

Port Allegany School District

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
Regular Meeting

March 9, 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. Justin Fillhart, Mr. Alex Johnson, Mr. Sean Lathrop, Mrs. Erica Petruzzi and Mr. Marc Budd

Board Absent: Mrs. Barbara Delacour, Mr. Jason Stake and Mrs. Ink Young

Others Present: High School Principal Tracy Kio, Business Manager Adam Moate, Mark Willcox, Christie Willcox, Bria Willcox, Brooke Kane-Walker/ Pearson, C.Tingley, Amber Funk, Ashley Carlson, Crystal Drew, Nicole Parrish, Kristi Freeman, Andrew Krellner, Amanda Priest, Tabatha Dart, Bethany Mealy, Laura Alfieri and Val Seybert

Formal Appointment of New Board Member

Mr. Ernst administered the oath of office to Mr. Fillhart.

Public Comment

Mr. Mark Willcox, the interim head softball coach, requested the board to reconsider their vote denying Brooke Kane-Walker/ Pearson as a volunteer softball coach. Mr. Willcox provided a detailed background on Brooke, highlighting her qualifications and contributions to the softball team. Mr. Willcox emphasized the benefits of having Brooke as a volunteer coach, including her extensive experience and dedication to developing young athletes.

Ms. Bria Willcox, a 10th grade student of the Port Allegany School District spoke in support of Brooke Kane-Walker/ Pearson. Bria shares her personal experience with Brooke as her travel softball coach and praised her coaching skills and dedication. Bria highlighted Brooke's division I softball background, emphasizing the value of her experience. Ms. Willcox concluded by reiterating the benefits Brooke would bring to the softball team as a volunteer coach.

Minutes of Proceeding Meetings

Approved the minutes from the March 2, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting. Motion: Mr. Johnson; Second: Mrs. Babcock. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Approved the Treasurer's Report for the period ending February 28, 2026 as presented by Mr. Johnson. Motion: Mr. Lathrop; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion was carried unanimously.

Bill Lists and Payrolls

General Fund investments on February 28, 2026 were as follows: Juniata Valley Bank (JVB) Investment Savings - \$8,199,565.70 and JVB Now Account - \$23,392.64. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion was carried unanimously.

February 28, 2026 balance for various accounts were reported as follows: Capital Reserve Fund - \$1,673,831.33; Student Activities Account - \$139,873.94; Student Athletics Account - \$164,984.86; Cafeteria Account - \$265,491.46; PLGIT Class Amount: \$809.64; and PLGIT Prime Amount: \$5,778,805.66 Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approved the General Fund Bill List of March 9, 2026 - \$ 1,133,212.01 and payrolls of February 12, 2026 - \$ 295,693.87 and February 26, 2026 - \$ 298,908.93. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion was carried unanimously.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Budd provided an update on the auditorium curtain project, noting the need for new curtains and rigging due to the old materials being in poor condition. The estimated cost for the new materials and rigging is between \$150,000 and \$160,000.

Mr. Budd stated he met with an LG rep and representatives from Mazza and Schneider Electric to discuss ongoing issues with the building's heating system and the steps being taken to correct them. It was noted that previous system approvals and required validation processes – such as LG's design verification program – were not properly completed, contributing to current performance problems. Concerns about the building envelope were dismissed, as the structure has remained unchanged since 1950 and should not be the root cause of the heating failures.

To address deficiencies, their plan included installing three additional outdoor units (increasing the total from five to eight) and adding 36 new indoor VRF units, along with redistributing system loads to improve efficiency. Fined tube/baseboard heating will be reinstalled along exterior walls, while ceiling-mounted radiant panels in the science wing are already functioning effectively. The system will rely more heavily on natural gas heating as temperatures drop, supported by existing high-efficiency boilers that are capable of meeting demand.

Schneider Electric is covering the cost of corrective work, as the issues stem from their original design, and they have remained committed to the project despite expectations they might withdraw. However, uncertainty remains, warranties, future service costs (which may double), and overall system performance guarantees.

Additional concerns include potential roof damage and warranty voiding from new

installations, the need for structural analysis, and lack of written guarantees before proceeding. The existing system has been overworked, leading to compressor failures, and LG has voided warranties on some components due to excessive strain.

The board emphasized the need for stronger assurances from Schneider, including warranties, possible extended maintenance coverage, and proof that the redesigned system will meet performance expectations moving forward.

Mr. Budd provided an update regarding EI Associates. He stated they have added metal detectors and bullet proof glass, for each school, to the new construction as a security measure. The board discussed applying for the Act 34 grant. There is a 25% match.

Mr. Budd discussed a community request he received for upgrades to the pickleball courts, including the possible removal of tennis lines. The board considered the benefits of the pickleball court upgrades and the potential use of Burgart Foundation funds for the project. The board was agreeable to fulfilling this community request.

NEW BUSINESS

Personnel

Approved Tracy Smith to be a volunteer with Gator Network for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion passed.

Approved the addition of Ms. Melissa Gallup to the support staff substitute list. Motion: Mr. Johnson; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion passed.

The PASD Board of Directors entered into executive session at 7:46 pm to discuss Drew Evens, a recommended volunteer for the 2025-2026 spring softball season. Motion: Mrs. Babcock ; Second: Mr. Johnson. The motion carried.

Mrs. Babcock made a motion to exit the executive session at 8:04 pm. This was seconded by Mr. Johnson. The motion carried.

Approved volunteer Drew Evens to help with the 2025-2026 spring softball season. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mrs. Babcock made a motion to add Brooke Kane-Walker/ Pearson to the agenda for recommendation to be a volunteer coach for the 2025-2026 spring softball season. Mrs. Petruzzi seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1, with Mr. Lathrop voting no.

Approved Brooke Kane-Walker/ Pearson to be a volunteer coach for the 2025-2026 spring softball season. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mrs. Petruzzi. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1, with Mr. Lathrop voting no.

Finance

Approved the recommendation to renew the Google licensing 3 year contract agreement at a

total cost of \$16,085.28. Year 1 cost: \$4,994.22; Year 2 cost: \$5,545.53; Year 3 cost: \$5,545.53. Motion: Mr. Lathrop; Second: Mr. Fillhart. The motion was carried unanimously.

Buildings & Grounds

Mr. Budd discussed an outdoor stainless steel exhaust pipe that needs to be repaired at the elementary school. There is a 90 degree elbow where the pipe comes out of the building that has disintegrated and although the pipe is still venting, this will need to be replaced. He stated Mazza had been contacted and they were getting prices for the repair.

Board

Mr. Ernst mentioned receiving a response from Representative Causer's office regarding the board's concerns about school property and registered sex offenders. He stated this is the only response he has received at this time and will update the board if he receives any other responses.

Executive Session

The PASD Board of Directors entered into executive session at 8:12 pm for a discussion of personnel matters. Motion: Mrs. Babcock; Second: Mr. Lathrop. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Lathrop made a motion to exit the executive session. Mr. Fillhart seconded. The motion was carried unanimously. The executive session exited at 9:08 pm.

Adjournment

The PASD Board of Directors adjourned the meeting at 9:09 pm. Motion: Mr. Johnson; Second: Mr. Lathrop. The motion passed.

Next Scheduled Meeting

April 6, 2026 - Committee of the Whole Meeting