

MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes  
January 8, 2025  
Lecture Hall, Muhlenberg High School  
[www.muhsdk12.org](http://www.muhsdk12.org)

**Call to Order**

The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District was called to order on Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 6:30 PM by Board President, Mr. Garrett Hyneman.

**Members Present**

President – Mr. Garrett E. Hyneman  
Treasurer - Mr. Miguel Vasquez  
Secretary – Mrs. Cindy L. Mengle  
Member – Mr. Andrew L. Eaton, Sr.  
Member – Mr. Ronald J. Haas, Sr.  
Member – Mr. S. Wayne Hardy  
Member – Mr. Otto W. Voit, III  
Solicitor – Mr. Brian F. Boland, Esq.  
Recording Secretary – Mrs. Tara L. Flowers

**Members Absent**

Vice President – Mrs. Kristyna Eagle  
Assistant Secretary – Ms. Janet Howard

**Administration Present**

Superintendent – Dr. Joseph E. Macharola  
Assistant Superintendent - Dr. Alan S. Futrick  
Business Manager- Mr. Shane M. Mathias, CPA  
Director of Physical Plant – Mr. Ken Patterson  
Director of Special Education - Ms. Nicole Huntbach  
Supervisor of Special Education - Mr. Byron Grosslefinger  
Licensed Behavior Specialist - Ms. Courtney Knittle  
Director of Technology - Dr. Juliana Ciccarelli  
Director of Federal Programs - Dr. Cathy Shappell  
Director of Food Services - Mr. Carey Kline  
Director of Human Resources - Dr. Jessica Heffner  
Director of Pupil Services - Mr. Michael Mish  
Director of Curriculum & Instruction K-12 - Mr. Kyle Crater  
Athletic Director - Dr. Timothy Moyer  
Principal on Assignment - Mr. Steve Baylor  
High School Principal - Mr. Haniff Skeete  
High School Assistant Principal - Ms. Lori Morris  
High School Assistant Principal - Mr. Aaron Kopetsky  
Junior High Principal - Mr. Chris Becker  
Junior High Assistant Principal - Mr. Joshua Rankin  
Junior High Assistant Principal - Ms. Michele Weaver

Junior High Assistant Principal - Mr. Joseph Scoboria  
C.E. Cole Intermediate Assistant Principal - Ms. Jaclyn Bellanca  
Elementary Principal - Ms. Ginny Hornberger  
Elementary Assistant Principal - Ms. Julie Kehr  
Elementary Assistant Principal - Mr. Daniel Kramer  
Social Worker - Ms. Lauren Heydt  
Social Worker - Ms. Amanda Foulds  
Social Worker - Ms. Emily Carmichael

### **Visitors**

Linda Roebuck	Diane Benson
Susan Roeckle	Daniel Fair
Tony Lupia	

### **Educational Presentations**

#### **A. School Director Recognition Month**

Dr. Macharola spoke about January being once again designated School Director Recognition Month, to honor school board directors' and their dedication to public education excellence across the commonwealth.

More than 85% of Pennsylvania's students attend public schools, including the 4,424 students in Muhlenberg School District. Along with district administration, the nine members of each local school board make complex decisions to guide public schools and provide an educational environment where every student can find a path to success. Nine out of every 10 students in the United States attend public schools. Therefore, access to high-quality public education is crucial not only for our children's success, but for the strength of our society. It takes a team of dedicated people – teachers, administrators, staff, parents and other community members – to provide that education.

School board directors are a vital component of our public education system, working tirelessly to ensure all students have access to a quality education. They volunteer their time and effort to the challenging and complex responsibilities of board business, such as voting on budgets, adopting policy and conducting comprehensive planning. Their dedication and passion for their communities are truly inspiring.

As an additional measure of commitment, the Muhlenberg School Board also has taken the step of adopting the PSBA Principles for Governance and Leadership. This framework of actionable steps is designed to increase the effectiveness of the board. Research shows that school board actions have a direct effect on student achievement. Therefore, it is vital that boards take action to increase their effectiveness, for the benefit of the students they serve.

Board service is an unpaid position, and the majority of school directors cite their desire to give back or contribute to public education as the main motivation for their service. As locally elected officials, school directors are invested in their communities.

The job they do ensures our schools continue to provide opportunities for success for every student, even during unprecedented circumstances. Thank them for advocating on behalf of our collective interest and for the benefit of our children.

