velcro bags for accessibility.

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

Mr. Moll reported that the BCTC currently had the highest enrollment to date. He stated the BCTC programs restructured classes and had gone up from 1,800 to almost 2,100. They attended conferences, and the executive director had been asked to speak nationally at some events. One of the highlights reported by BCTC was its participation in the NASA program for the second consecutive year.

**2.5 TAX COLLECTION COMMITTEE – *Nicoleen M. Kleffel***

Mrs. Kleffel reported that the last meeting was held in September. The statement up until August had not changed significantly, showing a four (4) million-dollar net position change. She added that this information was typically maintained by the financial office, but it was available should anyone have questions regarding the Berks Earned Income Tax Bureau (BEIT).

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

Mrs. Lash reported that she had the opportunity to represent the district in the Delegates' Assembly on Tuesday. She noted that there was very little action required at this year's assembly, aside from voting on a few wording changes and no new legislative actions were introduced.

**2.7 SCHUYLKILL VALLEY EDUCATION FOUNDATION – *Linda R. Lash***

Mrs. Lash reported that the Red and Black Event would be held on March 13<sup>th</sup> at the Leesport Market facility, and a larger attendance was anticipated this year. She shared that the Education Foundation recently awarded several grants and has launched a new "Jeans on Tuesdays" initiative, allowing teachers to contribute through payroll deduction. In exchange, participating staff members could wear jeans on Tuesday, with proceeds benefiting the Foundation. Mrs. Lash outlined the following grants recently awarded by the Foundation: A dual enrollment grant for four (4) students attending RACC, a \$500.00 grant to the High School Family and Consumer Science program for cake-decorating supplies, a \$500.00 grant to the Elementary School for flexible seating, a grant to Lisa Chillot for Agricultural class materials used at the Elementary School, a grant to Ronda Seymour for art project charms for the Middle School students, a grant to Michelle Rowles for a camera and microphone to be used by The Pantherette High School newspaper. Mrs. Lash also noted that the Foundation had received its Small Games of Chance license and would be selling a limited number of tickets for a Ninja Dual Basket Fryer raffle. Interested individuals should contact a Foundation member to purchase tickets.

**3.0 PERSONS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

Carol Weyandt, Bern Township – New Board Member dissemination of Board Director information  
Louis Schucker, Bern Township – Reading Achievement Comprehension and Evaluation

**4.0 BOARD**

There were no items for Board approval.

**4.1 SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

No Report

**5.0 SUPERINTENDENT**

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 shared district highlights from the past month. She congratulated the district's visual arts program on receiving the Outstanding Visual Arts Community endorsement from the Pennsylvania Art Education Association. This year, both the middle school and high school earned this honor. At the Elementary Center, the Garden Club continues to flourish. Students recently harvested eggplants and tomatoes, producing a bumper crop of eggplants and enjoyed hands-on learning in the garden. Second graders also participated in Pumpkin Math, where they practiced measurement, weighing, counting, and grouping using pumpkins. The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Camp included activities such as mountain biking, boating, fire building, and fishing. The high school students assisted the camp, helping younger students and fostering a strong sense of community. Dr. Taschner expressed pride in this longstanding tradition and thanked all who made the camp possible. The middle school held its annual Career Day, welcoming guest speakers from various industries, including healthcare, public service, trades, and sales, who spoke to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students about their careers. The district's FFA group attended both the Fall Leadership Conference and the Berks County FFA Leadership Conference, where members learned about Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE), goal setting, leadership and self-discovery. Students also participated in communication skill-building activities and recruitment initiatives. Dr. Taschner congratulated Logan Jones on earning First Place for Arrangement in a Basket and Second Place for Fresh Floral Vase Design at the BCTC Oley Fair. She also commended the Schuylkill Valley High School Marching Band for earning Second Place at the King Frost Parade and thanked the Board of Directors for prioritizing the purchase of new band uniforms. Dr. Taschner recognized Mrs. Kyzer for her leadership and dedication to the growing band program, noting that the ensemble continues to sound stronger each year. The football team and cheerleaders also participated in the King Frost Parade. In athletics, Abby McCaffey advanced to States after winning the PIAA District III Class AA Girls Golf Championship. Boys' soccer and girls' volleyball teams will compete in the District III Semifinals this week, and football will be playing in the District III Quarterfinals on Friday. Matilda Walborn will compete at States on Saturday after earning a second-place medal in the AA race at Districts with a time of 19:02, setting a new Schuylkill Valley record for girls' cross country. The Fall Sports Recognition event for athletes, coaches, and parents would be held on November 11<sup>th</sup>, and Board Members were invited to attend. Lastly Dr. Taschner announced that the Schuylkill Valley School District Winter Festival would take place on December 7<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the high school. This year's event would feature a vendor and craft fair, along with games, food and activities for students of all ages. She encouraged anyone interested in volunteering to participate and join the community celebration.

