

**EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
May 13, 2024
East Stroudsburg Area School District Admin Building and via Zoom
5:30 PM
Minutes**

I. The Chairperson, Rebecca Bear, called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary, Patricia Rosado called the roll.

II. Board Committee Members Presents: George Andrews, Rebecca Bear, Wayne Rohner and Richard Schlameuss

Board Non-Committee Members Present: Keith Karkut (in person) Ann Catrillo and Michael Catrillo (via zoom)

III. School Personnel Present In Person: Brian Baddick, Peter Bard, Maria Casciotta, Dave Cooper, Eric Forsyth, Shae Jones, William Riker, and Patricia Rosado

School Personnel via Zoom: Brian Borosh

IV. Community Members In Person: Larry Dymond

Community Members via Zoom: Daisy Matthew

V. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by George Andrews to approve the agenda for May 13, 2024, and with members of the Committee reserving the right to add to the agenda and take further action in the best interest of the District. Motion was seconded by Wayne Rohner and carried unanimously, 4-0.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Richard Schlameuss to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2024, Finance Committee meeting. Motion was seconded by George Andrews and carried unanimously, 4-0.

VI. Items for Approval:

- a. Approve the purchase of four (4) student transportation vans from **Rohrer Bus** totaling \$333,016 plus fees (\$83,254.00 each) (Brightbill could not deliver vehicles in the specified timeframe).

Mr. Bard said when we put this out for bid and we received two bids. One was from Brightbill and one was from Rohrer Bus. Rohrer was the higher of the two

bids by \$9,000 but Brightbill cannot deliver according to the specs. We asked for delivery on or around July 1, 2024 so we can have them at the start of the school year. Brightbill bid Ford products and the Ford products could not be guaranteed for delivery by that time period. In fact, they could not promise delivery until probably midwinter. It would probably be in January. I reviewed this with Attorney Brown and he approved and agreed that we either throw out the bids completely or we award them to Rohrer Bus for the four vans. The idea would be to minimize the cost of sending big buses for a few students like Mr. Karkut brought up previously when we were sending a 72-passenger bus for a trip for a few students. These are gasoline powered vans and not propane. They are ten-passenger vans. They can be driven by anyone that has a C license. They do not need to have a CDL. We are going to place two vans in the South lot and two vans in the North lot. They can be driven by a coach or anyone. This should ease some cost and be a cost savings over the long run. Since we are using the General Fund money, they can be used by anyone at any time for anything. There won't be any restrictions on them. I recommend that we go forward with Rohrer since they promised they can deliver at some point in July so we can have them for the beginning of the new school year. Mr. Schlameuss asked are these RAM Vehicles. Mr. Bard said they are Dodge Ram vehicles. Mr. Schlameuss asked where will the funds come from. Mr. Bard said this will be paid through the Transportation Budget. There was some money left over from some open positions. Mr. Schlameuss asked is this from Federal money. Mr. Bard said, no and we went out to bid; therefore, the Board can pick which one to go with. Mr. Schlameuss said I don't know if we have to meet any requirements to buy American vehicles vs. Federal money, Local or State. Mr. Bard said I asked Attorney Brown and he said he was good with the bid requirements. Mr. Andrews said am I understanding correctly that the vans that we have in our parking lot were purchase by ACCESS funds; therefore, can only be used by Special Education students. Dr. Riker said that is correct. Mr. Andrews said it looks like they do not use them every day since they sit there often. Mr. Bard said these vans that we want to purchase would be a good option for the trips that only have a few students. Mrs. Bear said they can also be used by a small sports team. Mr. Rohner said what I am hearing is that we can have conceivably two different sports or events using these 10 seaters on the same day. Mr. Bard said you can, have four different teams/clubs using them on the same day. Mrs. Bear said two for South and two for North. Mr. Bard said if North needed four, they could use all four on the same day. Mr. Rohner said and vice versa. Mr. Bard said, correct. Mr. Schlameuss said the availability right now is crazy. I am waiting for two buses that won't get in until December. We ordered them two and a half years ago. I want you to realize that this is a thing that is occurring. Will we need an MOU with the Association for the transportation piece of it. For example, if a coach is going to drive a vehicle that typically would have been a bus trip, how do we get past that. Mr. Bard said our primary focus is that we would be using our own employees or our own drivers first. Mr. Schlameuss said we want to make sure that we have some kind of safeguard in place to allow use of the vehicles when we don't have option. I want to make sure that there is some kind of

process that we use so we don't have a grievance filed because we used the van and not transportation. Mr. Bard said the vans will be under transportation; therefore, the trip will be assigned through the Transportation Department. Ms. Robins and the Dispatchers will be assigning the drivers. If a coach would want to drive them, then I will work with Steve Zall to make sure there is some type of arrangement. Mr. Andrews asked why would we need a driver and a coach in the same vehicle. Mr. Andrews said there may be an issue if we don't. Mr. Bard said I will work with Mr. Zall to address this issue when the vans come in so he can meet with the union. I believe this is what Mr. Schlameuss' point is. Mrs. Bear said this could be done like when our social studies class goes down to the courthouse for something you can probably just need two vans. Mr. Schlameuss said we do not want to create a grievance if we don't have to. We need to have steps. We can say a teacher or coach will drive a vehicle after we have exhausted all kinds of possible solutions. Once the Board approves it, I will have Mr. Zall approach the union about this. Mrs. Bear said it sounds like what we did back in the day. When our kids were in elementary school the PTO would call the bus lot first and confirm with the bus lot to see if they could do it. If not, then we would go out to Pocono Bus or Martz. I remember I used to do that as a PTO Board member. I would give them dates and they would say yay or nay. Mr. Bard said this is something similar to what we do. Mr. Andrews asked will we have everything figured out in time. Mr. Bard said I will make sure a process is in place.

- b. Approve adding an option for a **Roth 403b** to all of our all existing 403b vendors (if applicable).

Mr. Bard said all of our vendors for 403b options, if employees chose to do that, is for a pre-tax version of the 403b. The Roth would be for after tax. They can do a contribution after tax so they do not get penalized when they go to withdraw. The Board will have to approve this if they see fit. It would not be adding any vendors or anything like that. Mrs. Bear asked can they do both options if they chose to. Mr. Bard said they can. They do not have the option for the Roth. Mrs. Bear said they would be able to choose from Traditional and Roth. Mr. Bard said they can if the Board approves it. All Committee members have a copy of the budget presentation that I will be asking the Board to approve at Monday's 5/20/24, Regular School Board meeting.

- c. Approve the **2024-2025 Preliminary Final Budget** (Presentation follows).
Mr. Bard said he will be presenting the 2024-2025 Preliminary Final Budget tonight. There were some changes in the document from the last time primarily because the State sent more money from the homestead/farmstead. They sent over a little more than one million dollars in gambling money for more homestead money. People will be getting a bigger tax break. We had to add some more staff and I will go over this as well.

Slide 2 – Market Values and Assessments

County	2023 Assessment	2024 Assessment	Change From Prior Year
Monroe	\$2,608,545,206 93.06%	\$2,591,104,602 93.06%	(\$17,440, 604) (-0.6%)
Pike	\$194,696,490 6.94%	\$194,704,270 6.94%	\$7,780 0.00%

As you know the East Stroudsburg Area School District is a multi-county school district. We have to be leery of rebalancing. Due to rebalancing the district lost almost \$50 million of assessment values since the reassessment was completed in 2020. That has had a severe impact on our real estate tax collection in Monroe County. Pike County has not had that big of an impact because Pike County has not reassessed. This past year we lost \$17 million and that can go up even further because some more reassessments are coming in as well as our common level ratio has gone on.

Slide 3 – Market Value Impact on Millage

County	2023-24 Rebalanced Millage	2024-25 Rebalanced Millage (Proposed)	Change From Prior Year
Monroe	30.79	30.96	0.10%
Pike	128.52	127.01	-1.1%

The 2022-23 STEB rebalanced millage is the new base millage for 2024-2025 budget discussions and decisions. These may change slightly as we continue to get assessment values in.

This is where you notice some changes that I am still working on due to the extra \$1 million in revenue that came in. If you look at the further slides, I'm sure some of you noticed it when you got the packets on Friday, there was a little over \$1 million that came in that affected the rebalancing a little bit. These numbers are not finalized. They may change before the final budget adoption. I have a meeting later this month with some colleagues to help me go over these numbers. It looks like Monroe County will have a .5 increase from the previous year based on the STEB rebalancing formula. Pike County will have a 1.1% decrease. I want to make sure that the public is aware that it isn't the Board who is cutting or increasing taxes. This is due to the formula that the State uses to rebalance the millage when a school district has multicounty. These numbers may decrease as I formulate the \$1 million we received from the homestead/farmstead numbers that came out on Thursday.

Slide 4 – 2024-2025 Revenue Summary

	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Budget	Variance \$	Variance %
Local	\$108,722,094	\$108,134,383	\$(587,711)	(0.5%)
State	\$60,526,274	\$68,052,827	\$7,526,553	11.0%
Federal	\$9,987,030	\$9,972,091	\$(14,939)	(0.01)%
Other	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0.0%
Total Revenue	\$179,285,398	\$186,029,301	\$6,743,903	3.63%

As we get to the revenue summary, this may show you the local formula and budgetary formula. These numbers are based on the previous budget numbers. The State revenue increased by \$7.5 million. That is an 11% increase. That includes the 2022 - 2023 budget as well as the 2023-2024 Governor’s projected budget. That is where the big increase comes from. This includes a \$2 million decrease in local revenue from the decrease in assessments values. We had to look back in the last four years and noticed that because of this severe decline in assessment values, we had to take some of the revenue out of the local real estate but made up for it. We will talk a little bit more about that.

Slide 5 – 2024-25 Revenue Highlights

Local

- Property Tax rates reflect rebalancing and a \$2 million decrease in collection due to \$25 million dollar loss of assessment value
- Added \$1.50 million increase revenue offset due to investment income due to interest environment for at least ½ of the year.
- RE transfer tax leveled off, as did Local Income Tax.

State

- Includes July 2023 BEF and SEF increases
- Includes an additional \$4 million from proposed 24-25 state budget.

Federal

- Phase out complete in September 2024. Has \$5 million for Trane projects (Expenses has \$5 million offset for HVAC projects).

Other

- Any sale of fixed assets not used for trade ins (For example – Chromebooks)

We had to take some of it out over the local real estate taxes because we came up a little short this year in collections. Our local collection rate is pretty steady at around 90% in Monroe County and 93% in Pike County. That goes to show based on that, we took \$2 million out of the real estate collection down to \$88 million. Normally, we would be getting around \$90 million or \$91 million of local collection.

