

# Big Spring School District

## Newville, Pennsylvania

### Board Meeting Minutes

#### JUNE 2, 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 7:30 pm with nine (9) Board of School Directors present: John Wardle, President; Michael Hippensteel, Vice-President; Lisa Shade, Treasurer; Julie Boothe, Secretary; Melissa Bigler, Seth Cornman, David Fisher, Kenneth Fisher, and Frank Myers.

Absent: No absences

Others in attendance: Nicholas Guarente, Superintendent; Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent; Cristy Lentz, Business Manager; Thomas King, Solicitor; Donna Minnich, Board Minutes; Rob Krepps, Director of Technology; and Darin Baughman, Technology Support.

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

President Wardle announced the Board met in Executive Session at 5:30 this evening for the Annual School Safety and Security Report which is required by the PA School Code.

#### **2. Student/Staff Recognition and Board Reports** – Nothing Offered

#### **3. Reading of Correspondence** – Nothing Offered

#### **4. Recognition of Visitors** - 24 visitors signed in for the meeting

#### **5. Public Comment Period**

Michael Deihl offered a prayer of support for the students, staff, administration, Board, and community.

Adam Oldham offered comments on the budget, the Act 1 Index, and said small incremental tax increases are best.

Lawrence Flynn offered comments on taxes, said the Board should take into account the previous speaker does not pay taxes in this district, and said the Board should ask the people who pay taxes here when making budget decisions.

Mr. Cornman stated a Point of Order for comments made from the audience.

## 6. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the [Policy Committee](#), [Finance Committee](#), [Committee of the Whole](#) and [Board Meeting Minutes](#) for May 19, 2025 as presented?

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

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

Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

## 7. Old Business – Nothing Offered

## 8. New Business Personnel Items - Actions Items

Unless there is an objection, we will combine all New Business Personnel Action Items listed under #8 into one motion.

### 8.a. Recommended Approval of Resignations

Superintendent Dr. Nicholas Guarente received the following professional staff resignations:

- Denise Hocker provided a resignation from the position of School Psychologist effective August 1, 2025.
- Gwen MacConnell provided a resignation from the position of Special Education Teacher at Oak Flat Elementary School.

Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Nadine Sanders, received the following extra-duty staff resignation:

- Stacey Gibb provided a letter of resignation from the extra-duty position of Co-NJHS Advisor.

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

### 8.b. Recommended Approval of a Middle School Special Education Teacher - Carley Herndon Education:

Lebanon Valley College - Special Education N-12 (Bachelors Degree)

#### Experience:

Cornwall Lebanon School District - Substitute Teacher

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors appoint Carley Herndon to the position of Middle School Special Education Teacher replacing Gregory Ellerman who has transferred. The compensation for this position should be established at Bachelor's Degree Step 1 \$62,175.00 for the 2025-2026 school year, based on the current contract between the Big Spring Education Association. Employment is contingent upon pending receipt of all required employment and certification documentation.

#### **8.c. Recommended Approval of a High School Teacher - Austin Coyle**

##### **Education:**

West Chester University of Pennsylvania - Criminal Justice (Bachelors Degree)

Wilson College - Special Education (Teacher Certification)

##### **Experience:**

Carlisle School District - Special Education Teacher

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors appoint Austin Coyle to the position of High School Special Education Teacher replacing Cherie Williams who resigned. The compensation for this position should be established at Bachelor's Degree Step 5 \$63,775.00 for the 2025-2026 school year, based on the current contract between the Big Spring Education Association. Employment is contingent upon pending receipt of all required employment and certification documentation.