Questions/Comments/Concerns:

*Dr. Macharola took time to honor two current board members for their years of service: Mr. Otto W. Voit, III for twenty-five years of service and Mr. S. Wayne Hardy for five years of service. He thanked them for being an advocate of the children of the District, unwavering service to the district, and support to the administration and leadership.*

B. Physical Plant Update - Mr. Ken Patterson

Mr. Patterson reported:

- Maintenance and Custodial Staff update - Maintenance crews both inside and outside took advantage of the holiday break doing touch ups, spackling, and painting in the admin office area and taking care of the winter HVC filter changes throughout the campus. They also along with the custodial crew cleaned up the District's first winter snow events. Custodial crews over the break worked on areas of the building where normal school activities are happening. In addition, custodial crews continue to play their part in orchestrating winter sports and community activities as well as continuing to do a great job keeping the District's buildings clean and safe. Maintenance staff has also been busy completing work orders from the staff.
- Football Stadium Turf Field Update - The football stadium turf project has been completed, completely replaced. The Gmax testing took place and passed. The field is now the District's and available for use.
- Multi-Purpose Turf Field Update - The multi-purpose turf field continues to progress; liner and drain pipe installation along with the stone base should be happening in the next few weeks. Substantial completion of that project is set for this February.
- New 5/6 Building Update - The new 5/6 middle school went out for bid on Tuesday, October 29th. All bids were open yesterday at the Admin Building. The lowest qualified bids are before the school board this evening. The Berks County Conservation District has approved the storm water permit for this phase. The District hopes to get final approval from Laureldale Borough and Muhlenberg Township at each of their board of commissioners meeting this month. The District hopes to get construction started either at the end of January or beginning of February depending on how quickly the general contractor can mobilize on the site.

C. First Reading of Policies - Dr. Joseph E. Macharola

Policy No. 005, *Organization*

Purpose

This policy was updated to reflect the United States Court of Appeals Third Circuit decision in *Montemuro v. Jim Thorpe Area School District*. In this case, the court found that Pennsylvania law establishes that board officers have a property interest in their job as an officer of the board and, as such, cannot be removed from such office without notice of the reason for removal and due process. The section in the policy regarding Officers was revised to appropriately address this court decision.

The section in the policy regarding Appointments was revised to generally state that removal of an appointee will be based on the terms of a contract or provisions of applicable law.

Policy No. 308, *Employment Contract/Board Resolution*

Purpose

This policy was updated to include a definition and guidelines addressing resignation from employment. Resignations were previously addressed in administrative regulations. At the request of members, PSBA has developed language outlining submission and acceptance of resignations for the board-level policy, including the board's role in this process and in delegating authority to the Superintendent.

The policy language addresses the School Code requirement for professional employees to submit a resignation notice at least sixty (60) days prior to the resignation's effective date. It also addresses submission of a resignation by the Superintendent. Policy 308 is being adopted for legal liability purposes.

Policy No. 610, *Purchase Subject to Bid/Quotation* and Policy No. 626, *Federal Fiscal Compliance*

Purpose

Effective January 1, 2025 - Each year, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry is required by law to publish changes to the base amounts triggering the requirement for public, telephonic bids or separate bids for certain contracts, or both. These changes are based on the Consumer Price Index and are published annually in the PA Bulletin: Pennsylvania Bulletin ([pacodeandbulletin.gov](http://pacodeandbulletin.gov))

PA School Code Sections 24 P.S. §7-751 and 24 P.S. §8-807.1 require public school entities to obtain competitive bids and price quotations based on these amounts. The amounts reported in the most recent Bulletin have increased for the new calendar year: the amount for purchases subject to public bid is \$23,800 and the amount for purchases subject to written or telephonic price quotation is \$12,900; effective January 1, 2025. School entities have reviewed district policies, administrative regulations and procedures for purchasing and procurement (610, 626 Procurement attachment), and update documentation as necessary to reflect the new amounts.

*Policies 610 and the Procurement attachment to Policy 626 are recommended for audit purposes.*

Policy No. 832, *Opioid Antagonist*

Purpose

This policy was formerly titled Naloxone. Act 135 of 2022 updated the definitions and terminology for drug overdose medication and the state statute now uses the term opioid antagonist. The definition of Naloxone was replaced with the definition of opioid antagonist and the term was changed throughout the policy. Minor language revisions were made to clarify the role of the school nurse in managing building-level administration, maintenance and stocking of opioid antagonist medication in schools.

