EPS - September 9, 2026

Wednesday, September 9, 2026 6:30 PM
High School Library, 35 Church Hill Road, Kintnersville, PA 18930

1. **Committee Members**

2. **Meeting Opening**

3. **Topics/Descriptions/Presented by**

3.A. 5-year review presentation: Business Department

Agenda updated at 12:11 PM on September 9, 2026:

At the request of the Committee Chair, this informational presentation has been postponed to the October 14 agenda, so as to allow for the full two hours of the meeting to be dedicated to the informational presentation regarding exploring building consolidation and resource optimization.

3.B. 5-year review presentation: Wellness/Fitness Department

Agenda updated at 12:11 PM on September 9, 2026:

At the request of the Committee Chair, this informational presentation has been postponed to the October 14 agenda, so as to allow for the full two hours of the meeting to be dedicated to the informational presentation regarding exploring building consolidation and resource optimization.

3.C. 5-year review presentation: Social studies Department

Agenda updated at 12:11 PM on September 9, 2026:

At the request of the Committee Chair, this informational presentation has been postponed to the October 14 agenda, so as to allow for the full two hours of the meeting to be dedicated to the informational presentation regarding exploring building consolidation and resource optimization.

3.D. Building Consolidation Presentation

4. **Discussion**

5. **Committee Approved Expenditures**

5.A. None.

6. **Informational**

7. **Next Scheduled Meeting Date**

7.A. October 14, 2026 at 6:30 PM

8. **Adjournment**

9. **Minutes from previous meeting**

9.A. August 2026 Minutes

Business Department

6 - 12 Curriculum Review
2026 - 2031

Business Review Team

Leadership

6-12 Department Chair

Brian Gilbert

Instructional Team

Business Department

- Moriah Hoferica
- Rory Mcmullen
- Nancy Rugel
- Breanna Timochenko

Administration

Assistant to the Superintendent

Dr. Michael Donnelly

Progress Review

A look at the previous 5 - year plan (2020-2025)

- ➔ Offer Financial Literacy Online and MOOC for grades 9-12.
- ➔ Utilized video skills outside the classroom to strengthen livestream program.
- ➔ AP Computer Science - Incorporate new curriculum
- ➔ Students who completed the business pathway met future ready standards in multiple ways – by completing job shadows and achieving Excel certification.
- ➔ Cutting-Edge Video Studio

MISSION *and* Vision

The Palisades' Business and Technology Department is dedicated to providing an education the develops applicable skills for a successful career in a globally competitive and diverse work environment.

Our vision is to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs, business leaders and professionals who will lead with purpose, adapt to change, embrace innovation and make a positive difference.

Current Program

Highlights

- Business Career Pathway Program - continued to increase our networking opportunities
- Offering additional Advanced Placement opportunities
- Two fully engaged online course offerings
- Financial Literacy course graduation requirement continues to be highly successful
- TV/Video Program - Live streaming events, youtube channel, community outreach, and district news, district events, PCF events, etc
- Ethics Bowl and FBLA Competitions
- Entrepreneurship - service and merchandising hands-on business concepts and experiences

Area of Focus #1

Digital Communications

Measurable Goal

Integrate the use of a Podcast platform across business curriculum areas.

Area of Focus #2

TV / Video Program

Measurable Goal

Evolve PALMS video production program. High School livestream will evolve into a student-led program where students handle the setup, broadcast, and teardown of each stream.

Area of Focus #3

AP Career Kickstart

Measurable Goal

Cybersecurity:

- Benefit: Provides an AP-aligned pathway into high-demand technology careers and develops technical, problem-solving, and career-ready skills.
- Goal: Increase enrollment and successful completion in AP-aligned Cybersecurity courses by 20% over five years.

Business:

- Benefit: Prepares students for college and careers through AP-aligned business, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy skills.
- Goal: Increase enrollment and successful completion in AP-aligned Business courses by 20% over five years.

Area of Focus #4

K - 12 Relevance of Curriculum

Measurable Goal

All program levels will meet annually with school and community stakeholders to evaluate the relevance of the curriculum and make modifications based on identified needs. Authentic learning opportunities will be integrated to enhance student engagement and real-world application.

Next Steps...

Podcast Center:

- Establish a location, equipment needed, and lesson plans.

Evolve Video Production Program:

- Add Unit in TVII/III where students learn to set up and take down live streaming equipment, evolve into full student led task
- Establish PSDtv Broadcast Club in hopes of approval of official club, continue to grow and nourish club.

Next Steps Continued...

AP Career Kickstart

- Launch AP Business with Personal Finance and AP Cyber Security
- Continue to adjust based on College Board requirements and additional resources.

K - 12 Relevance of Curriculum

- Establish a community stakeholder group 7-12, collaborate, continue to integrate industry leaders
- Create guest speaker experiences.