#### **8.d. Recommended Approval of Aquatic Staff Updates**

Matthew Kump, Aquatics Director, recommends the following Aquatic Staff updates for student lifeguards:

- Payton Alleman, new hire, to serve as a Student Lifeguard and be compensated the hourly rate based on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Classified Compensation Plan.
- Blake Cubbedge, new hire, to serve as a Student Lifeguard and be compensated the hourly rate based on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Classified Compensation Plan.
- Caden Reall, new hire, to serve as a Student Lifeguard and be compensated the hourly rate based on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Classified Compensation Plan.
- Jared Warner, new hire, to serve as a Student Lifeguard and be compensated the hourly rate based on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Classified Compensation Plan.
- Hannah Wickard, new hire, to serve as a Student Lifeguard and be compensated the hourly rate based on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Classified Compensation Plan.
- Student employment termination date of July 31, 2025 for the following senior student lifeguards: Rebekah Fertig, Zaida Moore, and Jocelyn Warner.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the aquatic staff student updates as presented.

#### **8.e. Recommended Approval of Extra Duty Staff**

Dr. Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent, recommends the following 2025-2026 Mentor Teacher:

- Emily Hangen to serve as Mentor to Carley Herndon.
- Jennifer Tomasov to serve as Mentor to Austin Coyle.

#### **8.e. Recommended Approval of Extra Duty Staff (continued)**

Scott Penner, Director of Athletics and Student Activities recommends the following athletic staff:

- Shane Cohick to serve as a Volunteer Coach for the Football Program.

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

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade to combine and approve all items in New Business Personnel Action Items 8 (a) through 8 (e) as outlined and recommended above.

Voting Yes: Bigler, Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle  
Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

### **9. New Business - Actions Items**

#### **9.a. High School TSI Non-Title I School Plan**

As required by the PA Department of Education and State Board Regulations, the Board of Education for the Big Spring School District must review and approve the 2025-2026 Big Spring High School TSI Non-Title 1 School [Plan](#).

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve the 2025-2026 plan as presented.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mr. Cornman

Voting Yes: Bigler, Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle  
Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

#### **9.b. Recommended Approval of Agreements**

Dr. Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent, has reviewed the [License and Partnership Agreement](#) with Shippensburg University for Head Start/Pre K Counts for the 2025-2026 school year. The Head Start and Pre-K Counts programs are located at Newville Elementary School and services are provided by Shippensburg with the school day running from 9:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., Monday - Friday.

Dr. Nadine Sanders, Assistant Superintendent, has reviewed the Addendum with [ESS Support Services LLC](#) and [ESS Northeast LLC](#) to update the payment matrix and extend the agreements for paraprofessional hired through ESS.

Dr. Trisha Reed, Director of Student Services, has reviewed the [Therabilities Physical Therapy Agreement](#) for 2025-2026 to provide school-based physical therapy services.

### **9.b. Recommended Approval of Agreements (continued)**

Dr. Trisha Reed, Director of Student Services, has reviewed the [Shippensburg University Agreement](#) for the 2025-2026 HIRE ME Program.

Dr. Trisha Reed, Director of Students Services, has reviewed the Contract for Therapy Services with [Skybound Pediatric Therapy](#) for services during the 2025-2026 school year.

Dr. Nicholas Guarente, Superintendent, has reviewed the [proposal from Let's Talk! by K12 Insight](#). Let's Talk is a cloud-based platform that helps school districts deliver superior customer service.

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

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

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

Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

### **9.c. Recommended Approval of Fundraiser**

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

- [Cookie Sale](#) fundraiser June 23 through July 7, 2025 to benefit the Cheer Program.

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

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

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

Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

### **9.d. Recommended Approval of Fiscal Year 2026 Property, Auto, Umbrella, Cyber, Student Accident, and Workers' Compensation Insurance**

The District works with Arthur Gallagher to help ensure the proper insurance coverage as follows:

- Workers' Compensation - The District's experience mod increased from 0.975 to 1.204. The insurance rate decreased from 0.33 to 0.3 but the total dollar premium went up slightly due to the increase in payroll costs.
- Property, Auto, and Umbrella Insurance - Arthur Gallagher solicited for quotes for our Property, Auto, and Umbrella Insurance coverages. Three quotes were received. Utica, the District current vendor, provided the lowest cost quote. Additionally, Utica supplies the District with SafeSchools training software, as well as potential for a dividend. The insurance premium increase is driven by District property values increasing and nationwide claims.

