

Minutes for the Meet and Discuss Voting and Non-Voting Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District held in the High School Auditorium on Wednesday, November 12, 2025.

I. Mr. Carpenter called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

The Meet and Discuss Board Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District is held on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. This meeting is being held to review the agenda for the regular monthly Board Meeting that will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium.

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

III. Mr. Carpenter read the following Notice: This meeting is being recorded for District purposes. It is or may be published in part or in its entirety on the District's website without the express permission of meeting participants.

IV. Roll Call

Mr. John Carpenter, President
 Mrs. Valerie Scott, Vice President
 Mr. Garrett Kovacevic, Treasurer
 Mrs. Adina Ferragonio
 Mrs. Cathy Fischer
 Miss Amy Fitsko
 Mrs. Mary Jo Kehoe
 Mrs. Kelly Romasco
 Mr. Matthew Zatchey

Others Present:

Dr. Joseph W. Pasquerilla, Superintendent
 Dr. Amy Filipowski, Assistant Superintendent
 Mrs. Michelle Amadio, Business Manager / Director of Operations
 Ms. Michelle Gannon, Solicitor
 Mrs. June Mueller, Board Secretary

V. Mrs. Mueller read the following Sunshine Law

The Board of School Directors held an Executive Session(s) on Wednesday, November 12th to discuss:

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

VI. Correspondence

No Correspondence

VII. Amendments to the Agenda/Approval of the Agenda**Amended item 1 under Finance and Budget**

Mr. Carpenter made a motion to approve the amendment, seconded by Mr. Zatchey. Mr. Kovacevic and Mrs. Scott voted against the amendment.

Tabled items 4-7 under Building and Grounds

Mr. Zatchey moved to approve the amendment, seconded by Mr. Carpenter. The vote in favor was unanimous.

VIII. Recognition/Presentation**Dr. Eric Rosendale – New Horizon Project**

Dr. Rosendale presented the New Horizon School project, targeting completion by August 2026.

Progress & Scope:

- Simultaneous actions: Securing funding, preparing for mold/asbestos abatement, and approving an ESCO.
- Remediation includes: Mold/ACBM removal, replacing ceilings/drywall, correcting building codes, and building envelope reconstruction.
- Upgrades include: HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and LED lighting, aiming for energy efficiencies and reclaiming space for 24 more students.

Financing:

- The \$20 mil estimate is the maximum projection. Efforts aim to keep costs minimal.
- Funding starts with a one-year draw-down construction loan.
- Districts incur no costs in the first year.
- A long-term bond will pay off the loan.
- Energy savings and a redirected debt payment (starting 2035) will reduce district costs.
- Actively seeking grants and donations.

Key Discussion Points:

- Alternative Uses: Mr. Carpenter emphasized the value of the New Horizon school and its services and was pleased to see it remain, but inquired about alternative options for utilizing the space.
- Alternative Remediation: Dr. Pasquerilla expressed a preference for a non-presented "Option 2," suggesting it may be the better course of action.
- Insurance Coverage: Mrs. Kehoe asked if the mold damage, caused by leaking pipes, would be covered by insurance. Dr. Rosendale clarified that the damage occurred over time, not immediately, and therefore, insurance will not cover it.
- District Financial Responsibility: The Board discussed the district's financial responsibility regarding the project.
- Leasing Alternatives: Mr. Kovacevic noted the square footage of the building and raised the possibility of leasing alternative space.

Dr. Pasquerilla commented on New Horizon School's excellent work and teachers, but suggested that the Board explore all options to find a more feasible amount for the project, noting that he would say the same for our district buildings.

He expressed concern about inheriting a thirty-year loan and the project cost. He suggested that "Option 2" would cost significantly less money and still ensure the building's safety for students. He respects the effort but hopes for less costly alternatives.

IX. Public Comment (Regarding Agenda Items Only)

At this time, DISTRICT RESIDENTS may come forward to comment on agenda items only. Each person must state their first and last name and address prior to speaking. Each resident will be allowed three minutes and can speak only once. This period for public comment prior to the standing committee reports will be limited to one-half hour. Although not required, board members desiring to address questions or concerns may do so after the residents' comments/questions or at the conclusion of the committee reports. There will still be an opportunity for residents to comment on any business relevant to the Ambridge Area School District under Old and New Business at the end of the meeting.

