

Port Allegany School District

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
Committee of the Whole Meeting

March 2, 2026
High School Library
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Ernst called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the high school library with a moment of silence and the flag salute. Ms. Plumstead called the roll.

Board Present: Mrs. Erica Babcock, Mr. Christopher Ernst, Mr. Alex Johnson, Mr. Sean Lathrop, Mrs. Erica Petruzzi, Mr. Jason Stake, Mrs. Ink Young and Mr. Marc Budd

Board Absent: Mrs. Barbara Delacour

Others Present: High School Principal Tracy Kio, Elementary Principal Greg Oliver, Assistant Principal Kathleen Bostjancic, Business Manager Adam Moate, Kristi Freeman, Chelsea Caden, Crystal Drew, Renee Johnson, Amanda Priest, Bethany Mealy, Andrew Krellner, Ashley Carlson and Tabatha Dart

Public Comment

Mr. Sean Lathrop congratulated Mr. Marc Budd for being inducted into the D9 Hall of Fame.

Committee Reports

Christopher Ernst, Intermediate Unit Nine Board of Directors representative, provided the board with an information packet. Mr. Ernst reported on the IU9 Board of Directors, including the first review of the 2026-2027 IU9 general operating budget and the approval of the 2025-2026 program of services. Motion passed to approve an interagency agreement between the IU9 and the Port Allegany School District. Motion approved to submit an application to the CDE for Act 34 public school facility grant funding for the CTC. Mr. Ernst mentioned the Superintendent's Advisory Council meetings held on January 4th and February 11, 2026. Discussion was had on the letters sent by the Port Allegany School District to PA and federal government representatives regarding access to school facilities by registered sex offenders. Mr. Ernst asked the IU9 board directors to share the letters with their respective school boards.

Alex Johnson, Seneca Highlands CTC General Advisory Board representative, had nothing to report.

Due to the PSBA Legislative Representative position being vacant, there was nothing to report. Mr. Ernst mentioned the board will need to fill this position and asked for volunteers.

Minutes of Proceeding Meetings

Approved the minutes from the February 9, 2026 regular meeting. Motion: Mr. Stake; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion passed.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Budd discussed issues with the curtain in the auditorium, including a support bar underneath the main ductwork that has caused damage. Maintenance staff took down the curtain, and a professional from Pittsburgh is coming to assess the situation. The possibility of replacing the curtains was mentioned, however this could cost up to \$250,000.00. The board discussed potential temporary solutions, such as cutting off four feet of the curtain and using a side curtain.

Mr. Budd informed the board about the Easter break schedule and upcoming board meetings. The board opted to keep the April board meeting dates as they are.

Mr. Budd discussed the recent resignation from high school custodian Mitch Dowell. He stated that even though his time here was short, he will be missed and thanked him for his service. This position has been posted both internally and externally and Mr. Budd's hope is to have a name to bring to the next meeting on March 9th, for approval.

Mr. Budd discussed the previously approved resignation of guidance counselor and teacher, Mr. Riley, and the need to advertise for this position. The board discussed the roles of this position and the curriculum that Mr. Riley teaches. The board was agreeable to posting for this position to hopefully fill it sooner rather than later so Mr. Riley can spend time with his replacement.

Mr. Budd and the board discussed and reviewed the district's growing need for speech services, noting that 99 students are currently receiving services, with at least 105 projected for next year before kindergarten enrollment. The district is paying over \$250,000.00 to IU9 and approximately \$79,000.00 to Care for Children for contracted services after being unable to fill a district speech therapist position. Given the rising caseload and costs, the board discussed advertising for a full-time district-employed speech therapist, though recruitment may be challenging. Mr. Johnson asked if all students requiring speech services are currently being served. Mrs. Bostjancic confirmed.

Mr. Budd and the board discussed and reviewed a \$305,000 COPS grant with a \$75,000 district match, intended for swipe-card access to all high school classrooms, radios, repeaters, and some camera upgrades. Members expressed concern about the cost and necessity of electronic access for every classroom, potential power/backup issues, and maintenance, noting that current doors are already locked under a Level 2 lockdown daily. Radio and repeater upgrades were seen as beneficial for improving emergency communication. No decision is required immediately, and the board will review the grant details further before deciding whether to accept it.