Wellness / Fitness Department

K - 12 Curriculum Review
2026 - 2031

Wellness / Fitness Review Team

K-12 Department Chair: Jennifer Kukowski

High School Department: Lauren Rood and Chris Hastie

Middle School Department : Jennifer Kukowski, Josh Kline, and Nathan Michener

Elementary School Department: Shauna Chilton and Jason Blocher

Assistant to the Superintendent for Educational Services: Dr. Michael Donnelly

MISSION

We seek to empower students to make informed decisions so that they can lead healthy, active lives.

F - Foster a positive learning environment that motivates students.

I - Inspire life-long healthy decision makers.

T - To provide students with the knowledge and skills to live an active lifestyle.

Progress Review

A look at the previous 5 - year plan (2019-2024)

- ➔ K-12 Mindfulness Training
- ➔ Recommendation of a second semester of health at the high school level
- ➔ Career exploration within Wellness and Fitness at the secondary level
- ➔ Healthy boundary education grades 3-12

Current Program

Highlights - Elementary

- Continue to expand and develop Adapted and Modified PE programs at Tinicum and Springfield which continue to grow and incorporate reverse inclusion which not only benefits our students in both the IU classrooms, but our regular ed students as well.
- Just received a new kindergarten biking program which we look forward to implementing next school year. Working on organizing equipment and finishing trainings to make sure we are ready to incorporate next year.
- Continue to hold great events at each building such as our elementary track meet and 3 field days every year, and Kids Heart Challenge.
- Completed the transition of our guest speaker series to The Weller Center–Lehigh Valley Hospital; the move was very well received by students.

Current Program

Highlights - PALMS

- The guest speaker program was successfully transitioned to The Weller Center–Lehigh Valley Hospital and garnered positive reception from participating students.

- Successfully planned and facilitated Red Ribbon Week, Team Unity Day, and Field Day events.

- Increased mindfulness lessons in 6th grade health and mentoring classes with lesson written by Health and PE staff.

Current Program

Highlights - High School

- Continued to provide and expand guest speakers for health class, utilizing the Weller Center
- Expanded on and continued to develop quality LifeSkills Health Lessons. Including Internet Safety and cyber awareness.
- Added more Lifetime activities to PE courses, including pickleball.
- Started to develop curriculum for Gambling Awareness for Health Class.

Area of Focus #1

Curriculum Review

Measurable Goal

Aligning K-12 curriculum with new state standards when the standards are released.

Area of Focus#2

Program Implementation

Measurable Goal

Decrease online student enrollment and offer more face to face courses that are available in our planned courses.

- Health classes miss discussion based learning, social norming, and skills based practice. Maintaining compliance with the new skills based standards would require in person and hands on classes.
- Due to loss of one staff member at the high school we cannot run several of our offered planned courses.
- High school health has 66% of students enrolled in online health. High school PE has 19% of students enrolled in online PE (26-27 school year). Drivers Education is 100% online.

Area of Focus #3

Program Implementation

Measurable Goal

Research and review current expectations of programing and maximize student opportunities, to align with our scope and sequence of planned courses.

- Every child active every year (elementary and middle levels, and maintain high school requirements)
- 50% of 8th graders are enrolled in a PE elective class.
- 35% of freshman are not scheduled for PE. PE 1 is required before a student can be enrolled in another PE class.

Area of Focus#4

Program Implementation

<u>Measurable Goal</u>

Program Sustainability- Elementary Bike Program. Pilot year is occurring this school year.

Increase of unique opportunities in elementary Health and Physical Education

- Look into and review possible new programs: Golf program, roller skating

Area of Focus #5

Health and Safety

<u>Measurable Goal</u>

Climate control of all physical education teaching spaces for health, safety, and welfare of all students and staff.

- Temperatures reaching 95 degrees. Temperature measurements have been recorded for the past five years. Temperatures reach unsafe levels for physical activity. All gym spaces have limited air flow with no windows or doors that open to the outside.
- Student 504 and IEP accommodations.
- Longevity of fitness equipment in the fitness center.

Next Steps...

State standards may be out within the year:

- Aligning K-12 curriculum with new state standards when the standards are released.

Evaluating changes in 8th grade Health & PE:

- Allocating time throughout the semester to accomplish the health curriculum, while keeping all children active.

Increasing face to face instruction and offerings of current planned courses

Sustainability of program offerings at the elementary level

Climate control needs to be addressed for health and safety of students, staff and community

Social Studies Department

K - 12 Curriculum Review
2026 - 2031

Social Studies Review Team

High School Department Chair: Alex Bobsein

Middle School Department Chair: Dennis Gluck/Dave Hinkle

Elementary School Department Chairs: Bridge Snively

Assistant to the Superintendent for Educational Services: Dr. Michael Donnelly

Input from all elementary teachers and secondary social studies teachers

Progress Review

A look at the previous 5 - year plan (2019-2024)

- Exercising student choice and voice, new electives were added to the high school course guide
- Off campus professional learning experiences for department members, 6 - 12, brought about ideas for supporting classroom instruction
- Fully implemented our new district-written SS curriculum. We valued teacher creativity by offering multiple ways to present lessons with explicit scopes and sequences to follow, incorporating project-based learning and interactive learning.

