

NORTHERN TIOGA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
110 Ellison Road  
Elkland, PA 16920

Minutes –March 9, 2026

**1.0 OPERATIONS**

1.1 Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Tioga School District Board of Directors was called to order by Rod Butler at 7:03 PM.

1.2 Moment of Silence

Rod Butler led a moment of silence.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Rod Butler led those present in the Pledge to the Flag.

1.4 Board Attendance: Board Members Present: Allison D’Haene, Greg Cummings, Rod Butler, Denise Mack, James Moyer, Kim Strauser, and Julie Preston (via zoom). Absent: Craig Stage and Ed Bonham.

Administrators Present: Superintendent Kaufman, Kathryn Slavinski, Dan Fie, Matt Sottolano, Daren Bryant, Bonnie Walker, Kathy VanSchaick, Jess Millard, and Becky Koehler.

1.5 Student/Staff Recognitions & Presentations

Jazz Band Performance

Student of the Month

Williamson High School – Charles Hess

The student of the month for Williamson is Charles Hess. This junior is the son of Julie and Luke Hess of Millerton. Charlie's favorite classes include Mechanical Drawing, Metal Shop, and Phys Ed. His love of all things hands-on translates to his School to Work assignment on the family dairy farm, something he plans to do full time after graduation. His favorite task at work is driving equipment, while in his free time, he enjoys hunting. Charlie’s teachers describe him as a reserved, but responsible student, who works diligently. They also say he is not afraid to ask questions and is a natural analytical thinker who can be depended on for correct answers and well-prepared assignments. Finally, Charlie is known as honest, kind, and genuinely a good human. Congratulations to you, Charles! Williamson is proud of you.

Williamson Middle School – **Ava Baker**

Williamson Middle School is proud to announce Ava Baker, of Tioga, as Williamson's Middle School Student of the Month for March. Ava is the daughter of Marcia Confer and James Baker. Ava is a member of the Junior High Volleyball team. Outside of school, Ava enjoys being with friends. Ava is a model student who demonstrates PRIDE expectations each day. She is helpful to all teachers and peers. She provides assistance to others when they are struggling. She is eager to go above and beyond within the learning community. Congratulations Ava!

Cowanesque Valley High School – **Markenna Burdick**

Cowanesque Valley is proud to announce senior Markenna Burdick as the March Student of the Month. Markenna is the daughter of Kristin Burdick of Westfield and Mark Burdick of Westfield. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Drama Club, History Club, Digital Media Club, and chorus. She also plays tennis and is on the track team. Markenna's teachers describe her as trustworthy, reliable, and well-spoken. She is a role model to younger students and is a pleasure to be around. Her future plans are to go into interior design. Congratulations, Markenna!

Cowanesque Valley Middle School – **Kayleigh Costellic**

The Cowanesque Valley Middle School teachers are proud to name Kayleigh Costellic as March's student of the month. Kayleigh lives in Lawrenceville with her parents Erica and Anthony Costellic. Kayleigh is a responsible and hard-working student. She always comes to class prepared and ready to learn. She is respectful to her teachers and to other students. In addition to being an excellent student, Kayleigh is involved in many extracurricular activities. She is a member of band, student council, and the FFA. Kayleigh is involved in several sports including volleyball, swimming, skiing, horseback riding, and track. She also works at Triple D Farms in the horse barn, and she sometimes helps with trail rides or lessons. In the future, Kayleigh would like to become a large animal vet. She would also like to give swimming lessons and horseback riding lessons. Great job Kayleigh

R.B. Walter Elementary School – **Brailynn Cady**

Brailynn Cady has been chosen for student of the month! She is the daughter of Megan and Ryan Cady of Millerton, PA, and a 4th grade student at RB Walter. Brailynn is a quiet, sweet girl who always tries her best. She speaks up for herself and asks questions when needed. Brailynn really likes school and is excited to be here every day! She rarely misses and does extra work at home. Brailynn's favorite subject is science, and she really likes doing experiments and projects. She is very responsible and works hard to make sure she is successful. During her free time, she enjoys playing with her friends. She is very kind and people enjoy being around her. Brailynn's teachers appreciate her work ethic and her helpful attitude. She is someone they can count on to always be doing what she should. Outside of school, Brailynn enjoys playing with her brother, doing crafts, and swinging in her yard. She has a lot of support at home and enjoys spending time with her family. In the future, Brailynn would like to become a veterinarian and work with people and their pets. Congratulations Brailynn!