Mr. Budd provided an update on ongoing HVAC and facility projects. Radiant panels in the science wing are installed and working, but the finned tubing in the middle wing has been

delayed, leaving some rooms inconsistently heated. Electric heaters are still used in parts of the building, and additional VRF units (36 total) and three roof units will be installed starting June 1 to improve system performance and address prior under-sizing issues. The district is coordinating with Schneider (HVAC contractor), Mazza (service contractor), and LG (equipment manufacturer) to ensure proper installation, commissioning, and warranty coverage for new and existing units. Engineers will review plans on-site before installation begins. Challenges include roof warranty, prior system inefficiencies, and uncommissioned units from earlier projects.

Mr. Budd stated he and Mr. Moate recently met with EI Associates and are still waiting for updated drawings and cost estimates for the playground, vestibule and concession stand. Grant opportunities (Act 34 and regional grants) are being explored to offset costs, though project budgets do not currently exceed minimum thresholds. Mr. Johnson asked if we could apply for a joint grant since the CTC is also applying.

Mr. Budd informed the board that the school's Google licensing needs to be renewed before the end of the school year. Mr. Moate stated this is a three year agreement, totalling \$16,085.25. The board agreed they would like to keep the same provider and were agreeable to adding this to the agenda next week for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Personnel

Approved the resignation of Mitch Dowell as an 8 hour Maintenance/ Custodian effective Friday, February 27, 2026. Motion: Mr. Stake; Second: Mrs. Young. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approved the addition of Mr. Tom Murphy to the substitute teaching list. Motion: Mr. Stake; Second: Mrs. Babcock. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approved the addition of Ms. Amanda Dickerson to the substitute list as a nurse substitute. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mr. Lathrop. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approved the addition of Mr. Travis Osbourne to the support staff substitute list as a custodial/ maintenance substitute. Motion: Mr. Stake; Second: Mr. Johnson. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approved volunteer Tom Murphy to help with the 2025-2026 track and field spring season. Motion: Mr. Stake; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi.

Approved Christian Sevinsky to be a volunteer with Gator Network for the remainder 2025-2026 school year. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Young. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Port Allegany School Board of Directors met in executive session at 8:20 pm to discuss the volunteers for the 2025-2026 spring softball season.

The Port Allegany School Board of Directors returned from executive session at 8:42 pm. Mr. Ernst announced the board would vote on each softball volunteer individually.

Approved volunteer Will Daniels to help with the 2025-2026 softball spring season. Motion: Mr. Stake; Second: Mr. Lathrop. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Stake and seconded by Mrs. Babcock to approve Brooke Pearson as a volunteer for the spring softball season. The motion failed by a vote of 2-6.

Approved volunteer Josh McNeil to help with the 2025-2026 softball spring season. Motion: Mr. Johnson; Second: Mrs. Babcock. The motion passed.

Approved John Boyd as the Assistant Baseball Coach for the 2025-2026 school year with a salary set in accordance with Schedule B1 of the Professional Agreement: \$1,833.00.

Finance

Mr. Moate briefly discussed the Fire/EMS tax credit for 2025.

Board

The board discussed the letters of interest that were received of 3 applicants for the vacant board member position. Mr. Ernst and Mrs. Young both mentioned that all of the letters were very well written and thanked them for showing interest in this position. The board agreed to add Mr. Justin Fillhart to the Port Allegany School Board of Directors. It was noted that Mr. Fillhart's experience in construction, leadership and business management, as well as previous experience as a school board member would be a great asset to the board. Mr. Fillhart will be officially sworn in at the Monday, March 9, 2026 regular meeting.

The board was notified that Ms. Tyler Anderson has met all the qualifications to comply with Section 1108 of the Pennsylvania School Code resulting in professional employee status granting her tenure.

Adjournment

The PASD Board of Directors adjourned the meeting at 8:54 pm. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Young. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Plumstead
Secretary to the Board of School Directors

Next Scheduled Meeting

March 9, 2026 - Regular Meeting