

Board of School Directors Committee Meetings Minutes Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Generated by Renai Cardillo on Thursday, December 29, 2025

Members present: Ken Keith, William Formica, Kimberly Wheeler, Michael Barnacz, Alexandra Wisser, Andrew Souchet, Corinne DeGeiso, Rosemary Buetikofer, William Brong

Others present: Frank Gallagher, Christopher Hey, Katie Kennedy-Reilly, Michael Taylor and Megan Zweiback

Mr. Keith called meetings to order at 6:30 P.M.

1. Policy

1.1 First Reading of Revisions to Policy 005 - Organization

Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Hey introduced the First Reading of Revisions to Policy 005 - Organization, stating that this policy will allow the Board to function as a Committee of the Whole, ensuring all members have an equal voice at regular Board Committee Meetings. Dr. Hey stated that with the permission of the Board, the Committees will operate under this revision this evening. He also noted that it may seem very much the same as the Board has functioned in the past, where everyone has an opportunity to question and comment on all agenda items.

Dr. Hey noted specific revisions which outline how the Committees of the Whole will function, in addition to and including any work that could be performed by consultants to support the work of administration. Dr. Hey also indicated that the Board President will preside over all Committees of the Whole.

Ms. Wisser asked about the Committee as a Whole noting that Boyertown Area SD uses similar policy and cited verbiage that all Board members will have the opportunity to participate in Ad Hoc and Committee of the Whole, wondering if it is implied for this policy.

Dr. Hey said that he will look at their policy to determine if the wording is the same and the intent is the same.

Mr. Souchet noted a line item in the policy referring to the role of the Past President in an Organization meeting. Dr. Hey acknowledged and said it will be updated for the Second Reading. Mr. Souchet also asked about the impact of revisions on other existing policies. Dr. Hey responded that the planned policy overhaul program in coordination with P.S.B.A. will address Section 000 where there may be impacted policies, as well as Section 900 policies.

Mr. Souchet asked how this change will improve Board Governance? Dr. Hey responded that operating at a committee as a whole, evolved over the last ten years, instead of a Committee of three that could be hindered in the absence of a board member, this change has been operating for several years and the policy simply formalize it. Mr. Souchet acknowledged understanding and noted that it is his experience that having a leader within a sub committee, is always helpful.

Mr. Souchet also asked how this will benefit the students? Dr. Hey responded that it will assist the board to operate more efficiently.

Dr. Gallagher reiterated that collective discussions in public, gives equal voice showing that everyone involved is in the conversation and everyone is working together. Dr. Gallagher also noted that he recently spoke with a neighboring school district Superintendent who had formally switched their Committee meetings to this type of format, and have also found it to be more productive and useful. Dr. Gallagher stated that it often fosters more meaningful discussion and eliminates the impact of absence committee members.

Mr. Formica stated his favor of this type of meeting as it is often difficult for committee members to meet and discuss outside of scheduled meetings. This format allows everyone to hear all discussions.

Ms. DeGeiso inquired about the possibility of including community members for Ad Hoc Committee participation and Dr. Hey said that they certainly would be considered, as in the case of the Comprehensive Plan. He also noted that the language could be added to this policy revision. Ms. Wheeler added that parents are already participating in Education-Personnel/Curriculum Council meetings.

Mr. Keith suggested that Superintendent Gallagher put together a list of existing committees where parents are already engaged.

Mr. Brong reflected on past practices and his understanding of the formalization of Committee as a Whole.

Ms. Buetikofer asked for clarification on the individual committees and their continued existence? Mr. Keith and Dr. Hey both confirmed the Committees will remain, with all board members being members of all committees. Dr. Hey also stated that the agendas will be constructed as they appear this evening.

Mr. Barnacz asked for verbiage to be included in the actual policy clarifying the changes. Dr. Hey responded that the comments would be taken under advisement and any changes could be reviewed in advance of approval.

A member of the public (Mr. Rothholz) asked where the committees get their content? Dr. Gallagher responded that Administration directs the work behind Committee discussion and approvals. Dr. Gallagher also stated that Board members are welcome to bring questions, suggestions and ideas for Committee considerations. He also noted that not every issue would require Committee authorization, some can simply be a change to an administrative procedure.

Another member of the audience asked about public dissemination of information from the Board indicating the notification that a policy has been added or revised. Dr. Hey responded that the communications to parents and guardians is typically very school oriented and could not commit to sending policy revision emails. However he did indicate that a discussion with the web specialist to improve the viewing of documents on a mobile device could occur.

The Board agreed to move the policy forward for second reading.

The Policy Committee was adjourned.

2. Operations

2.1 Middle School Tracks & High School Tennis Courts Proposal

Mr. Taylor opened the discussion for Operations at 6:49 P.M., noting that representatives from Tarkett Sports were in attendance to discuss the projects on this evenings' agenda. He noted that Field Turf a part of Tarkett, the same firm that recently installed the new multi-purpose field.

He announced the first project is the resurfacing of the tennis courts at the High School.

