

Big Spring School District

Newville, Pennsylvania

Board Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2025



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1. Opening Meeting: Call to Order/Pledge - President John Wardle

The Board of School Directors for the Big Spring School District met in the Big Spring Middle School Auditorium at 8:09 pm with eight (8) Board of School Directors present: John Wardle, President; Michael Hippensteel, Vice-President; Lisa Shade, Treasurer; Julie Boothe, Secretary; Seth Cornman, David Fisher, Kenneth Fisher, and Frank Myers

Absent: Robert Over

Others in attendance: Nicholas Guarente, Superintendent; Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent; Nicole Donato, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Cristy Lentz, Business Manager; Thomas King, Solicitor; Donna Minnich, Board Minutes; Mike Fronk, Technology Support; and Darin Baughman, Technology Support.

President Wardle led all individuals present in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. Student/Staff Recognition and Board Reports – Evelyn Hippensteel offered student updates to the Board and Mount Rock Elementary School staff members Crystal Header and Stephanie Devonald offered staff updates.

3. Reading of Correspondence – Nothing Offered

4. Recognition of Visitors - 113 visitors signed in for the meeting

5. Public Comment Period

Lawrence Flynn offered comments of concern for how math is being taught to Big Spring students and encouraged the Board to return to traditional math instruction methods.

Lauren Swigart shared her appreciation of the educational services provided by Big Spring School District and said she and her extended family members chose to live here because of the quality of education being provided to her children and all of our students.

5. Public Comment Period (continued)

Kate Elkins offered comments of support for the math instruction being provided by Big Spring and said research-based strategies promote problem solving and number sense. She said it is not wise for the Board to base math curriculum decisions on a handful of survey responses shared during the DIG Committee meeting.

Adam Oldham offered comments of appreciation for the teachers who push his students educationally. He said the overwhelming majority of students and families are happy with Big Spring School District and are not trying to leave.

6. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the [Buildings and Property Committee](#), [Policy Committee](#), [Committee of the Whole](#) and [Board Meeting Minutes](#) for January 20, 2025 as presented?

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

7. Financial Reports

7.a. Payment of Bills

<u>Fund Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Fund Accounting Payment Register</u>	<u>Fund Accounting Payment Summary</u>
General Fund - Procurement Card	\$6,769.30	Procurement Card - Detail	See Procurement Card Detail
General Fund - Checks/ACH/Wires	\$2,831,811.06	General Fund - Detail	General Fund - Summary
Special Revenue	\$2,024.61	Special Revenue - Detail	Special Revenue - Summary
Capital Projects Reserve Fund	\$0.00	No Payments	No Payments
Cafeteria Fund	\$133,053.82	Cafeteria Fund - Detail	Cafeteria Fund - Summary
Student Activities	\$33,262.57	Student Activities - Detail	Student Activities - Summary

Total amount of all funds \$3,006,921.36

Motion to approve the Payment of Bills as presented by Mrs. Shade was seconded by Mr. Myers

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

7.b. Treasurer's Fund Report

- [General Fund Report](#)
- [Special Revenue Report](#)
- [Capital Project Report](#)
- [Cafeteria Fund Report](#)
- [Student Activities Fund Report](#)
- [Student Activities Account Summary](#)
- [Investment Report](#)
- [Earned Interest and Bank Fees YTD for General Fund, Special Revenue, Capital Projects, and Cafeteria](#)
- [Earned Interest YTD Student Activities](#)

Treasurer's Fund Reports are noted.

7.c. YTD General Fund Report and YTD Taxes

The administration prepared the [YTD General Fund Report](#) and the [YTD Taxes](#) for the Board. The General Fund report looks at our revenue and expenses for this year against the budget and compares those amounts to last year. The YTD Tax Summary shows the monthly collections and cumulative collections and compares that to the two previous years.

The Year-To-Date General Fund and Tax Reports are noted.

8. Old Business – Nothing Offered

9. New Business Personnel Items - Actions Items

Unless there is an objection, we will combine all New Business Personnel Action Items listed under #9 into one motion.

9.a. Recommended Transfer of Classified Staff

Dr. Sanders, Assistant Superintendent, would like to recommend the following classified staff member for transfer:

- Shantay Gantz from Direct Care Paraprofessional at the High School to Direct Care Lifeskills Paraprofessional at Oak Flat Elementary School.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the employee listed above for a transfer with no change in number of hours/days worked or placement on the classified pay scale.