The policy guide includes language requiring any school employee who may have custody of or administer an opioid antagonist to successfully complete an online PA Department of Health training program about recognizing opioid-related overdoses, administering opioid antagonist and promptly seeking medical attention for drug overdoses. This language was originally included in the policy because it was a requirement of the PA Department of Health program when the Department was providing free doses of Naloxone to school districts. The language was retained in the updated policy guide 823 as a recommendation and as a liability consideration. 35 P.S. 780-113.8 includes provisions for immunity of persons who “act in good faith and with reasonable care” in administration of an opioid antagonist. That section goes on to state: “Receipt of training and instructional materials that meet the criteria of subsection (a) and the prompt seeking of additional medical assistance shall create a rebuttable presumption that the person acted with reasonable care in administering an opioid antagonist.” PSBA included the language on training of school employees who may have custody or administer an opioid antagonist based on those immunity considerations. The district may consult the school solicitor and school nurses, and revise the policy language to meet the needs of the district.

Policy 823 is recommended for legal liability purposes if the school entity stocks and administers opioid antagonists.

**Hearing of Visitors** - Muhlenberg School District taxpayers and residents have an opportunity, at this time, to comment on matters of concern, official action, or deliberation which are or may be before the Muhlenberg School Board. ***This period of time is for comments only; it is not a time to engage in a question and answer or debate with the board. Comments from the Board are at the option of the Board.*** The Board retains the option to accept all public comment at this time. Presentations ***will*** be limited to two minutes per person. In the event that the Board determines that there is not sufficient time for residents or taxpayers of the School District to comment, the Board may defer the comment period to the next regular meeting.

There were none.

## **Board Business**

### **Personnel**

#### **1. Professional Appointment**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following professional appointment:

- a. Mr. Matthew Fry, Elementary Teacher (K. Deibert), C.E. Cole Intermediate, pending PA Certification, effective December 19, 2024, at a salary of \$52,970 (B, 16 Steps from the Top), prorated for days worked.

#### **2. Acceptance of Resignations**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District accept the following resignations:

- a. Ms. Danielle Ninfo, Long-term Substitute Teacher, Muhlenberg Junior High School, effective December 17, 2024.
- b. Ms. Laura Santangelo, STEM Teacher, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, pending release from Muhlenberg School District per PA School Code.
- c. Ms. Susan Hawkins, Assistant Business Manager, rescind retirement effective date of January 16, 2025 and extend retirement date to February 28, 2025 or sooner a replacement can be procured by the district.

#### **3. Mentor Assignments**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following mentor assignments at the professional rate of \$30.00 per hour for the 2024-2025 school year:

- a. Mr. John Barr, mentor for Mr. Colin Bliss, Math Teacher, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for thirty-five (35) hours.
- b. Ms. Tiffany Price, mentor for Mr. Matthew Christman, Long-Term Substitute, Muhlenberg High School, for thirty (30) hours.
- c. Ms. Jenna Jusits, mentor for Mr. Matthew Fry, Elementary Teacher, C.E. Cole Intermediate, for sixty (60) hours.

#### **4. Co-Curricular Appointments**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following co-curricular appointments:

- a. Mr. Justine Vallone, MHS Math Department Chair, effective November 7, 2024, at a stipend of \$750, prorated for days worked.
- b. Ms. Lauren Heydt, from MHS Aavidum Co-Advisor to MHS Aavidum Advisor, effective December 16, 2024, at a stipend of \$3,286 (year 3), prorated for days worked.

- c. Ms. Tiffany Clemison, MHS Cheer Volunteer Coach. effective December 13, 2024.
- d. Mr. Joshua Horst, MJHS Wrestling Volunteer Coach, effective December 13, 2024.
- e. Mr. Dan Houck, Sports Event Monitor, effective December 12, 2024, at a pay rate of \$15.00 per hour.

## **5. Completion of Probation**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the completion of probation for the following classified employees:

- a. Ms. Ashleigh Greene, Special Education Paraprofessional, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of December 3, 2024 and recommended for permanent employment as of December 4, 2024.
- b. Ms. Cindy Wanamaker, Special Education Paraprofessional, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of December 9, 2024 and recommended for permanent employment as of December 10, 2024.

