Minutes for the Meet and Discuss Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District held in the High School Cafeteria on Wednesday, August 13, 2025.

I. Mrs. Carpenter called the meeting to order at approximately 7:10 p.m.

The Meet and Discuss Board Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District is held on Wednesday, August 13, 2025. This meeting is being held to review the agenda for the regular monthly Board Meeting that will be held on Wednesday, August 20, 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 (Present for Roll Call and Presentation Only)

Mr. Garrett Kovacevic, Treasurer

Mrs. Adina Ferragonio

Mrs. Cathy Fischer

Miss Amy Fitsko

Mrs. Mary Jo Kehoe

Mrs. Kelly Romasco

Mr. Matt Zatchey

Others Present:

Dr. Joseph W. Pasquerilla, Superintendent

Dr. Amy Filipowski, Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Michelle Amadio, Business Manager / Director of Operations

Ms. Megan Turnbull, 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, August 13th to discuss:

- o Personnel matter(s)
- o Matters subject to attorney-client privilege and other confidentiality laws
- o Litigation or threatened litigation matters
- o Sensitive public safety issues
- Salary schedule and labor relations

VI. Correspondence

VII. Amendments to the Agenda/Approval of the Agenda

Amended item 2 under Building and grounds to include 'subject to finalization from the solicitor'.

Miss Fitsko made a motion to remove clear backpacks from Handbooks, seconded by Mr. Zatchey. Mrs. Ferragonio, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Kehoe, Mr. Kovaevic, Mrs. Romasco, and Mr. Carpenter voted against the motion.

VIII. Recognition/Presentation

ABC Transit – 2025-2026 Transportation Plan Presentation

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.

Josh Gill, Economy Borough, PA

- Concerns with clear backpacks
- Concerns with the bleachers not being planned for

Mr. Carpenter, Ambridge, PA

- In support of clear backpacks, if they could prevent a single instance of harm.
- After surveying the visitor bleachers, it was unforeseen that they were found to be unsafe. They will be demolished, but the plan is to replace them.

Dawn Alexa, Ambridge, PA

- Why are binders listed on the school supply list?
- Daughter transferred back to the district and did not have a schedule for orientation day.
 - The updated 2025-2026 school supply list does not include the binders.
 - ➤ Dr. Pasquerilla welcomed the student back to the district, and Guidance will be contacted for scheduling.

The Board discussed the pros and cons of making clear backpacks mandatory for all students. Some agreed that it would increase school safety and believed the measure could deter potential threats, helping to create a more secure environment. However, some raised concerns about student privacy and students' normalcy. There was also discussion about the financial burden this would place on families. After extensive discussion and weighing a variety of perspectives, the majority of the Board decided to move forward with a policy requiring clear backpacks for all students in the district.

X. LEGISLATIVE ACTION FOR THIS MEETING

Education and Technology

Mrs. Romasco

1. Student Handbooks

- a) It is recommended to adopt the High School Student Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year.
- b) It is recommended to adopt the Middle School Student Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year.
- c) It is recommended to adopt the Elementary Student Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year.
- d) It is recommended to adopt the PreK Counts Student Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year.
- e) It is recommended to adopt the Ambridge Area Cyber Academy Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year.

2. 2025 Pennsylvania Summit for Educational Leaders

It is recommended to ratify the approval of Stephaine Hull's attendance at the 2025 Pennsylvania Summit for Education Leaders from August 3rd through August 5th, 2025, at the Nittany Lion Inn and State College Area High School, State College, PA. All expenses (travel, lodging, meals) are paid per Board Policy 331, Job-Related Expenses. Registration fee paid through Wright Promise Grant funds.

3. <u>Disposal of Equipment at Ambridge Area High School</u>

It is recommended to dispose of unusable/obsolete technology equipment (see Appendix), which is no longer used at the High School, as per Board Policy 706.1 - *Disposal of Surplus Property and Obsolete Equipment*.

Mrs. Romasco moved to approve items 1-3, seconded by Mrs. Ferragonio. Mr. Zatchey voted against all the motions.