**9.d. Recommended Approval of Fiscal Year 2026 Property, Auto, Umbrella, Cyber, Student Accident, and Workers' Compensation Insurance (continued)**

- Cyber - Arthur Gallagher solicited for quotes for Cyber insurance. PAIU provided the lowest quote and is currently less than our 2024-2025 premium.
- Student Accident - The student accident premium will remain flat.

The administration recommends the Board of School Directors accept the [insurance coverages](#) as follows: workers' compensation quote from UPMC Work Partners, the liability insurance quote from Utica, the cyber insurance quote from PAIU, and the student accident coverage from Crum and Forster/US Fire.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mr. Cornman

Voting Yes: Bigler, Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle  
Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

**9.e. Recommended Approval of Planned Maintenance Service Agreements**

The Administration solicited three quotes from HB McClure (current vendor), McClure Company, and Ainsworth, for the renewal of the District's Planned Maintenance Service Agreements for boilers in four buildings, the Dectron pool unit, and the Trailblazer chiller at Oak Flat Elementary. Ainsworth did not submit a proposal. HB McClure provided a quote of \$100,416 for a period of three years and the McClure Company provided a quote of \$51,840 for a period of three years.

The Administration recommends the Board of School Directors approve a three-year service agreement with [McClure Company](#).

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

Mr. Hippensteel questioned the \$50,000 difference between the quotes and Dr. Guarente said they couldn't find anything substantially different in the services being offered. Mr. Hippensteel also asked if \$100,000 is budgeted for maintenance of boilers and Mrs. Lentz said she would double check.

Voting Yes: Bigler, Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Myers, Shade, and Wardle  
Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

**9.f. Recommended Approval of Intercom Speakers Replacement Quote**

At the January 20, 2025 Buildings and Property Committee Meeting, administration included the replacement of two-way intercom speakers at Newville Elementary as a Summer of 2025 Capital Project with an estimated project cost of \$40,000. Administration solicited and received three quotes for replacing the two-way intercom speakers at Newville Elementary.

#### **9.f. Recommended Approval of Intercom Speakers Replacement Quote (continued)**

The administration recommends approval to move forward with the lowest price quote from [IP Phone Warehouse](#) in the amount of \$20,283.68. This project is anticipated to be paid from leftover funds from the cellular signal boosting project remaining in the PCCD Safety and Security Grant, pending PCCD project modification approval. Should approval not be granted, the secondary funding source would be from the Capital Reserve Fund.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mr. Cornman

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

Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

#### **9.g. Recommended Approval of Security Cameras Replacement Quote**

At the March 3, 2025 Board Meeting, the Board of School Directors approved replacing security cameras, not to exceed \$50,000, as part of the Summer of 2025 Capital Projects. Administration solicited and received three quotes for replacing aging security cameras throughout the District.

The administration recommends approval to move forward with the lowest price quote from [B&H Photo](#) in the amount of \$40,551.87. Installation labor will be provided by District technology staff with the exception of any cameras requiring a lift. The installation for these cameras requiring a lift will be installed on a time and material bases and not to exceed \$8,500.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mrs. Shade

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

Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

#### **9.h. Recommended Approval of Laptop Lease**

The district's current three-year lease for teacher and administrative laptops concludes on June 30, 2025. To maximize their value, these laptops will be re-imaged and repurposed for an additional three to four years of service. They will then be distributed to paraprofessionals and office staff, replacing their current six to seven-year-old devices.

In March, the district issued an RFQ for new laptops from Lenovo, Dell, and HP. Dell submitted the lowest per-unit price that met the specified requirements. Subsequently, the district secured three quotes for the Dell Pro 14 laptops, with GDCIT providing the lowest bid. Dell has also offered a three-year lease option with a 0% finance charge, after which the district will own the laptops.

