

PLEASANT VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Brodheadsville, PA 18322

Minutes of the August 4, 2026 Board of Education Special Meeting

CALL TO ORDER:

A special meeting of the Pleasant Valley School District Board of Education was held on August 4, 2026 and called to order by President Sue Kresge at 6:02 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mrs. Denise Hopely followed by a moment of silence. The meeting was held in the Pleasant Valley School District Administration Building, 2233 Route 115, Brodheadsville, PA 18322.

Roll Call – School Board Recorder: Mrs. Kathleen Franklin

School Board members in attendance: Mrs. Sue Kresge, President, Mrs. Diane Serfass (virtual), Mr. Norm Burger, Mr. Robert Clark, Mrs. Janet Dooner, Mr. John Gesiskie, Mrs. Denise Hopely, Mr. Matthew Walters.

Absent: Mr. Ryan O’Keefe

Administrative staff in attendance: Dr. James Konrad, Superintendent, Dr. Rae Lin Howard, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Tammy Smale, Business Manager, Mrs. Lori Fulmer, Director of Human Resources, Mr. Jason Van Voorhis, Director of Instructional Technology & Innovation, Rodney Bronson, Chief of Police.

School Solicitor in attendance: Timothy Gilsbach, Esq. (virtual)

SECRETARY’S REPORT: Mrs. Tammy Smale, Board Secretary

Mr. Burger motioned, seconded by Mr. Walters to approve the August 4, 2026 Special Board Meeting Agenda.

VOICE VOTE: 8-0 CARRIED

Pleasant Valley Citizens – (Agenda/Non-Agenda items): There were no Pleasant Valley Citizens wishing to address the Board.

HUMAN RESOURCES: Mrs. Lori Fulmer:

Mr. Walters motioned, seconded by Mr. Clark to approve Agenda items #4.A. - Personnel Items:

Approval of Agenda item #4.A.1. – Hiring of Professional Staff:

1.	Name:	Patrick Rimple
	Position:	Technology Education/STEM Teacher
	Building:	PVMS
	Salary:	PHD, Step 1; \$92,067
	Effective Date:	August 25, 2026 (pending paperwork)
	Replace:	James Igoe (Changed Assignment)

Approval of Agenda item #4.A.2. – Supplemental Contracts – Non-Athletic:

	Name	Position	Salary
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1.	Nicole Composto	PVI 2026-27 PVBA Course Facilitator - Math	Compensation Based upon Student Enrollment
2.	Anthony Chupa	PVI 2026-27 PVBA Course Facilitator - Social Studies	Compensation Based upon Student Enrollment
3.	Jacqueline Brinker	PVI 2026-27 PVBA Course Facilitator - Math	Compensation Based upon Student Enrollment
4.	Megan Gower	PVI 2026-27 PVBA Course Facilitator - Math	Compensation Based upon Student Enrollment

Prior to the vote, a lengthy discussion was held. Mrs. Hopely shared her concerns about procedural requirements as she had said that several board members asked for information to be provided during Executive Session and they have not been answered. Mrs. Fulmer said the candidate is still completing the requirements for PA Department of Education work experience pathway. Mrs. Fulmer continued that PDE offers an experienced-based certificate, which allows you to work as a paid, full-time teacher of record for five years while finishing your education training.

Mr. Gesiskie asked for clarification that the candidate gets hired first as this is not a substitute job. Mrs. Fulmer explained that he will work as a teacher in the classroom and finished the program and it upgrades to a permanent level one. The five year limitation will have to convert. The candidate is already involved in the business world, not the internship being involved. The Department of Education has opened different work experience pathways for someone to become a teacher. We are following the PA Department of Education regulations. Mrs. Fulmer has not spoken to him on how he is applying and paying for it but if he meets the criteria for course approvals he would be eligible for reimbursement. Mr. Gesiskie asked the class has to be preapproved, yes they do, which it states in the collective bargaining agreement. The course approval form is filled out and goes through the approval process. The course is completed and grades and proof of payment are uploaded and processed.

Mr. Gesiskie asked if we are reimbursing classes. Dr. Konrad said yes if he applies through the course approval process, the district would pay for under the collective bargaining agreement. Mrs. Hopely asked if the candidate can be approved as a long term substitute at which time Mrs. Fulmer said that Mr. Fitzgerald said that is not possible through this pathway.

Mrs. Fulmer assured the Board that the candidate will be given a mentor here and with the university where the teacher is enrolled. The Pathway and the certification go hand in hand. The university will work with him to complete any outstanding certifications. Dr. Konrad reiterated that each of our new teachers have mentors and resources they need.

Mrs. Fulmer continued that the position was changed to STEM position at the June meeting and candidates had until July 14th to apply. There were two other candidates but they were not fully qualified. Mr. Gesiskie asked if they had teaching degrees, Mrs. Fulmer answered yes that one candidate did and the other candidate was from out of state.

Mrs. Hopely inquired on whether the district sought out to universities, colleges, technology schools for possibly candidates. Mrs. Fulmer attended several job fairs this school year. This particular posting for the STEM teacher position was posted internally and externally and put out on social media and Linked In.

Dr. Konrad pointed out that we cannot make people apply as it is a difficult position to fill. Just like our issues finding a German teacher. PDE recognizes see how many certified people they were able to provide certificates to through different pathways. They are going at great lengths to recruit. This individual has a high degree with a PHD, as answered at the last executive session, his qualifications, background experience, in the Board approved CBA.