Building and Grounds

Mrs. Ferragonio

1. <u>High School Cafeteria Boiler</u>

It is recommended to ratify the purchase of a replacement boiler for the high school from Rayburg Appliance Services, Inc., for a total cost of \$14,950.47. This was the lowest qualified bid.

2. Tom Sipes Demolition Contract Agreement

It is recommended to approve and ratify an agreement for demolition services with Tom Sipes Demolition in the amount of \$85,000.00 for the removal, disposal, and grading of the High School visitor bleacher site. **Subject to finalization from the solicitor.**

3. High School Stadium Lights

It is recommended to approve a proposal from Yates Electric LLC to provide temporary power for the stadium lights during the demolition of the visitor side bleachers, at a total cost of \$4,289.00.

Mrs. Ferragonio moved to approve items 1-2, as amended, seconded by Mr. Carpenter. Mr. Zatchey voted against Item #1.

Athletics Mrs. Fischer

1. Athletic Handbook

It is recommended that the revised High School Athletic Handbook be adopted for the 2025-2026 school year.

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

Personnel

*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. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Brianna Hunt from her position as an Ambridge Area High School Mathematics Teacher, effective July 14, 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.

2. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Lee Levi from her position as a Highland Elementary School Learning Support, Emotional Support, Autistic Support, and Life Skills All Grade Levels, effective August 15, 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.

3. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Alexander Jewell from his position as an Ambridge Area Middle School English Teacher, effective August 12, 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.

4. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Molly Cleckley as the Ambridge Area School District Special Education Secretary, effective August 29, 2025, with regret.

5. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Donovan Hopkins as a Paraprofessional at Highland Elementary, effective July 14, 2025, with regret.

6. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Marsha Geweth as a Paraprofessional at Economy Elementary, effective July 17, 2025, with regret.

7. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of Amanda Knox as a Five-Hour Cook at the high school, effective July 25, 2025, with regret.

8. Resignation

It is recommended to approve the resignation of RaeAnne Smedley as a PreK Paraprofessional at Economy Elementary, effective July 29, 2025, with regret.

9. Professional Employee

It is recommended to approve Claire Spaziani as a State Street Elementary Fourth Grade Teacher at a salary of \$50,981.00 (Step 1, Master), effective with the first day of new teacher induction, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEA/PSEA Agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, and PDE certifications if applicable.

10. Professional Employee

It is recommended to approve Michaela Pavlinich as an Ambridge Area Middle School Learning and Emotional Support Teacher All Grades at a salary of \$50,981.00 (Step 1, Master), effective with the first day of new teacher induction, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEA/PSEA Agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, and PDE certifications if applicable.

11. Professional Employee

It is recommended to approve Chelsea Dugan as an Ambridge Area High School Special Education Job Coach, Learning Support/Emotional Support/Autistic Support/ and Life Skills All Grade Levels at a salary of \$50,071.00 (Step 1, Bachelor), effective with the first day of new teacher induction, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEA/PSEA Agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, and PDE certifications if applicable.

12. Professional Employee

It is recommended to approve Abby Sobel as an Ambridge Area High School Learning Support/Emotional Support/Autistic Support/Life Skills/Transition/Special Education Teacher at a salary of \$50,981.00 (Step 1, Master), effective with the first day of new teacher induction, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEA/PSEA Agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, and PDE certifications if applicable.

13. Professional Employee

It is recommended to approve Jessie Wehler as an Elementary STEAM Teacher All Buildings at a salary of \$50,981.00 (Step 1, Master), effective with the first day of new teacher induction, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEA/PSEA Agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, and PDE certifications if applicable.

14. Professional Employee

It is recommended to approve Victoria Stewart as an Ambridge Area High School Mathematics Teacher at a salary of \$50,071.00 (Step 1, Bachelor), effective with the first day of new teacher induction, as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Association AAEA/PSEA Agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, and PDE certifications if applicable.