Mr. Andrews asked if the State includes 50% or 100% of the revenue. Mr. Bard said it includes 50% of the allocation from the State for the 2024-2025 school year. I don’t know if the State has started to negotiate the budget; therefore, this includes an additional \$4 million from the State. The State proposed to give us \$9 million. We can actually see more money from the State if they

give us the full allotment. When you look at the spreadsheet that the State gives you, you have to look at the level up column. That is the column that concerns me a little bit, because that is where the State gives us the most amount of our increase. That is also the part of the formula that is the most in jeopardy at the negotiation level with the State Legislator. I only gave maybe a \$2 million swing out of maybe \$6 million. Some Business Managers are not giving any money in there, but I thought it's fair to say that we will get something because of the unconstitutional ruling that came from the court. We stand to gain more money. I don't know how much, so I put the \$4 million in there. This seems to be a pretty conservative number.

The 1.5 million increase in revenue due to investment is good; however, if it does not, we may lose a little of it. We've been averaging \$2.5 million on interest earnings. I put in the budget \$1.75 million. I believe this is a stable place to be. It does hurt us if we borrow, which would be probably to buy the buses. This is a relatively small risk; therefore, I believe we are in a pretty good place.

There is \$50,000 in for any sale of fixed assets such as the buses or computers.

Slide 6 – 2024-2025 Budget Comparison to Prior Year

	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Budget	Variance \$	Variance %
Revenue	\$179,285,398	\$187,116,093	\$7,830,695	4.0%
Expenditures	\$187,784,000	\$203,583,195	\$15,799,195	8.4%
Revenue over Expenditures	\$(8,498,602)	\$(16,467,102)		

You will see the increase in revenue. You will also see expenditures increase from the previous year. There is a \$3.5 million increase from the previous budget presentation. This includes the \$1.7 million in debt service for the borrowing of school buses. It also includes 7 new positions. Five of them are for Special Education Teachers and 2 new paraprofessional positions for special education due to newly identified special education students, especially in K-2. Overall, this budget has 9 new teachers and 9 new paraprofessionals for special education. We also reviewed the services for special education to ensure all the student's needs are met.

Mrs. Bear asked by increasing the staff, will there be less going out to the IU 20 or will that also increase. Mr. Bard said it would be about the same.

It looks like the deficit will be \$(16,467,102). When you look at the numbers that go across that just shows the variance. When you look at the numbers going down vertically, that shows the number. The revenue and expenditure shows you what the deficit will be.

Slide 7 – Budget Cost Drivers

	2024-2025 Budget	Increase/(Decrease) over 2023-2024 \$	Increase/(Decrease) over 2023-24 %
Salaries	\$85,926,009	\$9,643,649	11.8%
Benefits	\$59,846,537	\$6,004,208	9.9%
Charter Schools	\$8,750,000	\$(250,000)	(2.9)%
Utilities	\$3,239,236	\$58,928	1.8%
Debt Service	\$18,305,977	\$1,602,306	10.2%
ESSER	\$5,150,000	\$(586,877)	(11.4)%
Everything Else	\$22,365,436	\$(673,019)	(5.4)%
Total Expenditures	\$203,583,195	\$15,799,195	8.4%

This slide includes the increases and decreases by dollars. The salaries and benefits is what drives 70% of the budget. The increase in salaries is 11.8%. This includes everyone’s salary in the school district, including the substitutes. The benefits include PSERS, Social Security, and health insurance cost. This has a 3% health insurance cost that was confirmed by our health insurance providers, that we needed to continue putting that in due to residual claims costs. Charter School tuition is trending around \$8.5 million; therefore, I feel comfortable cutting the Charter School cost down by \$250,000. That is due to great work that has been done over the last several year by Dr. Vitulli and his staff, by getting students into our ESACA or back into our brick and mortar schools. That is a 2.9% decrease in Charter Schools tuition. Utilities cost is staying relatively consistent. The electricity contract is good for another year at the same rate. We are going out to bid for natural gas. Natural gas prices are lower than they were last year. This number also includes propane for our school buses. This number is pretty consistent. The debt is up by 10% due to the purchasing/leasing of school buses. ESSER includes the reduction that we spoke about earlier. Everything Else, which we discussed before includes all of the discretionary spending from maintenance supplies to school supplies as well as special education services and different services that we cannot eliminate. If I gave you every category and line item this slide would go on forever. I wanted to make you aware that all items include an 8.4% increase. This includes every contract that the Board has enacted. Mr. Andrews asked do we have any idea on how much our surplus will be this year. We budget roughly an 8.5% budget deficit. We should end up somewhere between \$1 million dollars surplus or \$1 million dollars deficit. I have it here about \$2.5 million because I think it’s going to be somewhere around that number. I’m being very conservative on that piece. Mr. Andrews said we have an 8.5% estimated deficit but it’s not going to be that high of a number. Dr. Riker said I want to point out just one area, for the record and full transparency. Back in February I had shared with the Board that based on contractual obligations, the budget for this coming school year, 2024-25, was going to go up by approximately \$12 million. I had a couple of Board members question those numbers at that time. I just want to point out again for the benefit of our community that I was incorrect. That number wasn’t \$12 million but rather it is \$15.6 million. Of course, I did not include all of the negotiated compensation plans. The actual number that you see on slide 7 that Mr. Bard has shared with you in the first two rows is that in one year the increase in salaries and benefits total \$15.6 million. Mr. Bard did not speak about this yet and I don’t know if he was going to, that the Administration removed 13 positions that were unfilled but had been budgeted at a cost savings of \$774,736. Mrs. Bear said we just added 9 positions. Dr. Riker said those were needed

positions. Mrs. Bear said you could have just shifted the positions. Dr. Riker said we did not shift them because we would have kept the 13 positions in plus the new 9 positions. These positions that were added were professional association positions for the most part. The 13 that were removed were from the support association predominantly, bus driver positions. Had that number been left in there, this salary and benefit increase would have actually been \$16.4 million. I am happy to have worked with Mr. Bard and our team to at least reduce that number by \$774,000. Mr. Andrews said we also increased it because we added the new positions. Even though they are hired, it goes into the new budget. That is all I am saying.

Slide 8 – General Fund balance as of June 30, 2023

- **Nonspendable:** \$783,115 **Total: \$51,267,628**
 - Prepaid expenses
- **Committed:** \$24,000,000
 - PSERS and Future Healthcare Expenses
- **Assigned:** \$23,498,602
 - Future Educational Programs - \$6,000,000
 - Future Budget Expenditures - \$9,000,000
 - Balance the 2023-24 Budget - \$8,498,602
- **Unassigned:** \$2,985,911; 1.5% of expenditures

Mr. Bard said slide 8 includes the General Fund Balance that was audited, which ended June 30, 2023. These amounts show what was approved by our auditors, Zelenkofske Axelrod. This is the General Operating Fund balance. It does not include the Capital Reserve, which I will talk about at the end of my budget presentation. The Nonspendable funds cannot be used. This what the Board approved.

Slide 9 – Projected General Fund balance as of June 30, 2024

- **Nonspendable:** \$783,115 **Total: \$51,267,628**
 - Prepaid expenses
- **Committed:** \$11,531,500
 - PSERS and Future Healthcare Expenses
- **Assigned:** \$33,967,102
 - Future Educational Programs - \$6,000,000
 - Future Budget Expenditures - \$9,000,000
 - Balance the 2023-24 Budget - \$2,500,000 (projected)
 - Balance the 2024-25 Budget - \$16,467,102
- **Unassigned:** \$4,985,911; 3% of expenditures

This will show you basically the same numbers. This is the projected General Fund balance as of June 30, 2024. You may say I didn't change anything. There are some changes. The Committed Category is now \$11,531,500. I took some money out of the Committed Category and moved it to the Assigned Category. The Assigned Category then takes money from the 2023-24 budget, which is the \$2.5 million projected balance, which I said I was being very conservative. It will probably be less than that. I then put the ending balance for the 2024-25 school year of \$16,467,102. This will balance the 2024-25 budget. I also added money to the

Unassigned category to get it to 3% of the budgetary expenditures in order to meet with Policy 620, which is under consideration by the Policy Review Committee, which calls for the unassigned number to be at 3% of the expenditures. It is not an arbitrary policy that says you need to have it at 3% because the State looks at the General Operating Budget balance in totality. They do not just look at the Unassigned total. I wanted to be cognizant of the potential Board policy.

Slide 10 – Projected General Fund balance as of June 30, 2025

- **Nonspendable:** \$783,115 **Total: \$32,300,526**
 - Prepaid expenses
- **Committed:** \$11,531,500
 - PSERS and Future Healthcare Expenses
- **Assigned:** \$15,000,000
 - Future Educational Programs - \$6,000,000
 - Future Budget Expenditures - \$9,000,000
- **Unassigned:** \$4,985,911

I wanted to show what happens if we realize the entire deficit completely. The projected General Fund Balance as of June 30, 2025 is about a \$16 million deficit. If the \$16 million deficit is realized the projected fund balance that could be audited, and this is all a projection, would drop to \$32,300,526 million. That just leaves you with the Assigned with \$15 million and the Committed with \$11,531,500. What I usually say at these particular situations is you always be aggressive on expenditures and conservative on the revenue side of things. If we achieve more revenue than anticipated, the number goes down. The deficit goes down and so forth. You can anticipate this number is the worst case scenario.