MISSION

The mission of the social studies department is to develop active and informed citizens who embrace diversity, understand the context of historical and current events, and think independently when presented with conflicting sources of information.

Rationale: A democracy requires educated citizens who can make informed decisions. Social studies helps students understand and participate in the democratic process. As our society becomes more culturally diverse and we live in a more interdependent world, social studies provides students with the knowledge and understanding of the past necessary for coping with the present and planning for the future. Our mission is that students not only learn information but also how to learn so that they can continue to seek the knowledge that will allow them to reach their full potential and be productive members of our society

Current Program

Highlights

Elementary-

- Working relationship with Hellertown Historical Society in relation to America 250
- Worked with former Palisades students to portray the importance of military veterans and their service
- Engagement with the Mercer Museum's Tile Works
- Continued work on district Social Studies curriculum
- Investigation and implementation of new PA Personal Finance Standards

Current Program

Highlights

PALMS-

- Expanded Rho Kappa
  - Toured Revolutionary Museum in Philadelphia
  - Assisted Veteran's Day at PHS
  - Visited Local Legion displays and memorials
  - Connections with local historical societies (Durham, Grist Mill, Hellertown)
- Expanded 7th grade Global Awareness resources
  - Textbook and supporting resources (World Cultures and Geography)
- Expanded Kami/NewsELA use in the classroom
- Resumed the 8th grade Washington DC class trip (paused during Covid)
- Continued with evidence based writing assignments (document-based questions/text dependent analysis)
  - Utilized AI to enhance lessons with additional short writing assignments

Current Program

Highlights

High School-

- Successfully designed and implemented new elective courses, based on student interest survey
  - Recently added electives enjoy consistent enrollment requests
  - Students report positive, enriching experiences; teachers report rewarding engagement
  - The courses enhance the curriculum menu, offering more diverse options for students within the field
- Successfully piloted and utilized new textbooks and curricular materials
  - Department members are constantly reviewing and revising, as new resources are published
- AP courses enjoying high enrollment and yielding impressive Exam results
- Continue to administer the civics exam, 100% pass rate, with about 50% of students achieving a perfect score during the 2024/2025 school year.

Area of Focus #1

Increase student achievement

Measurable Goal:

Continue to see an increase in student writing and reading comprehension of informational texts through a variety of offered strategies as defined by the department.

Area of Focus #2

Curriculum Review

Measurable Goal

Review and adjust current curriculum guidelines and course offerings to reflect evolving state requirements, school goals, student enrollment trends, departmental staff expertise, and scheduling availability. All courses will be reviewed and a recommendation will be made for which to discontinue in advance of the publication of the high school's course offerings.

Area of Focus #3

Professional Development

Measurable Goal

Increase opportunities for K-12 collaboration with colleagues through professional development. These internal and outside trainings and enrichment activities will provide opportunities to explore and share best practices. Also, these opportunities will hopefully assist in improving the effectiveness of instructional strategies, especially in the area of Artificial Intelligence in the classroom.

Area of Focus #4

Resources Review

Measurable Goal

Continue to examine and evaluate current online and traditional resources. The department will also explore new and effective materials that could potentially increase student engagement and learning outcomes.

Next Steps...

K - 5:

- Implement new lessons for the PA Personal Finance Standards
- Evaluate current CKLA curriculum and analyze ties to current district Social Studies curriculum
- Explore additional historical enrichment opportunities outside of the classroom

6 - 8:

- Evaluate new 6th and 8th grade textbook class sets
- Purchase additional 7th grade class set (we now have 2 teachers)
- Continue to expand field trip learning opportunities for students
- Continued professional development on AI and its impact on education
- Continue to explore and implement reading and writing strategies to increase student performance

9-12:

- Evaluate and update course offerings/curriculum guide
- Evaluate potential updates/modifications to the the Graduation Project and the Senior Seminar
- Continue to expand field trip learning opportunities for students
- Maintain a dynamic curriculum by refreshing reading materials, leveraging innovative educational technology, and strengthening digital citizenship instruction.
- Continue to strengthen students' reading, writing, and research skills

Charting our Course:
Exploring Building Consolidation and Resource Optimization

EPS : September 9, 2026

Presenters:

Dr. Bridget O'Connell
Dr. Michael Donnelly

Presentation Format

1. Review of Issue of Declining Enrollment
2. Review of Prior Meetings
3. Preliminary Review of Impact on Class Sizes, Building Utilization, Programming, Personnel, and Expenditures/Revenues/Costs

Review of Issue of Declining Enrollment

Year	District enrollment	Decline
2000	2162	
2010	1844	-318 students from 2000 (15% decline)
2020	1404	-758 students from 2000 (35% decline)
2026	1301	-861 student from 2000 (40% decline)

Review of Issue of Declining Enrollment

The Board has been discussing and reviewing the issue of declining enrollment for well over a decade. Presentations and minutes can be found on the district website under Departments, Buildings and Grounds, and Building Use Data. Presentations on this site begin in 2014.