Roger Kowal, Economy Borough

- Concerns regarding the New Horizon Project.
- Concerns with how the district is spending taxpayer money.
- Items 1-7 under Building and Grounds – with the total being 2.3 million, he urged the Board to Table those items with the CBA negotiations in the near future.
- Told the Board to consider removing the bleachers from the Field House completely and using it as a training facility.

Mr. Carpenter raised concerns regarding the lack of bleachers, specifically noting the safety risk to the band from stray footballs and players. Furthermore, he stated that Maintenance staff are dedicating significant time away from other essential duties to set up and remove chairs in the end zone. Mr. Carpenter emphasized that safety must be the top priority and stressed the importance of providing adequate seating for both home and visiting spectators. Finally, he reminded the committee that Graduation is approaching quickly, and visitor seating is still unavailable.

Denise Manganello, Baden, PA

- Suggested we use our district space, such as State Street Elementary, to lease to New Horizon and make money for the Bleacher Project.
- Supports the Special Education that New Horizon provides, but opposes the \$20 million project cost, citing the need to prioritize teacher retention and competitive salaries.
- Suggested the board look at handbook policies, not procedures.

Josh Gill, Economy Borough

- I am not against progress, but for priority.
- 1.3 million for bleachers/field is not the top priority.
- Supplies, teachers' contract, and contract negotiations should be a priority.
- Suggested temporary bleachers for the Band.
- Asked when the last time the district rented the Field House space for profit.
- Ambridge youth sports should not have to pay facilities fees.
- Put students first.

Janice Maloy, Harmony Twp.

- District money should be spent on academic and teacher support.
- This should be the bridge to academics.
- Use funding on mental health and technology for our students.

Board Discussion Summary

1. New Horizon Project

- The Board members held an open, internal discussion during the public meeting concerning the New Horizon Project.
- Mr. Carpenter moved to amend the agenda item related to the New Horizon Project.

2. Bleacher Options (Building and Grounds)

- The Board subsequently held an open discussion regarding the available bleacher options.
- Dr. Pasquerilla recommended that the Board vote for either item 2 or item 3 under the Building and Grounds section.
- He personally favored item 2, option 1, stating that it would ensure the seating capacity is comparable to other school stadiums within the county.
- Dr. Pasquerilla advised against considering item 6 or item 7 under Building and Grounds at this time.
- Mrs. Romasco thanked the Administration for their extensive work in securing pricing and quotes and for accommodating all Board requests when presenting options.
- Mr. Zatchey cautioned that the Board should remember that many grants will not provide reimbursement if a project is already completed.

3. Policy Discussion

- A discussion took place regarding the Dance Attendance policy, to mirror the existing Athletic policy for school dances.

X. LEGISLATIVE ACTION FOR THIS MEETING**Finance and Budget****Mr. Zatchey**1. **AMENDED** New Horizon School Resolution 2025-2026-06

A Resolution is presented for adoption by the Ambridge Area School District which authorizes the Board of School Directors of the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit #27 as operating agent of the New Horizon School to incur debt in an amount not to exceed **Twelve Million and 00/100 (12,000,000.00)** ~~Twenty Million and 00/100 (\$20,000,000.00)~~ dollars for the remediation of the presence of mold and asbestos present in the New Horizon School building. It is recommended that the Resolution be approved as ~~presented~~ **amended**.

Mr. Zatchey moved to approve item 1, as amended, seconded by Mr. Romasco. Mr. Kovacevic and Mr. Zatchey voted against item 1.

Building and Grounds**Mrs. Ferragonio**1. Softball Field Resurface

It is recommended to approve a quote from DuraEdge in the amount of \$16,764.00 to resurface the Softball field, through the state bidding process.

2. Visitor Bleachers Option 1

It is recommended to approve the proposal from Stadium Solutions for the installation of 1,298-seat bleachers, as described in option 1, at a total cost of \$590,230.00 through state contracting pricing.

3. Visitor Bleachers Option 2

It is recommended to approve the proposal from Stadium Solutions for the installation of 1,580-seat bleachers, as described in option 2, at a total cost of \$736,575.00 through state contracting pricing.

4. **TABLED** Bleacher Drainage System

It is recommended to approve the proposal from Stadium Solutions to complete the drainage system and asphalt work at a total cost of \$18,500.00 through state contracting pricing.

5. **TABLED** 20x32 Structure

It is recommended to approve the proposal from Stone Creek Structures for the purchase and installation of a 20x32 structure at a total cost of \$23,053.20, through the bidding process.

