



Eastern Lebanon County School District

180 ELCO Drive, Myerstown, PA 17067

May 5, 2026, DO Boardroom, 5:00 pm

General Services and Finance

Committee Minutes

GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

General Services Committee Chair: **JP Santos**

General Services Committee Members: **Jack Kahl, Megan Schaeffer, Jordan Weaver;**

Board President, **Rachel Moyer**

Others present: Joya Morrissey, Bonnie Kantner, Ray Ondrusek, and Howard Kramer.

Call to Order and Welcome

- Mr. Santos called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Discussion Items

- Project Updates provided by Mr. Frantz
 - High School Cafeteria Floor
 - The cafeteria floor replacement is scheduled with equipment disconnect on June 8–9, equipment move on June 16, floor installation on June 22–25, and put-back beginning July 1. The work is being paid for by insurance due to the Ansul fire system issue, with no direct cost to district funds.
 - Middle School Roof
 - The middle school roof project is on track to start Monday, June 8 (after Ag Day) and be completed before school resumes; it includes tearing off the old surface down to the insulation, increasing R-value, and is funded through a grant and district funds (25% split).
 - Middle School Boiler
 - Both middle school boiler units are installed and functional, with a state inspector scheduled for June 12 at 8:00 a.m. to finalize approval. The rental boiler has been removed, and the district is awaiting the final invoice to submit to insurance.

- Fort Zeller Playground
 - The new Fort Zeller playground has been ordered, with installation planned to be finished by August 14; equipment will ship directly to the installer, who will store it off-site until installation to avoid damage and student access.
- District-wide Summer Projects
 - District-wide summer work will focus on safety-related items, such as sidewalk damage and lighting issues, as well as general summer cleaning, power washing, and painting across buildings.
- Veterans Memorial Project and upcoming Ceremony, May 21, 2026, 3:30 pm, ELCO High School
 - The Veterans Memorial project is nearly complete, with plants arriving and engraved benches being finished, and has been largely driven and community-funded by the Interact Club. An upcoming ceremony is planned for May 21, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. at ELCO High School to recognize and celebrate the memorial formally.
- Contract Renewal
 - SentinelOne Licensing
 - Mr. Boltz shared that SentinelOne is an endpoint detection and response system installed on all district computers and servers to monitor, detect, and quarantine malware and other malicious activity, with 24/7 vendor monitoring. The board is being asked to approve a new three-year renewal through a consortium with Capital Area IU and Lancaster-Lebanon IU, which provides about a 60% cost savings compared to purchasing directly, for a total of \$16,267.57 covering 560 computers, 40 servers, and a first-year processing fee.
- Lebanon County Career & Technology Center Articles of Agreement
 - The board reviewed the proposed Articles of Agreement for the Lebanon County Career & Technology Center (CTC), which serve as a governing “constitution” for the joint operating committee (JOC). The articles define how costs are shared among the six sending districts, how JOC members are appointed, the delegation of authority, terms for the director and superintendent of record, audit requirements, and procedures for vacancies and advisory committees. A central point of debate is the funding model for future renovation projects, with three options considered: an attendance-based (ADM) formula, a property value (STEB/assessed value) formula, and a 50/50 blend of the two. Although ADM alone would be more favorable to ELCO financially, the ELCO board

chose to support the 50/50 model as a compromise and a good-faith recognition that the CTC serves the entire county, not just one district. Some resistance remains from at least one other district that feels it cannot afford the 50/50 split and prefers the STEB model, which would benefit that district more heavily. The JOC has asked the architect to bring back lower-cost renovation scenarios, but those project decisions are separate from, and will follow, approval of the updated articles. The articles also spell out withdrawal terms, requiring two fiscal years' notice and continued responsibility for any outstanding indebtedness, with capital assets remaining with the CTC if a district leaves. Because the articles have not been updated in decades, board members emphasized that approving them is a necessary first step before any final decisions on renovation costs or district participation can be made.