Review of Most Recent Meetings

Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting - December 3, 2025

Recommended Bucks IU tour elementary buildings (Dec. 2025)

Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting - January 28, 2026

Bucks IU is interested in potential rental for programming. No specific building identified or further action taken.

Board Meeting - April 15, 2026 (approved KCBA to conduct demographic survey and facilities use study)

KCBA began their work following Board approval.

Review of Most Recent Meetings

Fiscal Committee Meeting - July 20, 2026 - KCBA presented first of two presentations on district demographics and facilities use.

> Findings: Two, K-5 buildings are possible with additions to each of the two buildings. Committee was not interested in pursuing a plan that included building expansion and requested another option. No discussion on selling any of the buildings.

Buildings and Grounds - August 26, 2026 - KCBA presented an option that consolidated buildings without building expansion.

> Option: Two, K-4 buildings, one, 5-7 building, one 8-12 building. Committee was interested in further discussing this option in two weeks at Education Programs and Services meeting on September 9, 2026.

Preliminary Data Review

Remaining agenda:

1. Review of impact on class sizes with K-4, 5-7 and 8-12 configuration and building utilization
2. Preliminary impact on reconfiguration by grade level bands
3. Personnel
4. Expenditures/Costs/Revenues

Review of Current Class Sizes - Elementary

Elementary Enrollment as of August 24, 2026 (current year)

	Total students per grade	**Tinicum** One class per grade	**Durham** Two classes per grade	**Springfield** Both single and double classes per grade	**Number of Classrooms/ Classroom Teachers**
K	87	20	22 / 22	23	4
1	87	22	22 / 21	22	4
2	100	23	15 / 16	23/23	5
3	90	24	20 / 21	25	4
4	102	21	25 / 24	16 / 16	5
5	92	28	16 / 16	16 / 16	5
Totals	**558**	**138**	**240**	**180**	**27**

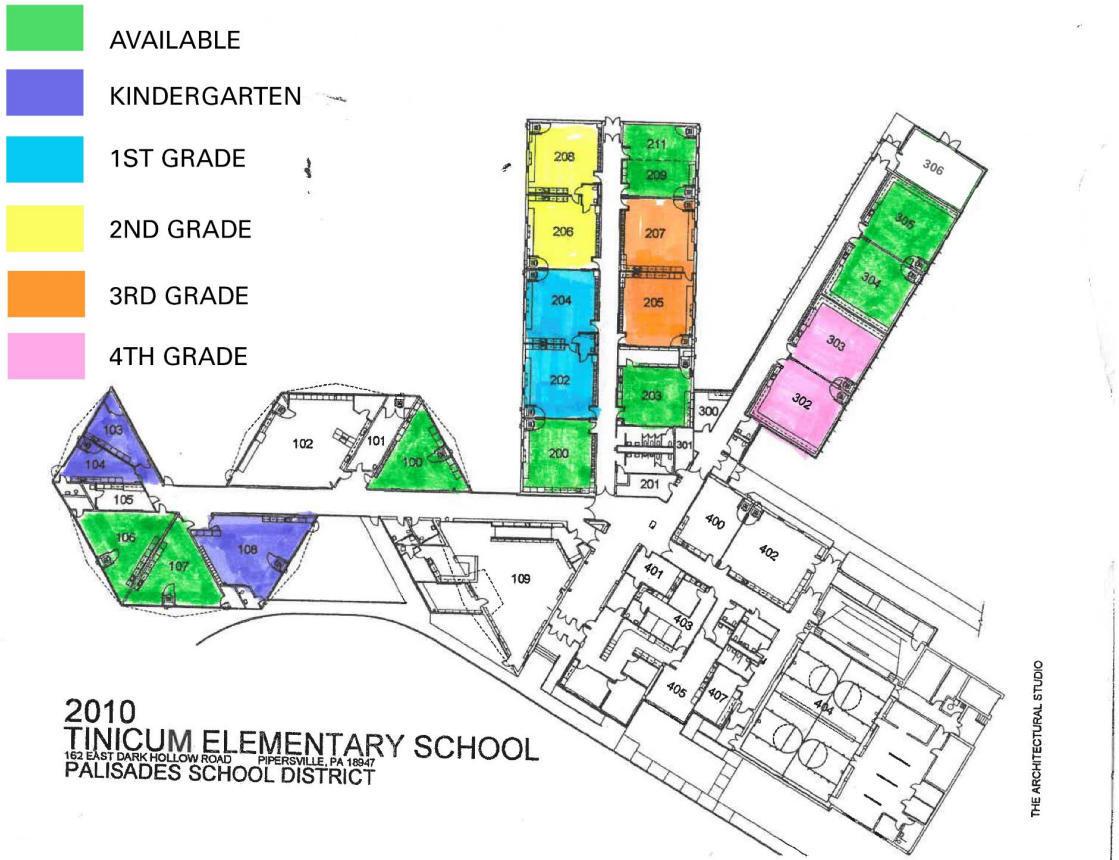
Preliminary Review of Projected K-4 Structure

