

PENN

BOARD REPORT

Volume 46 No. 4

CAMBRIA

November 2024

This report summarizes the actions taken by the Penn Cambria Board of Education at its regular meeting, November 19, 2024. Routine business, such as approval of agenda, minutes, treasurer's report, financial reports, and payment of bills was accomplished. The Board also took the following actions and approved the following resolutions:

I. SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Congratulations to the following Varsity Boys Soccer Team who took second place at District VI Championships: Levi Baker, Elijah Chyr, Evan Connacher, Kyle Conrad, Seth Conrad, Cody Farabaugh, Zachary Farabaugh, Ryan Giraud, Charles Golden, Duncan Gongloff, Cayden Helsel, Drew Latterner, Nicholas Marshall, Thomas McSweeny, Carter Panick, Jackson Rice, Jordan Shedlock, Frank Wallis, and Jacob Zunich.

Congratulations to the following Varsity Football players who won Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference and who placed first at District VI Championships: Ian Beck, Isaac Britton, Malakai Brown, Jace Davison, James DelGrande, Kingston Durbin, Ethan Eckenrode, Jack Eckenrode, Marcus Eckenrode, Matthew Eckenrode, Landon Ehrenfeld, Preston Farabaugh, Brock Fredack, Mason Geist, Grant Gides, Colin Gongloff, Benjamin Gorba, Ryan Hanlon, Gavin Harrold, Trentyn Hassenplug, Ayden Himmer, Derek Hite, Brady Jones, Noah Jones, Evan Latterner, Koaltan Lego, Blake Lilly, Nathaniel Mack, Mason Mento, Blake Nadolsky, Thomas Plunkett, Cameron Price, Logan Price, Hunter Pyo, Anthony Rossman, Karter Shall, Dayne Summerville, Colin Toth, Ian Urish, Corbin Vinglish, Keegan Waddell, Maximus Watt, and Bryce Wheeler.

II. HEARING OF VISITORS - There were no questions, concerns, comments, related to school business.

III. DENTAL INSURANCE PROGRAM

RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors hereby approve a two-year renewal agreement effective January 1, 2025, with *MetLife* to provide dental insurance coverage for all eligible employees. This benefit plan will continue to be administered in compliance with all employment agreements.

IV. GENERAL FUND MAIN CHECKING ACCOUNT

RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors approve the closing of the Penn Cambria First National Bank General Fund main checking account and the opening of a new checking account with First National Bank to be used for the same purpose.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent's recommendations be approved as follows:

A. Personnel Actions

1. Accept Termination

a. Debbie Love, Gallitzin, Intermediate School Aide, effective October 21, 2024

2. Accept Resignations

a. Robert Speicher, Johnstown, High School Math Teacher, Scholastic Quiz Advisor, and High School Cyber Mentor, effective January 20, 2025

b. Nicholas Wanyo, Ebensburg, May - August Fitness Center Coordinator, effective October 17, 2024

c. Nicholas Wanyo, Ebensburg, Head Soccer Coach, effective November 1, 2024

d. Nevaya Wilt, Gallitzin, Intermediate School Aide, effective November 8, 2024

3. Approve Appointments

a. Timothy Blair, Ashville, Pre-Primary 2nd Shift Custodian, retroactive to November 6, 2024

- b. James Miller, Ashville, Middle School Substitute Teacher, retroactive to November 18, 2024 through an approximate date of January 10, 2025
- 4. Approve Appointments, effective pending documentation
 - a. Angela Gibbons, Cresson, Middle School ELA Teacher, Masters Step TOP, \$75,178
 - b. Lori Long, East Freedom, Middle School Special Education Teacher, Masters +30 Step 12, \$64,438
 - c. Nicholas Summerville, Portage, Volunteer Wrestling Coach
 - d. Bethany Vinglas, Loretto, Substitute Nurse
- 5. Award Tenure
 - a. Kayla Galebach
- 6. Approve Mentor for the 2024-2025 school year, stipend per PCEA contract:

| <u>Professional Staff</u> | <u>Mentor</u> | <u>Stipend</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Mary Heiple | Renee Schreyer | \$250 |
- 7. Approve McIlwain School Bus Lines, Inc. Driver
 - a. Martin Auberzinski, Gallitzin, effective pending documentation

VI. NEW BUSINESS

LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors approve entering into an agreement with Collier's Engineering & Design, Inc, Pittsburgh, PA to provide consolidation and restructuring project services for Penn Cambria School District, including Site/Civil Preliminary and Final Land Development Plans, and Geotechnical Exploration Services.