Slide 11 – Projected General Fund balance as of June 30, 2026

- **Nonspendable:** \$783,115 **Total: \$32,300,526**
 - Prepaid expenses
- **Committed:** \$2,000,000
 - Future Healthcare Expenses
- **Assigned:** \$26,413,406
 - Future Educational Programs - \$3,000,000
 - Future Budget Expenses - \$2,000,000
 - 2025-2026 Projected Budget Deficit - \$21,413,406
- **Unassigned:** \$1,881,996
- **Total Fund Balance After Deficit \$9,800,328 (projected)**
 - (Caveats – State funding, cyber school reform, previous years deficits)

I told the Board I would include this slide. I forecasted what would happen in the 2025-26 budget and deficit. In the Assigned category, I am projecting the deficit to be \$21,413,406 in the 2025-26 fiscal year. How am I getting that number? It is by not including any increase in State funding. I'm not including any cyber school reform. I'm not including what the previous year's deficits were. So, I'm not including what the deficit

may be in 2023-24 or 2024-25. This is the total fund balance after the deficit will be projected to \$9.8 million. It decreases very steadily and very steeply. I'm just showing you what the worst case scenario would be. The Assigned and the Committed decrease significantly, and the Unassigned is below the 3%. but like, I said, the State looks at the total fund balance. There are a lot of caveats in there, because if the State funding is favorable, you may continue to get more State funding and things of that nature. This paints a relatively bleak picture moving forward, but I think we can make it together as a district team. The district has a challenge moving forward. The district always has a strong fiscal backbone. The Board has always continued to move forward, but just so that the Board understands, moving forward in the future, they may need to look at increasing revenue at some point beyond what the State can give them, because more than 60% of our funding comes from the local effort, which is the local tax basis. Mrs. Bear said I noticed in the 2026 slide that you reduced future educational programs. Is that money you reduced because you paid some programs from there? Mr. Bard said no, I reduced it to cover the budgetary deficit of \$21 million. I did not move it into the budget but just to cover the deficit. Mrs. Bear said do we take funds from the Committed and Unassigned categories to pay for educational programs as we need them during the budget or do we put them in there just in case. Mr. Bard said we have been lucky that the future educational programs that we had budgeted in there, have been able to come out of the General Operating Budget and not the fund balance so that we do not realize the \$8.5 million deficit. Even the purchase of the transportation vans is not going to be taken out of the fund balance or budgetary reserve since there was a cushion in there of unfilled positions. If we need to make a large curriculum program expense, we have the means to do that. Mr. Rohner asked what is the projected student population. Mrs. Bear asked is it going up or down. Mr. Bard said it is staying right now consistent around 6,850. Mr. Rohner said you mentioned that we are around \$1 million plus or minus. Typically in my nine years, there has been a surplus much greater than \$1 million. Do we have any line items that are out of budget as we speak today. Mr. Bard asked are you asking if they are in the positive or in the negative. Mr. Rohner said that are overspending. Mr. Bard said no none that are overspending. They are all very close. The problem we would have if we do not come in a surplus, would be the lack of revenue coming in due to the lack or assessment value coming in. Mr. Rohner said a month ago you mentioned that the State may provide \$2.5 million in the month of June. Mr. Bard said yes, but I am looking at the local effort. The State effort has been fine. It has to do with the real estate tax problem. We may come in with \$2.5 million short in real estate projections. Mr. Schlameuss said we have seen increases in other areas such as interest on our investments. Mr. Bard said this has helped us to offset and get closer to where the projection should be. When you were getting those numbers, you were hitting those surpluses. That is what Mr. Rohner was seeing. Those big numbers have gone away now. It is not so much on the expense side of things. Dr. Riker said I think in December you indicated that the revenue came in under budget while the expenses were like 4.6% below budget. It's not whether departments are over budget or under budget. I think overall, the number was somewhere less than 1% from what was budgeted to what was expended. The expense side was very close. It is the revenue side that is the potential challenge on whether you get the revenue. When you are projecting in 2026 a \$21 million deficit, even if we take this year's index of 7.6%, it will roughly give you a \$6 million revenue. The challenge is you cannot cover

your deficit even if you raise taxes to the index. You then, as a Board, get into the challenge of having to raise revenue and decrease expenditures at the same time. That is what this projected balance will be, as it may be the worst case scenario, if its realized. It will only be the worst case scenario, correct me if I am wrong, Mr. Bard, if the State does not increase the revenue because the expenses are already committed. The Board has committed to the expenses. It is the revenue side, at least as far as the big piece of that which is salaries and benefits. The only way this would be realized is if the State budget allocations would not come in as projected. For example, the State initially came out and said, East Stroudsburg might get \$9 million. If you get that, that is a plus, but like Mr. Bard said and Mr. Andrews asked, he only budgeted half of that roughly into the budget now. He also included on his first or second slide a \$7 million increase because of the additional monies given to us from the State that we did not put into the budget for this previous year. Mr. Bard said if we see a Charter School Reform we would see a \$4 million reduction in expenses and expenditures. Dr. Riker said there are a lot of ifs. I don't know if it is prudent to budget based on those ifs. Mr. Bard said my goal is to prepare the Board because in my day I have seen worse. I think you guys are in a good spot right now. I want to prepare you for the future and every day and every step of the way. We will do it as a team to get through to whatever you have to do. Mr. Bard said Mr. Schlameuss said it the best, I believe back in February, he said no matter what we will get through it. I believe that is still the case. Dr. Riker said I would love to hear some ideas on how. Anyone? Mr. Rohner asked ideas on what? Dr. Riker said on how you are going to get through it. Mr. Schlameuss said the first thing is that we have to get through this year and the next. As we are getting through the middle of next year, like December and January and start looking at our budgeting. That is when we are going to have to really have a good hard look at where we are actually in order to plan and see where we are with State revenues. We will know, hopefully by August of this year, where we are with next year's budget. Hopefully, the Legislatures will have something approved and we'll know where we stand somewhere between the \$4 million and \$9 million. That will be a big piece of it. If there is any reform on charter schools because that is the other big piece. We are putting a lot of eggs in one basket but at the same time, we have to look down the road. I think to Mr. Rohner's point, we've raised taxes one year by a little bit. We still came way over budget. It's hard to really nail down a budget and try to fall within 1.0% chance. Dr. Riker said if the district would continue to end with large surpluses, the argument would be that the Board should give money back to the taxpayers. Mr. Schlameuss said I am sure that there are taxpayers that would like to see that. Dr. Riker said or you can continue to budget in a way that gives you these surpluses even though you are projecting a deficit. Mr. Schlameuss said that is what we have been doing for the past two to three years. We have budgeted the money to get us close to 0 and we noticed that we are still coming in under budget. Dr. Riker said which is a positive. Mr. Schlameuss said it is a positive. Dr. Riker said most would celebrate that. Mr. Rohner said we do celebrate. Mr. Schlameuss said it puts us in a dangerous situation. Mrs. Bear said I would say that banks are probably going to raise their rates possibly one more time this year. That is what they are saying now. They are also saying towards the end of the year, rates are going to start to drop. Mr. Bard said I am going to get to the next slide because there are other things that the district has to worry about other than this. I am going to go to my next and final slide.

Slide 12 – Capital Projects and Planning

- **No Capital Reserve Transfer Planned in 2023-2024**
 - (Capital Reserve Projects totaling between \$4 and \$5 million are expected out of the balance in 2024-2025.
 - In 2025-2026, another \$2 to \$3 million are expected out of the capital reserve fund for expected projects and purchases.
 - Forecast that the Capital Reserve will be exhausted by the end of the 2026-2027 fiscal year.
 - There is no money allocated for the Science Playground project in the Capital Reserve plan or the General Operating budget.
 - There will be a need for 7 buildings to have their roofs replaced or re-coated in the next 5 years which will cost anywhere from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million each depending on the structure. We will need to plan for these roofs to be recoated or replaced, which will be starting in the next couple of years.

It's like the boy who cried wolf so much when it comes to the budgeting. I think Mr. Schlameuss has said it that there has been years where the deficit has been set and then we haven't come in with a deficit. I think a lot of people are used to that. They are numb to it because we keep talking about a deficit but then there isn't one. Well, eventually, the Wolf is going to come. If I'm not mistaken, in the story the wolf eventually shows up. There are a lot of projects in the Capital Projects list that the district has that the capital Reserve is going to be exhausted before we can finish them. That is going to lead to some other problems because the district isn't really flushed with cash. We can't say that we want to give any money back. I don't want people to get the wrong idea. I don't think there is going to be a transfer plan in 2023-24 for the Capital Reserve projects. Normally every year there has been a reserve transfer after the audit of between \$3 and \$5 million. I'm not planning a transfer this year because of the financial situation that we are in. I will talk about something later on that is on the Finance Committee meeting agenda, item 8 where there are two grants available to help us with possibly 70% from the State Government which is 30% or a 50% match. If we are able to get one of the roofs or two of the roofs done right away out of that. That is the blank resolution in your agenda tonight. I will touch on that when we get to that piece. I need to put that on our project list, as well as refinancing and recalling some of our debt. Recalling is the process where we are on the top of the point where, some of our bonds are near the point of being paid off so they are at the highest part of it. They can be recalled and be refinanced and then sent back out. That can give us some fresh capital to work with to do some of these projects that could also lower our debt payment and bond payment. The is one of the levers that we can pull to lower some of our expenses. When it comes to lowering expenses, these are some of the things that we can do; however, like I mentioned a few minutes ago, the borrowing market right now is not very good for doing this. That is why I have not brought it to your attention in the last 14 months because it is not a very smart idea to do at least during this fiscal year. We can revisit this next year.

Slide 13 – 2024-25 Budget Timeline

- May 20, 2024 – Full School Board Preliminary Final Budget Presentation and Vote (Preliminary Final Budget is then posted and advertised for public inspection for 20 calendar days)
- June 10, 2024 – Finance Committee – Final Budget Presentation with numbers tied and tried up.
- June 17, 2024 – Full Board – Final Budget Presentation and vote for passage. If not passed, budget must be voted on again and passed by June 30th.
- June 30, 2024 – Deadline by the Commonwealth for All School Districts to pass a Budget.

Mr. Rohner said you mentioned that there is a need for seven buildings to have their roof replaced or re-coated. We have done Resica Elementary, North Campus, Bushkill Elementary. What other buildings? If you are going to mentioned Middle Smithfield, I think the taxpayers should be holding the contractor accountable for the poor roof job that we received for that addition since we have multiple leaks since day one. We continue to have roof leaks. I don't think the taxpayer should pay \$2.5 million for poor construction. That issue needs to be addressed. Mr. Bard said I think the highest cost is for H.S. South.