6. **TABLED** Field House Bleachers Option 1

It is recommended to approve the proposal from The C.M. Eichenlaub Company for the demolition and installation of Bleacher Bank A, as described in option 1, at a total cost of \$331,729.00 through the state bidding process (Co-Stars).

7. **TABLED** Field House Bleachers Option 2

It is recommended to approve the proposal from The C.M. Eichenlaub Company for the demolition and installation of Bleacher Bank A and B, as described in option 2, at a total cost of \$595,534.00 through the state bidding process (Co-Stars).

Mr. Carpenter moved to separate items 1-7, seconded by Mrs. Romasco. All in favor.

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

Mr. Carpenter moved to approve item 2, seconded by Miss Fitsko. Mrs. Ferragonio, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Kehoe, Mr. Kovacevic, Mrs. Romasco, Mrs. Scott, and Mr. Zatchey voted against item 2.

Mr. Zatchey moved to approve item 3, seconded by Mrs. Scott. The vote against it was unanimous.

Steering and Rules

Mrs. Kehoe

1. Policy 201 – Admission of Students – First and Final Reading

It is recommended, as a first and final reading, to revise Policy 201 – *Admission of Students* to establish age requirements for the admission of students to first grade and to kindergarten that are consistent with state law regulations.

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

Personnel

Mrs. Scott

***ALL NEW HIRES, PENDING RECEIPT OF SATISFACTORY AND CURRENT CLEARANCES, SATISFACTORY DRUG SCREENING, TB TESTING, RESPONSES BY CURRENT/FORMER EMPLOYERS TO ACT 168 SCREENING, AND PDE CERTIFICATIONS IF APPLICABLE.**

1. Professional Employee

It is recommended to retroactively hire Kylee Ryan as a Social Worker at Ambridge Area High School and Highland Elementary School at a salary of \$50,981.00 (Step 1, Master), effective November 6, 2025, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEA/PSEA Agreement.

2. Part-Time Assistant Athletic Director

It is recommended to retroactively hire Glenn Freed as the Part-Time Assistant Athletic Director, effective October 20, 2025, with compensation set at \$35.50 per hour for up to two hours per day and a \$80.00 stipend per night when periodically covering a sporting event.

3. Highland Elementary Part-Time Secretary

It is recommended to retroactively hire Stephanie Nolan as the Highland Elementary Part-Time Secretary for 5 hours per day and five days a week, effective October 29, 2025, as per the terms of the negotiated agreement between the Ambridge Area School District and Ambridge Area Education Support Professional Association – ESPA/PSEA-NEA.

4. Food Service Worker

It is recommended to retroactively hire Sesani Frederick as a non-union Food Service Assistant at the high school, effective October 27, 2025.

5. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Sara Yannessa from her position as an Ambridge Area Middle School Exploratory Language Teacher, All Grade Levels, effective November 5, 2025, with regret. The district reserves the right to retain the employee for the sixty (60) day statutory period or until they are relieved of duties, whichever occurs first.

6. Rescind

It is recommended to rescind James Barton as the Girls' Basketball Assistant.

7. Posted Positions: Clubs/Activities

It is recommended that the following individuals who have applied for the specified posted positions for the 2025-2026 school year be approved at the rate of pay as per the collective bargaining agreement, provided the school year allows and sponsors are able to hold activities as normal.

<u>ACTIVITY/CLUB (High School)</u>		<u>SALARY</u>
Bowling	Joe Bellinger, Volunteer	No Remuneration
HOSA Club	Eric Harbison	\$470.00

<u>ACTIVITY/CLUB (Middle School)</u>		<u>SALARY</u>
Dungeons & Dragons Club	Mason Zabucky	\$470.00

8. FMLA

It is recommended that Employee #2927 be approved for a leave of absence under Board Policy 535, Family and Medical Leave, beginning January 7, 2026, not to exceed twelve (12) weeks.

9. FMLA

It is recommended that Employee #3096 be approved for a leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave, beginning January 5, 2026, not to exceed twelve (12) weeks.

10. FMLA

It is recommended that Employee #2323 be approved for a leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave, beginning February 9, 2026, not to exceed twelve (12) weeks.

11. ABC Transit Bus Driver/Aide

It is recommended to approve the individuals listed as operators, attendants, and maintenance for ABC Transit, Inc. for the 2025-2026 school year, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

Aide

- Patricia Allen
- Lilli Wamsley
- Haily Clear

Van Driver

- Brian Wilson
- Christine Fletcher

The following are sub drivers who will fill in or cover trips and charters for this school year.