Public Comment:

- Mr. Kahl's and Mr. Kramer's comments focused on ongoing concerns about poor acoustics and sound quality in the high school auditorium and IS gym, including dead spots and distortion that make it difficult to hear performances clearly. Commenters asked that acoustic and speaker upgrades be placed on a future committee agenda, acknowledging the estimated cost (around \$60–68k) and suggesting it be considered after the current budget season. They emphasized that improving the sound system would be a worthwhile investment given the district's strong commitment to music, theater, and the arts.

Next Finance Committee Meeting:

- June 9, 2026

Adjournment

- Mr. Santos adjourned the meeting at 5:26 pm.

Future General Services Committee Meetings:

August 4, 2026
September 9, 2026
October 6, 2026
November 3, 2026

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Finance Committee Chair: **Ray Ondrusek**

Finance Committee Members: **Howard Kramer, JP Santos, Megan Schaeffer;**
Board President, **Rachel Moyer**

Others present: Joya Morrissey, Bonnie Kantner, Jack Kahl, Jordan Weaver.

Call to Order and Welcome

- Mr. Ondrusek called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Discussion Items

- 2025-2026 Budget Transfers
 - Mrs. Mathias reported a single requested budget transfer of \$346.50 within the same building, moving funds from the books line item to the supplies line item. The committee was asked to approve this internal reallocation to align spending with actual needs better.
- Grades K – 8 Student Photography Update
 - The district issued an RFP for student photography services and received proposals from five photo companies by the deadline. Elaine and Megan will review the submissions with building principals to align with school needs and parents' affordability, and select a new photography vendor by May 18. There is no direct cost to the district for this service.
- Food Service Presentation – Mr. David Ludwig, Food Service Director
 - Mr. Ludwig's presentation explained that ELCO's program is self-operated and self-funded, covering its own staffing, supplies, and equipment through meal revenues and reimbursements, with breakfast and lunch participation and federal/state reimbursement of about 22,000 meals over the last year. Successes this year include Second Chance Breakfast at the high school (serving ~55 additional students per day and generating roughly \$30,000/year in revenue), expanded use of USDA commodities (including DoD produce funds), elimination of Styrofoam trays, and the rollout of the Smart Sense temperature-monitoring system, along with approximately \$45,000 in catering revenue. Looking ahead, the director recommended a \$0.15 lunch price increase (to \$3.30 at Elementary/IS and \$3.50 at MS/HS), which would generate about \$19,000 annually and still leave meal prices well below the state/federal estimated cost of producing a reimbursable lunch; he also emphasized that breakfast remains free for all students. He proposed hiring a middle school kitchen manager (around \$44,000) to free the assistant director from kitchen

duties so she can focus on production records, fully using Premier Edge, integrating it with Smart Sense, and enabling online nutritional information for students, parents, nurses, and staff. The board discussed price sensitivity among families, but several members noted that school meals still offer strong nutritional value and cost-efficiency compared to packing lunches at home. The presentation also reviewed the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and the current 48.72% free/reduced rate, explaining that CEP is not financially viable based on ELCO's numbers and that free/reduced students remain eligible into the start of the next year. Finally, the director stressed efforts to reduce stigma and maintain access, noting that families can apply discreetly online via SchoolCafe, and that the district does not deny meals to students even when accounts carry negative balances (though à la carte charging is restricted).

- Contract Renewals for 2026-2027
 - Wellspan Sports Medicine Agreement is a renewal contract that provides athletic training and sports medicine services for ELCO student-athletes, maintaining the existing level of school-based medical support.
 - Leader Services for IEP Writer is a renewal of the software/services used by the special education department to create, manage, and store students' IEPs, ensuring compliance and consistent documentation.
 - SmartFutures is an online career exploration and planning platform that the district uses to support students' career readiness activities, and the contract renewal continues access to these tools across grade levels.
 - Dr. Davis shared that the Phoenix Learning Solutions contract questioned at the Curriculum Committee meeting is for the additional component in PowerSchool that houses student IEP plans and allows teachers to access each student's IEP.
- Special Education Contracts for 2026-2027
 - Yellow Breeches Education Center was included in the renewal contracts for special education placements, used for students whose IEPs require a specific setting; it was presented as a repeat, ongoing placement option rather than a new program.
 - John Paul II Learning Center was likewise part of the group of repeat renewal contracts, providing a specialized placement for students based on their IEP-driven needs, with no significant changes discussed beyond continuing current arrangements.
 - River Rock Academy was also among the eight special education placement contracts up for renewal, serving students whose behavioral or educational needs are outlined in their IEPs. The committee confirmed these are standard renewals aligned with existing student placements.