15. Paraprofessionals

It is recommended to hire the following individuals to fill the Paraprofessional positions as per the terms of the Ambridge Area Education Support Professional Association (ESPA/PSEA-NEA) collective bargaining agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

Kim Robinson, Middle School Gabriella Godby, PreK at Highland Elementary

16. Mentor Teacher

It is recommended to approve the following mentor teacher assignments for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years, as per the negotiated agreement:

Mentor Teachers	New Teachers
Lisa Kovach	Mia Boccabella
Chelsea Benedict	Samantha Banks
Jennifer Ax	Justin Egizio
Heidi Bober	Michaela Pavlinich
Kent Withrow	Victoria Stewart
Bonnie DeAngelis	Chelsea Dugan
Tom Frost	Jessie Wehler
Bonnie DeAngelis	Abby Sobel
Suzanne McKenzie	Claire Spaziani

17. Permanent Contract

It is recommended that the following professional staff, who will have completed three years of satisfactory service in the Ambridge Area School District be awarded permanent professional contracts:

Miranda Swartz Sarah Schaffer Hannah Jozwiak Anna Rubaker Lee Levi Cory Cavanaugh Emily Schultz Ethan Becker Alex Jewel Zachary Dugan Alexis Cogis

18. 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.

ACTIVITY/CLUB (High School)		SALARY
Tech Production	Benjamin Holmes	\$ 450.00
	Kristin Holmes	\$ 450.00
Technology Student Association (TSA)	Benjamin Holmes	\$1,350.00
JR Drill Team	Kara Russo	\$1,200.00
Robotics Club	Benjamin Holmes	\$ 235.00
	Kristin Holmes	\$ 235.00
Video Production Club	Benjamin Holmes	\$ 470.00
Unified Club	Ashley Schmidt	\$ 235.00

\$470.00

Teen Leadership Chess Club	Anna Mild Kim Bogati Teri Kutzavitch	\$ 235.00 \$ 470.00 \$ 470.00
ACTIVITY/CLUB (Middle School		SALARY
Student Council	Sarah Yannessa	\$235.00
	Kelly Hartley	\$235.00
Interact	Erin Wolf	\$470.00
Science Explorers Club	Gianna Sinatra	\$470.00

19. Posted Positions: Department Heads and Building Heads

Technology Student Association (TSA) Scott Setzenfand

It is recommended that the following individual who has applied for the specified posted position for the 2025-2026 school year be approved at the salary designated in the negotiated agreement, pending receipt of current clearances and drug screening:

DEPARTMENT HEADS		SALARY
<u>K-12</u>		
Applied Science and Technology	Benjamin Holmes	\$1,365.00

20. 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.

1)	Girls' Tennis	<u>Stipend</u>
	a) Megan Racioppo, Head Coach	\$4,300.00
	b) Ty Baker, Assistant Coach	\$1,050.00
	c) Joseph Fortune, Volunteer Coach	No Remuneration
2)	Boys' Golf	Stipend
	a) Zack Dugan, Assistant Coach	\$1,050.00
3)	Boys' Basketball	<u>Stipend</u>
	a) Craig Wiltrek, Middle School Coach	\$1,750.00
	b) Marlon Kittrell, Middle School Coach	\$1,750.00
4)	Wrestling	Stipend
	a) Larry Knopsnyder, Head Coach	\$4,300.00

21. Principal Certification Practicum

It is recommended to approve Kristen Folk, a student enrolled at Robert Morris University, to complete her Principal Certification practicum at State Street Elementary, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening. Kristen will be placed with Mrs. Jo Ann Hoover.

22. 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.

Bus Driver

Kristofer Balognae

Amy Frolo

John Graham

Justin Hockenberry

Don Holt

David Jordan

Mellainie Lipscomb

Michael Mcsorley

Kevin Roland

Van Driver

Donald Walker

Maureen Reed

23. 2025-2026 Summer Band Camp Ratification

It is recommended to ratify the following band camp position for the 2025-2026 summer band camp at the designated stipends, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening, provided band camp can be held as normal:

Auxiliary Assistant Evie Jankowski \$1,300.00

24. Cafeteria Food Service Union Worker

It is recommended to hire the following individuals as Cafeteria Food Service Union Workers, in accordance with the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing, and responses from current or former employers to Act 168 screening.

