

PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Palmerton, PA

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

An executive session was held after today’s meeting on Wednesday, May 21, 2025.

The regular board meeting of the Palmerton Area School District Board of School Directors was held in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 680 Fourth Street, Palmerton, PA, on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, and called to order at 5:30 p.m. President Earl Paules presided. The meeting was viewable via livestream on the district’s Facebook page.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Present: Directors Haas, King, Krawchuk, Danielle Paules, Earl Paules, and Snyder

Absent: Directors Connell, Mazepa, and Schaible

OTHER ATTENDANCE

Angela Friebolin – Superintendent, Ryan Kish – Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Facilities, Daniel Heaney – Assistant Superintendent for Academic Programs and Technology, Jacqueline McCandless – Board Secretary, and Shawn Lochinger– Solicitor

STUDENT REPORT:

Elementary – select students were recognized for their leadership skills in the Leader in Me program with a certificate signed by the Superintendent and Board President: Evelyn Montagner, Alessa Portilla, Isabella Capinha, Tanner Kovacs, Payton Kistler, Piper Bartholomew, Sebastian Parra at Towamensing Elementary; Liam Lucykanish, Finleigh Culkin, Levi Stewart, Paisley Stewart, Madelynn Worden, Macie Borger, Hannah Papay at S. S. Palmer/Parkside Elementary.

Junior High School – as read by Mr. David Sodl, principal

- Student Council – sponsored a skating night at LaRose’s on May 7
- Track – ended the season with an invitational at Lehighton in which we received 19 medals
- Life Skills Class – attended the Spartan Games on May 6; fishing derby held at the Germantown Fishing Grove on May 8
- Band & Chorus – presented their spring concerts last week
- Mrs. Hoffman will chaperoned students Jacob Shafer, Kylie Deitterich, Robbie George, and Peyton Mantz for the 24 Challenge Competition at the CLIU on May 19
- NJHS – “End of the Year” dance is May 30
- 8th Grade – field trip to Pocono Valley Resort on May 15
- Envirothon – ten students participated recently; one eighth grade team earned fourth place

High School – Cassie Hager, grade 12

- Math Dept. – students Ezra Green and Dillon Borger participated in the annual Integration Bee at the University of Scranton on April 23
- Spartan Games – Buddies Club participated in annual Spartan Games event where our Life Skills students shined in the running, jumping, and throwing events
- Baseball –team finished the season with 13-6 record; had first league playoff win since 1996; Jason Carrelli broke the career hit by a pitch record, Luke Matsko broke the single season singles record, and AJ Borger tied the school record for saves in a season
- Softball – qualified for league and district playoffs with a 9-8 record
- Music – successful concerts held this month; jazz band attended North Schuylkill Jazz Festival; band and chorus trip to Virginia for adjudication earned a rating of excellent; Jalin Burns won award for outstanding vocalist; marching band gave rehearsal performances to sixth graders to garner interest in the program; marching band performing in Memorial Day parade

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

- Attended Advocacy Day in Harrisburg on May 13 with Dr. Heaney, Directors E. and D. Paules and Schaible; met with Rep. Heffley and Sen. Argall to express concerns about need for cyber charter reform, namely implementing a state-wide standardized tuition rate for non-special education students and a tiered system of billing for special education students; hope to make it a yearly event
- Reviewing district policies, practices, and procedures related to bullying
- Last physical day of occupancy at Parkside for administration will be on June 10; new temporary location for offices is 3295 Forest Inn Road; moving days are June 11 and 12
- Graduation is scheduled for June 6 at 7 pm

BUSINESS MANAGER’S REPORT:

- Proposed budget is on the agenda with no tax increase; proposed budget will be posted on website, as well as be available for public inspection at the administration office; Board will vote on the final budget at the June board meeting
- The state sent out an email that in case federal funds are removed, the state will terminate our federal grants with little to no warning; represents around \$500k reduction for the district
- Special education department will be receiving an additional \$150k in contingency funds to be used for outplacement expenses; thank you to Ms. Demi Rohlfing who worked hard in applying for this and making this happen

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:

- Director Haas – CLIU: had honor of attending inaugural preschool graduation for early intervention students; Library: new program director in place now; special reading by local author, Jeff Cortazzo, on May 28 and meet the author day on May 29; 24-hour readathon, June 5-6, also looking for volunteers to read; dine and donate June 19 at Ciro’s; summer reading program starts June 16
- Director Danielle Paules – PSBA: alliance partner series continues; May 28 is safety and security board report webinar; charter school funding formula is the root of the problem; charter school audits show an increase in revenue of \$425m and reserves by 144%

OLD BUSINESS:

Director Earl Paules stated CCTI’s budget for next year has passed, however, their fund balance is still a concern. The Board discussed an incident at a recent meeting held at CCTI.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- None

MEETING MINUTES

Director King moved, seconded by Director Krawchuk, to approve the board meeting minutes from April 15, 2025.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Director Haas moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to approve the consent agenda.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

