October 06, 2026 – Board Work Session Minutes

President Mr. Kyle Batz called this Work Session of the Tulpehocken Area School District Board of Directors to order in the District Office Board Room at 7:03 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance and opening Prayer followed.

PRESENT: Mr. Kyle Batz, Mr. Christopher Beitler, Mr. Harry Fox, Mr. Chris Heck, Mr. Matthew Hetrick (via phone), Mr. Carl Kauffman, Ms. Jennifer Kester, Mr. William T. Palmer Jr. (7:09), and Mrs. Kristan Rissmiller.

ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Andrew Netznik, Superintendent
Mr. Taylor Charles, Assistant to the Superintendent
Mr. Matthew Shirk, Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Kimberly Umphrey, Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Kylene Sanders, Director of Teaching and Learning
Dr. Radha Ericson, Supervisor of Teaching and Learning
Ms. Adrienne Troutman, Coordinator of Student Services
Mr. Trevor Brown, Dir. of Athletics, Student Activities & Comm. Relations
Mr. Christopher Hamrick, High School Principal
Mr. Chad Gerard, HS Assistant Principal
Mr. Brian Foreman, MS Principal
Ms. Lindsey Tinney, Penn-Bernville Elementary Principal
Mr. Andrew Guers, Bethel Elementary Principal
Ms. Andrea Kreiser, Recording Secretary

And the following interested citizens and staff: Mr. Robert Sattazahn, Mr. Andrew Kline, Mrs. Jennifer Becker, Mr. Steve Becker.

Call to Order ..... President

Pledge of Allegiance ..... President

Prayer..... Board Member

Roll Call ..... Recording Secretary

I. Discussion Items

1. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Netznik

A. School Board Years of Service Recognition – PSBA

Mr. Andrew Kline, Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA), recognized Mr. Heck for 15 years, Mr. Fox for 5 years, Mr. Hetrick for 5 years, and Mr. Palmer for 25 years of service as members of the Tulpehocken Area School District Board of School Directors.

B. Election Day – Tuesday, November 3 – Middle School Cafeteria

Dr. Netznik reminded the Board that, due to Election Day on November 3, the Board meeting will be held in the Middle School Cafeteria.

C. Define, Refine, and Align Administrative Presentation – Instructional Administrative Team

The Instructional Administrative Team provided an overview of the programs they will be focusing on throughout the school year to continue strengthening each program and ensuring consistency across the District. Areas of focus and administrative leads include: Mr. Gerard – Check-In/Check-Out (CICO); Mr. Hamrick and Mrs. Tinney – Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS); Mr. Foreman and Mrs. Tinney – Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS); Mr. Guers and Ms. Troutman – English as a Second Language (ESL); and Ms. Troutman and Mr. Brown – Community & Family Engagement. Dr. Ericson will provide oversight and support for all programs.

D. Graduation Project Discussion

Dr. Netznik asked the Board for feedback regarding whether the District should continue requiring graduation projects. He noted that graduation projects are not a state requirement and require additional District resources, including teacher compensation and staffing for Saturday morning presentations.
The Board discussed the current graduation project requirements and their value to students. Ms. Kester expressed interest in developing a more meaningful experience for students, noting that the current graduation project has moved away from its original intended purpose. Mr. Fox questioned how the current requirement benefits students and suggested placing greater emphasis on practical skills, including financial literacy and everyday life skills.
Ms. Sanders shared that Personal Finance is now a required course for graduates beginning this school year. The Board asked the administration to review the Personal Finance course requirements and explore options for restructuring the current graduation project requirement, including the possibility of incorporating components of a graduation project and/or community service. Administration will develop a proposal and bring it back to the Board for further consideration.

E. STEMAg Innovation Academy Update

Dr. Netznik informed the Board that, due to stormwater runoff from the project entering the creek, the District will now be required to obtain a different permit. He explained that there are three options available, each with varying timelines and associated costs. Dr. Netznik also shared that he is meeting with representatives from Lehigh University, Alvernia University, and Penn State Berks to explore potential partnership opportunities. Additionally, he will be meeting with several individuals over the next few weeks to discuss potential funding and grant opportunities for the project.

2. Citizen/Student Participation (Pertaining to Agenda items only)

3. Buildings & Grounds/Technology

A. Penn-Bernville Elementary HVAC Project Update – Mr. Shirk

Mr. Shirk reported that the District sent a letter to the contractor regarding delays in the project timeline. Since the contractor's receipt of the letter, progress on the project has increased. The permanent boilers are expected to be operational by October 13, with the entire project anticipated to be completed by the end of October.

