

LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 14, 2025

The combined Committee-of-the-Whole and regular monthly meeting for voting purposes of the Lake-Lehman Board of School Directors was held on Monday, April 14, 2025, in the auditorium of the Lake-Lehman Junior-Senior High School.

The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Wright, at 7:00 p.m., and opened with Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance and a special moment of silence requested by Mr. Walsh to acknowledge the passing of Lori Bennett, who served as an LIU Board Member.

<u>DIRECTORS</u>	<u>Roll Call</u>
Robert Baran	Present
Kevin Carey	Present
David Paulauskas	Present
Drew Salko	Present
Jean Sayre	Present
Mark Wallace	Present
Scott Walsh	Present
Rob Wojtowicz	Absent
Robert Wright	Present

Others Present:

James E. McGovern, Superintendent
Tracey Liparela, Assistant to the Superintendent
Mary Jo Casaldi, Superintendent's Administrative Asst./Board Secretary
Avery Smith, Esquire, District Solicitor
Joseph Caputo, Business Consultant
Matthew Nonnenberg, Junior-Senior High School Principal
Lori Bednarek, Special Projects Coordinator
Donald James, Lehman-Jackson Elementary Principal
Michael Kostrobala, Ross Elementary Principal
Doug Klopp, Lake-Noxen Elementary Principal
Brian Murphy, Technology Coordinator
Tina Antonello, Director of Special Education
Erica Orock, School Psychologist
Brady Butler, Director of Buildings and Grounds

Representative Jamie Walsh	Anita Koziol	Sarah Saylor Kashatus	Merrit Nash
Mary Azaravich	Chris Kuhar	Jen Runquist	Dara Lopasky
Rocky Lopasky	G. Major	Richelle Steele	Richard Cronin
Tracey McGurk	Landen Aritz		

EXECUTIVE SESSION

An Executive Session of the Board was held on April 14, 2025, to discuss the following:

- A. Employment – retirements
- B. Coaching/extra-curricular appointments/future positions

READING OF MISSION

Mr. McGovern read the Mission of the Lake-Lehman School District.

“The Mission of the Lake-Lehman School District is to inspire students to achieve personal fulfillment through the context of community, independence, generosity and mastery within a safe learning environment.”

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

The Superintendent’s Report included the following:

- **Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Award**

State Representative Jamie Walsh presented a special House of Representative’s Citation to Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Contest-Grand National Champion: Kendall Grabinski, 5th grade student at Lehman-Jackson Elementary. Kendall also received a medallion, a certificate, a trophy, \$500 in cash, and her photo was published on the Zaner Bloser webpage. She was also interviewed by several local television stations for her accomplishment!

Mr. Donald James, Principal, Lehman-Jackson Elementary, noted that Kendall was the third national contest winner of the Zaner Bloser contest within the past 12 years at Lehman-Jackson.

- **Athletic Presentations**

Coach Kuhar presented a Certificate of Athletic Achievement to Connor Runquist for being named District II “AA” Swimming Champion -500 Freestyle. “Congratulations Connor!”

- **Senior Projects**

This year our senior class once again exceeded expectations with their Graduation Projects.

The students volunteered well over 3,125 hours of community service and raised \$53,346.91 to benefit local non-profits!! Some of the money raised benefited Lake-Lehman Booster Clubs, Mama Bird, Equines for Freedom, Sweet Valley Fire Company, Volunteers in Medicine, just to name a few.

- **Annie Jr.**

The Lake-Lehman Jr/Sr High School Theatre Troupe will present Music Theatre International’s Annie Jr., at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 3, 2025, and again on Sunday at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10.00 for adults and \$8.00 for students and senior citizens. Enjoy a Broadway classic your whole family will love!

- **U-Knighted Knight Out**

This is our second annual event which will bring all buildings, students, families and community members together for a fun night out! The event will be held on Saturday May 3, 2025 from 5:00 until 9:00 p.m., under the stadium lights! Rain date: May 17th.

- **Kindergarten Registration**

Kindergarten online Registration and information is now available online on our district website.

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Caputo, Business Consultant, provided a year-to date budget summary and expenditure analysis. He also provided information on the Governor's proposed budget for 2025-2026, school taxes, millage history, millage rates and the impact of school tax increases to the homeowner. Mr. Caputo plans to provide a budget presentation at the May 19th School Board Meeting.

In regard to state allocation of funds to school districts, Mr. McGovern commented that our district has not raised taxes for years and is being penalized for being fiscally responsible. "This is not a good situation compared to other school districts."