Clark Wood Elementary School – Emma Chapa-Bock

Emma Chapa-Bock is the daughter of Jasen and Brittany Bock of Tioga. Emma is involved in chorus and breakfast helpers. She is always willing to help others and volunteer for any task. She works hard and always has her homework done. Outside of school she plays travel ball and enjoys reading. She also babysits when needed. Emma exemplifies the RAMS expectations. She is always cheerful and has a smile on her face. She has a very well-rounded personality and will be able to accomplish anything she puts her mind to. Emma, we are very proud of you. Congratulations.

Westfield Area Elementary School – Eden Mummert

Eden Mummert is a fourth-grade student in Mrs. Young's class. She is the daughter of Nate and Amanda Mummert of Knoxville. She participates in the basketball intramural program and plays the flute in the band. When listing her likes at school she said math, social studies, writing, and art. Eden is a fantastic leader both in and out of the classroom. She is always on task, working hard, punctual, and volunteering. She is willing to help her peers, tutor younger students, and stand up for what is right. Eden is a very strong leader who is a wonderful role model for others. She is also kind, respectful, and a joy to be around. Outside of school she takes horseback riding lessons, likes to draw (which she is pretty good at), and enjoys playing with her dog, cat, and guinea pig. Congratulations, Eden, for being recognized for all that you are and all that you do!

Tenure and Professional Contract

The Superintendent and Mr. Millard recommend that the following Teacher, be granted tenure and issued a professional contract: Preston Cratsley.

## 1.6 Open Forum

Bob Goodrich, Osceola, PA.

Mr. Goodrich asked the board to consider the taxpayer when creating the budget. He also shared thanks to the board for their commitment. He finished with a prayer.

Kim Myers, Lawrenceville, PA.

Ms. Myers expressed her concerns with the Athletic Facility Project, as the district has not been awarded any grants for the project currently.

## 1.7 Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Greg Cummings, seconded by Allison D'Haene, to approve the monthly meeting minutes from February 9, 2026, and the work session minutes from February 23, 2026. votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

## 1.8 Budget Transfers (Exhibit #2) - None

## 1.9 Approval of Bills (Exhibit #3)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Denise Mack, to approve bills as outlined in Exhibit #3. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.10 Facility Use Permits & Conferences (Exhibits #4 & #5)

1.11 Information & Correspondence

Ethics Statements: As required by law, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania “Statements of Financial Interest” have been distributed to all Board members, administrators, and the superintendent. These must be completed and returned to the Board Secretary prior to the May 1, 2026, deadline.

## 2.0 REPORTS

2.1 Superintendent’s Report

February 13th-Wellness Day

Mr. Kaufman shared that the February 13th professional development day was organized as a wellness day for district staff. He stated that the staff who participated were overwhelmingly supportive in their review of the day. Over 90% of those who participated rated the experience as something that they would likely apply to their daily life or work. The district was fortunate to have several outside agencies and organizations participate in providing sessions. And the staff provided many suggestions for session topics for a future wellness day. This was the second district wide professional development day where the kitchen staff at Clark Wood Elementary School prepared the lunch. He expressed that as with the professional development day in September, the kitchen staff knocked it out of the park. The lunch was one of the highlights of the day.

Athletic Facility Project Update

Mr. Kaufman also shared that the district had its Rating Call with Standards and Poor and its Due Diligence Call with PFM Financial Advisors last week. Both calls went very well and are next steps in moving forward with securing financing for the project. Cottle's Asphalt Management continues to prepare their documents, and the district is currently advertising for a clerk of the works for the project.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Mr. Kaufman let the board know that he met with Michelle Moore, PhD from the Potter County Education Council. The Council is interested in partnering with Northern Tioga School District to bring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) to the district. DPIL is a program that provides books to children from birth to five years old. The books are free to children, but the program does require local sponsorship. Northern Tioga School District could be that sponsor. Up until several years ago, the district had its own program where books were provided on children's birthdays. DPIL provides a book to registered children, monthly. The approximate cost to the district is \$10,000. The board recommended that the program be funded through the Board Initiative Reserve. The program would begin July 1, 2026.

Act 47 Residency Verification for Cyber Charter Students

Lastly Mr. Kaufman shared that a new law passed with the state budget in the fall requiring families of cyber charter school students to verify residency twice a year, November 1 and March 1. The process initiates with the families, but the guidance that is coming to school districts is for the school districts to also initiate the process. We have noticed that some of the cyber charter schools that we support financially are already contacting families about residency verification and have provided the district with the required documentation.