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|--------------|-------------------|
| Ed Armstrong | Charles Kniess |
| Peggy Bieber | Brenda Leslie |
| Jane Casey | Gunther Lill |
| Boyce Gitzen | William Stevenson |

12. 2025-2026 Coaches

It is recommended that the following individuals be approved to fill the designated coaching positions for the 2025-2026 school year at a salary as per the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, provided the school year allows coaches to hold sports as normal.

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|--|-----------------|
| 1) <u>Track and Field</u> | <u>Stipends</u> |
| a) James Simms, Head Coach | \$4,300.00 |
| 2) <u>Girls' Basketball</u> | <u>Stipends</u> |
| a) Nathan Smith, Girls' Basketball Assistant Coach | \$2,410.00 |

Mrs. Scott moved to approve items 1-12, seconded by Miss Fitsko. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Legislative

Miss Fitsko

1. Beaver County Career and Technology Center Articles of Agreement

It is recommended to approve the Articles of Agreement between the Beaver County Career & Technology Center and the participating Districts.

Miss Fitsko moved to approve item 1, seconded by Mr. Zatchey. The vote against it was unanimous.

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS (NON-VOTING AGENDA ITEMS)**Education and Technology****Mrs. Romasco**1. Ambridge Area High School Course Selection

It is recommended that the 2026-2027 Ambridge Area High School Course Selection Book be approved.

2. Ambridge Area Middle School Course Selection

It is recommended that the 2026-2027 Ambridge Area Middle School Course Selection Book be approved.

3. Seton Hill University College in High School Dual Credit Agreement

It is recommended to approve a three (3) year College in High School Dual Credit Agreement between the Ambridge Area School District and Seton Hill University. The term of this agreement shall be July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2029.

4. Global Wordsmith Language

It is recommended to approve a two (2) year agreement between Ambridge Area School District and Global Wordsmith Language Services to provide Interpretation Services. This is at no increase in cost.

Finance and Budget**Mr. Zatchey**1. School District Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly school district bills in the amount of \$2,997,031.14 and the monthly school district personnel salaries in the amount of \$1,368,458.63 be paid.

2. Cafeteria Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly cafeteria bills in the amount of \$116,866.22 and the monthly cafeteria personnel salaries in the amount of \$62,357.72 be paid.

3. Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) Joint Purchasing Fuel Consortium Resolution 2026-2027-06

It is recommended to adopt Resolution 2026-2027-06, which authorizes the district to participate in the AIU Joint Purchasing Fuel Consortium Program for the 2026-2027 school year at no cost to the district. It is further recommended that the President and Board Secretary be authorized to sign the related Joint Purchasing Board Resolution.

4. Berkheimer

It is recommended to authorize the Per Capita Tax Collection Agreement with Berkheimer as the current Collector, Delinquent Collector, and Tax Hearing Officer pursuant to the Local Taxpayers Bill of Rights and adopt an Act 20 Schedule of Fees.

Building and Grounds**Mrs. Ferragonio****Athletics****Mrs. Fischer**1. W.P.I.A.L

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

Public Relations**Miss Fitsko****Steering and Rules****Mrs. Kehoe**1. Reorganization Meeting

It is recommended that the Reorganization Meeting be scheduled for Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium.

2. December Board Meeting

It is recommended that the monthly Meet and Discuss Meeting and Board Meeting be scheduled for Wednesday, December 3, 2025, immediately following the Reorganization meeting.

3. Policy 113.1 – Discipline of Students with Disabilities – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to update Policy 113.1 - *Discipline of Students with Disabilities* -This policy was reviewed with current state and federal legal provisions. The language on reporting of school safety and security incidents was updated based on the terminology changes from the School Code. The provisions addressing coordination with law enforcement agencies and submitting the annual report to the PA Department of Education were also revised, and the legal citation references were updated to align with current School Code.

4. Policy 113.2 – Behavior Support – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to update Policy 113.2 *Behavior Support*- This policy was reviewed with current state and federal legal provisions. The language on reporting of school safety and security incidents was updated based on the terminology changes from the School Code. The provisions addressing coordination with law enforcement agencies and submitting the annual report to the PA Department of Education were also revised, and the legal citation references were updated to align with current School Code.

5. Policy 320 – Freedom of Speech by Employees – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to revise Policy 320 - *Freedom of Speech by Employees* - Detail has been added to this policy to facilitate acknowledgement of the freedom of rights of school employees and the indications as to when such speech may impact efficiency or constitute a reasonable likelihood of disruption. Any decision in this regard must include consultation with the school solicitor.