Dr. Riker said you have a document in front of you that was handed out tonight. I have been sharing this document with the Property & Facilities Committee. This is the latest updated one that I provided to the Property & Facilities Committee in May. I'll just walk you through this briefly but the roofs that Mr. Rohner is asking about are all those listed in red in the first column on page one. These all came from a feasibility study that the Board did last in 2015. I say that because as you will see, noted in bold print there these estimates, these numbers, you see are from 2015. Clearly they are way lower than what those costs will actually be when you get to this. Now, what I had presented in January to the Committee was that they may want to start to allocate a percentage of the total cost of the project, even though I'll use the High School South roof, which is slated to be done on that feasibility study in 2029 at a cost of \$2.3 million. We all know that this number is going to be much higher than \$2.3 million. What I did in red, you'll see that I took that and divided it out over the years and said if we take a percentage 20% over the next five years and allocate or earmark the money that is currently in the capital for those roofs, you will then have the money arguably. You could have the money already in your capital to cover those costs without having to borrow funds to do so. The Committee has not committed to that. What you see highlighted in green is what the Board is already committed to and approved. The Board has already approved those expenditures down near the bottom. You will see what the Capital Fund was as of the end of March, \$19.7 million. As you go across this chart on the back side of the chart, you will see how the Capital Fund is reduced using again these numbers. When Mr. Bard is saying that by the end of the 2025-26 school year, you will see on this chart, it says you have \$10 million left in the Capital Reserve assuming you do not put additional money in the capital. Again, I would say that number is way higher than it would be because you also have all those roof projects that you need to be considering. You don't have to allocate any money from capital or put any money for those roofs. It will just be when they come to be done. The Board will then be looking to borrow the money to cover the costs of those projects. We are pretty confident in the fact that the Capital Fund, in addition to what we

discussed earlier, is probably going to be depleted within the next three to four years, unless the Board decides to put additional funds in there. At that point, you are going to be back into borrowing money to maintain your facilities and address any other issues regarding boiler replacement, generators and roofs. Mr. Rohner asked, on this capital projects you have a Capital Reserve Fund as of March 2024 at \$19.7 million. Dr. Riker said that is correct? Mr. Rohner said the April School Board packet gives me an ending balance of \$26.188 million. Why is there such a discrepancy in those numbers? Mr. Bard said because we did not transfer money out of the General Fund to the Capital Reserve or vice versa. We only do it on a quarterly basis. We didn't make any transfers out of the Capital Fund to the General Fund. We just did it. That is why that is reflected. That is on the paper that Dr. Riker is referring to, which is a real time updated balance. The Board book did not reflect the transfers. Mr. Rohner said, so you are telling me that in March of 2024, I have 19 plus million dollars. Mr. Bard said, yes. Mr. Rohner said when I get my Board packet in April, I have an ending balance for March 2024 of 26 million plus dollars. Mr. Bard said we only transfer money out of the Capital Reserve to the General Fund on a quarterly basis. We don't do it on a monthly basis. Every time that we pay all the Capital Reserve bills out of the General Fund, we keep a record of it and then we do a transfer once a quarter. Mr. Rohner said I have no idea what you are trying to tell me or the community. Mr. Bard said I'm telling you that we pay all of the Capital Reserve bills out of the General Operating Fund. Then, once a quarter, we transfer the money out of the Capital Reserve Fund Account to the General Operating Fund. Mr. Rohner said so then the information that I get out of this Board agenda is inaccurate. Is that what you are telling me. Mr. Bard said if you want to think about it that way you can but it is not inaccurate. Mr. Schlameuss asked are the checks that you wrote for the Capital Expense in the General Fund, listed in that Board book. Mr. Bard said every check that we issue is in the Board book. Mr. Schlameuss said thank you very much. Mr. Andrews said you write the checks out of the General Fund, then you pay back the General Fund through the Capital Fund once a quarter. Am I hearing that correctly. Dr. Riker said yes. Mr. Bard said we transfer the funds once a quarter. Mrs. Bear asked is it transferred in a fiscal quarter. Mr. Bard said it is not a fiscal quarter. My staff did not do the transactions until early this month. The April Board meeting was in the middle of April. My staff transferred the funds during the last week of April. Mrs. Bear said so they are one month's in arrears. Mr. Bard said, correct. You will see the transfers coming in the Board book in May. Mr. Rohner said my May balance is going to be the \$19.7 million. Mr. Bard said it will be adjusted lower because we also have to pay some other things that will come up. It will be much closer than the balance you have on your sheet there. Dr. Riker said all the items in green will have to come out of there. One of those pieces in this document that you may want to consider as a Finance Committee is in order for you to ensure that you maintain money in your Capital Fund, you may want to allocate a certain dollar amount that would be provided to the Property and Facilities Committee on an annual basis to be spent for Capital Projects as opposed to what has been for eight years as a blank check. If we need it, we do it. There isn't an amount that has been committed to or a targeted amount because emergencies come up as well that the Board obviously needs to commit funds to take care of. Mr. Rohner said typically we put the repairs into a budget. Mr. Andrews said my question is why don't we take it directly out of the Capital fund versus taking it out of the General Fund. Mr. Bard said because the Capital Fund is in a bank account earning about 5.5% interest compared to the General Fund, which is only about 2% interest. Mr. Schlameuss said the longer we keep it in there the more money we make. One of the things that might be helpful is if we had some type of Capital Asset Planning tool. Something that says we know that

these roofs are going to be in need of replacing, what is the condition of this roof, how many years old is it etc. We then look at all of our assets across the whole district and say these are the things that are a grade of 5 in great condition or a grade of 1 in poor condition. We can look district wide and see what buildings, what electrical services, what plumbing, etc. are needed. Mrs. Bear said that would be helpful for new Board members coming in since we will not be on the Board forever. Dr. Riker said I think you are speaking about the feasibility study and you are right. The district has not done one of those since 2015. These numbers that you are seeing reflected here in red are actual numbers from the 2015 Feasibility Study. The Board at that point prior to me had D'Huy Engineering come in and look at all those pieces. It is a 32-page report that goes through everything from electrical to boilers to roofs. The years that you see listed here for roof replacements is coming from that feasibility study that was done in 2015. I don't disagree. It's probably a good time, if nothing else to get truer numbers on some of these things that need to be done. Mr. Schlameuss said in his world, every year we look at all of our assets and grade them so we know every year what is going on versus just waiting for a feasibility study. If that is the thing that kicks it off though, that would be great but then there needs to be some kind of tool that then monitors every year inspections of the property, physical visual inspections. Dr. Riker said that is what we do but you are right, if we had a tool to do it. Of course, we are paying attention to that study and looking at what was rejected back then. That is how this capital list has been generated over the years from that feasibility study. Mr. Schlameuss said there might be new things that pop up on it that may take precedence over other things. This is a Property & Facilities thing.

- d. Approve the purchase of **PBIS Manager** at a cost of \$21,260.00.

Ms. Shae Jones said I am going to speak a little bit about the PBIS Award, using money out of our PCCD Grant. It's a system that the secondary level has been using this past year to manage the rewards that students are able to have so that it's catalogued through the schoolwide PBIS Program. We are able to do it for all levels, K-12. It is one of the things with the digital program that is highly recommended once you have truly established your school line, which our elementary level is well established at all 3 tiers at this place and time. I think this year, one building is getting their first 3-tier recognition, but the rest of the buildings have established all 3 tiers. Our Schoolwide Program is really strong there. It also will help us with our check-in check-out data as well as the check-and-connect data that will be used to identify certain students to see if we need to move students into a tier 3. If they're doing well they are sent down to the next tier down. Mr. Andrews asked what is this used for. Ms. Jones said it is used on our Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support Program. It's a universal program for tier one. All the kids get positive recognition for positive behavior, sometimes they get tickets, or other items throughout their day depending on the building. They can hand in their tickets for things like stickers, but as they get older, there are different items they can purchase just using their schoolwide money. Mr. Andrews asked is this a schoolwide program. Ms. Jones said, yes. Mr. Andrews asked if a kid is doing well, you'll give them the ticket/cash. Ms. Jones said we used it for all kids. We have to identify certain behaviors of certain kids to see if they are able to make that goal which might be super high. We also recognize students that may be struggling. If they are doing well we want to catch them doing well. Mr. Andrews asked is this run basically by the teachers. Ms. Jones said it's run by our teachers. our bus drivers our cafeteria monitors. It is usually with our bus drivers, and cafeteria monitors that they will get extra points. They'll get like a gold ticket instead of just a regular ticket just because those are areas where we see high rates of behavior because it's

unstructured time. Mr. Andrews said so most of our employees give out these tickets. Ms. Jones said this is a digital program now. We are able to do it digitally now. Mrs. Bear asked does it communicate with Sapphire so that parents know when their kids get something positive so that they can get an alert. It's nice if you get a phone call from a teacher but maybe an alert could go out through Sapphire, as we're redoing Sapphire now. That way when Johnny comes home, I could say, "Hey, great job, Johnny! I heard you had a great experience in the cafeteria today". It would be nice if it could work that way. At work we send what's called Credo cards. An email goes out if someone does something well on my team. Maybe we can somehow, as we're redoing Sapphire, add that little card aspect to parents to say your kid did well today. Ms. Jones said absolutely and I believe parents would be able to access this kind of similar notice because the elementary use Class Dojo, too. I have not used this particularly at elementary but they are using it for secondary right now. They really do love that program. These are things we can definitely explore within our Navigate 360 because they actually oversee PBIS reports as well. Mr. Andrews asked is the \$21,260 cost per year or is it just for the program. Ms. Jones said it is for each year, and then we have it budgeted out of the PCCD Grant for two years. Last year, they used it for one of our secondary programs with one of the grants they had received. They used it out of that and the next couple.

- e. Approve the purchase of **Navigate360** Behavioral Case Manager at a cost of \$39,005.50. Ms. Jones said we are also purchasing this program out of our PCCD Grant. The \$39,000 is actually for a three-year program. They require a three-year contract. This is going to be, not just for our mental health pieces, but it is going to track our students for a suicide risk. I get multiple notices each day, like there was a couple that come in every day for students that have either expressed suicidal ideation thoughts. Sometimes, it's just an impulsive comment. Other times, you know, it may be more severe. They do what they call the Columbia suicide severity risk scale. Each time a child does say a suicidal threat, ideation comment or something that could be harmful, this is going to be able to Case Manage that. It will all be digital. I will have immediate access as a Social Services Coordinator to oversee, look and actually be able to identify our trends if we are seeing a high rate coming out of a certain program or specialized program. I know we do see more out of Emotional Support at different points. We can really work at what prevention tools and educational tools we can use for our students there, and it will also be part of our Risk Assessment or our threat Assessment Plan as well with the Navigate 360. If there is a threat assessment that may come through or paperwork that we have to complete, all forms will be there so that everyone is on the same page. It links to our Safe 2 Say Program. Mrs. Bear asked can any staff member put an alert in there if they hear something or see something for the suicide risk assessments. Ms. Jones said absolutely, and we will not leave any of those students alone. If those comments are made, there is a really strong protocol within our buildings that is followed. If a child does say that, even if it's just out of impulse and frustration, we take every one of those seriously. We then make sure that child is not left alone. We reach out to their school counselor, building administrator or school nurse based on availability. Their counselor, administrator, or school nurse will go through the assessment protocols. Mrs. Bear said you also said that it goes along with the Safe 2 Say Program. Ms. Jones said yes, it is Safe 2 Say navigated. Both communicate, and we will do our threat assessments then. Mr. Andrews asked if this will be paid through a grant. Ms. Jones said it is budgeted through our grant.

- f. Approve **Calm Classroom** at a cost of \$22,769.00.