FISCAL REPORTS

Approved accounts payable reports

Approved treasurer’s reports

	Approved budget transfers									
PROM 2026	Approved the contractual agreement with Bear Creek Mountain Resort, Macungie, PA, for the Class of 2026 Senior Prom on May 1, 2026									
DRAMA CLUB LICENSING	Approved the production contract licensing agreement with Music Theatre International for the production of Lionel Bart’s Oliver! JR by the High School Drama Activity Club to be held in September 2025									
DJ	Approved the contract for DJ services with Nick Romano for the Junior High National Honor Society Dance on May 30, 2025 in the amount of \$250.00									
DONATIONS	Approved the following donations:									
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>PenTeleData</td> <td>to the HS Student Council Activity Club for miniTHON fundraiser</td> <td>\$250.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pencor Services, Inc.</td> <td>to the HS Student Council Activity Club for miniTHON fundraiser</td> <td>\$250.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Giant Company, Walnutport, Feeding School Kids Initiative</td> <td>to outstanding student lunch debt</td> <td>\$2,707.60</td> </tr> </table>	PenTeleData	to the HS Student Council Activity Club for miniTHON fundraiser	\$250.00	Pencor Services, Inc.	to the HS Student Council Activity Club for miniTHON fundraiser	\$250.00	Giant Company, Walnutport, Feeding School Kids Initiative	to outstanding student lunch debt	\$2,707.60
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JHS SECRETARY	Approved Lacey Barachie as Building Secretary at the Junior High School at an annual salary of \$36,071 prorated pending receipt of onboarding documents with a start date to be determined									
CUSTODIAN	Approved Tina Gerhard as Custodian at an annual salary of \$32,970 plus \$0.55 hourly shift differential per the Palmerton Area Education Support Professionals Association Memorandum of Understanding dated February 21, 2024, effective July 1, 2025									
TEACHER REVISED HIRE DATE	Approved retroactively the revised hire date for Katie Steigerwalt, High School Biology Teacher to May 16, 2025									
FMLA	Approved retroactively Family & Medical Leave for employee #190 with an onset date of May 6, 2025 not to exceed 12 weeks									
RESIGNATION	Accepted the following resignation:									
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Dawn Burke</td> <td>High School English Teacher</td> <td>Effective at the close of business June 11, 2025</td> </tr> </table>	Dawn Burke	High School English Teacher	Effective at the close of business June 11, 2025						
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TUITION REIMBURSEMENTS	Approved tuition reimbursements									
BHA CONTRACT	Approved the contract for services with Behavioral Health Associates for the 2025-2026 school year									
POLICE MOU’s	Approved the Memorandum of Understanding between the Pennsylvania State Police and the Palmerton Area School District									
	Approved the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palmerton Borough Police and the Palmerton Area School District									
LEGAL SERVICES-SSKW	Approved the standard agreement for legal representation with Sweet Stevens Katz Williams for the 2025-2026 school year									
	Approved the legal services consultation agreement for special education with Sweet Stevens Katz Williams for the 2025-2026 school year									

CLIU OVERDRIVE CONSORTIUM	Approved the CLIU#21 Overdrive/SORA Consortium agreement for the 2025-2026 school year in the amount of \$2,275.00
BOARD SECRETARY	Approved Jacqueline McCandless as Palmerton Area School Board Secretary effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029 at the rate of \$1,500.00 per year
ASST. BOARD SECRETARY	Approved Ryan Kish as Palmerton Area School Board Assistant Secretary effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029
PSBA DELEGATES	Appointed Directors Kristen Schaible and Alyson Krawchuk as voting delegates to the 2025 PSBA Delegate Assembly at Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in Pocono Manor, PA, on October 21, 2025
2ND READINGS & ADOPTION 006-008	<p>Approved the second reading and adoption of the following policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Policy #006 Meetings 2) Policy #008 Organization Chart
PROPOSED BUDGET 2025-2026	<p>END OF CONSENT AGENDA</p> <p>Director Krawchuk moved, seconded by Director Snyder, to approve the proposed final budget for 2025-2026 with no tax index increase and expenditure totals of \$41,864,023. The 2025-2026 Real Estate Tax mills will be set at 65.9150. The final budget is set to be approved at the June 17, 2025 board meeting.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>
RESOLUTION-INTENT TO REIMBURSE CAPITAL RESERVE	<p>Director King moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to adopt the reimbursement resolution as prepared by Bond Counsel declaring the Board's official intent to reimburse funds of the school district from the proceeds of anticipated bond issuances for expenditures made towards the high school and district administration building projects.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>
SUPERVISOR OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	<p>Director Connell moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to approve Kelly Beblavy as Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction as a Group One employee per the Act 93 Memorandum of Understanding at an annual salary of \$96,000 effective July 1, 2025.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>
TREASURER 2025-2026	<p>Director Snyder moved, seconded by Director Mazepa, approve Director Stacey Connell as Treasurer of the Palmerton Area School Board effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 at the rate of \$400.00 per year.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>
	<p>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Banko – asked what the requirements are to be elected to the school board
	<p>FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Danielle Paules mentioned a football T-shirt/hoodie fundraiser being held for a previous student now diagnosed with leukemia with all proceeds to the family.

ADJOURNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directors Snyder and King congratulated Kelly Beblavy on her new position.• Director King offered well wishes to Ms. Dawn Burke on her future endeavors.• Director Earl Paules congratulated all Carbon County seniors who participated in the Senior Games this month and wished all our high school seniors good luck in the future. He stated there will be an executive session immediately following this meeting for personnel matters. He also congratulated Director Schiable who was attending her graduation at LCCC this evening. <p>Director King moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 p.m.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Jacqueline McCandless Board Secretary</p>
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