Elementary Enrollment with K-4 configuration in 27/28 (next year)
**assumption of incoming K*

	Total students per grade	**Elementary Building 1** (10 classrooms)	**Elementary Building 2** (10 classrooms)	**Number of classrooms/ classroom teachers**
K	*90**	*22 / 23*	*22 / 23*	4
1	87	21 / 22	22 / 22	4
2	87	22 / 22	22 / 21	4
3	100	25 / 25	25 / 25	4
4	90	22 / 23	22 / 23	4
Totals		**227**	**227**	**20**

Note: current graduating classes = 122 (2026), 118 (2027) and 113 (2028)

Tinicum


AVAILABLE
KINDERGARTEN
1ST GRADE
2ND GRADE
3RD GRADE
4TH GRADE
103
104
105
106
107
108
102
101
100
109
208
206
204
202
200
211
209
207
205
203
201
300
301
306
305
304
303
302
400
402
401
403
405
407
404
2010
TINICUM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
162 EAST DARK HOLLOW ROAD PIPERSVILLE, PA 18947
PALISADES SCHOOL DISTRICT
THE ARCHITECTURAL STUDIO

Durham Nockamixon

- AVAILABLE
- KINDERGARTEN
- 1ST GRADE
- 2ND GRADE
- 3RD GRADE
- 4TH GRADE



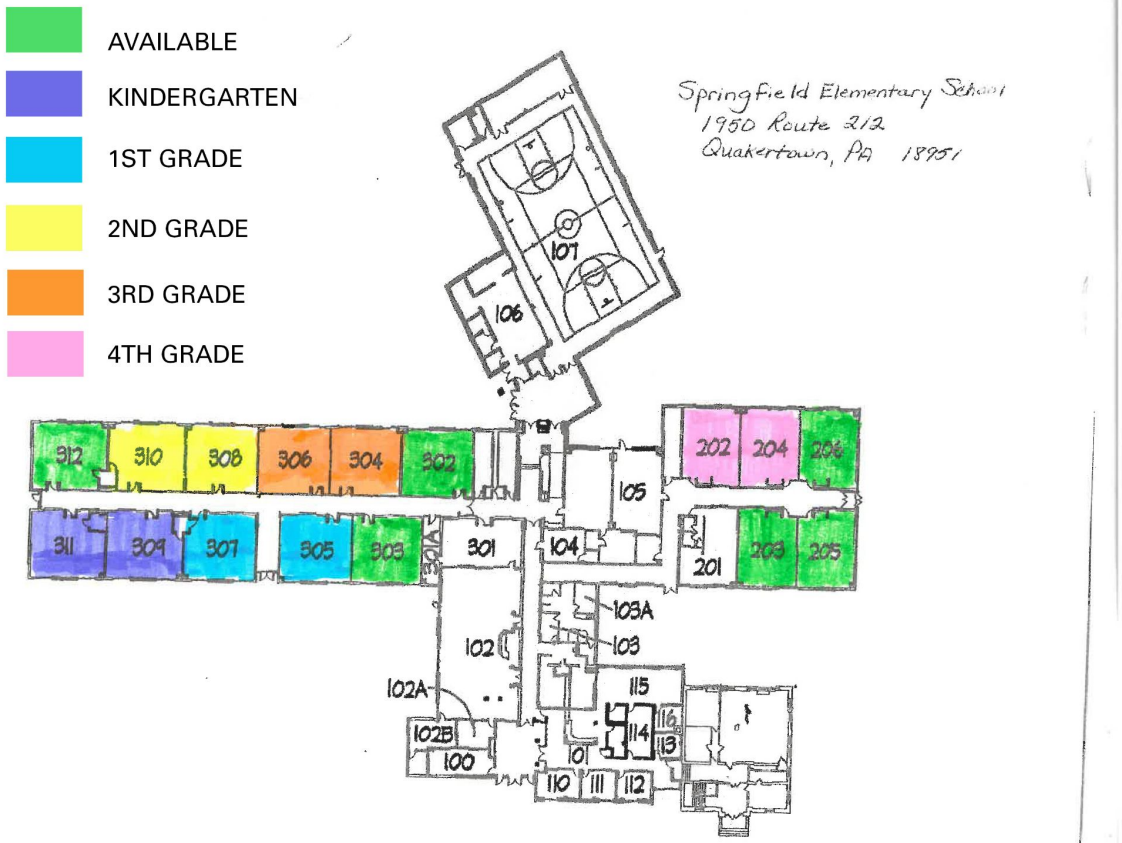
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Durham-Nockamixon Elementary School
41 Thomas Free Drive
Kintnersville, PA 18930

Springfield



Review of Current and Projected Class Sizes - PALMS

PALMS Enrollment as of August 24, 2026

Grade	Current 26/27		Projected 27/28		Projected 28/29
6	118				
7	100	5th	100 (4 sections)*	5th	87
8	99	6th	90	6th	100
		7th	118	7th	90
Totals	**318**		**308**		**277**

*4th grade currently has 5 sections with class sizes of 21, 24, 25, 16 and 16. By reducing from 5 to 4 sections, one elementary teacher can become K-7 teacher of the gifted.