6.0 **POLICY, PERSONNEL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

*Summary of Committee Deliberations – Paul L. Bendigo*

The Policy, Personnel and Public Relations Committee met at 6:33 p.m. on Monday, October 13, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, November 17, 2025.

***Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration***

**Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:**

The Board consolidated items 6.1 through 6.6 for Board approval 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. Sherry Faust, Special Education Paraprofessional, effective September 12, 2025.

**6.2** Accepts with regrets and best wishes for the future, the following resignation:

Mr. Brian Eiche, Custodian, effective September 27, 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 of Ms. Brittany Furnanage, Part-Time Food Services Worker, at an hourly rate of \$15.83, effective date to be determined, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ms. Krissi Swavely.

**6.3.2** Approves of Mr. Michael Capogna, Custodial Supervisor, at an hourly rate of \$25.11, effective date to be determined, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Jonathan Kile.

**6.3.3** Approves of Ms. Danielle Conrad, Part-Time Special Education Paraprofessional, at an hourly rate of \$17.36, effective date to be determined to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ms. Trisha Roy.

**6.3.4** Approves of Ms. MacKenzie, Secretary to the Assistant Principal at the Elementary School, at an hourly rate of \$18.57, effective September 29, 2025, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ms. Annalyse Miner.

**6.3.5** Approves of the following substitutes for the 2025-26 school year:

Erica Burch – Nurse  
Loretta Gaetani – Elementary Education K-6 (Retired)  
Christopher Monko – Guest Teacher  
Lauren Smith – Grade 4-8 (All Subjects 4-6, Mathematics 7-8 and Social Studies 7-8)  
Shannon Lewis – Homebound

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

Brecia Hansen  
James Pirtle

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

John Lorchak – Football High School Assistant Coach - \$6,920.00 (salary adjustment)  
Michael Petruny – Basketball Girls High School Assistant Coach - \$5,970.00  
Daniel Stemko – Basketball Girls High School Assistant Coach - \$4,500.00  
Peter Horst – Wrestling High School Assistant Coach - \$6,390.00  
Arthur Walsh – Wrestling Boys Varsity Head Coach - \$9,270.00

**6.3.8** Approves the following extracurricular appointment for the 2025-26 school year:

Peter Horst – Wrestling High School Assistant Coach \$6,390.00

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

Arthur Walsh – Wrestling Boys Varsity Head Coach - \$9,270.00

**6.3.10** Approves the following mentor for the 2025-26 school year, at a stipend of \$1,175.00 for full year mentors and \$587.50 for half year mentors.

MENTOR		MENTEE
Matthew Wisotsky	Half Year	Matthew Christman

**6.3.11** Approves the following volunteers for the 2025-26 school year:

- Mariel Arthur – ES
- Crystal Bear – HS (Student Internship – Wyomissing Animal Hospital)
- Kami Cluff – ES
- Lisa Feese – ES
- Jonathan Goda, Sr. – HS (Student Internship – JD Goda)
- Heidi Foreman – ES/MS
- Crystal Kowalski – SVEC
- Keith Marburger – ES
- Jennifer Moyer – ES
- Lee Niebel – ES
- Wayne Resh – HS (Student Internship – WTR Home Upgrades LLC)
- Jessica Skalamera – ES
- Christina Simpson – ES
- Brian Teitsworth – ES
- Alysen Vincelli – ES

**6.4** Approves the compensated leave of absence for the purpose of professional development for Ms. Dana Carter, Special Education Teacher at the Middle School, for the second semester of 2025-26 school year and the first semester of the 2026-27 school year.

**6.5** Acknowledges the following Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leaves of absence:

Fiona DeHart, School Psychologist, effective September 5, 2025, intermittently through June 5, 2026.