Ms. Jones said Calm Classroom is also out of our PCCD Grant. Last year, we actually piloted the Calm Classroom Program within three of our elementary schools. Bushkill Elementary, Middle Smithfield Elementary, and J.M. Hill Elementary had chosen to use that program. It's a really scripted program that does a lot of mindfulness within the classroom. It takes about three minutes to run the whole script. It might take a minute or two to get the kids settled down and seated, etc. However, our teachers really liked it. I had such positive feedback on that. It did not require them to have any extra planning time. They don't have to make a whole entire plan of how they're going to implement it each day. They have the idea, to use it, usually after recess or after lunch. Those times are when our kids are a little bit more, dysregulated, or first thing in the morning, and they can do it multiple times a day if needed. And again, it's really super quick and this program has a one-time cost of \$22,000, and then after that there is a cost to maintain it. When we budgeted, we estimated it would cost between \$3,500 and \$4,000 to be able to keep the digital part of the subscription. It also has a book and the common tools. Mrs. Bear asked can any teacher do it in their classroom. Ms. Jones said, yes. Mrs. Bear asked is it going to have the teacher taking a student from one classroom to go to another room. Ms. Jones said, no. It's going to be a tier one universal for every teacher. We're even purchasing it for our Specialists and everyone in our building. Mr. Andrews asked is it for the Special Education students. Mrs. Jones said it's a tier one for all elementary schools. Mr. Andrews asked if it is tied into MTSS. Ms. Jones said, yes. It would be tied in as a Universal Tier One Program under our SEL and Partial Behavioral Program. Mr. Andrews said I know MTSS has three tiers. Ms. Jones said it would be part of MTSS Tier one. It would fall under the SEL and Behavioral Tiers.

- g. Approve Budget Management Analytics Subscription from **Frontline Education** at an annual cost of \$7,000 (one-time implementation cost of \$1,100) (budgeted).

Mr. Bard said in 2024-25, the State is changing the way we report our annual financial data on the reports. They're changing it to better reflect Every Student Succeeds Act so that our building level expenditures have to be broken out into the AFR more readily. This program helps us do that and also provides a budget management analytical tool as well that will help the district out. This is primarily to help us with the AFR data. This is going to be well implemented throughout. All 500 districts are going to probably pick this up because they have to. What the Federal Government is asking all the States to do is to, and Pennsylvania is far behind on this, is divvy out all of our expenditures per building. Every district level expenditure has to be broken out per building per annual or our average daily membership and our square footage. This is how it's going to be reported. This software will help us do that more readily and easier than having to do it by hand. This is just a very simple thing to do and this has been built into my offices' budget. Mrs. Bear said this would be nice to see. You will know, who's spending what on electricity? Why is one school spending more than the other when they are same size? Are they not turning the lights off? Let's make sure that they're doing this. This could actually help us in the long run. Mr. Bard said it's going to be starting with the 2024-25 school year. I think this is another piece that could help us analyze more things more readily. Mrs. Bear asked is this what you spoke about last month that you were looking to get this system. You had mentioned the transparency that was coming. Mr. Bard said that was the Clear Go Budgeting tool as well. That's going to be the live tool to go along side-by-side with it. Mrs. Bear asked do they work together. Mr. Bard said, yes.

Everything that I'm implementing is going to work together. Mrs. Bear asked just out of curiosity, is this going to be a hard tool for the Business Office to learn? Or is it going to be something that's pretty user friendly? Mr. Bard said it's user friendly. It's very intuitive. It's extremely user friendly. Mrs. Bear said I know when we implemented the other system, it took a little bit of time to get it up and running. Mr. Bard said I also included my Director of Fiscal Affairs in the presentation. He agreed that it would be a pretty simple system to use, so I didn't just do it in a vacuum. Mrs. Bear said I know we had a little bit of struggles with the other system getting it going. Mr. Bard said no, I don't do really anything in a vacuum like that.

- h. Approve the contract with **Government Software Services LLC** for tax printing for Pike County (renewal).

Mrs. Bear said this is a renewal. Mr. Bard said correct. This is a basic contract that we do every year for Government Software Services. They'll print our tax billing for Pike County, mail them out for us, and they'll also do the interim tax bills as well. This is the contract that we have to do with them every year. Monroe County, does it without the tax? The County does it for us, but in Pike County they do not. Therefore, this is an independent company. Mrs. Bear asked is it the same cost as last year? No, there's an increase. It'll be an increase of about \$600.00. Mr. Bear said there is no cost listed. Mr. Bard said it's an average increase of about \$600.00. My accountant has told me that based on last year's price this is okay. It is not per tax bill. The \$600.00 is the total amount.

- i. Approve the purchase of **PrimeroEdge** for all schools not to exceed \$50,850.00 (to be paid out of the Food Service Fund).

Mr. Bard said I'll walk you guys through this. The reason it says not to exceed \$50,850, which is the quote. Mrs. Bear asked what is Primero Edge. Mr. Bard said it is the food software services that does all of our point-of-sales services for every cashier from the district where they do the sales for the food for the kids. It also does where the parents can deposit money into a student's account online. Mrs. Bear asked is this replacing My School Bucks. Mr. Bard said it can. The reason I say not to exceed is because there is a quote. The quote includes equipment purchase. Brian Borosh said that he can get us the computers at a cheaper rate so the most it's going to cost us is \$50,850. All this will be paid out of the Food Service Department. It will not come out of the General Operating Budget. Mrs. Bear said I have a couple of questions. With My School Bucks, if I fill my kid's account, they will charge me a fee to do it online. However, if I send a check into the cafeteria worker, there was no fee. Mr. Bard said it is probably going to be the same similar setup. I don't know if the fee is going to be the same or not. There is always going to be probably a fee for credit cards. Mrs. Bear said I would ACH it. Mr. Bard said the best way to get the money into your student's account would always be to send cash or a check in with them. That's always the best, from my experience. The reason we're changing to PrimeroEdge primarily is the State recommends it. This system with the State's system forms with their reporting software is the easiest. It's easy to report to the State our numbers. Also, the increase from one software to the next is a roughly \$10,000. This is not a large increase from one system to the next and it's also much more user friendly. It is also easier to operate for our reports, and it better communicates with our Sapphire System than the other that we currently use. Mrs. Bear asked with that new communication, will that mean, if the student's balance goes low

an alert will go out saying, your balance is low. Please fill your account. I know we get free lunches right now, and free breakfast. If that ever goes away, it would be nice to get those alerts. Mr. Bard said it's still going to readily communicate that out. We are still going to follow the Policy if the student goes below a certain amount. They are not going to have anymore a la carte charges. Mr. Forsyth said when we met to review this, it was a multi-department initiative, because it also impacts the district's ability to process the free and reduced lunch applications. Not if, but when they come back. No community eligibility is currently done in PrimeroEdge Software, but in a different piece of software so they talk together. The current system that the cafeteria has been using, they've gotten their mileage on it. It's a system that's based, we believe, in an older Fox Pro Program that runs on a server within the district that our Technology Department is depreciating this June. We now have to go somewhere with it and fortunately, this program integrates with all of the others we have. We are working together to make sure that we provide all of the hooks that we can into our mass notification system, Sapphire, as well as making a conversion from My School Bucks. We've already discussed that with both the vendor as well as with the cafeteria, to make sure any balances get moved for people as well. Mrs. Bear said the other question, too, I know we had spoken probably 3 or 4 years ago about, Eric, is using My School Box to pay for other things like a field trip, or, you know, concession stands, or something like that. If and when that comes in the future, will this system allow us to do that? Mr. Forsyth said that's a different conversation with our vendor, Sapphire, because My School Bucks did not integrate well with anybody. We have another service provider that we mentioned at another meeting called Vanco that we're waiting to bring on board. That will be inside Sapphire to allow for payment of all other types of fees, including damages, field trips, class trips, diploma, or whatever. Mrs. Bear said maybe even concessions stand so the kids could actually head into a game instead of staying there. Mr. Forsyth said there's a lot of options there. We are looking at other solutions that integrate the way you want. It may not, however, be the exact same platform that they're using just for the school lunches. Mrs. Bear said I know these are things we talked about in the past. That's why I was just wondering if they were looked into. Mr. Forsyth said we do ask those questions of every vendor. We sit and say, what are the other payment providers you work with, and oftentimes they have a sole source provider. When you get the vendor you want, you can't always tradeoff who the payment provider is to make it work with all of your others as much as we would like to.

- j. Approve the renewal of **SmartFutures** at a cost of \$17,875.00.

Mr. Baddick said once again we are here to talk about the renewal for SmartFutures. We've been using this for several years. This is the software program package that we are using to compliment and complete our Chapter 339 and our current Readiness Program K through 12. It's an online program that all students and our staff are able to track and build portfolios through the course of their education here at East Stroudsburg. Mrs. Bear asked is this the only option that's available for this. That works with what the State wants? Mr. Baddick said this has a built-in component of the PIMS Reporting System. We are able to put everything in easily because it coordinates with the Department of Education Reporting System. Is this the only one? No, but this is probably the best one that is built to support the PIMS reports through the Department of Education. Keep in mind, there's well over 60 plus PIMS reports and this system does communicate with PIMS and compliments it. We haven't had major significant issues with reporting, as we're obligated to get that done at a certain time of the

year before July 1. The program itself is very good. We looked at two other programs when we were looking for a software. We had students and teachers for approximately a year taking a look at programming. We took a lot of their input and this is how we came up with SmartFuture purchase. This program is probably going on 4 or 5 years now. Mrs. Bear said she got her email yesterday saying “Congratulations, you finished your SmartFutures for the year”.

- k. Approve the purchase of 3-year contract renewal of **Amira Software** subscription for special education students at a cost of \$13,500.00 (per year).

Ms. Maria Casciotta said I'm here to ask for approval for Amira Software. We brought Amira into the district when we were looking at our new reading curriculums, and it was used for all kids. Then we noticed that our children with special needs were making some really good gains with it. In reaching out to HMH and Amira Learning to try and figure out how we could get this for our children when we weren't going to use it for all children, I just thought it was a great idea, since we used to have IRead. I believe some of you were on that committee, and IRead is no longer a product. They closed that shop. We don't have something remedial for our children. Amira is like having a reading assistant for teachers and a reading tutor for students. It's a program where it's advanced artificial intelligence, and it listens to the children read to her, Amira. Based upon their reading and their mistakes that they're making, the program self-adjusts to provide the instruction or the remediation to the children. Mrs. Bear asked if this can be done on their Chromebooks at home. Mrs. Casciotta said it can. That's the beauty of it. Not only is it in school, but it also only takes 20 minutes in school, three days a week to make gains. If they can fit it in even more than that time, that is great. It is something that can be done in the general education classroom when we're doing small group instruction. While the teacher is working personally with a group, another group can be on their Chromebooks doing this remedial. It scaffolds up and down, based on the children's needs. If they're home or if they're on vacation, they can use this and get even extra practice. It is evidence-based on evidence-based approaches. It's driven there. The data that you get here, which is another excellent part of this, is immediate data that teachers can retrieve immediately. They can observe the information and then they can change their instruction to meet their needs. It's better than Dibbles. It's on the spot. Mrs. Bear asked is this just for special education, or all at all levels. Mrs. Casciotta said this is just for special education. Our district had chosen not to bring it on for everyone, and we've seen some gains in our children. Our teachers like it. Our children like it. We've seen children who are afraid to read start reading to teddy bears and to people in the classroom. They are volunteering to read so we want to keep it. As we know, IRead is no longer with us.