9.b. Recommended Approval of Extra-Duty Positions

Scott Penner, Director of Athletics and Student Activities, recommends the following 2024-2025 extra-duty staff:

- Courtney Anderson transfer from the position of High School Assistant Track Coach to Co-Assistant High School Track Coach.
- Scott Anderson to serve as Middle School Assistant Track Coach.
- Zachary Barber to serve as High School Co-Assistant Track Coach.
- Shane Cohick to serve as a Volunteer Coach for Middle School Track.
- Ava Duncan to serve as Middle School Head Track Coach.
- Gregory Ellerman to serve as Middle School Head Boys Soccer Coach.
- Margaret Murray to serve as Middle School Assistant Track Coach.
- Joan Schmidt to serve as High School Assistant Track Coach.
- Lukas Wolfe to serve as Middle School Assistant Boys Soccer Coach.
- David Young II to serve as High School Assistant Track Coach.

Brad Fry, Middle School Assistant Principal, recommends the following 2024-2025 extra-duty staff:

- Sharon Van Hove to serve as Middle School After School Club Advisor replacing Laura Grove who resigned.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the extra-duty positions as presented.

9.c. Recommended Approval of Maintenance Staff

Cristy Lentz, Business Manager, recommends the following maintenance staff hire:

- Craig Stouffer to serve as full-time Maintenance Technician – General Maintenance & Plumbing replacing Scott Martin who resigned. The starting rate is recommended at \$18.73 per hour for the 2024-2025 school year. This new hire is subject to the Probationary Period as spelled out in the Classified Staff Handbook.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the maintenance new hire as presented.

9.d. Recommended Approval of Resignations

Dr. Nicholas Guarente, Superintendent, received the following resignation:

- Denise Ginter provided a letter of resignation from the position of Elementary Intervention Specialist effective May 30, 2025 for the purpose of retirement.
- James Miller provided a letter of resignation from the position of High School Social Studies Teacher effective the conclusion of the 2024-2025 school year for the purpose of retirement.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the resignations as presented.

9.e. Recommended Approval of the Spring Coaching Roster

A list of the [spring coaching positions](#) and recommended personnel prepared by Scott Penner, Director of Athletics and Student Activities, has been reviewed by Stacy Lehman, Human Resources Coordinator. The 2024-2025 salaries established for these positions are based on the current contract between the Big Spring Education Association and the Big Spring School District.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the spring coaching roster for 2024-2025 of extra-curricular personnel and establish the salaries for these positions based on the current contract between the Big Spring Education Association and the Big Spring School District.

9.f. Recommended Approval of Leave Without Pay

Section 6.09 of the contract between the Big Spring Education Association and the Big Spring School District provides "The Board may grant leave without pay to an employee who requests prior approval for such leave." Superintendent Dr. Nicholas Guarente received a request for leave without pay from the following employee:

- Molly Kordes, Mount Rock Elementary Teacher, requesting leave without pay for a half day on February 19, 2025.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the leave without pay request as presented.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mr. Cornman to combine and approve all items in New Business Personnel Action Items 9 (a) through 9 (f) as outlined and recommended above.
Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle
Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

10. New Business - Actions Items

10.a. Recommended Approval of the 2025-2026 School Calendar

The administration drafted a proposed [School District Calendar](#) and [meeting dates](#) for the 2025-2026 school year which was provided as an information item at the January meeting.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the 2025-2026 School District Calendar and establish meeting dates and times as presented.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

10.b. Recommend Approval of a New Curricular Resource

Mrs. Nicole Donato, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, recommends a science, technology & engineering, environmental literacy & sustainability (STEELS) curricular resource for approval by the Board:

- [Amplify Elementary Science](#) for grades K - 3

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the curricular resource as presented.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

10.c. Recommended Approval of Agreements

Superintendent Dr. Nicholas Guarente reviewed the [Letter of Agreement](#) for the 2025-2026, 2026-2027, and 2027-2028 school years. The agreement is to ensure cooperative efforts and to facilitate continuity of care when serving students enrolled in the Big Spring School District and The Meadows.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Nadine Sanders reviewed the [renewal subscription quote](#) from PowerSchool for the TalentEd Application and Professional Tracking System to assist with the employment application and employee document collection and electronic storage process.

Superintendent, Dr. Nicholas Guarente, reviewed the [License Agreement](#) from Campbell Psychological Services LLC to provide outpatient mental health services to Big Spring School District students.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the agreements as presented.

10.c. Recommended Approval of Agreements (continued)

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Mrs. Boothe requested to separately vote on the Campbell Psychological Services agreement.