Elizabeth Oswald, Health Assistant at the Middle School, effective August 21, 2025, intermittently through June 5, 2026.

**6.6** Approves the personal leave of absence of Ms. Amelia Herbert, Special Education Teacher at the Middle School, effective September 11, 2025, intermittently through approximately December 31, 2025.

**Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Bryan O'Donnell to approve 6.1 through 6.6 as presented.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**6.7** Approves and appoints, pursuant to 24 P.S. §10-1079, Dr. Patrick Winters as Acting Superintendent effective November 12, 2025, and ending upon the appointment of a new superintendent or unless earlier terminated by resolution of the Board. The salary and terms of Dr. Winters' current employment agreement will remain in effect during this term.

**Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Alfonso Rossi to approve pursuant to 24 P.S. §10-1079 Dr. Patrick Winters as Acting Superintendent effective November 12, 2025, and ending upon the appointment of a new Superintendent or unless earlier terminated by resolution of the Board. The salary and terms of Dr. Winters' current employment agreement will remain in effect during this term.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- 6.8** Approves Mr. Jacob Edgette, English 7-12 Teacher, Master's, Step 7, \$69,224.00 (prorated for actual days worked), effective date to be determined, to fill the vacancy created by the transfer of Ms. Cassandra Baran.

**Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approve Mr. Jacob Edgette, English 7-12 Teacher, Master's, Step 7, \$69,224.00 (prorated for actual days worked), effective date to be determined, to fill the vacancy created by the transfer of Ms. Cassandra Baran.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**6.9 OTHER (OLD/NEW BUSINESS)**

Superintendent Search:

Mr. Rossi stated that due to the upcoming change in Board members and the superintendent's departure, he would like the search for a new superintendent to begin in November rather than December. He explained that this would allow the incoming board members to begin reviewing applicants immediately and provide them with an opportunity to discuss the process at the December meeting. Mr. Rossi added that he was opposed to using an outside search agency to assist with the process; instead, he recommended that the position be posted on websites that advertise school district vacancies to gauge initial interest and begin collecting resumes for review once the new board is seated.

Mr. Moll stated that the Board had previously discussed posting advertisements at no cost as an initial step.

Mr. Bendigo said that while posting the position early could be beneficial, if the Board was not satisfied with the applicant pool, they would need to pursue an alternative search process. He emphasized that it could send the wrong message to potential applicants if the process appeared uncertain. Mr. Bendigo noted that the Board had collectively decided to delay the search based on the current timeline, explaining that it could have been advertised, interviews conducted, and a candidate selected before the new Board was seated, but the Board chose not to proceed in that manner. He stated that the decision on how to advertise the position and select candidates should be made by the newly seated Board. Mr. Bendigo further noted that the district currently had an Acting Superintendent in place, whose appointment may extend for up to one year, so the situation was not urgent.

Mr. Weyandt agreed with Mr. Bendigo, stating that the Board should first determine its process for selecting candidates and that this decision should be made with the new Board.

Coaching Contracts:

Dr. Taschner reminded all coaches who had not yet completed their coaching contracts to do so. She noted that reminders were still being sent and encouraged coaches to log into their emails and sign their contracts as soon as possible.

**7.0 CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY**

*Summary of Committee Deliberations – Linda R. Lash*

The Curriculum and Technology Committee met at 6:44 p.m. on Monday, October 13, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday November 17, 2025.

***Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration***

**Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:**

- 7.1 Approves the proposal of WeVideo for Schools Annual Subscription in the amount of \$4,141.67 as presented.

**Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Bryan O'Donnell to approve the proposal of WeVideo for Schools Annual Subscription in the amount of \$4,141.67 as presented.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**8.0 BUDGET AND FINANCE**

*Summary of Committee Deliberations – Nicoleen M. Kleffel*

The Budget and Finance Committee met at 6:52 p.m. on Monday, October 13, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, November 17, 2025.

**Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration**

**Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:**

The Board consolidated items 8.1 through 8.2 for Board approval as presented.

- 8.1 Approves/ratifies the payment of bills in the following amounts from September 8, 2025, to October 27, 2025, as presented:

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$4,497,521.40</b>
<b>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND</b>	<b>\$89,582.25</b>
<b>CAFETERIA FUND</b>	<b>\$95,968.68</b>
<b>HS/MS ACTIVITY FUND</b>	<b>\$7,430.25</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,690,502.58</b>

- 8.2 Approves the acceptance of a donation of TV Studio equipment by the Berks Career and Technical Center as presented.

**Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel, seconded by Bryan O'Donnell to approve items 8.1 through 8.2 as presented.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- 8.3 Approves the resolution on the budget impasse and urges the Governor to work with the legislature to approve the budget.

**Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by Nicoleen Kleffel to approve the resolution on the budget impasse and urges the Governor to work with the legislature to approve the budget.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 13, 2025, BOARD MEETING:**

- 8.4 Approves the agreement for Solicitor/Legal Services with Fox Rothchild LLP from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026.

**Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Alfonso Rossi to approve the agreement for Solicitor/Legal Services with Fox Rothschild from October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- 8.5 **OTHER (OLD/NEW BUSINESS)**

POW/MIA Flag:

Mr. Bendigo inquired if the district ever sent any correspondence to the State encouraging the passage of legislation requiring the POW/MIA flag to be displayed at public school rounds and buildings.

Dr. Taschner confirmed that she had sent letters to all legislators, both in the House and Senate, and followed up with the individuals who originally presented the request.

Invoice to the County

Mrs. Kleffel inquired whether the district had the final invoice to be sent to the County.

Dr. Taschner stated the busing information was recently reviewed for accuracy. She noted the invoice was ready to proceed and confirmed that the Board would be receiving and reviewing it prior to submission to the County.

- 9.0 **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

*Summary of Committee Deliberations – Bryan J. O'Donnell*

The Buildings and Grounds Committee met at 6:55 p.m. on Monday, October 13, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, November 17, 2025.

***Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration***

**Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:**

The Board consolidated items 9.1 through 9.6 for Board approval as presented.

- 9.1 Approves the quote from Honeywell International for repairs to the Middle School Gym Unit in the amount of \$6,075.00.

**Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Alfonso Rossi to approve the quote from Honeywell International for repairs to the Middle School Gym Unit in the amount of \$6,075.00.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 13, 2025, BOARD MEETING:**

- 9.2 Approves the General Agreement with Ehrlich Pest Control for the treatment of carpenter ants in the JH Field Hockey Shed in the amount of \$300.00.

**Board Action: Moved by Frank Ammarell and seconded by Paul Bendigo to approve the General Agreement with Ehrlich Pest Control for the treatment of carpenter ants in the JH Field Hockey Shed in the amount of \$300.00.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

9.3 **OTHER (OLD/NEW BUSINESS)**

El Associates:

Dr. Taschner provided an update to the Board stating that she spoke with Bruce Christman of El Associates, the District's architect of record about the Reitnouer Project. She reported that El Associates would be sending a representative to review the site. They received the steel fencing specifications for the fieldhouse, which she planned to share to ensure consistency with the project design. Dr. Taschner also provided the information regarding the inclusion of brick pillars in every two (2) sections. She stated that El Associates would be preparing the bid documents for the Board's review and by November, the Board should be in a position to release the project for bid.

Mr. Weyandt inquired whether the District had received any communication from PennDOT regarding the start date for the lane expansion.

Dr. Taschner stated she had not received any information from PennDOT, but the District would move forward with obtaining the bids. The start date would be subject to the removal of the trees.

Solicitor Luke noted that one of the easement documents provided included a Right-of-Way designation listing Dr. Winters as the designee.

Dr. Winters confirmed that he had not received any correspondence or updates from PennDOT.

Softball Fields:

Mr. Rossi inquired if there was a start date for the softball field relocation.

Dr. Taschner stated there was currently no start date for the softball fields, but she would reach out and get that information to the Board.

10.0 **STUDENT SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES**

*Summary of Committee Deliberations – Alfonso F. Rossi*

The Student Services and Activities Committee met at 7:04 p.m. on Monday, October 13, 2025, in the Auxiliary Cafeteria of the Schuylkill Valley High School. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, November 17, 2025.

**Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration**

**Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:**

The Board consolidated items 10.1 through 10.6 for Board approval as presented.

- 10.1 Approves the contract with B&B Light and Sound for the 2026 Prom DJ service at an amount of \$1,200.00
- 10.2 Approves of a free animal presentation assembly by Coastal Wilds at Schuylkill Valley Elementary School.