The other proposed project is the resurfacing of the track at Indian Crest Middle School, of which comment has been received from P.I.A.A., stipulating its improvement or its use will no longer be permitted for competition.

The third project would be to replace the existing cinder track at Indian Valley Middle School, replacing it with a rubber track, making it equitable with Indian Crest Middle School. Mr. Taylor also stated that both schools have a high level of participation from students and that the Indian Valley student athletes are currently transported to Indian Crest for track participation.

Michael Volker, of Tarkett Sports Design and Brian Shanahan of American Athletic Track & Turf, the track and tennis court installer for Tarkett Sports introduced themselves and shared a presentation outlining the capabilities of their company. He elaborated on the discover, develop, design and build teams all within the organization.

The first proposed project they reviewed showed photos of existing high school tennis courts. Mr. Volker noted that the courts are approximately 15 years old and reaching the end of their life expectancy. Mr. Volker reviewed an alternate proposal for tennis court reconstruction that specifies Post Tension Concrete (PTC) instead of asphalt. He explained that this alternate spec could provide for stronger durability, less maintenance and would extend the life of the tennis courts. Details of the scope of proposed work was reviewed.

Mr. Keith asked for a pause on the presentation and asked for questions on tennis court project proposals before beginning the presentation on the track projects. Mr. Keith asked for clarification on the warranty outlined in the presentation and the response stated that the warranty is a third-party warranty.

Ms. Wisser asked about timing of the project and the response stated approximately a two and a half month project.

Ms. Wheeler also asked about timing of the tennis court project and Dr. Hey responded that boys tennis ends mid May and girls tennis begins in August, therefore the two month time frame could be met, weather dependent. Ms. Wheeler also asked about the fencing and Mr. Volker responded that it has also reached the end of its life.

Mr. Keith asked for individual comments on the possible cost associated with the PTC technology process. Ms. Wisser and Ms. Wheeler both expressed concern on the proposed cost of the PTC process.

Mr. Souchet stated that he is undecided on the technology cost at this time. Mr. Formica asked about the flexibility of changing the court for another sport (pickleball) or purpose. Mr. Volker stated that the PTC design would allow for an easy change to the court purpose. Mr. Formica stated that he is undecided about the cost of the project at this time.

Ms. DeGeiso asked about the warranty on the two different proposed types of design. A brief discussion occurred about the annual maintenance of an asphalt court versus PTC design of the project. Mr. Taylor stated that the administration could advise on the impact of both proposals on the bond issuance and the annual school district budget.

Mr. Brong asked about the cost associated with annual asphalt repair versus the Post Tension Concrete project. Mr. Brong also asked about the replacement of the fence. Mr. Brong expressed his concern for the project using the PTC method. He also asked for a list of schools where this method has been installed.

Ms. Buetikofer asked about the PTC technology and its actual use. Mr. Shanahan responded that it is a new technology to this area.

Dr. Gallagher suggested that the tennis court consideration deserves more detail and will be reviewed again with additional information at the January Operations meeting. Mr. Keith echoed the sentiment and asked the presenters to continue with the track presentation.

Mr. Volker reviewed a slide showing the proposed renovation to the Indian Crest Middle School track. He reviewed the details of the track improvement outlining the base, the rubberized surface and line striping and marking. He also noted that the project would include new field goal posts, a high-jump pad, a shotput pad and a long-jump ramp.

Mr. Volker reviewed a slide showing the existing cinder track at Indian Valley Middle School. He itemized the specifications of the proposed installation.

Dr. Gallagher reiterated that the administration is recommending both track projects in an effort to create comparable facilities at each middle school. He also noted that student participation in track has been increasing at both schools and the district has been busing students from Indian Valley to participate on the track at Indian Crest. Dr. Gallagher also noted that the tennis court renovation is also recommended but additional details are needed for that project.

Ms. Wisser asked about timing of the track projects and Dr. Gallaher stated that the project would occur once school ends and would take approximately two months. Ms. Wisser also asked about the cost for busing to transport students from IV to IC to participate in track activities?

Ms. Wheeler asked about the life expectancy of the proposed renovation to the Indian Crest track and Mr. Shanahan responded approximately ten years. Ms. Wheeler also inquired if an asphalt track was being considered for Indian Valley in an effort to save costs. Director of Business Affairs, Mr. Taylor responded that all of these projects were estimated and included in the original bond issuance as presented by PFM to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Souchet asked for additional clarifying details for each school outlining the specific location of field activities and the costs for each project. He stated that the specifics would be helpful in making the projects comparable.

Mr. Formica reinforced the track improvement at Indian Valley Middle School and noted the need for completion of these projects. He also questioned the proposed projects impact to the debt service. Mr. Taylor responded that he could provide those numbers at the January meeting.

Ms. DeGeiso expressed understanding for the need of the projects, but also expressed concern for other projects that also need attention.

Mr. Brong asked about core testing of existing ground and asphalt. He also requested an itemized breakdown of costs for each project. Mr. Brong also asked about the length of service for a rubberized top cost on a tennis court versus a rubberized top coat on a track.