- l. Approve the three (3) year renewal contract of **PandaDoc** for special education, gifted and 504 legally binding contracts/documents to sign and store them at a cost of \$41,202.00 (\$13,734 per year)

Mrs. Bear said PandaDoc is really convenient. I can speak to it because I've used it before for my daughter's IEP and it's really easy. It goes right to your email. I can read the whole thing. Mr. Andrews asked is it like DocuSign. Mrs. Bear said yes it is like DocuSign but for special education, and then it stores right into Sapphire. It's really nice. Mrs. Casciotta said DocuSign is another platform that we did look at back when. As some of you may know during Covid, and a lot of these companies gave districts free services during Covid. Our

district ended up choosing PandaDoc. It was easy for everyone to do. Toward the end of that, when we're coming back, we looked at several different programs but found PandaDoc to be the best. It was the best for the money as well. As a matter of fact, even during all this, I talked to DocuSign and they said we can't touch that. Our teachers have been using it for three plus years. It also allows you to develop your own templates if you would, but we primarily needed it for an E-signature tool for our special education documents. It also date, stamps it and gives you all that auditing information that's necessary, should we get audited. Mrs. Bear said it is very easy to use. Mrs. Casciotta said it's super easy. Mrs. Bear said I sign it every time I go for an IEP meeting for my daughter.

- m. Approve the renewal of **Pearson Digital Assessment Library** at a cost of \$25,311.00.

Mr. Baddick said Pearson Digital Assessment Library, if you recall, is our third year that we've been utilizing it. We opted to go more with the software package and with more of the electronic assessments that we are doing with our students. We've also expanded the types of assessments that we utilize throughout the district K through 12 in general and in special education. This is a people service piece that we've been very excited about. Pearson is the leader in public education with assessment material. For example, our Speech Clinicians and our School Psychologists utilize Pearson. You heard about the other assessments that may be used as Shae Jones mentioned. We use a variety of things with mental health and our School Counselors have access, but the big piece is that it's a more secure assessment library program that we have. If you remember a couple of years ago, we came in with this, and you know that one of the big things is the ease of a student participating in an assessment and the security of this assessment data information. Mr. Andrews asked is this for both general education and special education. Mr. Baddick said, yes. It is a Pupil Services renewal. We are just doing a one-year renewal on this. Again, it is heavily used, and we do rely on this for correct and accurate information on our student assessments.

- n. Approve the purchases of new bus cameras and GPS systems for all of District-owned transportation vehicles at a total cost not to exceed \$1.2 million dollars over 3 years with an initial 24-25 cost of \$914,432.00 (Paid out of Capital Reserve).

Mr. Bard said this came out of a discussion that we've been having about the degrading of our transportation vehicles. Mr. Karkut brought it up several times. I think it's very astute. Mr. Forsyth has presented this before at the Finance Committee meeting in November, before the election. We decided to redo this and get the ball rolling for the summer. We just went over, what we basically went over before. Mr. Forsyth said I'll give you a really high level overview to recap what work has been done. I don't have any technical presentation this evening at all. I'm going to give you some papers to look at this evening. I also want to make clear that my presenting this doesn't mean that I developed this whole solution. This was an effort that's really been ongoing for a year. We looked back at our notes, and it's almost been year to date that we've been looking into solutions. It all started with the consideration of a bus fleet replacement, which we know the district chose to postpone until this year. We are really going to be looking at making this move at a very good time so that we can coincide with a change in a portion of our fleet as well. About a year ago, in May of 23, our Director of Transportation, who wanted to be here this evening, but couldn't. She's in class right now. Damaris Robbins came to me with some concerns about the performance of the equipment. We have equipment that's been put in the buses for various technologies, for driver

convenience, as well as safety and security that was installed at the time the original buses were purchased. We have some of the technologies that are aging now at 4, 5, 6, even 7 years of age. It's not surprising to us that we're experiencing some performance issues with some of that. What we decided to do was to take a look at about 6 or 7 different vendors that provide solutions. No one vendor, I will say, provides every solution that we need. Everyone has a niche, but what we did is, we selected and recommend to you vendors that work together without purchasing overlapping technologies or not paying for the same services twice, but making sure that we're getting what we need or want in the school vehicles. We also included in all of the conversations from day one, our Administrative Services Analyst, Carissa Johnson, to make sure all of these systems not only talk to each other, but they also will be able to talk to Sapphire where they serve up a lot of their data into these systems. They'll also be able to glean information from our Financial Information System as well because employee data is used in these various systems. We also want to give acknowledgement to Mr. Borosh, our Director of Technology because this is a technical system, even though our department utilizes it, understands it, implements it. It's very important that any technologies the district invests in are able to communicate with the networks that he has in place, not just effectively, but securely. Mr. Borosh has had an opportunity to review these proposals as well and is confident that these systems will plug into the networks, that his department and Mr. Cooper manage in a way that will be effective. Lastly, our Chief of School Police, Mr. Mill, wanted me to mention this evening that he greatly supports an investment in the school bus technologies, due to the number of incidents that his department is involved in investigating on a daily basis. I'll explain why that's important. I think in order to know where we are going, we have to know where we're at. I'm going to start circulating some papers. If you could just pass it around and take any camera and look at it. This is what it currently looks like for us when we review video from a school bus. We are sharing this with you as the Board in an in camera review, because it's security footage. I would say in a normal presentation that this could divulge potential student identifiable information but I think you'll agree, when you look at that, you can't tell who anybody is. Everything that we see on a school bus presently is from the perspective of the driver, because that's how the current camera systems are installed. What you can see sitting in the driver's seat, whether that's over the hood, whether it's looking in the mirror behind you or whether it's looking at the dash areas, what our cameras can see. It's from that perspective. We find that this type of an environment has worked for a number of years but the equipment in those buses is literally bouncing down the roadways every day here in Pennsylvania. If you can imagine what that ride feels like bolted to the metal chassis of a vehicle. You'll understand why we're having some challenges keeping some of the equipment in the best working order. Also in the buses, we have not just the camera systems that you saw pictured there, but we also have handheld pre-trip units that each one of the drivers removes from the dash. They utilize that on touch points around the vehicle to complete and electronically record their pre-trip inspections as they take the bus out each and every day. The challenge with the camera systems isn't just the visibility that you viewed. But it's also the fact that they're SD-card based. That means there's a little card like the one that goes in your cell phone, or that goes in a digital camera one may own. That's in every single one of these units. And that's where the videos are restored. It's recorded over on a rotating basis. If the cards aren't regularly formatted, they will miss the video. They won't record. When an incident is indicated that someone has to go pull the video, that requires one of our Supervisors or our School Police

Officers, because we're handling student information legally, to go out and open up with a key the box on board, remove that card, replace it with another card they carry with them, take the card with the video back to the office, and locate the footage that's needed. We then transfer that footage to a secure Google drive and then notify the administrators who need to review it that it's available and then again repeat the process later in the day, most likely. It's a time consuming management issue we have right now, coupled with the aging technology. Just to give you an idea of how many incidents occur on a school bus that require investigation, as of today in our Student Information System, we have a total of 745 school bus-based infractions of the Student Code of Conduct for this school year. About 90% of our students get to and from school every day without ever being involved in a bus incident, so that's excellent. This year the Board has before them also the procurement of 40 new school vehicles. We're anticipating that that one-third replacement in our fleet will give us an opportunity to move forward with the replacement of the video equipment as well with the knowledge we wouldn't be doing anything with 40 buses that we know will be going away. Based upon our current estimate of delivery for new vehicles being somewhere around early to mid-September, we would simply defer installation into those vehicles until they arrived, and not outfit any of the current equipment that we're requesting into any of the vehicles that would be leaving us. Our end game goal is to be able to get the school bus technology cycle back in sync with the vehicle replacement cycle. As a vehicle ages, we then consider, does this equipment go away? We believe it will, because it's going to put us right at that 60 month or 5 year mark for the technology. Technologies change. We've already discussed with our school vehicle bus body shops the possibility of having any of the vendors we're proposing, who happen to be their partners as well in the future, six years out start installing the hardware when a bus is ordered. We are not even going through selecting what goes in it. These options we're going to show you this evening could be part of the vehicle option that's purchased and delivered to the district. Mrs. Bear said there's no more drive to pull out. It's just all Google Cloud based. Mr. Forsyth said let me show you what I have. Mrs. Bear asked can you actually watch a bus live now. If a driver said, I've been having issues on my bus with whatever, you could actually go in live? Can a Principal watch it live? Mr. Forsyth said that is part of the plan. Mr. Schlameuss asked you could or is it part of the plan. Mr. Forsyth said that is part of the plan. Yes you can. Yes you should. Mr. Schlameuss said it would be live looking using our cellular data while a bus is on the road. Mr. Forsyth said yes. I'm going to talk about all that real briefly giving you the overview. Here's what we're proposing. We're proposing a package comprised of elements from three different vendors. These various vendors were selected again out of about half a dozen that we looked at that could provide all of the things that we're looking for. On page one of the packet there, you'll see a vastly different vantage point than what you saw in the paper that I passed around just moments ago. This solution from 247 that we're recommending would provide new 180 degree ceiling mounted passenger area cameras spaced out on the bus so that you would have a bird's eye view into each and every seat. In a high back seat bus like our school buses are, it's very difficult to see into any of the passenger compartments unless the individuals are sitting up and smiling back at the camera. We would also recommend new stop-arm cameras. Our buses are currently outfitted with them, but they're 5 or more years old. We would recommend replacing those and, in other words, continuing to use those because we have successfully captured violations of the stop arm. Now, whether or not the magistrate prosecutes or places a fine on those is outside of our control, but we are doing our part with