PALMS - Grade Level Zones



AVAILABLE SPACE

5TH GRADE

6TH GRADE

7TH GRADE



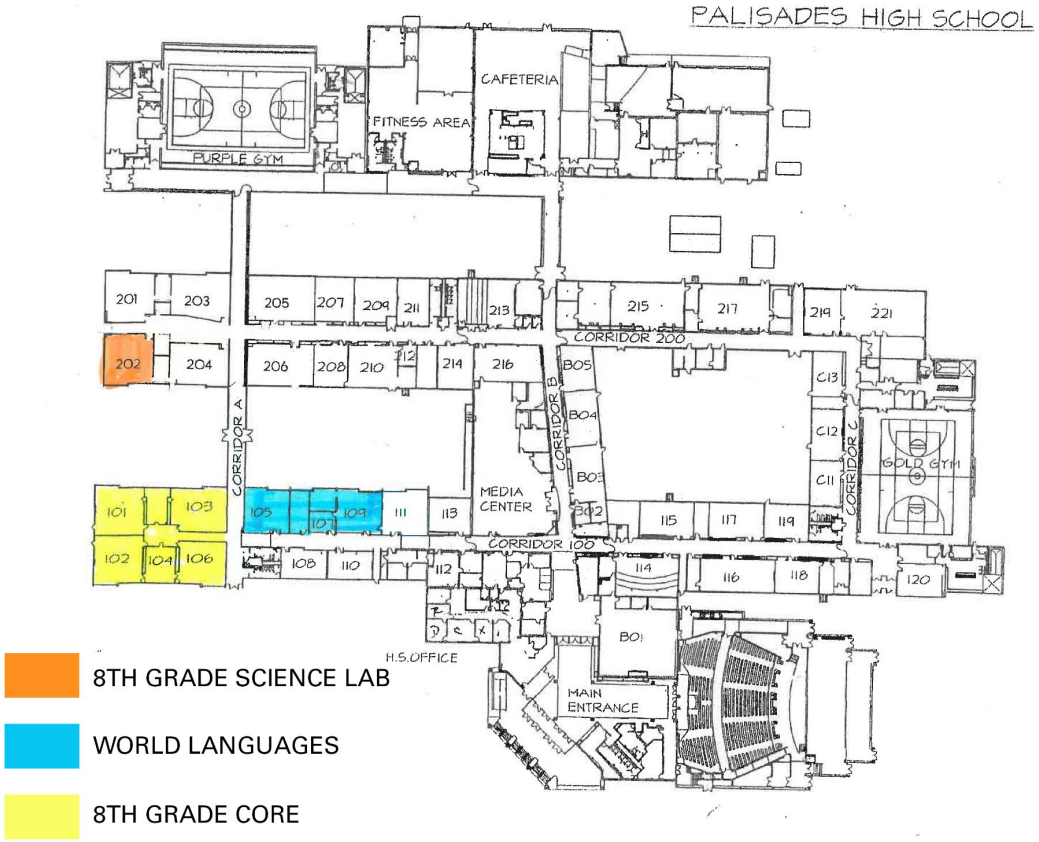
Review of Current and Projected Class Sizes - PHS

PHS Enrollment as of August 24, 2026

Grade	Current 26/27		Projected 27-28		Projected 28-29
9	94	8	100	8	118
10	98	9	99	9	100
11	113	10	94	10	99
12	118	11	98	11	94
		12	113	12	98
Totals	**423**		**504**		**509**

For reference, PHS enrollment (9-12) in 2004-2005 school year was 730 students.

PHS - 8th Grade Area



Preliminary Review of Impact of 2, K-4 buildings :

Considerations:

- Redistricting students from three buildings to two
  - Moving furniture/materials to accommodate grade levels in each building
- Transportation
  - Additional time is needed to create routes and determine length of time on the bus with two elementary buildings instead of three.
- No programmatic changes (schedule, specials, lunch/recess)
- Sufficient classroom space exists in all buildings to accommodate special programs including Pre-K, autistic support, emotional support and IU classrooms for students with multiple disabilities.

Preliminary Review of Impact: 5-7 Building

Considerations:

- 5th graders would have self-contained space on first floor and follow the current time allotment for elementary classes
  - 5th grade furniture and materials would need to move to PALMS
- 7th grade would be on the second floor and both 6th and 7th would follow the current middle school schedule
- Students in all grades have access to involvement in clubs and co-curricular activities (musical, ensemble groups, etc.)
- 7th graders assume building leadership roles/opportunities
- As per PA Law in 2026, K - 5 require 30 minutes of recess/day.
  - Additional outside equipment, like basketball hoops and permanent Gaga pit are considerations
- 5th graders would move to a secondary bus run which is earlier in the morning. Assigned seats in front of the bus behind the driver will keep 5th graders separate and supervised.