PURCHASE OF VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors approve the purchase of vehicles and equipment for the Building and Grounds Department as recommended by the Director of Buildings, Grounds, and Maintenance; specifically, one (1) plow, one (1) salt spreader, one (1) dump bed insert, and one (1) pick-up truck. The Board also authorizes the Superintendent to solicit sealed bids for the current dump truck, plow, and salt spreader and to accept bids of no less than \$5,000. Funding for these purchases to be made from the General Fund.

PENN CAMBRIA SCHOOL DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors hereby ratify the successor agreement with PCESPA, which covers the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2030.

WRESTLING BOOSTERS' TOURNAMENT SPONSOR

RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors approve Pursuit Sports Apparel as the official sponsor of the Penn Cambria Wrestling Boosters' Tournament to be held December 13 and 14 at Mount Aloysius College, per Policy #915. The official name of the tournament will be known as the Panther Holiday Classic Tournament, presented by Pursuit Sports Apparel.

SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF NEW, REVISED, OR BOARD POLICIES FOR REVIEW:

- A. 140.1 - Extracurricular Participation by Charter/Cyber Charter Students
- B. 801 - Public Records

VII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Reorganization Meeting of the Board of School Directors is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Library of the Penn Cambria High School for the following purposes:
 - 1. Elect a President
 - 2. Elect a Vice-President
 - 3. Select a Solicitor
 - 4. Designate time and place for committee and regular monthly meetings for 2025
 - 5. Conduct any business to come before the Board as this is the only meeting in December

VIII. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Jeanette Black, Assistant to the Superintendent, informed the Board of Directors that the state has released PVAAS scores and updated public data on the Future Ready PA Index and gave data highlights specific to Penn Cambria School District and talked about areas of focus moving forward.

A few data highlights included: grade three ELA and Math exceeded state average; grades seven and eight ELA scores and growth outperformed on all anchors and had exceptional performance on Text Dependent Analysis; high school had strong Keystones performance and continues to exceed all state averages, especially in Algebra; fifty-three percent of the Penn Cambria Class of 2024 has met their graduation pathway requirement by attaining proficiency on all three Keystones, another twenty percent met their pathway by scoring high enough on the three to meet the state composite score, basically seventy-three percent of the class to meet a graduation pathway based on their Keystone scores, other students met a variety of their pathways through vocational pathways, alternate assessments, and other indicators.

There are areas for improvement. The average daily attendance is good. Pre-COVID the average daily attendance was 94.8 percent, the average daily attendance for the 2023-2024 school year was 93.2 percent, so the average daily attendance is returning to those attendance levels. However, chronic absenteeism remains a concern. While the vast majority of students are in attendance every day, there are still a significant number of students that are missing eighteen or more school days per year. The chronic absenteeism is about 15 percent across district, with the high school being significantly higher than the other buildings at 24 percent.

Another area for improvement includes the inconsistent scores and growth at lower elementary grades, making it difficult to figure out if it is due to curriculum, scheduling, etc. and how to adjust. One year the scores and growth data are up and the next they are down, never having a three-year trend.

There is a new ELA program in grades three through six this year, with more focus on foundational reading skills into the upper intermediate and middle levels. There is also focus on career and life ready skills. Focusing on what matters and what the students need to know before they graduate. The school counselors give age-appropriate career lessons in elementary school through high school. The younger students learn about time management, work habits, and "Shark Tank" activities for kids.

Moving forward, Personal Finance will be a required course for all students starting in the 2026-2027 school year, based upon state requirements. Requiring students to have at least half credit of Personal Finance will be a requirement for all students starting in the 2026-2027 school year. We already have an excellent one credit high school Personal Finance course and thank you to the board who already approved the Personal Finance course to count as a math credit towards graduation. The district is moving toward the STEELS standards for science and PSSA science assessment will be in grades five, not grade four, and eight this year and will only be a field test.

Finally, the State assessments are moving online for 2026. Teachers are already willing and able to pilot the new state benchmark assessment called FIREFLY, so that students and teachers can get a feel for what the online assessments will be like.

Guy Monica thanked Jeanette Black for managing all the assessment data, handling grants, among the many other responsibilities that she has.

Mr. Monica also asked if cursive writing is still taught in elementary school and if the students struggle with writing in cursive in the middle school and high school. Mr. Black responded that cursive writing continues to be taught in third and fourth grades and that most of the students in middle school and high school are not required to write in cursive but are given the option to choose.