### Questions/Comments/Concerns:

*Mr. Haas questioned if everyone new coming to the district gets a mentor. Dr. Macharola advised they do. Mr. Haas asked if someone new comes into the district and has 10-15 years experience already, do they still get mentored. Dr. Macharola responded yes the district does. Dr. Futrick advised the hours are just lessened. Dr. Macahrola affirmed that the hours are lessened, however they are not acclimated to the school districts so they still give them a mentor.*

## **6. Request for Leave of Absence/FMLA Leave**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the request for a Leave of Absence/FMLA leave for the following employees:

- a. Employee No. 2486, Teacher, Leave of Absence/FMLA, effective on or about March 14, 2025 through on or about June 6, 2025.
- b. Employee No. 2935, Teacher, Leave of Absence/FMLA, effective on or about March 4, 2025 through on or about June 6, 2025.

## **7. Approval of Job Descriptions**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following revised job descriptions:

- a. Dean of Students - C.E. Cole Intermediate
- b. Dean of Students - Muhlenberg Elementary Center

## **8. MESPA Mentor Stipend**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District in accordance with the MESPA Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article XVI, Wages, Section 8, approve a mentor stipend to the following support staff who have assisted in the induction of a new employee into the school district and new employee remains employed for one (1) continuous year after hire date, at the following stipend as presented:

- a. Ms. Karen Adams, mentor of Ms. Nyla Gensemer, Special Education Paraprofessional, Muhlenberg Elementary Center
- b. Ms. Tanya Cooper, mentor for Ms. Olivia Gehris, Special Education Paraprofessional, Muhlenberg Elementary Center
- c. Ms. Patricia Greene, mentor for Ms. Joleen Borrell, Cafeteria Assistant, Muhlenberg Elementary Center
- d. Ms. Brenda Lochman, mentor for Mr. Jeffrey Weyant, Cafeteria Worker, Muhlenberg High School

## **9. Classified Appointment**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following classified appointment:

- a. Ms. Lori Darkis, Cafeteria Substitute, effective January 2, 2025, 2024 at a pay rate of \$14.00 per hour.

## **Management**

There are no items.

## **Physical Plant and Transportation**

### **1. Approval of Bids and Awarding Contracts for New Grade 5-6 Middle School**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the apparent low bids for the following prime construction contracts for the construction of a new 5-6 middle school: General Construction – eci Construction, LLC – contract value of \$36,485,000 based on their base bid and incorporation of Alternate Bid No. 09B – Terrazzo Flooring; Roofing Construction – GSM Roofing – contract value of \$2,796,300 based on their base bid; Mechanical Construction – Matchline Mechanical – contract value of \$10,210,000 based on their base bid; Electrical Construction – Hirneisen Electric, Inc. – contract value of \$8,181,000 based on their base bid; Plumbing Construction and Fire Protection – S.M. Fridy Mechanical Contracting, LLC – contract value of \$2,895,200 based on their base bid; subject to review by the district's solicitor.

## Questions/Comments/Concerns

*Mr. Voit asked about previous estimates months ago, what is the variance on the bids that have come in.*



*Mr. Don Main advised the variance from the estimates that the District received 2% of the total and also included in the base bids the allowances that were discussed in terms of rock and so forth; this is all in the values that the board is approving this evening.*

*Mr. Voit responded, well done.*

## **Budget and Finance**

### **1. Approval of Financial Reports**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following financial reports and that they become part of the permanent record of the meeting:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	<b>Financial Report</b>	<b>Bills Paid Month</b>	<b>Investments</b>	<b>Budget Transfers</b>
General	Nov 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024 Ck#57922-58047 V#28184-28202	Nov 2024	
Cafeteria	Nov 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024 Ck#8452-8479 V#3132-3140	Nov 2024	
Capital Reserve (Fund 32)	Dec 2024	Dec 2024			
Capital Reserve (Fund 39)	Dec 2024	Dec 2024	Dec 2024 Ck#1011-1016		
Activity	Nov 2024	Nov 2024			

### **2. Approval of 2025 Mileage Rate**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the 2025 standard mileage reimbursement rate for the use of a personal vehicle for business purposes of 70¢ per mile in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service guidelines as of January 1, 2025.

### **3. Fee Agreement for Special Education Attorney**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the fee agreement with Sweet, Stevens, Katz & Williams to provide Special Education Law services as presented.