Preliminary Review of Impact: 8 - 12 Building

Considerations for 8th graders:

- Expanded academic opportunities for 8th graders:
  - Earn high school credit for level I world language^
  - Earn high school credit for Algebra 1 and Geometry^
  - Diverse elective* options
- Students that take advantage of early credit options will then have more room in their schedule as an upperclassman for dual enrollment, Advanced Placement and elective courses as well as early dismissal (work, college courses) and/or early graduation.
- Dedicated classroom space as a cohort including science lab.
- Earlier access to fitness center in PE curriculum
- Continued participation in co-curricular activities (music, cybersonics) with new opportunities such as Unified Sports
- Participation in the fall play and spring musical

^may require revision to Board policy

*PHS electives are currently under enrolled and range in class size from 4-24 students. Declining enrollment in electives is due to declining high school enrollment overall and 9th graders that attend UBCTS take all electives in their program area.

Preliminary Review of Impact on Faculty

- While it is too early to provide specific implications of consolidation, the following statements are accurate:
  - Need for teachers to travel between buildings will be reduced or eliminated.
  - Should there be a reduction of (1) position at the elementary level, that position can be transitioned to become K - 7 PAL teacher without increasing staffing.
  - Elementary specialists will have full schedules* to teach in their primary area.
  - Secondary staffing may have reductions independent of consolidation. Comp plan includes review of class sizes and potential establishment of minimum enrollment to run a class.
    - Possible reclassification of (1) position as an interventionist for the middle school
  - Reassign an elementary counselor to provide services in new configuration to provide high level of support through transition.

*a full time schedule with 3 buildings is 36 classes in a 6 day cycle. Currently, due to single classes in certain grades in 2 buildings, specialists teach 27 classes in a 6 day cycle.

Preliminary Review of Expenditure Reduction/Revenue

Until a decision is made about building consolidation, these numbers are only estimates and are **conservative.**

Expenditure Reduction		**Added Costs (one time)**		**Annual Revenue**	
Utilities (average of 3 buildings)	$69,000 (27/28) $71,000 (28/29) $73,000 (29/30)	PALMS outdoor equipment (basketball hoops, permanent Gaga ball pit, etc. off cafeteria)	$75,000 (27/28)	Building Rental	$100,000 (27/28) $103,000 (28/29) $106,000 (29/30)
Personnel (payroll and benefits)	$570,000 (27/28) $600,000 (28/29) $615,000 (29/30)	Moving furniture/materials between buildings	TBD (27/28)		
Charter School Tuition reduction	$0 (27/28 - based on 26/27) $41,000 (28/29) $42,000 (29/30)	Tinicum - remove wall between 103 and 104 to revert back to a K classroom	In-house project (27/28)		

*charter school tuition is largely based on per pupil expenditure. A reduction in staff will reduce tuition.

Next Steps

- Board discussion at the September 16, 2026 board meeting.
  - ***No action is being taken***

- Board working session on Wednesday, September 30, 2026 in the PHS auditorium
  - Discussion on prior presentations, improving educational outcomes and opportunities for students, and remaining fiscally responsible.
  - Board direction will determine if a motion to hold a hearing regarding building consolidation will be placed on an upcoming Board agenda.

PALISADES school district
INSPIRED TO LEAD...PREPARED TO SUCCEED

MINUTES

Educational Programs and Services

Library at PHS
August 12, 2026
6:30 PM

Committee members present: Dr. Karen Beerer (committee co-chair), Dr. Michael Donnelly (co-chair/Assistant to the Superintendent), Cora Landis (committee member), Sylvia LeBlanc (board president/committee member), Betsy Nilsen (committee alternate)

Other Board members present: Linda Wenhold

Presentations for each topic below can be found on BoardDocs, where agendas and minutes are posted for Palisades Board meetings and Board committee meetings. For that link, please click here.

6:30 PM - 6:31 PM
Opening

Review Agenda and Introductions

Director Beerer and Dr. Donnelly welcomed everyone and reviewed the committee format and the agenda for the evening.

6:31 PM - 6:45 PM
Action

6th grade digital literacy course

Dr. Donnelly shared the updated version of the planned course statement, which now includes materials/technology tools that can be used with the course.

The committee moved the planned course statement to the full board for recommended approval on August 19.

6:45 PM - 6:49 PM
Action

MOU with BCIU #22 for Chief Science Officers grant funding

Dr. Donnelly reminded the committee of the work that Dylan Fedell did in concert with staff from the Bucks County Intermediate Unit which resulted in the awarding of a grant to support the continued growth of the Chief Science Officers program throughout the region. This MOU allows Palisades to access funds to support the club at the high school.

The committee moved the MOU to the full board for recommended approval on August 19.

6:49 PM - 6:58 PM
Discussion

Committee Areas of Focus for 26-27

Dr. Beerer reviewed with the committee the five areas of focus/goals for meetings throughout the 26-27 school year. Those items can be found in the agenda in Keystone Agenda on the Palisades website.