- 2026-2027 Proposed Final Budget Presentation - Mrs. Mathias
 - State subsidy increases for ELCO have slowed significantly. At the same time, prior years saw gains of \$400k+ annually, 2025–26 funding was lower than 2024–25, and 2026–27 adds only about \$154,890, much of which is labeled as adequacy funding.
 - ELCO’s adjusted Act 1 index for 2026–27 is 4.2%, and the budget currently assumes using the full index, with projections suggesting similar or slightly lower indices (around 3.8–4.0%) in the coming years.
 - The total 2026–27 budgeted revenues are approximately \$58.36 million, with about 70% coming from local sources, under 30% from the state, and just over 1% from federal funds.
 - On the expenditure side, roughly 64.5% of every dollar goes to instruction and instructional support, and about 65.4% of total costs are salaries and benefits. Major cost drivers include cyber charter tuition, medical/dental increases, CTC costs, and the restoration of a capital reserve transfer.
 - To prepare for Lebanon County CTC renovation debt, ELCO must dedicate 0.75% of the tax increase each year for four years, adding about \$250,000 annually to debt service until it reaches roughly \$1 million.
 - After several years of fund balance declines, ELCO is projected to increase fund balance in 2025–26 by about \$1.3 million (largely due to a two-year debt restructuring), ending at around \$7 million, and then using that as the starting point for 2026–27.
 - District assessed value rose from about \$1.769 billion to \$1.782 billion (a 0.73% increase) from July 1, 2025, to now. Long-range projections assume another \$50 million in new assessments coming online, which will help narrow future budget gaps.
 - Due to attrition and the failure to replace some positions, the 2026–27 salary budget is roughly \$64,000 lower than 2025–26, even as other cost categories continue to grow.
 - While statewide “adequacy” or Ready to Learn funding has increased by about \$34 million since 2023–24 for Lebanon County schools overall, ELCO receives only \$100,000 total across two recent years, a very small share relative to others.
 - The initial 2026–27 deficit of about \$2.5 million has been reduced to roughly \$450,000 through revenue refinements, attrition savings, and about \$297,000 in cuts to building and department budgets.
 - Even with a full 4.2% tax increase, flat/slow state support, rising mandated costs, and a still-projected \$450k deficit, ELCO must continue to rely heavily on local revenue and careful cost control while also planning for

significant upcoming obligations such as CTC renovations and capital needs.

- Mr. Santos and Mrs. Moyer thanked Mrs. Mathias and Mrs. Hanichak for their work on the budget.
- Mr. Ondrusek suggested that pressure be placed on the State to increase funding to relieve the burden on local taxpayers.
- Mr. Kramer stated that the district needs to entice businesses to come into the district.

Public Comment:

- Mrs. Showalter, a high school art teacher, spoke about the need to fill the second high school art teaching position. A handout was provided to the committee that outlined the number of students in each course at the high school. She highlighted that current and projected enrollments in Art 1–3, independent study, printmaking, and especially pottery are strong, and that cutting the pottery program would displace about 70 students, who would need new electives, and deprive them of an important creative outlet. She emphasized that many students see art and pottery as their “safe space” and primary reason for coming to school, and that advanced art and pottery courses are crucial for those pursuing postsecondary art programs. She also noted that high school art supports extensive community engagement (murals, public displays, and an upcoming mural unveiling at the Myerstown Library on June 3 at 5:30 p.m.), which would be difficult to sustain with only one art teacher.

Next Finance Committee Meeting:

- June 9, 2026

Adjournment

- Mr. Ondrusek adjourned the meeting at 6:40 pm.

Future Finance Committee Meetings:

August 4, 2026
September 9, 2026
October 6, 2026
November 3, 2026