

**MERCER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**MINUTES OF REGULAR**  
**BOARD MEETING on MARCH 16, 2026**

|                         |                 |              |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b> | ARTHUR AMOS     | RODNEY BOBBY |
|                         | REBEKAH BOLYARD | MATTHEW HAZI |
|                         | DAVID LENGEL    | SHANE NUGENT |
|                         | DEREK STOTSKY   | ZACHARY RYAN |

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** AIMEE PETERS

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

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. David Lengel, at 7:40 p.m. in the high school library. The Pledge of Allegiance followed. There were eight (8) members present.

At this time, Mr. Shawn Emerson from McGill, Power, Bell and Associates presented the internal audit report.

**MINUTES:**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rodney Bobby, the Board approved the minutes of the regular meeting on March 16, 2026 and the Curriculum & Extra Curricular Committee meeting on March 12, 2026. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

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

***Motion:*** Passed

**PERSONNEL:**

**Retirement:**

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Matthew Hazi, the Board approved the following retirements. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2026 BOARD MEETING CONTINUED:**

**PERSONNEL** (Continued):

**Retirement(s):**

Accepted, with regret, the retirement of Mr. Charles Mathias as an elementary teacher, effective June 8, 2026.

Accepted, with regret, the retirement of Mrs. Lynn Long as Confidential Secretary/Office Manager, effective August 31, 2026.

**Resignation:**

On a motion by Rebekah Bolyard, second by Shane Nugent, the Board accepted, with regret, the resignation of Mrs. Jill McCracken as varsity boys' basketball cheerleading advisor, effective immediately. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**Hires:**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rebekah Bolyard, the Board approved the following hires. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

Granted approval to add Justine Meyer as a volunteer junior high softball coach, effective with the 2026 season, pending clearances.

**Educational Staffing Solutions:**

Granted approval to hire substitute teachers and/or aides & paraprofessionals and/or accept, with regret, the resignation of such employees submitted by Educational Staffing Solutions (ESS), as attached.

**FMLA:**

On a motion by Zachary Ryan, second by Rodney Bobby, the Board granted approval for Mrs. Marlena Priester to take a Family Medical Leave beginning August 21, 2026 for 60 days. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE:**

On a motion by Zachary Ryan, second by Derek Stotsky, the Board granted approval for Mrs. Marlena Priester to take a Leave of Absence, following the conclusion of her FMLA, for the remainder of the 2026-2027 school year. On a roll call vote, members Bobby, Bolyard, Lengel, Nugent, Ryan, Stotsky, and Amos voted yes. Member Hazi abstained.

***Motion:*** Passed

**STUDENT TRAVEL:**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rodney Bobby, the Board approved the following student travel requests. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

Granted approval for Mr. Doug Schmid to accompany Tech Ed students to Acutec Precision Aerospace on March 17, 2026, in conjunction with previously approved trip to Tessy Automation. The cost to the district is the use of a school van.

**MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2026 BOARD MEETING CONTINUED:**

**STUDENT TRAVEL (Continued):**

Granted approval for Miss Lisa Wishart to accompany five (5) students to the Academic Games Nationals Tournament in Charlotte, NC April 23 – April 28, 2026. The cost for student registration is \$140/student (\$700). Students will be transported, lodged, and supervised by a family member. Approximate cost to the school district for Miss Wishart to attend include: lodging (\$1,125) food (\$300), transportation (\$620), registration (\$140), and one substitute teacher for four days (\$400). The estimated total cost of the district for this trip is \$3,285.00.

Granted approval for Mrs. Courtney Smithco and Mr. Charles Bigelow to accompany 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to the Mercer County Business and Industry Career Fair at The Park Inn in West Middlesex, PA on March 26, 2026. The only cost to the district is for transportation.

Granted approval for Mrs. Erin Ellis and Ms. Candace Vincent to accompany students to Envirothon training on April 1, 2026 and Envirothon competition on April 22, 2026 at Munnell Run Farm. The cost to the district is two substitute teachers for two days and the use of two school vans. (\$400)

Granted approval for Mr. Justin Gadsby to accompany three students to “Senator for a Day” at Thiel College on April 14, 2026. Van transportation is requested as well as one substitute for the day which is the only cost to the district. (\$100.00)

Granted approval for Mrs. Kelly Heffern to accompany the Jazz Band to Lakeview for the Jazz Festival on April 17, 2026. The only cost to the district is bus transportation.

Granted approval for the third-grade class (approximately 75 students) to travel to Coolspring Creek as part of the Trout in the Classroom program on May 5, 2026. The program will take place from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. One bus is requested for transportation. Cost of transportation will be provided by Trout Unlimited. There is no cost to the school district.

Granted approval for the third-grade class (approximately 75 students) to attend a presentation by Tamarack Wildlife on May 6, 2026. The Tamarack Wildlife Center will bring the program to the elementary school. The cost of the program is \$179.40 and will be paid for by the PEP Association. There is no expense to the school district.