Mr. Paulauskas responded that it seems that the state will help out if we raise our taxes and also stated that we are at a point where we have no more, or very limited options to keep costs down.

WEST SIDE AREA CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER REPORT

Mr. Salko provided highlights from the February 24, 2025, meeting of the West Side CTC Joint Operating Committee.

LUZERNE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT REPORT

Mr. Walsh provided highlights from the meeting of the Luzerne Intermediate Unit held February 26, 2025.

STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Landen Aritz, Student Council President, presented he following report:

"This past month, the Student Council has planned a bake sale set to occur tomorrow, Tuesday, April 15th, with all proceeds benefiting Blue Chip Animal Shelter in support of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month. We hope to achieve similar success as last month's bake sale, during which we were able to collect and use nearly \$200 to purchase necessities for Ruth's Place Women's Shelter. We also hope to continue to give back to both our school and local community with our final projects before we end the school year.

Finally, I would like to give congratulations and introductions to our newly elected 2025-2026 Student Council Officers: Treasurer, Grace Martin (Sophomore); Secretary, Hannah Sell (Sophomore); Vice President, Julianne Judge (Sophomore); and President Ella Aritz (Sophomore). It has been one of the most rewarding experiences and greatest pleasures to have served as Lake-Lehman's Student Council President. I couldn't be more excited for these individuals and all they will bring with their leadership. As always, thank you for your support!"

FOOD SERVICE

A hard copy of the monthly food service report was provided to board members.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. McGovern reviewed and read the agenda and addendum items.

Mr. Wright noted the agenda is approved as read and amended.

VISITORS – Comments relative to approval of Minutes, treasurer’s report, payment of bills, and ACTION ITEMS.

Mr. Paulauskas commented on School Board Action Item #9, which recommends approval of the bid for the Lake-Lehman School District Vestibule Security Upgrade Project. Mr. Paulauskas stated that he would like to see the board look into consolidating the elementary schools into one campus and called for a motion to table Recommended Action Item #9 under the heading of “School Board.” The motion was seconded and a roll call vote was taken.

Vote: Upon roll call of all members present, Dr. Carey, Mr. Walsh and Mr. Wright voted no. Mr. Baran, Mr. Paulauskas, Mr. Salko, Mrs. Sayre and Mr. Wallace voted yes; motion carried.

Recommended Action Item #9 under the heading of “School Board” is tabled.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Salko, seconded by Mr. Paulauskas to approve the following minutes.

March 17, 2025 - regular monthly meeting

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Motion was made by Dr. Carey, seconded by Mr. Paulauskas, to approve the Fund Accounting Payment Summary with payment date listed as April 15, 2025, in the amount of \$372,175.35, and interim payments dated March 21, 2025, in the amount of \$209,829.65, and April 4, 2025 in the amount of \$137,149.58; subject to audit.

Vote: Upon roll call, all directors present voted yes; motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Motion was made by Mr. Paulauskas, seconded by Mr. Salko, to approve the treasurer’s report as of March 31, 2025.

Vote: Upon roll call, all directors present voted yes; motion carried.

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF FINANCIAL REPORTS AND FILE FOR AUDIT
(Attached to Treasurer’s Report)

Balances as of February 28, 2025

- Athletic Fund
- Food Service
- Jr/Sr High School Activity Fund

- Jr/Sr High School Principal's Fund
- Lehman-Jackson Elementary Fund
- Ross Elementary Fund
- Lake-Noxen Activity Fund

ACTION ITEMS

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Motion was made by Mr. Baran, seconded by Mr. Paulauskas, to move on the following items:

1. Accept, with regret, the letter of retirement from Jeanne Williams, reading specialist, effective March 21, 2025.
Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.
2. Accept, with regret, the letter of retirement from Linda VanOrden, elementary teacher, effective June 6, 2025.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

No items.

ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

Motion was made by Mr. Wallace, seconded by Mr. Walsh, to move on the following items:

1. Approve the following as School & Booster Volunteers for the 2024-2025 school year; all clearances on file:

A	Mary Azaravich	G	Yvette Hawk
B	Bethany Crompton	H	Katy Parrish
C	Amy Denmon	I	Makenzie Riauba
D	Daniel DiGiovanni	J	Megan Rogers
E	Christine Eyer	K	Christopher Swire
F	Tiffany George	L	Keith Yanuzzi

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

2. Appoint the following Assistant Coaches/ Extra-Curricular Advisors for the 2024-2025 school year, all clearances on file.