6:58PM - 8:16PM
Informational

Informational Items

Dr. Donnelly reviewed the following three topics for informational updates:

PALMS Schedule for 2026-2027
Professional Learning Calendar for 2026-2027
Elementary summer academy 2026 review

Presentations for each topic above can be found on BoardDocs, where agendas and minutes are posted for Palisades Board meetings and Board committee meetings. For that link, please click here.

Committee Comments:

Topic: 6th grade Digital Literacy Course Planned Course Statement

Board Committee Member	Comments/Discussion
Director Beerer	Asked about training for the teacher for Gemini. Shared that some of the monies from the cell phone policy could be used to support some parent education including these topics. Asked about the actual curriculum for the course since there is no official program. Dr. Donnelly shared that there is a Teacher Guide for the course and he will share that with Dr. Beerer.
Director Landis	Wouldn't mind taking the class. Asked about other grade levels having access to this content.
Director LeBlanc	Shared that it would be great if students could develop classwide prompt libraries. Is looking forward to this course and finds significant opportunity to extend to the high school and with the new AP cybersecurity course perhaps there could be some crossover done that involves students working with each other.
Director Nilsen	Made note of the capstone project and would like to see a student presentation and what it looks like for a 6th grader.
Public Comments / Questions:	
Erin Shea (Riegelsville)	Where does it fit in the schedule for middle school?

Topic: MOU with BCIU #22 for Chief Science Officers grant funding

Board Committee Member	Comments/Discussion
Director Beerer	In favor of moving this forward to the full board.
Director Landis	Asked if the grant is for new programs or to support existing ones.
Director LeBlanc	In favor of moving this forward to the full board.
Director Nilsen	In favor of moving this forward to the full board.
Public Comments/Questions:	
Linda Wenhold (Springfield)	Does this club currently exist and is it part of our EDRs?

Topic: Discussion - Committee Areas of Focus

Board Committee Member	Comments/Discussion
Director Beerer	Shared that there is now a staff member at PDE dedicated to literacy and shared that there is conversation about coaches to support, as is the case in other states.
Director Landis	Agreed that these are good topic areas.
Director LeBlanc	Agreed that these are good topic areas that are talked about frequently and reflect community conversations.
Director Nilsen	Agreed that these are good topic areas.
Public Comments/Questions:	
Tanya Reese (Nockammixon)	Asked if an English teacher could get their certificate to become a coach?

Topic: Informational Items

Board Committee Member	Comments/Discussion
Director Beerer	Loves the writing piece for professional development. Was fortunate to be involved in the hiring process for the new teacher and from applicants and from parents they want a balance for middle school students to be able to explore areas of interest. Shared that there needs to be more communication to parents and students about the schedule, how student needs will be met, and how teachers will be supporting students during the Pirate Block. Dr. Beerer also asked about what types of intervention programs are available for students at the middle level.
Director Landis	Shared some confusion about how Pirate Block is managed and scheduled.
Director LeBlanc	Likes the idea of Pirate Block (a more mature version of the elementary What I Need period) and is supportive of it.
Director Nilsen	Appreciated that the staff recommended to learn more about writing and that we are including that in the professional development schedule. Asked if after school starts, could there be some sample student schedules shared at EPS? Asked if there is an orientation/open house so parents can understand the new schedule, particularly for grade 7 and 8 students.
Public Comments/Questions:	
Alyssa Spear (Kintnersville)	Asked where we stand in academic scores in comparison to other districts. Was a product of resource period and appreciates we are moving from that to more of a structured approach.
Jennifer Weland (Springfield)	Concerned about Buccaneers (male music group) losing out when other activities, like sports, won't be, since sometimes students are dismissed early to travel a distance.
Tanya Reese (Nockamixon)	Asked about students who need the academic supports, but truly enjoy other activities, like music or band, etc.
Josephine Williams (Bridgeton)	What happens to students who are in WEB and need academic support during Pirate Block if they want other activities? Also asked about instrumental involvement. Shared that she believes if a student who struggles in reading and has a class for an hour and then 43 more minutes during Pirate Block for reading, it might be too much.
Kim Barbaro	Agrees about the resource period model going away. Shared that we are fortunate

(Nockamixon)	to have a small school and that we need students to be able to participate in lots of different things. Asked about the communication loop from parents to the school with comments or concerns.
Erin Shea (Reigelsville)	Asked how many students will be in each group and how long to develop the skills.
Drew Williams (Bridgeton)	Asked what the percentage is of students who require intervention in the building.
Linda Wenhold (Springfield)	Asked for clarification on the electives and number of them.
Jill Williams (Bridgeton)	Asked if we can guarantee that if a student wants to participate in band, chorus, and orchestra that they won't be pulled during lunch or before/after school because that would impact how strong these programs have been. Stated that it's important that students have the ability to do all of the activities/sports because we are a small district.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at: **8:16 PM**

The next meeting is on Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 6:30 PM.