Granted approval for students in our Life Skills program and appropriate faculty and staff, to participate in the Shenango Valley Special Games on May 6, 2026 for bowling at Ten Pin Alley (9:30-1:00) and Thursday, May 7 for track and field events at Hickory High School (9:00-1:00). van transportation is requested. One substitute nurse at \$100.00 and transportation are the only cost to the district.

Granted approval for the fourth-grade class (approximately 97 students) to travel to Shenango River Lake in Hermitage, PA on May 8, 2026. Two buses are requested for transportation, which is being paid for by the PEP Association. One substitute nurse is requested for the day, which is the only expense to the school district. (\$100)

**MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2026 BOARD MEETING CONTINUED:**

**STUDENT TRAVEL (Continued):**

Granted approval for the sixth-grade class (approximately 79 students) to travel to Meadville Cinema to see a private showing of *The Sheep Detectives* in Meadville, PA on May 26, 2026. Two buses are requested for transportation. The cost of the movie tickets and concessions (\$10 per student), as well as transportation, will be paid for by the PEP Association. There is no cost to the school district.

Granted approval for the third-grade class (approximately 75 students) to travel to Munnell Run Farm in Mercer on May 27, 2026. One bus is requested for transportation and is being paid for by the PEP Association as well as the educational program. There is no cost to the district.

Granted approval for the sixth-grade class (approximately 79 students) to travel to Ten Pin Alley, Hermitage, PA on June 2, 2026. Two busses are requested for transportation. The admission fees, bowling, and transportation are being paid for by the PEP Association. There is no cost to the school district.

Granted approval for the second-grade class (approximately 73 students) to travel to the Golden Star Theaters – Shenango Valley Cinema in Hermitage, PA on June 2, 2026. Two buses are requested for transportation. Cost of tickets and snacks (\$14.25/student and \$17.25 per adult) along with transportation are being covered by the PEP Association. There is no cost to the district.

**FACILITIES REQUESTS:**

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Rebekah Bolyard, the Board approved the following facilities requests. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

Granted approval for Mrs. Wendy McClure and Mrs. Maggie Ference to host a Parents Day Out fundraiser at the elementary facility on April 24, 2026. This fundraiser will take place from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the elementary school. The cost for participation will be \$10 per student and open only to Mercer students in grades K-6. Proceeds from this event will be allocated towards Field Day.

Recommend approval for Mercer Touchdown Club to use the football field on June 19 and 20, 2026 to host Mercer Football Future Mustangs Kids Camp. All aspects of the facilities policy will be followed.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

On a motion by Rebekah Bolyard, second by Zachary Ryan, the Board approved the following professional development requests. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

Granted approval for Mrs. Allyson Rust, Mr. Eric Mausser, Mrs. Courtney Smithco, Mrs. Jennifer Mausser, and Miss Melanie Zeitler to attend the SAP County Coordination Meeting at Mercer County Behavioral Health in Mercer on March 27, 2026 from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. There is no cost to the school district.

**MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2026 BOARD MEETING CONTINUED:**

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Continued):**

Granted approval for Mr. Eric Mausser and Mr. Dan Heckman to attend UPMC Mental Health and Student Athletes on April 15, 2026 at PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh, PA. There's no cost to the district.

Granted approval for Mrs. Marlena Priester to attend a Personal Finance Professional Development workshop @ Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV on Tuesday, April 28, 2026. Cost to the district is one (1) substitute teacher for one (1) day (\$100.00).

**CLASSIFIED SALARIES:**

On a motion by Rodney Bobby, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approved the Classified Salaries for the 2026-27 school year, as attached. On a roll call vote, members Bolyard, Hazi, Lengel, Nugent, Ryan, Stotsky and Bobby voted yes. Member Amos abstained.

***Motion:*** Passed

**SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRACT PAY SCALE:**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rodney Bobby, the Board approved the Supplemental Contract Pay Scale, beginning with the 2026-27 through 2030-31 school year, as attached. On a roll call vote, members Hazi, Lengel, Nugent, Ryan, Stotsky, Bobby and Bolyard voted yes. Member Amos abstained.

***Motion:*** Passed

**ACT 93 CONTRACTS:**

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Rebekah Bolyard, the Board approved three-year Act 93 contracts for the following administrators and a three-year contract with the Business Manager, effective July 1, 2026, with the following beginning salaries, as attached. On a roll call vote, members Lengel, Nugent, Ryan, Stotsky, Amos, Bobby, Bolyard, and Hazi voted yes.

***Motion:*** Passed

| <b><u>Name</u></b> | <b><u>Position</u></b>             | <b><u>2026-27</u></b> |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Eric Mausser       | Middle/High School Principal       | \$107,000             |
| Charles Bigelow    | Asst. Middle/High School Principal | \$91,500              |
| Gregory Acre       | Elementary Principal               | \$106,800             |
| Amanda Simpson     | Director of Special Education      | \$98,500              |
| Michelle Goehring  | Business Manager                   | \$94,700              |

**K-12 PRINCIPAL INTERNSHIP:**

On a motion by Rebekah Bolyard, second by Matthew Hazi, the Board approved for Mrs. Allyson Rust to complete her K-12 principal internship at Mercer Elementary during the Fall 2026 semester, in accordance with the internship guidelines through Westminster College. Mr. Acre will serve as the supervising administrator for the internship. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2026 BOARD MEETING CONTINUED:**

**EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR:**

On a motion by Zachary Ryan, second by Arthur Amos, the Board approved Extended School Year (ESY) teachers for the summer of 2026. Mr. Andrew Burk and Ms. Bridget Kniess for academic instruction and Mrs. Korina Yanak for speech/language therapy, at a rate based on the Classified Salary schedule. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**MIU4 LEA POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND USE OF FUNDS 26-27:**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rebekah Bolyard, the Board approved the Notice of Adoption of Approved LEA Policies, Procedures and Use of Funds for the 2026-27 school year with Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**WILLIAM PENN ACADEMY:**

On a motion by Rodney Bobby, second by Arthur Amos, the Board approved the agreement between William Penn Academy and Mercer Area School District to provide comprehensive educational service, school disciplines and selected elective courses, in grades 9-12. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**TRANSPORTATION AGREE. WITH GROVE CITY ASD:**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Matthew Hazi the Board approval of a Transportation Agreement between Mercer Area School District and Grove City Area School District. Mercer will provide transportation, to be paid by Grove City School District, at a rate of \$60 per day in which students are transported, beginning March 2, 2026 and commencing June 30, 2026, as attached. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**MERCER COUNTY CAREER CENTER:**

On a motion by Zachary Ryan, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approval to accept the 2026-2027 Mercer County Career Center Budget in the amount of **\$6,969,611**, as attached. On a roll call vote, members Nugent, Ryan, Stotsky, Amos, Bobby, Bolyard, Hazi, and Lengel voted yes.

***Motion:*** Passed

**COMMONWEALTH CHARTER ACADEMY**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rodney Bobby, the Board approved of a Settlement Agreement between Commonwealth Charter Academy (CCA) and Mercer Area School District regarding tuition from the 2023-24 school year. CCA will refund \$3,914.75 to Mercer Area School District. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**RESOLUTION TO NOMINATE MIU4 BOARD MEMBER:**

On a motion by David Lengel, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approved of a Resolution nominating Mr. Rodney Bobby for consideration as an MIU4 Board Member. (Mr. Bobby currently serves and represents the Mercer Area School District on the MIU4 Board of Directors). On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2026 BOARD MEETING CONTINUED:**

**RMU DUAL ENROLLMENT:**

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Matthew Hazi, the Board approved a dual enrollment agreement with Robert Morris University for the 2026-2027 school year. Robert Morris courses will include BIOL 1210/1215 and STAT 2110. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**FEDERAL PROGRAMS CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT:**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rebekah Bolyard, the Board approved a Federal Programs Consortium Agreement between Mercer Area School District and Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV, which will commence on July 1, 2026 and ending September 30, 2028. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**CM REGENT (COBRA Dental/Vision):**

On a motion by Shane Nugent, second by Rebekah Bolyard, the Board approved of the budgetary/COBRA renewal rates for our Dental and Vision Plans, through CM Regent, for the 2026-27 school year as follows. On a roll call vote, members Ryan, Stotsky, Amos, Bobby, Bolyard, Hazi, Lengel, and Nugent voted yes.

***Motion:*** Passed

| Rate Tier / Classification | Dental<br>Amount | Rate Tier /<br>Classification | Vision<br>Amount |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Employee Only              | \$29.67          | Single                        | \$4.36           |
| Employee & Spouse          | \$59.33          | Employee +1                   | \$7.70           |
| Employee & Child           | \$62.30          | ---                           | ---              |
| Employee & Children        | \$61.93          | Employee + 2 or more          | \$13.05          |
| Employee & Family          | \$89.00          | ---                           | ---              |

**MERCER MIDGET FOOTBALL PROGRAM SHED:**

On a motion by Rebekah Bolyard, second by Arthur Amos, the Board granted approval to allow the Mercer Midget Football Program to replace the previously approved shed, with a new similar size shed on school property. The midget football staff will coordinate with the districts' facilities director. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**ATHLETIC UNIFORMS:**

On a motion by Rodney Bobby, second by Zachary Ryan, the Board approved new uniform purchases for the following groups in the 2026-27 athletic budget. (Boys' Basketball, Girls' Basketball, Volleyball, and Golf). The 2026-27 athletic budget will be presented to the school board for consideration, prior to the annual budget workshop. On a roll call vote, members Stotsky, Amos, Bobby, Bolyard, Hazi, Lengel, Nugent, and Ryan voted yes.

***Motion:*** Passed

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH MIUIV:**

On a motion by Arthur Amos, second by Shane Nugent, the Board approved of an Intergovernmental Agreement between Mercer Area School District and MIU IV for the 2026-27 school year, as attached. On a voice vote, all members present voted yes.

**MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2026 BOARD MEETING CONTINUED:**

\*Establish a date for the budget meeting. – Meeting set for April 8, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no additional business, Rodney Bobby motioned to adjourn the meeting, Rebekah Bolyard seconded. On a voice vote, all members voted yes.

---

Michelle L. Goehring, Board Secretary

---

David R. Lengel, Board President