Glorianna Tenney, Four-Hour Cook at Economy Elementary Chelsea Grimm, Four-Hour Cook at Economy Elementary

Mrs. Kehoe moved to approve items 1-13, seconded by Mrs. Ferragonio. Mr. Zatchey voted against item #20 - 3) a.)

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS (NON-VOTING AGENDA ITEMS)

Education and Technology

Mrs. Romasco

1. Foster Care Youth Transportation MOU

It is recommended to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ambridge Area School District and the Beaver County Children and Youth Services to establish transportation procedures to ensure the educational stability of Foster Care Youth.

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 \$3,172,927.29 and the monthly school district personnel salaries in the amount of \$1,126,964.59 be paid.

2. <u>Cafeteria Monthly Bills and Salaries</u>

It is recommended that the monthly cafeteria bills in the amount of \$10,166.97 and the monthly cafeteria personnel salaries in the amount of 16,440.57 be paid.

3. Tax Exemption

It is recommended to approve the requested real property tax exemption for 412 River Glen Drive, Economy Borough (Parcel 60-044-0598-000) for 2024 school taxes, as certified by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs letter dated May 6, 2024.

Building and Grounds

Mrs. Ferragonio

1. Crossing Guards

It is recommended that crossing guards be placed at locations throughout the Ambridge Area School District for the 2025-2026 school year, as listed below:

10th Street and Duss Avenue

5th Street and Duss Avenue

8th Street and Duss Avenue

15th Street and Church Street

State Street and Harmony Road

Athletics Mrs. Fischer

1. Award of Bowling Facility

It is recommended to approve a bid proposal from Fair Oaks Bowling Lanes to provide a venue for the high school bowling team for a three-year term beginning in 2025-2026.

<u>Public Relations</u> Miss Fitsko

Steering and Rules Mrs. Kehoe

1. Policy 105.1- Curriculum Review by Parents/Guardians and Students – First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to update Policy 105.1 – *Curriculum Review by Parents/Guardians and Students* to ensure that parents/guardians have an opportunity to review instructional material and curriculum.

2. Policy 105.2 - Exemption From Instruction - First Reading

It is recommended, as a first reading, to update Policy 105.2 – *Exemption from Instruction* to update the policy to comply with the requirement of the state Board of Education to assure parents/guardians the right to have their children excused from specific instruction that conflicts with their religious beliefs.

<u>Legislative</u> Miss Fitsko

XII. President's Address

Mr. Carpenter thanked ABC Transit for coming and is looking forward to a great school year for students and staff.

XIII. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Pasquerilla thanks all staff who provided their services to get the buildings ready for school. Thanks to each member of the staff. Looking forward to a great school year.

XIV. Solicitor's 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.

Shaun Duguay, Ambridge, PA

- Son denied transportation to Glade Run.
- Bullying issues against his son went unaddressed.
- District failed to provide a safe environment.
- The district did not address the suicidal ideation issue that his son experienced.
- Came to the building to address the issue and was escorted out by law enforcement.
- He was falsely reported to the police by our building secretary.

Ms. Turnbull, School Solicitor

Advised Mr. Duguay to consult with the Administration Team, as this is not a Board issue.

Randy Dawson, Ambridge, PA

- Concerns with bleachers being rebuilt.
- Suggested that we seek sponsorship for our field, similar to our previous partnership with Wright, to help fund its reconstruction and updates.

Fabiola Gergerich, Ambridge, PA

- Thanked ABC Transit for their presentation.
- Why only visitor side bleachers?
- Was the demolition of the bleachers budgeted for?
- Thanks for updating the Board Policy on religious rights, as a practicing Catholic.
- Why not start school after Labor Day?

Dr. Pasquerilla

- The home side bleachers are newer and made of aluminum, while the visitor bleachers are much older and constructed from concrete.
- ➤ We align our school calendar with CTC.