## 2.2 Business Manager's Report

Monthly Reports – (Exhibits #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, and #12)

A motion was made by Allison D'Haene, seconded by Greg Cummings, to approve the Payroll Rate Changes, Capital Reserve Report, Financial Report, Cash Investment Report, Student Activity Report, Cafeteria Bills and Report, and Transportation Changes- None, as outlined in Exhibits #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, and #11. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

2026/2027 Budget Update

## Act 1 Budget Timeline

- May 31, 2026 – Adopt Proposed Final Budget
- June 30, 2026 – Adopt Final Budget

## Preliminary Budget Revenue Information

- No Tax Increase---based on February 2026 Assessment Data from County, which is lower than the June 2025 assessment, tax revenues will decrease by \$71,498.00
- Adjusted Index is 5.2% for Northern Tioga which equates to 0.5064 mills or approximately \$508,031.00 in increased tax revenue
- 2019/20 - Increase was at the adjusted Act 1 Index of 3.4%
- 2020/21 – No Tax Increase
- 2021/22 – No Tax Increase
- 2022/23 – Increase was 4.0%. Less than the adjusted Act 1 Index of 5%
- 2023/24 – Increase was 3.211%. Less than the adjusted Act 1 Index of 6.1%
- 2024/25 – No Tax Increase
- 2025/26 – Increase was 3.0%. Less than the adjusted Act 1 Index of 5.9%
- This is an average increase in real estate taxes of 1.94% over the past 7 years.

## State Budget for 2026/27

- Governor Shapiro presented his proposed budget on February 4, 2026. Included in his proposal:
- \$50 million increase for the BEF formula
- \$565 million increase in New Adequacy
- \$50 million increase for Special Education

- \$100 million proposed for School Safety & Mental Health/Targeted Grants through PCCD
- \$125 million for school facilities improvements grants via Commonwealth Financing Authority
- Funding to continue Universal Free Breakfast
- Continuing Cyber Charter Reform
- Increase to the Minimum Wage from \$7.25 to \$15.00/hour
- What does the PROPOSED budget equate to for Northern Tioga?
  - Basic Education Funding increase of \$101,572 over 2025/26 allocation
  - Special Education Funding increase of \$81,634 over 2025/26 allocation
  - New Adequacy Investment increase of \$920,653 over 2025/26 allocation

Important to remember that this is a PROPOSED budget.

#### Federal Revenue

- No projections for 2026/27 yet

Expenditure Information – that is known at this time.

- PSERS Retirement Rate is 33.59%, down from 34.00% last year. Please note that employer contribution rates are projected to increase in the following fiscal year and beyond. Estimated projections are listed below:
  - 2027/2028 – 34.12%
  - 2028/2029 – 34.63%
  - 2029/2030 – 35.17%
  - 2030/2031 – 35.69%
  - 2031/2032 – 36.06%
- Professional Staff Salary Increases \$839,509
- Support Staff Contract is currently under negotiations – expires June 30, 2026
- Act 93 & Administrator Salary Agreements - expire June 30, 2026
- BC/BS Health Insurance Increase of 13.0% average is \$747,669

#### Next Steps

- Continue to review expenditures and revenues and update projections
- Review 2026/27 Equipment Requests

### 2.3 Buildings and Grounds Report

Daren Bryant prepared a report to provide the board with an update on the various projects that have been completed or are in progress throughout the district by the buildings and grounds team. Including 4 completed work orders.

### 2.4 Grant Update

Becky Koehler provided the board information regarding the Feminine Hygiene Product Grant Program Funding.

### 3.0 ACTION ITEMS- VOICE VOTE

#### 3.1 Voice Vote (Exhibits #13 and #14)

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Allison D'Haene to approve the following voice vote action items as outlined below and in Exhibits #13 and #14. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

##### 3.1.1 2025/2026 Co-Curricular Appointments (Exhibit #13)

##### 3.1.2 Substitutes (Exhibit #14)

##### 3.1.3 Retirements & Resignations: Nancy Young, Elementary Teacher, Westfield Area Elementary School, retirement effective June 30, 2026.

##### 3.1.4 Approval of Volunteers: Joseph Southard- Cowanesque Valley Softball and Timothy Hurd- Williamson Softball

##### 3.1.5 Additional Vacancies During March- to interview and offer positions to successful candidates for any teacher, classified, or Act 93 vacancies that may occur between the March and April Board meetings. Those recommendations will be made to the Board at the regular April meeting. (This will eliminate the need to convene a special meeting.)