- 10.3 Approves of the 2025-26 Sweet Stevens Legal Services Consultation Agreement at a cost of \$10,500.00.
- 10.4 Approves the contract with Concord Theatricals for the 2026 POP Musical materials at a cost of \$3,508.54.
- 10.5 Approves the Settlement Agreement & Release for Student #5635.
- 10.6 Approves the psychoeducational services for Student #1959.

**Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Frank Ammarell to approve items 10.1 through 10.6 as presented.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 13, 2025, BOARD MEETING:**

- 10.7 Approves the Waiver of Expulsion Hearing Release Agreement between Schuylkill Valley School District and the Parents of Student #4481.

**Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Linda Lash to approve the Waiver of Expulsion Hearing Release Agreement between Schuylkill Valley School District and the Parents of Student #4481.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 13, 2025, BOARD MEETING:**

- 10.8 Approves the contract with Shefter & Sons LLC DBA: The Wherehouse of Hamburg for the 2026 Schuylkill Valley High School Prom.

**Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Kelly Steinkne to approve the contract with Shefter & Sons LLC DBA: The Wherehouse of Hamburg for the 2026 Schuylkill Valley High School Prom.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**10.9 OTHER (OLD/NEW BUSINESS)**

**SNAP Benefits:**

Mr. Rossi stated that with the impasse in Washington, SNAP benefits may be affected soon. He requested the District keep an eye on students that may be affected and try to assist in any way they can.

**Boys' Soccer Team Semifinal Game:**

Mrs. Steinke announced that the following night the Boys Varsity Soccer Team would be playing their semifinal game at Lancaster Catholic High School at 5:30 p.m. and encouraged everyone to come out and support the team.

**11.0 OTHER BUSINESS/GOOD OF THE ORDER**

**Special Meeting:**

Dr. Taschner informed the public that on November 10, 2025, the District would hold a Special Meeting to receive the audit, and the Business Manager would present the Budget presentation for the public that was provided at the Board Retreat.

Recognition of Leadership and Service:

Mr. Bendigo expressed that he had served on the Board that hired Dr. Taschner, noting that she was the fifth superintendent during his twelve (12) years on the Board. He recalled that when the Board hired Dr. Taschner, she was tasked with addressing three (3) key areas of concern at the time:

**1. Improve the District's accounting and budgetary processes**

After reviewing the District operations, Dr. Taschner and her team uncovered that certain expenses had been logged incorrectly, student accounts were being documented improperly, and the Athletic Department had been using a separate checking account, which was not permissible under PDE regulations.

**2. Update the student curriculum**

Dr. Taschner made significant progress in modernizing and improving the District's curriculum.

**3. Increase employee accountability across the District**

Mr. Bendigo emphasized that while the District employs many outstanding individuals including teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, the IT Department, Food Service staff, and Custodial staff, there had been numerous personnel challenges that required attention. Dr. Taschner consistently brought these matters before the Board, explained her proposed course of action and sought direction from the Board. She took on the difficult tasks necessary to address these challenges and followed through with integrity and professionalism.

Mr. Bendigo further noted that Dr. Taschner regularly provided the Board with detailed weekly updates and additional reports as issues arose. He concluded by thanking her for her dedication and stating that she accomplished everything the Board had asked her, adding that she did a great job.

Mrs. Lash also shared that when Dr. Taschner joined the District, there were many underlying issues, some of which the Board had not been aware of at the time. She expressed great respect for Dr. Taschner's leadership in establishing policies and administrative regulations that had never previously been in place. Mrs. Lash commended her ability to move the District forward after a period of stagnation. She extended her best wishes to Dr. Taschner as she transitioned into higher education, noting that her future students and colleagues would be fortunate to learn from someone with such deep knowledge and experience in public education.

Dr. Taschner expressed that it had been an honor to serve the students, community, colleagues, Board members and former Board members of the Schuylkill Valley School District. She stated that she would always think fondly of her time with the District and expressed gratitude to everyone for their kindness, collaboration, and commitment to doing amazing work for children.

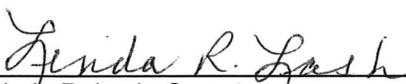
**12.0 ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

  
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Linda R. Lash, Secretary  
Board of School Directors