Mrs. Dooner noted that the candidate has a PHD in MicroBiology. Through Act 47 in 2025, PDE changed the intern into the experienced pathway. There is no stand-alone STEM certification.

Mrs. Dooner share her thoughts on the robotics and laser printing, industry based work that has been around since 2000. This is a technology world and we do not have enough educators in technology. She feels that with this new pathway, there will be more PHD's showing up that have no experience in teaching.

Mr. Walters said he is interested in this pathway with more professionals in the schools. He asked if there are any other schools have issues with this. Dr. Konrad shared in his discussions with other superintendents, other schools are struggling with what this technology looks like.

Dr. Howard explained that this is stemmed focused, we are giving our kids another experience. This is part of our COMP plan and we are continuing to give our students the skills they need. This is also an area that our kids need for the future. We will be sharing an update on our Comp Plan at the Working Session meeting.

Mr. Walters shared that the Board members who are on the next teacher contract committee, with this new pathway, they should look for the option of bringing these candidates into the district on a different salary level. Mr. Clark reminded everyone that this was a Board approved contract.

Mrs. Hopely inquired about the steps in the hiring process. Mrs. Fulmer said we are following the CBA as we offer the candidate the position before it is brought to the board. Dr. Konrad added that the candidate moves forward for board approval. Mrs. Hopely feels it would have been better to have the discussion before the job was awarded.

Mr. Burger said the number of years we developed these steps and criteria that human resources is using to go through the process of the candidates. We need to get rid of some of the chaos when he came onboard. What makes this hiring a little different is since we approved the collective bargaining agreement before the PA Department of Education provided this work experience pathway. Teachers in Science and Technology have always been in short supply. When you find someone who is qualified in the special category and is compatible with recommendation, we need to give serious consideration.

Mrs. Kresge share that we need to provide the teacher with the proper tools which includes the proper mentor to set them up for success. Dr. Howard said we started the STEM program in PVE and continued at PVI with student's learning the 3D printer in Mr. Crosby's class. These students are going to be thrilled to take these courses.

Mrs. Hopely shared her concerns about lesson plans for this position. Dr. Howard assured her that the Curriculum Department will work with him and he will have a mentor. Our STEM program is across the district and the Curriculum Department's focus is to help our teachers.

Mr. Gesiskie was concerned that the course had not been approved before the hiring. Prior to the June meeting, we should have approved the position. He shared that he would rather hire an applicant with the educational background with more of a starting salary. He inquired about

whether the teacher would have a full schedule. Dr. Konrad said he will have two periods of grade 6, two periods of grade 7 and two periods of grade 8 which is a full schedule. Mr. Gesiskie asked about the resources for the course and if we had them. Dr. Howard answered that we have resources to begin the school year and may need more.

Mr. Walters questioned the budget for the hiring. When you interviewing the candidates, you need to hire the best candidate for the students. Mrs. Smale shared that we have had a lot of retirements this year and she budgeted in the middle of the matrix for all of the new hires and we came in well below what was budgeted. Mrs. Smale shared that he cannot go far with the salary as he is already at the top of the scale as the increments from year to year are small.

Mrs. Serfass said there is one thing to remember is we approved this CBA. If we do not hire this PHD candidate, we can be charged with unfair labor practice and subject the district to more legal fees. This is the purpose of having the matrix. The renegotiation is when we have to take a look at possibly changing this.

Mr. Gesiskie agrees with changing the contract for the other alternatives, but prefers choosing someone in the education field. Mrs. Hopely added her concerns that if there is enough time to get the program up and running.

VOICE VOTE: 7-0 CARRIED
Voting no on Agenda item #4.A.1. –
J. Dooner, J. Gesiskie, D. Hopely –
5-3-0 Motion Passed

CURRICULUM & STAFF DEVELOPMENT: Dr. Rae Lin Howard –

Mr. Clark motioned, seconded by Mr. Walters to approve Agenda item #5.A. – Field Trip.

Approval of Agenda item #5.A. – Field Trip:

1.	Organization/Grade	PVHS Leo Club
	Teacher(s) Involved	Dr. Susanne Rasely-Philipps/Amanda Altemose
	Destination	MiniTHON Leadership Summit, Hershey, PA
	Purpose	Prepare officers for MiniTHON Leadership role for 2026-2027
	Date(s)	August 7, 2026
	District Buses Needed (#)	One (1) Bus
	Cost for Buses	\$752.88
	Budgeted	LEO Club Budget

VOICE VOTE: 8-0 CARRIED

PLEASANT VALLEY SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

Mr. Gesiskie asked about the goals and evaluations. Mrs. Kresge hopes to discuss at the Working Session meeting. He also asked about discussing the issues at the high school.

Mrs. Kresge wanted to address the process for Executive Session in sharing that it was not denied. We followed the process of the policy. If there is something you want change, you need to bring it forward. The item was not denied during the executive session. The executive session was not denied. There was not five board members who wanted the executive session. The policy is 006.

Mr. Walters shared he will be available after the meeting to talk to the community if they have any concerns.

Mrs. Dooner shared she did wish they had executive session to discuss further. She shared her concern that students signed up for an Industrial Arts course in May and it is changing to the STEM course. She does hope the program is a success. She also thanked everyone for showing up this evening.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Walters motioned, seconded by Mr. Clark to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 PM.

CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy A. Smale, Board Secretary

Kathleen M. Franklin, Assistant Board Secretary

Next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting:
August 27, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

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Tammy A. Smale, Board Secretary

Kathleen M. Franklin, Assistant Board Secretary

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