### 3 ACTION ITEMS- ROLL CALL VOTE

#### 3.1 Roll Call Vote (Exhibits #15, #16, #17, #18, #19, #20, #21, #22, #23, #24, #25, #26, #27, #28, #29, #30, and #31)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Greg Cummings to approve the following roll call vote action items as outlined below and in Exhibits #15, #16, #17, #18, #19, #20, #21, #22, #23, #24, #25, #26, #27, #28, #29, #30, and #31. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

##### 4.1.1 Temporary Professional Teacher Appointments; in accordance with the contractual agreement between the Northern Tioga School District and the Northern Tioga Education Association: Caitlin Barr, Special Education Teacher, Clark Wood Elementary School, on an emergency permit through the end of the 2026-2027 school year at step 9 with a master's degree effective March 11, 2026. If Caitlin receives her certification in PK-8 Special Education before the end of the 2026-2027 school year, her position will become permanent with the school district.

##### 4.1.2 Motion to Remove Employee: Motion to remove Employee #3444 as a probationary employee prior to the end of the 120-day probationary term.

##### 4.1.3 Approval of Online Academy Name Change: Approval to change the name change of our online academy from Northern Tioga Academy to Northern Tioga Flexible

Academy (NT Flex) and approve our listing of Northern Tioga Flexible Academy (NT Flex) as one of our schools.

- 4.1.4 Mrs. Slavinski, Principal of R.B. Walter Elementary School, requests the Board's approval to use up to \$1,500.00 from her Principal's Special Request Fund to fund STEM Week, field trips, end-of-year activities, and/or PBIS student rewards.
- 4.1.5 Approval to purchase items listed below for a total of \$10,873.00 in place of a salt spreader for the red maintenance truck which was approved in the 2025/26 equipment request at a cost of \$12,000.00. The maintenance department was able to replace the motor on the current salt spreader for a cost of \$1,127.00, leaving a balance of \$10,873.00.
- 4.1.6 Approval of Inventory Services (Exhibit #15)
- Approval of the agreement with Kroll, LLC, for district-wide Fixed Asset Inventory and Asset Management Services at a one-time cost \$20,900.00 and a yearly service fee of \$3,000.00 for annual updates. Kroll will inventory all capital assets with a value of \$5,000.00 or greater and will reconcile this inventory to the current fixed asset accounting records. This will keep the district in compliance with GASB 34.
- 4.1.7 Approval of the Williamson Unified Bocce Booster Charter Bylaws (Exhibit #16)
- 4.1.8 Approval of the Red Cross Shelter Agreement (Exhibit #17)
- 4.1.9 Approval of PFM Resolution (Exhibit #18)
- Approval to adopt the debt resolution as presented by bond counsel authorizing and securing the issuance of general obligation bonds to finance the capital improvements to the athletic facilities at Williamson High School and Cowanesque Valley High School.
- 4.1.10 Approval of the 2025/26 IU 17 General Operations Budget. (Exhibit #19)
- 4.1.11 Approval of the Pre-K Room Rental Agreement with Stepping Stones Preschool (Exhibit #20)
- 4.1.12 Policy First Reading- of proposed changes to the following policies: (Exhibits #21, #22, and #23)
- Policy 204- Attendance, Policy 610- Purchases Subject to Bid/Quotation, and Policy 611- Purchases Budgeted.
- 4.1.13 Policy Second Reading and Adoption- of proposed changes to the following policies: (Exhibits #24, #25, #26, #27, #28, #29, #30, & #31)

Policy 105.2- Exemption From Instruction, Policy 203- Immunizations and Communicable Diseases, Policy 218.1- Weapons, Policy 220A- Student Expression/Dissemination of Materials Attachment, Policy 233- Suspension & Expulsion, Policy 622- GASB Statement 34, Policy 907- School Visitors, and Policy 913- Non-School Organizations/Groups/Individuals.

**4 NEW BUSINESS**

**5 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

5.1 Future Board Meetings

An executive session for purposes authorized by the Sunshine Act may be held between tonight and the next Board meeting.

Board Special Meeting– March 23, 2026, 6:00 PM

Regular Board Meeting– April 13, 2026, 7:00 PM

5.2 Committee Meetings

**6 ADJORN**

6.1 Adjourn

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Greg Cummings to adjourn. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

Adjournment was at 8:13 PM.

An executive session was held following this meeting for personnel matters.

Brittany Mondock  
Board Secretary

All documents as attachments to the minutes not contained herein are maintained in a separate file located in the Superintendent's Office.