Voting Yes on the first two agreements: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

Mrs. Boothe asked if we have a current contract with Campbell and Dr. Guarente responded it was approved in 2020 and tonight's agreement is a renewal with the same company. Mrs. Boothe said the contract was for the 2020-2021 school year and asked if there was a newer agreement. Dr. Guarente said not that he was aware of. Mrs. Boothe asked if there is a policy on giving medical advice to students directly and Dr. Guarente said he is not sure our staff gives medical advice to anyone. Mrs. Boothe expressed concern that students aged 14 and up could give consent without parental consent and said parental consent could be bypassed. Dr. Guarente said the Campbell agreement requires insurance and parental consent and said Campbell will not see students without insurance and parental consent. He said this resource has been in place since 2020 and many students have taken advantage of the services which is why the agreement has been updated and is being presented for approval. Solicitor Tom King stated he reviewed the agreement with Dr. Guarente and made recommendations for added language that should address Mrs. Boothe's concerns.

Voting Yes to approve the Campbell Agreement: Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Voting No: Boothe

Motion Carried. 7-1

10.d. Recommended New Bus Driver

Deitch Buses, Inc. has submitted an additional driver for the 2024-2025 school term:

- Christian Kaufman

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors acknowledge receipt of the additional driver for the 2024-2025 school year.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

10.e. Recommended Approval of Building Utilization Fee Schedule

Scott Penner, Director of Athletics and Student Activities, recommends a [Building Utilization Fee Schedule](#) for future building utilizations.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the Building Utilization Fee Schedule as presented.

Dr. Guarente stated Mr. Hippensteel and Mrs. Shade have worked very hard on the draft fee schedule and said both deserve kudos for working collaboratively to develop a fair fee schedule.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

10.f. Recommended Approval of Fundraisers

Scott Penner, Director of Athletics and Student Activities recommends approval of the following 2024-2025 fundraiser:

- [Marianna Subs](#) sale March 3-28, 2025 to benefit FBLA and offset costs for students to attend the state leadership conference.

Clarissa Nace, Middle School Principal, recommends approval of the following 2024-2025 fundraisers:

- [Cherrydale fundraiser](#) February 19 - February 28, 2025 to benefit the Middle School PTO.
- [Fisher Popcorn fundraiser](#) March 3 - March 20, 2025 to benefit National Junior Honor Society.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the fundraisers as presented.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

10.g. Recommended Approval of Cellular Signal Boosting - Summer 2025 Project

As discussed during the Building & Property Committee Meeting on January 20, 2025, one of the summer projects for 2025 is to complete the Cellular Signal Boosting Project at the High School. The next step will be to engage in the Invitation to Bid process. The project is currently estimated at \$140,000 and is slated to be paid for from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) Safety and Security Grant.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve engaging invitations to bid and moving forward with this as a summer of 2025 project.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mr. Cornman

Mr. Cornman stated there are several cellular dead spots in the high school and this should address that issue and Dr. Guarente confirmed that is correct.

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle
Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

10.h. Recommended Approval to Apply for a Grant

Dr. Nicholas Guarente, Superintendent, received a request to apply for the following grant:

- Clarissa Nace, Middle School Principal, is requesting permission to apply for and participate in an [Alumni FFA Grant](#) to help with the cost of the annual FFA Banquet.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the request to apply for and participate in the FFA Grant as presented.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle
Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

11. New Business - Information Item

11.a. Contracted Staff Update

Jennifer Chamberlin, Supervisor of Special Education, provides the following Contracted Staff Updates:

- Alyssa Haskell to serve as the CAIU Early Intervention Teacher at Oak Flat Elementary School effective January 6, 2025.
- Bradford Wolfe to serve as the New Story Teacher at Oak Flat Elementary School replacing Olivia Stanton effective February 5, 2025.

Dr. Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent, provides the following Contracted Staff Updates:

- Andrea Lonic to serve as a Campbell Psychological Services Therapist at Oak Flat and Mt. Rock Elementary Schools beginning with orientation the week of February 24 and starting services the week of March 1, 2025.
- Madison Tack to serve as ESS Paraprofessional for Life Skills at the Middle School.

11.b. Statement of Financial Interest

Board members have a paper copy of the [Statement of Financial Interest](#) form for 2024 at their seat this evening and are reminded to return a completed form or copy of the [electronic](#) submission of their form to Mrs. Minnich on or before May 1, 2025 for the State Ethics Commission.

11.c. Cumberland County Board of Elections

Municipal secretaries are required to send the Cumberland County Board of Elections written [Official Notice of Offices to be Filled](#) as required by Act of Assembly for the Municipal Primary, 2025 on or before February 18, 2025.

11.d. Leave Request

- Trina Kulp, Administrative Assistant for Student Services, is requesting a leave of absence beginning Thursday, February 27, 2025 through approximately Friday, April 11, 2025 with a return date of Monday, April 14, 2025.

According to Family and Medical Leave Policy 335, administrative, professional and support employees may request a leave of absence for specific family and medical issues in compliance with the Family Medical Leave Act.