A	Victoria Groff	Softball	Volunteer
B	Alexandra McKitish	Varsity Cheerleading	\$1,779.99 (Pro-rated)
C	Courtney Dougal	JH Cheerleading	\$1,779.99 (Pro-rated)

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

3. Appoint the following Head Coaches/ Extra-Curricular Advisors for the 2025-2026 school year, all clearances on file.

A	Kelly Adamshick	Girls Soccer	\$4,360.54
B	Enrico Bartolini	Boys Soccer	\$4,360.54
C	John Sobocinski	Cross Country	\$4,360.54
D	Gerald Gilsky	Football	\$8,478.64
E	Christopher Kukosky	Girls Volleyball	\$4,937.16
F	Adam Motovidlak	Golf	\$3,013.00
G	Jean Lipski	Field Hockey	\$6,408.27

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

TRANSPORTATION

No items.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Motion was made by Dr. Carey, seconded by Mr. Baran, to move on the following items:

1. Approve a leave of absence for Employee #3277, effective April 8 – July 8, 2025. It is understood the leave will consist of sick and unpaid days in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act; not to exceed 60 days.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

SCHOOL BOARD

Motion was made by Mrs. Sayre, seconded by Mr. Salko, to move on the following items:

1. Approve the CM3 Building Solutions proposal for the underground fuel tank removal and generator replacement project at Lehman-Jackson, Lake-Noxen and the JR/SR high school utilizing grant funds from the "Public School Environmental Repairs Program" at a total project cost of \$1,368,628. All underground fuel tanks will be removed and the current diesel generators will be replaced with natural gas generators at each of the three listed buildings under this project. Lake-Lehman School District is responsible for 50% of the cost in accordance with the aforementioned grant.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

2. Approve the Academic Affiliation Agreement between Lake-Lehman School District and King's College Department of Education for the purpose of student observations and student teaching placements. Term of Agreement is for 5 years from date of execution and will be renewed annually unless otherwise terminated by either party.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

3. Approve the Educational Affiliation Agreements between Lake-Lehman School District and King's College Department of Nursing, ABSN and RN-BSN Programs, for the purpose of clinical observations and field placement with school nurses. Term of Agreement shall commence upon signing by both parties and continue for an initial period of one (1) year, with automatic renewal for successive one-year terms unless terminated by either party.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

4. Approve the calendar for the 2025-2026 School Year.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

5. Exonerate James Mitkowski II, of Ross Township, from payment of all real estate taxes that become due on or after February 7, 2025, which apply to the property listed on the Exemption Certificate, and all terms and conditions which apply as listed on the certificate, as determined by the Pennsylvania State Veteran's Commission for Real Estate Tax Exemption, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

6. Authorize payment of the following insurance appeal(s) based on the determinations of the Lake-Lehman Insurance Appeals Committee:

A.	Appeal #2024-12-1870	\$275.00
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Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

7. Approve the Application for Use of Facilities requested by Tim Rischawy, Back Mountain American Legion Baseball, for use of the baseball field for American Legion baseball games to be held on June 9th, 10th, 16th, 17th, 23rd, 24th, 30th and July 1, 2025, from 4:00 pm until 8:00 pm., upon availability.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

8. Approve the Application for Use of Facilities submitted by Savannah Harrison, Northwest Area Little League, for use of the Ross Elementary baseball field for softball and baseball practices from April until June, 2025 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.

9. Award the bid for the Lake-Lehman School District Vestibule Security Upgrade Project to D & M Construction Unlimited, Inc., of 107 North Turnpike Rd., PO Box 132, Dalton, PA. This award shall include the base bid and Alternates #1 and #2. The project has an estimated total cost as follows:

Base Bid	\$1,224,000.00
Alternate #1	\$29,500.00
Alternate #2	\$9,300.00

THE ABOVE MOTION WAS TABLED.

INFORMATION AND RECOGNITION

Mr. Wright noted that all informational items are as listed.

BOARD DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE BUSINESS

Mr. Salko added that he is in agreement with Mr. Paulauskas comments in regard to building a new elementary school.

SET MEETING DATES

Mr. Wright read the following meeting information:

The combined Committee-of-the-Whole and regular monthly meeting for voting purposes has been scheduled for May 19, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., and will be held in the auditorium of the Lake-Lehman Junior-Senior High School.

VISITORS

Representative Jamie Walsh commented on the funding formula with funds going to schools in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Representative Walsh commented that we need to fix what is broken in regard to the funding issue within the state.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wright called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Salko motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Baran. Mr. Wright adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Jo Casaldi".

Non-Member, Board Secretary
Mary Jo Casaldi