retrieving the information and presenting it to them. The third and fourth pages it talks about the technology that's used and, to answer your question, there are no more SD cards. That's correct. These are hybrid DVRs. All that that means is, they record their data when the bus is in motion on a solid state drive. That drive has no moving parts so it can handle the bumps, the jars and so forth. When the bus is stationary, it backs itself up to a regular hard drive that's inside there as well, that is parked safely during the time that the bus is in motion. When the bus parks, the drive activates and backs up the SD card for good measure; therefore, we have redundancy. What happens is while the bus is sitting in the parking lot as soon as it returns back to the district, all of the data from that last trip is uploaded over a high speed Wi-fi network that is then brought into the district's network with Mr. Cooper's help. Those units on the buses talk directly to the cloud-based servers at 247, so that the district has access to that digital bus video footage in the cloud without anyone having to go out and retrieve a card and go through those steps. Mr. Schlameuss said the data leaves us and is stored on some system off site. Mr. Forsyth said it is cloud-based, just like our Sapphire Student Information System. Mr. Schlameuss said there is 133 buses at 1080P with 3 cameras on every bus. Mr. Forsyth said, yes. Mr. Schlameuss said that is a lot of data. Mr. Forsyth said it is and with compression, the data can get there and does. We also have to remember that, due to our actual staggered schedule, none of our buses hit the lot at the exact same moment. They come in clumps and groups and the buses also go to two different locations that have two different pathways to get the data there. Mr. Schlameuss said when the drivers turn off the ignition is there a battery backup so that they can continue doing their data dump. Mr. Forsyth said, yes. Mrs. Bear asked how often do we check the batteries? Is this going to be part of the bus drivers responsibility or will the bus do that automatically. These systems are designed to work with the bus parked, working off of the vehicles' 12-volt system without depleting the vehicles 12-volt system. Mr. Schlameuss said there's a timer on it, and just turns off. Mr. Forsyth said so that they have time to do the upload that needs to take place. Now, you also asked about the live look-in. The system also provides for the ability to perform a live look-in using the cellular data. This was something that Chief Mill indicated would be extremely helpful to his department. When they get the calls about a student that may or may not be on a bus, it gives them the ability to go on and look live at any of those cameras and determine, are they there, aren't they there, or if a bus driver indicates I'm having a problem right now, they can get live eyes on the bus, and not waiting for it to return to the lot to upload its data. That service is a metered service, meaning we purchase the minutes for that, in bunches of 1,000, and we utilize that and subscribe to it as we need it. It doesn't mean people should be sitting around all day just watching a bus drive down the road. It's there for the expressed purpose of an emergency. Now that is the package from 247. 247 provides for that passenger compartment in bus safety and security visual package and the ability to upload it. Also included in their prices are all of the Wi-fi network connectivity that would occur in the bus lot in order for that to take place and on board each bus. Mrs. Bear asked what happens when we're driving up Bushkill Falls Road and it's a dead zone? Mr. Forsyth said you won't be able to use live driving through a dead zone. Once it gets back to the lot, there will be no dead zone, because the local Wi-fi will be placed in each lot to provide ample signals for all of the buses to upload their video. Mr. Schlameuss said is there a place for a driver to press a button to select like a 3 minute block before and after that button so they can kind of capture that incident without having the report. Mr. Forsyth said we have those currently on the buses, and they can be used for any incident. They also are

used for the stop-arm violations right now. It is a capture. What it does it indicates is looking 3 minutes this way and 3 minutes that way, and it puts a marker on the video for us. Mr. Schlameuss asked and this will happen. Mr. Forsyth said, yes. Mrs. Bear said the other question I had is about the temperature. Does that mean that it won't work in negative 13 Fahrenheit, or is it just not recommended because I know we get cold? Mr. Forsyth asked which spec are you looking at. Mrs. Bear said over here on the back where it says the temperatures. I'm just reading it because we get colder down here. Mr. Schlameuss said it's a mobile device that you're not going to keep inside the bus. You are going to take it out from the lot with you. Okay, so it might be cold in the bus for the first couple of minutes. Mr. Forsyth said it is not referring to the actual drive. It's not referring to the solid state drive. The solid state drive is going to work, regardless of the temperature that it's operating there that's for the mobile drive or the spinning drive. It doesn't impact its ability to be used when it's cold. This is what they're designed for. They're designed for being on board a vehicle sustaining the years of abuse that you get in a mobile environment. That's 247. Zonar is a vendor we currently use in the district. We would like to expand the use of Zonar to provide better services. In looking at the Zonar package, we're recommending replacing the driver handheld, LED devices for the pre-tripping with the Samsung tablets. The reason for that is because the Zonar Software is now tablet-based, allowing the driver to take that tablet with them and do their pre-trip around the bus digitally. It records the information the same way, and it still scans the touch points they have to go to. It just presents it in a mobile format for them. We also have the ability with a tablet inside the vehicle to provide for future integration and expansion of our Frontline Time Management System. Whereas every driver currently has to go to a time clock, we could choose to move that into the bus in the future, because that is also a web-based kiosk program. We don't have plans to do that immediately but a tablet in the bus would make that possible. It would also provide us with access in the future for extra work opportunities electronically. That is something that I know, currently our Director of Transportation, Damaris Robbins, is working on with Transfinder, the ability to utilize their system to make the trip book electronically accessible. Even though the district has currently done that using its own platform, we are pushing the vendor to provide something more robust for that. Either platform or either way that's delivered would then be also accessible via the tablet and not just a few shared terminals that would be inside the drivers' lounges. Lastly, it would continue to work with our Z Pass Passenger System that allows us to monitor the ridership on the buses. That is a large component of our ACCESS Program currently as well, where we're able to track the ridership for the medically billable services. In the last year we've expanded that potential to all of our students with the HID Badges that come as part of the student photo ID package now as well. Now the additional piece with Zonar would be what's called Zonar Coach, and you'll see a cut sheet within your package that's labeled that. Zonar Coach is a program that allows for just what it sounds like driver coaching. It provides the driver with a safety score. It has two different cameras, one facing over the dash, one facing backwards. It helps identify various types of behaviors. For example, right now we can do overspeed with Zonar. That would not be new. It would allow us to add the identification of potentially distracted driving. It has artificial intelligence, the ability to recognize if the driver is using a mobile device while the vehicle is in motion. It also provides reports of any indications of harsh braking, harsh turning, or sudden stopping and other safety management features to coach the driver. Lastly, Transfinder is a vendor we're currently using. We're looking at continuing to use those services and integrating them

with Zonar and 247. That means we would want to maintain our current route finder software. That's our bus route and stop management and assignment software that's used within the Transportation Office. That software also creates for us our State reports that go to PDE each year. It's called E-trans System that generates for us our average reimbursement from PDE. I believe it is usually in the neighborhood of about 3 million dollars a year in State subsidy for our Pupil Transportation. We would also want to maintain Tripfinder. You'll notice all these finder words, it's because Transfinder names everything finder. Their Tripfinder package allows for the online entry of field trip requests, the management and assignment of those as well. That's the package that Ms. Robins is currently seeing if it can be expanded to even the driver level to allow them to bid if you will on their trips effectively. We're currently in the process of implementing Servicefinder. One of our mechanics that we currently have is familiar with using that program from another location where he had worked and is helping us implement it. That Servicefinder is just what it says. It's a package for managing the Fleet service. A driver can go up to a vehicle with any mobile device, scan a QR code and be able to submit a work ticket for that vehicle if they were driving. It can then be processed and attached to the vehicle. We have a very good vehicle service record. That could be very helpful when we go to dispose of the vehicles later. It is also just for tracking, recurring problems and costs. The last two pieces with Transfinder that we would like to expand into are Stopfinder and Wayfinder. Stopfinder is for the parents. Right now, we can send mass notifications to parents when a bus is running late, but that still requires a person to pull the trigger. Somebody has to stop and tell that system, Bus 15 is late today, call them and here's the message. We can still do that but with Stopfinder it allows the parent to set their own parameters about bus notifications. For my student's bus, I would like to know when that bus is within 5 minutes of me so I can be out at the bus stop. It will use the GPS data to inform the parent of that. Additionally, the parent can look and see where their bus is. It's a little better than Amazon telling you your package is 10 stops away. Mrs. Bear asked will it know if say bus 3 is supposed to come, but bus 11 takes my kid that day, will it automatically know? Mr. Forsyth said it won't automatically know. We'll still have to tell people where that bus is. Mrs. Bear said if the child swipes their badge on the bus, then I will know that my child is on bus 11 versus bus 3, because of the swipe. Mr. Forsyth said I don't know if it will tell Stopfinder that. But I will find out. That's a great question. We will have the ability to know, but we'll make sure the parent can know as well. The additional piece I mentioned Wayfinder. That's for the driver. It had been discussed in previous meetings we had with committees of the Board giving drivers the ability to have turn by turn, directions for the route, being able to be told when they're off route, being notified if they missed a stop, that they didn't actually pass, etc. Seasoned drivers know their routes. Drivers that substitute and fill in for others would benefit from having that kind of feedback. Without that, a driver not being allowed to use a mobile device when the vehicle's in motion, leaves them with paper copies of route sheets. They can be challenging to read, and even more so when the driver needs to do that when the bus is parked. The tablet with Wayfinder could read that information to them. Now, one question I anticipate because was, wouldn't putting a mobile device like that in a bus, increase the potential for driver distraction. The feedback we get from those in the industry is no more than any other device in the bus that the driver could choose to misuse. There's also mobile device management software for these that can limit what applications, if any, can be operated at certain times, or when the vehicle is moving, ensuring or helping to ensure that it's used appropriately. Transfinder would be the third