6. Policy 718 – Service Animals in Schools – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to update Policy 718 - *Service Animals in Schools* to specifically include the only permissible questions a school entity may ask regarding an individual requesting the use of a service animal, as well as those inquiries and requests that a district may NOT ask.

7. Policy 102 – Academic Standards – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to update Policy 102 - *Academic Standards* to adopt the new 2025-2026 state standards for Science, Environment, Ecology, Technology, and Engineering across all grade levels, with a planned update next year to include the Personal Finance and Financial Literacy requirements for the 2026-2027 school year.

8. Policy 105 – Curriculum – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to update Policy 105 – *Curriculum* to include a new section addressing Special Instruction and Observances to ensure compliance with state and federal laws—such as those mandating Constitution Day, Bill of Rights Week, and various PA historical and environmental observances—that promote civic, historical, and cultural awareness.

9. Policy 122 – Extracurricular Activities – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to revise Policy 122 - *Extracurricular Activities* - Authority section states that the Board shall make school facilities, supplies, and equipment available and shall assign staff members for the support of extracurricular activities for students. Such availability and assignment shall be in accordance with the Equal Access Act and other applicable laws, regulations, and Board policies.

10. Policy 122.1 – Non-school-Sponsored Student Groups – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to adopt Policy 122.1 - *Nonschool-Sponsored Student Groups*. This policy addresses the requirements regarding the provision of Equal Access to nonschool-sponsored student groups.

It is important to note that this policy is separate and distinct from the subjects below:

- Extracurricular activities that are sponsored or approved by the Board are governed by Policy 122. Extracurricular Activities.

- Non-school organizations, groups and individuals initiating a request for use of school facilities or dissemination of materials are governed by policies 707. Use of School Facilities and 913. Non-school Organizations/Groups/Individuals.

11. Policy 918 – Title I Parent and Family Engagement – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to revise Policy 918 - *Title I Parent and Family Engagement* to ensure compliance and accountability for federal Title I funds by requiring dated agendas and sign-in sheets for meetings and adding mandated District-Level and School-Level attachments to formalize specific actions taken to engage parents and families.

Legislative

Miss Fitsko

XII. President’s Address

Mr. Carpenter thanked the Admin and Board for a productive conversation.

XIII. Superintendent’s Report

A special thank you was given to all students and staff for their widespread efforts in recognizing our veterans through events like the Veterans Day breakfast held across all school buildings. The Superintendent also acknowledged the successful Middle School STEM event and anticipates the community enjoying the exciting lineup of upcoming holiday chorus and concert performances.

XIV. Solicitor’s Report

Nothing to report.

XV. Old and New Business

It is now time for old and new business. Any DISTRICT RESIDENT who desires to comment on any business relevant to the Ambridge Area School District should now come forward. Each person must state their first and last name and address prior to speaking. Each person will be allowed three minutes and can speak only once. This period for public comment prior to the standing committee reports will be limited to one-half hour.

Fabiola Gergerich, Ambridge, PA

- Asked that the New Horizon Project be posted on the website.
- Suggested that the BVIU reach out to the commissioners and legislation to assist with this New Horizon Project.
- Asked if the bleacher options will be back on the agenda next month for consideration.
- Questioned the Course Selections Book agenda item – do members review the textbook in depth and review all material??
- Questions on the Freedom of Speech Policy – can employees talk amongst themselves?

Mary Ninehoser, Ambridge, PA

- Suggested that the district reach out to community sponsors for the Bleacher Project.
- Consider a fundraising strategy involving memorialization, such as naming the bleacher project of an individual.

Josh Gill, Economy Borough

- Requested clarification on an email received regarding a safety pilot program. Which method is being utilized, and how is participant privacy being protected?
- Thanked and congratulated Dr. Pasquerilla for the Credit Rating presentation at last month's meeting.
- Is ABC Transit being held accountable? No notification came home when the bus broke down.
- A driver left bruises on a child.
- Protect Students.
- ABC Transit is receiving millions of dollars from our district, and parents are still filling gaps.
- What protocols are in place?
- Is the district actively looking for another transportation company?

Dr. Pasquerilla indicated that ABC Transit has improved, but performance remains less than great. He will ask Dr. Filipowski to address the recent dip in communication with the transit company.

XVI. Motion to Adjourn

At approximately 10:00 p.m., Mr. Carpenter moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Zatchey. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

**Mrs. June Mueller
Board Secretary**