**4. E-Rate Category 2 Wireless Equipment**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District accept the bid for Uninterruptible Power Supplies (hardware and installation) of \$55,961.38 from Integra One (PEPPM Contract 533902-017). This purchase of technology equipment is through the E-rate program and is anticipated to be reimbursed to the district at a rate of 85% of cost (funded by Technology Budget) as presented.

**Education**

**1. 2025 MSD Summer Style**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the 2025 MSD Summer Style program for three sessions beginning June 16, 2025 through August 7, 2025 as presented.

Questions/Comments/Concerns:

*Mr. Voit wanted to give compliments to Dr. Macharola for the summer program and the entire administration, especially to Mr. Kline who sees the students every single day. He spoke about the program being phenomenal and everyone working so hard.*

*Dr. Macharola wanted to especially thank Dr. Shappell for the incredible work she has done and time she has put in the summer program. Dr. Macharola advised this summer program will continue on well after he is gone.*

**2. Admission of Fact, Waiver of Hearing, Acknowledgment of Compliance with Procedural Safeguards and Consent to Expulsion**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Settlement Agreement and Release for the following student as presented:

- a. Student "A", Muhlenberg Junior High School
- b. Student "B", Muhlenberg High School
- c. Student "C", Muhlenberg High School
- d. Student "D", Muhlenberg High School

**4. Student Tuition Agreement for the 2024-2025 School Year**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following student tuition agreement for the 2024-2025 school year as presented:

- a. Student #37129, Conrad Weiser Decisions

## **5. Certificate of Support Students**

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the enrollment of Certificate of Support Students, PA School Code 1302, for the 2024-2025 School Year as listed.

### **Student Activities**

*There are no items.*

### **Minutes**

Review minutes of the Annual Organization Meeting of December 4, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting of December 4, 2024 and the Regular Board Meeting of December 4, 2024.

#### Questions/Comments/Concerns:

*Dr. Macharola spoke about sadly learning that a former employee he had recently met, who also worked for Kozloff Stoudt, lost his life while walking across the street in Wyomissing. He spoke about his recent meeting and how proud he was of Muhlenberg and how proud he was to work in Muhlenberg.*

*Attorney Boland spoke about Mr. Richard Weiherer being a history teacher here in the District and he also worked for his office for about 8 or 9 years as a runner, often coming to Muhlenberg and filing things for them. Mr. Boland spoke about Mr. Weiherer being an absolute joy to work with, a great guy and loved by the staff. He advised that sadly, while delivering mail to the post office, he was struck by a vehicle and will be greatly missed.*

*Mr. Voit spoke about graduating in 1975 and Mr. Weiherer was his history teacher. Mr. Voit advised he was a phenomenal teacher and person; may he rest in peace.*

*Mr. Hyneman advised that Mr. Weiherer was also a very prolific writer to the editor in the newspaper.*

*Mrs. Mingle also commented that she had the pleasure of having Mr. Weiherer as a teacher as well and echoed what Mr. Boland and Mr. Voit has said; being very enthusiastic about what he did and he loved teaching.*

*Mr. Lupia spoke about Mr. Weiherer being a no nonsense teacher, he was serious about his topics that he taught, very nice guy, nicest teacher and one of the best teachers Muhlenberg ever had.*

### **Old Business**

*There are no items.*

### **New Business**

*There are no items.*

### **Hearing of Visitors**

Presentation is limited to approximately two minutes per person. Should any citizen require more than the two minutes allocated, please contact the Superintendent prior to the meeting. He will coordinate such requests for the Board. Citizens addressing the Board should be aware that the meeting is being taped.

*There were none.*

### **MSD/RMCTC Board Visitor of the Month**

Schedule 2024-2025

January	Mr. Otto W. Voit, III
February	Mr. S. Wayne Hardy
March	Mr. Miguel Vasquez
April	Ms. Janet Howard
May	Mr. Ronald J. Haas, Sr.

### **Review of Board Meetings and Calendar of Events**

January 8	6:30 PM	Committee of Whole Meeting and Regular Board Meeting
January 13	6:30 PM	RMCTC Reorganization Meeting
February 5	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
February 10	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
February 12	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
March 5	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 10	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
March 12	7:00 PM	RegularBoard Meeting

April 2	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
April 9	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
April 14	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 7	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
May 12	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 14	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
June 9	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
June 11	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting

**Adjourn Meeting**

Moved by Mr. Hardy and Mr. Voit, that there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 7:11 PM.

Attest:



Cindy L. Mengle  
Secretary