Mr. Carpenter

The bleachers were not included in the budget. Mr. Carpenter also noted that the district's aging buildings, including the high school, often require unexpected maintenance like the recent boiler replacement being approved. He stressed that the board has been fiscally responsible, having added \$2 million to the fund balance despite rising everyday costs and unplanned projects. He concluded by stating that they have been able to "stay the course" and be fiscally responsible.

Dr. Pasquerilla

> Credited the recent board for avoiding raising taxes while remaining fiscally responsible. Despite difficult decisions and rising costs.

Josh Gill, Economy Borough, PA

- Thanked the Board for no tax raise, but noted that with the recent assessment, all taxes went up.
- Feels many other factors should be considered before implementing the clear backpacks.
- What training was held for staff on the Evolv system?
- Why are the SROs at the middle and high school not manning the Evolv system?
- Concerns with the lack of school nurses and whether current salaries are adequate.
- Concerns with equitable resources for academic and health supplies for the students.
- Why did the administration apply for CSI and TSI for all buildings?

Ms. Turnbull

Explained the following: To prevent school districts from receiving a "windfall" after a countywide reassessment, Pennsylvania law requires them to calculate and adopt a new revenue-neutral millage rate. This adjusted rate ensures that the total tax revenue collected in the first year after the reassessment does not exceed the total revenue collected the previous year.

Dr. Pasquerilla

> Staff had training for the Evlov system, and there were meetings throughout the school year to keep everyone up-to-date on the **Evolv System**.

- ➤ The district does a SHARRS report, and the district is reimbursed from the state for certain health services and nurse supplies. We have not heard that there was a lack of supplies. We will look into this.
- > The Nurse position is in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and during negotiations is the time to see if this salary can be increased.
- > Support is offered to all of our buildings.
- > The other buildings did not qualify for CSI or TSI.

XVI. Motion to Adjourn

At approximately 10:00 p.m. Miss Fitsko moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Romasco. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. June Mueller, Board Secretary

APPENDIX A

Number of Devices	Device Model Number	Device Model
1	2847	
1	3140	DELL LATITUDE
18	3190	DELL LATITUDE
5	3350	Dell Latitude
46	3380	
2	5480	Dell Latitude
7	5550	Dell Latitude
44	5580	Dell Latitude
15	5590	DELL LATITUDE
1		LENOVO
8		Desk Phone
1	114155VU	LENOVO
1	14G5	HP CHROMEBOOK
1	17 by 3053C1	HP
1	1702FP	Dell Monitor
2	1708Fbb	Dell Monitor
1	26LV610V	Toshiba Monitor
1	5QPB	Toshiba
1	695WI	Epson Bright Line
4	A1395	IPAD 2nd Gen.
41	A1474	IPAD AIR 1
10	A1566	IPAD AIR 2
1	A1566	IPAD Air 2
6	A1822	IPAD 5th Gen.
21	A1983	6TH GEN IPAD
6	A1893	5TH GEN IPAD
2	A1983	6TH GEN IPAD
27	A2197	7TH GEN IPAD
1	A2602	9TH GEN IPAD
1	AA35G	Atlas Mlixer
1	E156FPC	Dell
2	E197FPb	Dell Monitor
1	E6470	Latitude
1	IFT20W30	HP Monitor
1	K17A12	Dell
7	L921G	NU Monitor
1	L9ZA	Princeton
1	NX9020	HP COMPAQ
30	Optiplex 390	Dell Tower
12	OPTIPLEX 580	DELL TOWER
8	OPTIPLEX 7050	DELL

11	P170St	Dell Monitor
3	POU1	Avor Doc Cam
25	QL711V	DELL NU MONITOR
1	S1502D	JTX Monitor
1	SDM-S71R	Sony Monitor
1	V173	Acer Monitor
1	VS11349	VIEWSONIC
1	w1907	HP
		INFOCOUS
1	X1A	BATTERY
3	XD 206U	Mits. E Projector
1	XUC18	HP
1		Philips 4 head VHS