Administration recommends approving the proposal from [GDCIT](#) for \$367,125, payable in annual installments of \$122,375 over three years.

Motion by Mr. Myers was seconded by Mr. Cornman

#### **9.h. Recommended Approval of Laptop Lease (continued)**

Mr. Hippensteel said he received an e-mail late this afternoon from an HP Representative pointing out cost and quality comparisons between the HP model they quoted and the Dell laptop on the agenda for consideration. Mr. Hippensteel asked why the district chose Dell and Mr. Krepps shared some of the details about the laptops and said they want them to last 6 or 7 years and the HP model had the lowest benchmark performance. Mr. Krepps also pointed out Dell is offering 0% financing and said we would be getting more product for our money with Dell because of not paying interest. Mr. Hippensteel asked if this item is tabled would it be a burden and Mr. Krepps said tabling wouldn't be a hardship and the decision could be delayed until the next meeting.

Motion by Mr. Hippensteel to table this agenda item was seconded by Mr. Cornman.

Mr. Myers asked clarification on who sent the e-mail and Mr. Hippensteel said Mr. Fawthorpe, a representative from HP who also sent the e-mail to Mr. Wardle. Mr. Krepps said he is the HP salesman for the district. Dr. Guarente asked for clarification on the laptop comparison and said we need to compare apples to apples and focus on performance of the machines for longevity. Mr. Wardle asked what laptops are being used now and Mr. Krepps said Lenovo and their bid wasn't pursued. Mr. Cornman asked which benchmark was used and Mr. Krepps said it was a cloud-based benchmarking tool and he could provide that name to the Board. Dr. Guarente asked if we want to purchase a machine that is cheaper and does less and said he physically held both machines in his hands and said there is a difference between them.

Mr. King asked if the prices came through Costars and Mr. Krepps said they did 3 quotes which came in better than state contracts. Mr. King said the Commonwealth has guidelines on bidding and purchases with a debt element and debt filing requirements. Mr. King said it is important to meet the bidding requirements.

Voting Yes to table agenda item 9h: Bigler, Boothe, Cornman, D. Fisher, K. Fisher, Hippensteel, Shade, and Wardle

Voting No: Myers

Motion Carried. 8-1

### **10. New Business - Information Item**

#### **10.a. School Safety and Security Report**

School Safety and Security Coordinators are required by the PA Public School Code to provide an annual report to the School Board outlining current safety and security practices along with identified strategies for improving school safety and security. Director of Safety and Security Mike Sturm presented a report to the Board of School Directors during Executive Session prior to the start of the public meetings this evening to comply with the June 30 deadline.

#### **10.b. Invitation to Bid for Food Service Dishwashers and Middle School Serving Line Equipment**

Administration will be compiling bid specs to engage in an invitation to bid process for the replacement of aging dishwashers in the kitchens at the Middle School and Oak Flat Elementary. Additionally, we will also be creating bid specs to engage in an invitation to bid process for refreshing the Middle School serving line equipment (new and additional equipment) to expand menu options at the Middle School. These projects were included in the Annual Child Nutrition Financial Report as a means to reduce the excess net cash resources in the Food Service Fund. Once proposals are received and evaluated, the administration will present recommendations to the Board for approval.

### **11. Board Reports**

**11.a. Athletic Council - Ken Fisher, Mike Hippensteel, Frank Myers, & John Wardle** – Nothing Offered

**11.b. Building and Property Committee - Melissa Bigler, David Fisher, Mike Hippensteel, and John Wardle** – Nothing Offered

**11.c. Capital Area Intermediate Unit - Seth Cornman** [CAIU](#) – Nothing Offered

**11.d. Cumberland Perry Area CTC - John Wardle and Mike Hippensteel** – Mr. Wardle said he attended the last meeting, they had a great graduation, mentioned NOCTI results and said the building project is moving forward but they haven't broken ground on the project.

**11.e. DIG Committee - Julie Boothe, Chair Seth Cornman and Lisa Shade** – Mrs. Boothe said the committee voted to dissolve the DIG Committee and said their work is complete.