Ms. Buetikofer and Mr. Barnacz were in agreement for comparable spaces for each middle school. Mr. Barnacz requested specific designs on each project.

A member of the audience asked for clarification on the specified material for the track projects.

Another audience member (Mr. Rothholz) thanked the board for its consideration of the Indian Valley track project. He also asked about the fence surrounding the Indian Crest track and if fencing would be installed at Indian Valley as well. Mr. Rothholz expressed concern about existing fencing at the Indian Valley baseball field as it appears to be failing. He also mentioned the absence of fencing at the Indian Valley pickleball court.

Mr. Keith summarized the projects and the district needs. He also stated that there are enough questions to return to the January Operations Meeting with additional details and answers.

Mr. Keith adjourned the Operations Meeting at 7:51 P.M.

3. Finance

3.1 2026-27 Budget First Look

Mr. Keith called the Finance Committee to order at 7:51 P.M.

Director of Business Affairs Mr. Taylor introduced the presentation with a review of the Budget process focusing on revenues.

Mr. Taylor stated that the school district would be applying for exceptions and developing a Preliminary Budget, based upon the Act One Index for the 2026-2027 school year which has been set at 3.5%. Mr. Taylor stated that a Preliminary Budget would be presented at the January Finance Committee Meeting, after which it would be made available for public inspection.

Mr. Taylor reviewed slides that listed how the school district is funded and how its revenues are received locally, from the state government and the federal government. He explained the process for revenue collection through real estate taxes which comprises 74.8% of the budget, annual state budgetary funding at 24% and federal funding in the form of grants at 1.1%.

Mr. Taylor reviewed a slide which itemized Local Revenue Sources totaling \$116M. He listed the types of local sources including real estate taxes, interim real estate taxes, current per capita taxes, earned income taxes, transfer taxes, delinquent real estate taxes, earnings on investments, federal revenue (IDEA), community services activities and other local revenues. Mr. Taylor praised the improvements to the Community Education program.

Mr. Taylor continued the slide presentation showing Ten Year Comparison of Local Revenues along with prior year, current year to date and next year estimates.

Mr. Taylor also reviewed a slide depicting the Real Estate Tax Millage Increase History which showed the Souderton Area School District having averaged the lowest tax increase over the last 20 years within Montgomery County.

Mr. Taylor reviewed State and Federal Revenue along with the Ten Year Comparison for each.

Mr. Taylor reviewed the Budget Calendar noting the public display of Preliminary Budget in early January 2026. He listed all Finance Committee Meetings in 2026 and the intent to approve a Final Budget on June 18, 2026.

Board members were invited to comment on the presentation.

Ms. Buetikofer asked what makes up other revenue? Mr. Taylor responded that it is several areas within the revenue budget including parking fees, lost books, and other miscellaneous items, under the \$100,000 threshold in budget line items.

Ms. DeGeiso asked why a ten year comparison when there was no ESSER funding at the beginning of the time period. She expressed concerns how the ESSER funding may skew the numbers. Ms. DeGeiso also asked for the details of the other local revenues.

Mr. Souchet asked for the definition of the acronym IDEA. Mr. Taylor explained; Individual with Disabilities Education Act.

Mr. Souchet also asked about the Per Capita Tax category and if there are any plans to renew the Plan Con or ESSER funding sources. Mr. Taylor explained that Plan Con was a reimbursement source from the state for school construction projects and at this time, it has been discontinued. Dr. Gallagher responded that there has been some discussion in Harrisburg that would see the return of Plan Con, however nothing is in place at this time.

Mr. Souchet suggested a glossary and appendix for the acronyms appearing in the budget presentation.

Ms. Wisser also inquired about the details of the \$1.9M other revenue sources. Ms. Wisser said that she would also prefer to see a 3 year, 5 year, and 10 year view of the budget to provide additional context. She also expressed concern about the Title funding and how the district could plan for its potential loss?

Dr. Gallagher stated that at this time, there is no plan to dissolve Title funding. He also stated that he serves on the Montgomery County Legislative Education Committee, keeping current with all forms of legislative communication. He noted that the loss of Title funding would be devastating to schools everywhere.

Ms. Wisser inquired as the district applies for an Exception to the Act I Index, does it have a target number or percentage increase? Mr. Taylor responded that there is not a target number. He explained that by creating a preliminary budget, the district will complete a worksheet showing expenditures and/or deficits. The worksheet

calculates the district eligibility for its tax increase. The Board will ultimately decide how to exercise the given option, based upon its eligibility.

Dr. Gallagher reported that the Indian Valley Education Foundation had received its Uninvest EITC funding in the amount of \$45,000 and in addition a recent donation was received in the amount of \$40,000 from Audi/Ciocca of Allentown. Dr. Gallagher stated that these funds, while received to the foundation, go directly back to the schools.

Another member of the audience asked about the future forecast of other revenue sources and Mr. Taylor clarified that the school district calendar budget runs through the month of May – therefore there is no forecasting error.

A member of the audience expressed concerns about federal education reimbursements.

Mr. Keith adjourned the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Taylor, C.P.A.

Board Secretary/Director of Business Affairs