11.e. Proposed Updated Job Descriptions

The administration has updated the job descriptions listed below:

- [707 - Maintenance Technician - Facilities Systems](#)
- [709 - Maintenance Technician - Electrical & Security Systems](#)
- [710 - Maintenance Technician - General Maintenance & Plumbing](#)

After the job descriptions have been reviewed by the Board of School Directors, the administration will present the updated job descriptions for Board approval at the March 3, 2025 Board meeting.

12. Board Reports

12.a. Athletic Council - Ken Fisher, Mike Hippensteel, Frank Myers, and John Wardle – Nothing Offered

12.b. Building and Property Committee - David Fisher, Mike Hippensteel, Robert Over, and John Wardle – Nothing Offered

12.c. Capital Area Intermediate Unit - Seth Cornman – Nothing Offered

12.d. Cumberland Perry Area CTC - John Wardle and Mike Hippensteel – Mr. Wardle said new bids are due back in 6 weeks and they are looking forward to seeing what they come in at. He said students have received a number of awards, things are going well and students are in the process of applying for seats for next year which is a very competitive process.

12.e. DIG Committee - Julie Boothe, Chair Seth Cornman and Lisa Shade – Mrs. Boothe said recommendations from tonight's meeting will go to the Board following the discussed corrections.

12.f. Finance Committee - Julie Boothe, Frank Myers, Robert Over, and Lisa Shade – Nothing offered

12.g. Future Ready Comp Plan Board Reps - Ken Fisher and Lisa Shade - Nothing offered

12.h. Policy Review and Development Committee - Seth Cornman, Julie Boothe, David Fisher, and John Wardle – Mr. Cornman said the committee is looking forward to the next meeting on March 17.

12.i. South Central Trust - Seth Cornman – Nothing offered

12.j. Tax Collection Committee - David Fisher – Mr. D. Fisher said he attended the January meeting where officers were elected.

12.k. Wellness Committee - Seth Cornman – Mr. Cornman said he met with Mrs. Lentz to discuss the committee and they reviewed information to help rebuild the committee moving forward.

12.l. Future Board Agenda Items – Mr. D. Fisher said he would like a policy moving forward to address the counseling issue and would like to see the Board proactively address that concern.

12.m. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Nicholas Guarente

Dr. Guarente thanked the technology department for working through equipment problems at the meeting this evening.

Dr. Guarente thanked the staff from Mount Rock Elementary School for presenting updates this evening.

Dr. Guarente said he and Mr. Myers attended the grand opening of the Weis store and said we are off to a good community relationship with them. He said Weis donated \$500.00 to the Paw Packs Program.

Dr. Guarente said the RFP (Request for Proposal) for transportation services has been published and we are and awaiting transportation bids. Dr. Guarente said we do currently have cameras on our busses.

Dr. Guarente said the vote to move forward with pricing of the cellular signal boosting will be updated on the web page for public review and said they hope to secure 3 competitive bids for that service.

13. Meeting Closing

13.a. Business from the Floor/Board Member Comment

Mr. D. Fisher thanked BSEA for the meal this evening.

Mr. Cornman said he ran on policy and lowering taxes and said shutting down customer service training is unfortunate. He said private schools all have customer service support teams and we need to design our system to be more competitive. He said we can do better and attract people. He thanked BSEA, said the soup was wonderful, and thanked the FFA.

Mr. Myers said Lauren Swigart – you rock and said when she was talking this evening, he had goosebumps. He asked her what kind of customer service she most valued at Big Spring and she said the care and dedication of our staff.

Mrs. Shade said she spent some time with Scott Penner and Randy Jones and wanted to share an improvement to the athletic portion of the web page which now includes a user-friendly drop-down tab for access to the daily athletic calendar schedule.

Mr. Hippensteel thanked the staff for the meal, said he is always impressed with the FFA, and said it is so refreshing to hear from them.

Mr. Wardle said we hope spring is coming and brining renewed hope. He said students are making tough decisions about college, tech schools, and military. He thanked Saylor's Market for the years of support to our school and community and said Weis has tried to step up. He thanked those who spoke and those in attendance and said people are wanting to know what is happening and are concerned. He said it is about all of us and what we can do for our young people.

13.b. Adjournment

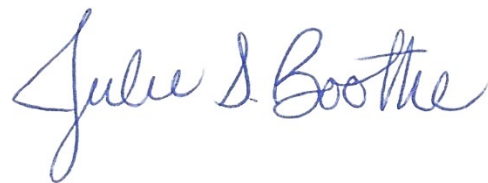
Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Voting Yes: Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle

Motion Carried unanimously. 8-0

Meeting adjourned at **9:17 pm**, February 18, 2025

Next scheduled meeting is **March 3, 2025 at 7:30 pm**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie D. Boothe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'J' and a clear, legible 'Boothe'.