**11.f. Finance Committee - Melissa Bigler, Julie Boothe, Frank Myers, and Lisa Shade** – Mrs. Shade said Mrs. Lentz provided a finance update this evening and budget talks will continue at the June 23 meeting.

**11.g. Future Ready Comp Plan Board Reps - Ken Fisher and Lisa Shade** - Nothing Offered

**11.h. Policy Review and Development Committee - Seth Cornman, Julie Boothe, David Fisher, and John Wardle** - Nothing Offered

**11.i. South Central Trust - Seth Cornman** - Nothing Offered

**11.j. Tax Collection Committee - David Fisher** - Nothing Offered

**11.k. Wellness Committee - Seth Cornman** - Nothing Offered

#### **11.l. Future Board Agenda Items**

Mrs. Shade requested the Policy Review and Development Committee conduct the annual charter review to ensure alignment with its purpose and responsibilities. Mrs. Shade suggested an amendment to the charter to be worded, "Development of new policies shall require Board approval before incurring any expenditures." Mrs. Shade also proposed a motion to block any and all new policy expenditures that come from the Policy Review and Development Committee until the appropriate Board approval is obtained.

## 11.m. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Nicholas Guarente

Monthly Enrollment effective May 29, 2025

Total Students Active Enrollment	Cyber Charter School Enrollment Regular Ed	Cyber Charter School Enrollment Special Ed	Approved Home Education	CPACTC
2,354 (including CAOLA and CVA)	138	95	221	118

Dr. Guarente shared kindergarten registrations are now 121 and will continue throughout the summer.

Dr. Guarente said we celebrated 180 graduates on Friday with an inside ceremony. He said 93 graduates will be attending 2 or 4 year colleges, 17 will be entering career/technical programs, 41 are preparing to enter employment, and 3 graduates will be enlisting in the military. Dr. Guarente shared 19 graduates earned distinguished diplomas, 23 earned over a 4.0 cumulative GPA, and 26 attended CPACTC in 14 different programs. He said 100% of our students passed the NOCTI exams with 83% scoring advanced and 3 graduates earned the FFA Keystone Degree.

## 12. Meeting Closing

### 12.a. Business from the Floor/Board Member Comment

Mr. D. Fisher said graduation was great and he was very impressed with the number of kids who earned a 4.0. He also said pertaining to the comments this evening on taxes, until recently, we were the second highest tax rate in Cumberland County.

Mr. Cornman said the Act 1 Index was created because schools were raising taxes without oversight. He said the index was created to curtail raising taxes but has been used by schools as a goal post and not to adjust spending. He said the index rate doesn't mean you should use it.

Mrs. Shade said the Board approved Let's Talk which is a K12 Customer Service platform designed to improve schools, shared details of what to expect from the service and said it should be extremely helpful for community members.

Mrs. Boothe said graduation was nice and it was great to see everyone shift gears for an inside ceremony and said it was a beautiful graduation filled with nice speeches. She thanked everyone for the work that went into making it a success.

Mr. Hippensteel said an inside graduation was not an easy decision but said being inside felt more personal because of having parents closer to the graduation process. He said he heard a lot of compliments and said maybe we should consider some kind of bleachers for outdoor ceremonies to create that closer feel which people liked.

President Wardle said flexibility was vital to the success of graduation and thanked the various departments, Dr. Guarente and the whole team that made it happen with the flexibility to work together for an outstanding graduation. Mr. Wardle thanked the post grad committee for the great events offered to our students and said they deserve a lot of credit for the wonderful things that happened and are already meeting tonight to plan for next year. He said we have reached summer which is a time to recharge but challenged the Board and the public to take time to engage the kids of our community.

**12.b. Adjournment**

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

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

Motion Carried unanimously. 9-0

Meeting adjourned at **8:18 pm, June 2, 2025**

Next scheduled meeting is **June 23, at 7:30 pm**