vendor. The third piece of this entire vehicle package. Again, we would like to begin implementation, if it's approved, with the buses that we know aren't going to be leaving the district in the next year. We would then add this into the new buses able to be obtained, and then in 5 years we can determine where we move them. Now in the meantime, we know that we're going to be getting rid of buses every year up until those 5 years. Our anticipation would be that we move this equipment every year until we get to that five-year point. Then we would start procuring buses with it. If that's what the Board desire to maintain, that five-year replacement cycle. It means that we're going to have this equipment and some buses that are new. We're also going to be putting this equipment into some buses that are five years old. The difference is, we'll be taking it out of those buses in a year and into the next bus. So, you'll see there, the costs are \$914,000 and change for year one, because it's a procurement of all of the hardware. Then, in the following years 2 through 5, we're looking at approximately a \$120,000, annual investment for the service fees, software, cellular service, and so forth, in order to maintain the system. Now those fees, just to put it in perspective, are a large chunk of change, our district currently has a very good surveillance system throughout the buildings with those cameras. We took a look this afternoon and that entails some 1,094 cameras throughout our school district, like the ones you see in here. If this program is implemented in our 133 school vehicles, those alone would be 1,283 total cameras just in our school buses, because of the unique challenges of the viewing angles and other things that take place there. Just to sort of quantify the price tag, it would be like replacing the entire district surveillance system and putting it into your school vehicles. Mrs. Bear asked if the Omni 360 cameras have sound. I can actually hear sound now and it is not muffled. Mr. Forsyth said we can, but the difference is where the sensors are. It's in one side of the bus. This would spread them out. Of course, Pennsylvania law permits the recording of audio and video uniquely on school buses with proper posting, which our district does do. Mr. Bard asked how long does the video stay in the cloud? How long does it store a video per vehicle? Mr. Forsyth said discussions with our vendor indicate we can have input into that. We'll look at our records retention schedule to see how long we are currently maintaining the video with Mr. Borosh, and we'll make sure that it matches. They've indicated that we have ample opportunity to have input on that. Some of the customers retain it as long as one year. Mr. Bard said so 133 vehicles, 5 days a week for one year. That's a lot of data. Mrs. Bear said we are approving today to buy 4 vans. Mr. Bard said Mrs. Bear is speaking about those 10 passenger vans. Mrs. Bear said will we put cameras in those as well? Or are those not going to have cameras, just out of curiosity? Mr. Forsyth said I'll go back and check with Ms. Robins. She listed some additional recent purchases in the 133 vehicles, so I'll make sure that includes the 4 vans we approve today. Mrs. Bear said maybe not get the cameras that the buses will get but a smaller camera. Mr. Bard said we will not need the package with the stop-arm camera. Mr. Forsyth said there are 3 packages that go in the vehicles. The lowest level package would go in a van. It's 2 cameras plus the coach. You have a small vehicle system that maintains only 2 cameras over the passenger compartment because of length of seating than the other one that has the 3. Mrs. Bear said so different ones for the short ones than the big bus. Mr. Forsyth said, correct. There is not one size fits all. We looked at what vehicles we anticipate having in the fleet when this next year begins. We're recommending the purchase of the right number for each various size of those. Mrs. Bear said will they actually use the back scanner now, since we tried to implement it but we never really did. Mr. Forsyth said all implementation looks correct now.

VII. Recommendations by the Property & Facilities Committee (Pending Final Approval by Property & Facilities Committee)

- a. JMH Clock System Replacement - **Guyette** \$19,141.62
- b. JTL Auditorium Projection System - **Applied Video Technology** \$44,194.00
- c. RES Security System - **Keystone** \$27,500.00
- d. HSN 5-Year Sprinkler Internals - **Keystone** \$10,900.00
- e. Application for Payment #1 - HSN and LIS HVAC Roof - **Trane** \$366,645.00
- f. Application for Payment #1 - RES Univent Project - **Trane** \$420,000.00
- g. Current Project List

VIII. Recommendations by the Education Programs & Resources Committee

None

IX. Items for Discussion

- a. Resolutions needed for PA PDE and DCED Grants for Building renovations.
Mr. Bard said I am going to make this relatively short. I am also going to have something else for discussion at the Board meeting. It's not quite ready yet. There is a resolution that I submitted in your packets. It is an authorized official resolution. It is not ready yet for this committee to approve and move forward because I don't have the budget numbers yet. Josh Grice from D'Huy Engineering is working on them as we speak but this is for the grants. The PA PDE Grant is for building and environmental repairs, which is things like mold, mildew, asbestos and things of that nature. That does not necessarily apply to us but the DCED Grants do. That is for boiler replacement, roofing replacement and things of that nature. We are going to look at all of the grants and grant language through Angela Byrne. The problem is that I do not have the money that we can put into these resolution forms here. I am holding it up so you can see them. If we do get them by May 20th, it will be included at the Board meeting because we have to apply by May 31st. If we do not have it by May 31st and we want to apply, we would have to call a Special Board meeting in order to have them approved. I believe we will have them because I got an email about a half hour ago from Josh Grice saying that he has the budgets relatively completed. What these projects are is 70% grant and 30% district match. They may be able to extend and do some of these projects that are on your current project list and on the capital list, which could extend your capital reserve list out longer. There are things that we can pay for, do and complete with grant money. These are things that we are going to do anyway from roof and boiler replacements and a large scale recabling project at one of the schools that would cost \$700,000. There are a lot of things that we are trying to get done and there may be several resolutions on the May 20th agenda that you will see. If you have any questions, I will be able to address them at the Regular School Board Meeting. I don't want to give you a sticker shock when you see them on the Board agenda.

X. Public Participation - Limited to Items of Discussion or Approval

- A. Mr. Larry Dymond said I am totally amazed especially with you (Mr. Bard). You realize that the economy is not doing well and the stock market is not performing well. People are unemployed from losing jobs, others are getting their hours cut back and the whole nine yard. Here we just keep spending, spending and spending. I don't know what your plan is for that but it does not look good. It's a shame that the economy is going to be taking a good hit but we have no control over that either. We probably do in general. Tough times are coming. It is not going to be for two months or a year but a long-term thing. I think you are going to have to go back and rethink a bunch of your spending. It's nice to have everything on a gold platter but I don't think this district can afford it. The taxpayers here can't either. We already have people putting their houses up for sale and going back to the city because of the high rates on their mortgage and because of their times being cut back. This is going to be a real problem.
- B. Mr. Karkut said we have to really look at our numbers. Tonight, I looked at three documents and got 3 different numbers of students in our school district. Our CFO said we have 6,850 students that we are basing our budget on but yet the First Navigate 360 proposal says we have 6,400 students. The second Navigate 360 proposal says we have 7,000 students. I've been asking this for years. How many students do we really have? Because the listing in the back of our Board book changes and it's got so many different acronyms that I think that we double count. The other inaccuracy I have for the record is Mr. Forsyth stated for the amount of the students that ride our bus, he used a percentage of 7,000 students. That is not how many students ride our buses. We are probably about 3,000 students ride our bus. Just look at any school, the line of parents' cars that extend well into the road. You have 100 plus cars at JTL every day. Those numbers really have to be looked at. The other thing I was going to ask financially, with a lot of our proposals tonight, we have strayed away from bids again. I thought we were getting good with bids and things that drew my attention was inadequate competition was the reason we did not get a second bid. What does that mean? Also, have we looked at these two proposals for Special Ed students. Could we use the Special Ed Funding that we have? Mr. Baddick asked which one are you referring to. Mr. Karkut said both Navigate 360 proposals. Mr. Bard said one of them is being paid by the PCCD Grant. Mr. Karkut said it is really alarming because when the Superintendent came to us in February and told us about the impending doom, it is inevitable because we have been in in impending dome, but yet we continue to spend for years. The budget is presented by the Administration to the Board for approval. Yet, when there is a problem, the question is what is the Board going to do about this. What are we going to present? We had two meetings for budgets. I recall many years ago, when I was previously on the Board, we had a Board Book and we sat for hours as a budget committee and looked over the budget for days and weeks. Now we, as a Board have seen 2 proposals and actually one proposal because no offense to you, Pete, but it's the same thing you presented last month. There are not changes. Mrs. Bear said there are some. Mr. Karkut said not much. We are faced with a \$16 million deficit. How is our

administration going to fix that deficit so we can approve it? We are told we have no authority to change anything but we can only approve it. Mr. Schlameuss said the administration has said there is absolutely ways to reduce the deficit. You can cut spending, you can fire teachers, etc. Mr. Karkut said but we have not had any proposals on how to do that. Mr. Schlameuss said you do not need to because we are still not through this budget which we projected a deficit for but will realize anything from positive to negative. Mr. Karkut said I know that but I am just clarifying what has been said to the public that we are having a \$16 million deficit which has been done in other instances.

XI. Advisory Recommendations for Consideration by the Board of Education

1.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Richard Schlameuss to recommend that the Board consider for approval the following items. Motion was seconded by Wayne Rohner and carried unanimously, 4-0.

- a. Approve the purchase of four (4) student transportation vans from **Rohrer Bus** totaling \$333,016 plus fees (\$83,254.00 each) (Brightbill could not deliver vehicles in the specified timeframe).
- b. Approve adding an option for a **Roth 403b** to all of our all existing 403b vendors (if applicable).
- d. Approve the purchase of **PBIS Manager** at a cost of \$21,260.00.
- e. Approve the purchase of **Navigate360** Behavioral Case Manager at a cost of \$39,005.50.
- f. Approve **Calm Classroom** at a cost of \$22,769.00.
- g. Approve Budget Management Analytics Subscription from **Frontline Education** at an annual cost of \$7,000 (one-time implementation cost of \$1,100) (budgeted).
- h. Approve the contract with **Government Software Services LLC** for tax printing for Pike County (renewal).
- i. Approve the purchase of **PrimeroEdge** for all schools not to exceed \$50,850.00 (to be paid out of the Food Service Fund).
- j. Approve the renewal of **SmartFutures** at a cost of \$17,875.00.
- k. Approve the purchase of 3- year contract renewal of **Amira Software** subscription for special education students at a cost of \$13,500.00 (per year).
- l. Approve the three (3) year renewal contract of **PandaDoc** for special education, gifted and 504 legally binding contracts/documents to sign and store them at a cost of \$41,202.00 (\$13,734 per year)
- m. Approve the renewal of **Pearson Digital Assessment Library** at a cost of \$25,311.00.
- n. Approve the purchases of new bus cameras and GPS systems for all of District owned transportation vehicles at a total cost not to exceed \$1.2 million dollars over 3 years with an initial 24-25 cost of \$914,432.00(Paid out of Capital Reserve).

2.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Richard Schlameuss to recommend that the Board consider for approval the **2024-2025 Preliminary Final Budget**. Motion was seconded by George Andrews and passed, 3-0. Wayne Rohner voted no.

3.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Wayne Rohner to recommend that the Board consider for approval the following items, in accordance with the recommendation of the Property & Facilities Committee. Motion was seconded by George Andrews and carried unanimously, 4-0.

- a. JMH Clock System Replacement - **Guyette** \$19,141.62
- b. JTL Auditorium Projection System - **Applied Video Technology** \$44,194.00
- c. RES Security System - **Keystone** \$27,500.00
- d. HSN 5-Year Sprinkler Internals - **Keystone** \$10,900.00
- e. Application for Payment #1 - HSN and LIS HVAC Roof - **Trane** \$366,645.00
- f. Application for Payment #1 - RES Univent Project - **Trane** \$420,000.00

XII. Next Meeting - June 10, 2024, at 5:30 PM at the Administration Building and via Zoom
Mrs. Bear said she will join the June meeting via Zoom.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Richard Schlameuss to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Wayne Rohner and carried unanimously, 4-0.

XIII. Adjournment: 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia L. Rosado
Board Secretary