4. Finance

5. Personnel

5A – 5E A resolution was offered by Mr. Palmer, seconded by Mr. Heck to approve the following motions:

5A. Approve the following resignations:

- **Wendy Fisher, Administrative Assistant to the Bethel Elementary Principal for purpose of retirement, effective December 4, 2026.**
- **Sandra Boyer, Life Skills/Autistic Support Paraeducator at Bethel Elementary for the purpose of retirement, effective October 30, 2026.**
- **Erin Dietrich, Kindergarten Teacher at Bethel Elementary, effective upon mutual agreement between districts.**

5B. Approve the following substitute classified staff/event staff for the remainder of the 2026/2027 school year: ***(Pending receipt of all required documentation, clearances, and disclosures.)***

- **Carol Parsons** **Instructional Aide/Food Service/Lunch- Recess Aide/Secretarial**

5C Approve supplemental contracts for the following winter Coach positions for the 2026/2027 sports season.

• **Mark Risser**	**Head Boys' Basketball Coach**	**$4940**
• **Craig Tranovich**	**Assistant Boys' Basketball Coach**	**$3476**
• **Michael Priotte**	**MS Head Boys' Basketball Coach**	**$1937**
• **James Rissmiller**	**MS Assistant Boys' Basketball Coach**	**$1397**
• **Luke Ruffner**	**Assistant Wrestling Coach**	**$3512**
• **Josh Giorgio***	**MS Head Wresting Coach**	**$1800**
• **Mel Fansler**	**MS Assistant Wrestling Coach**	**$1530**

**** Pending receipt of all required documentation, clearances, and disclosures.***

5D Approve the following Extra-Curricular positions for the 2026/2027 School Year:

- **Megan Bux — Musical Scenic Artist — $739**

5E. Approve the following volunteers for the remainder of the 2026/2027 school year:

- **Samantha Parker — Field Trips/Classroom/School Events**
- **Jason Wenrich — Field Trips/Classroom/School Events**
- **Elizabeth Lawrey — Field Trips/Classroom/School Events**
- **Ashley Hassler — Field Trips/Classroom**
- **Katherine Grim — Field Trips/Classroom/School Events**
- **Tiffany Matthew — Field Trips**

The above motions were voted on as stated below.

AYES: Mr. Christopher Beitler, Mr. Steven Bressler, Mr. Harry Fox, Mr. Matthew Hetrick, Mr. Chris Heck, Ms. Jennifer Kester, Mr. William T. Palmer Jr.
NAYS: Mr. Kyle Batz, Mrs. Kristan Rissmiller
ABSENT:
ABSTAINED:
This motion was carried 7-2.

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6. Programs

7. Policy

A. Give first reading with the intent to give second reading and final approval on November 17, 2026, to the following policies:

#102	Academic Standard
#105	Curriculum
#204.1	Virtual Attendance and Wellness Checks
#209	Health Examinations/Screenings
#246	School Wellness
#249	Bullying/Cyberbullying
#704	Maintenance
#803	School Calendar
#805.2	School Security Personnel
#822	Automated External Defibrillator (AED)/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

The above motion was recognized and will be voted on at the October 20, 2026, meeting.

8. Curriculum

9. Items for Board Action

10. Transportation

11. Legislative

12. Old Business

Mr. Beitler reported that he and Mr. Batz took the pig roaster to Lesher Welding, where measurements and photographs were taken. Lesher Welding will construct a pig roaster for the district over the winter so that it will be available for use next year.

Mr. Beitler also shared that he recently came across a job posting for a heavy equipment operator offering a substantial salary. He emphasized the many high-paying career opportunities available in skilled trades and hands-on professions, highlighting the value of these career pathways for students.

Ms. Kester commended the entire staff for their hard work in making the Dedication Ceremony and Open House a success. She felt the event was very well organized and was pleased to see such a great turnout from the community. Mr. Batz echoed her comments and praised the food served during the event. He expressed interest in having students sell similar food items in the building and encouraged the administration to work with Mrs. Kiene to explore possible options.

Mr. Batz expressed concern that the track is beginning to fade despite being only one year old. He requested that the district look into the issue to determine the cause of the discoloration.

13. New Business

14. Public Comment

II. Adjournment

Mrs. Rissmiller made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Heck. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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Mrs. Kristan Rissmiller
Board Secretary