FELL CHARTER SCHOOL

Board of Education Public Meeting

777 Main St. Simpson, PA 18407

6:00 p.m., March 23, 2026

Via Google Meet /In- Person

AGENDA

Call to Order by Board President at 6:01p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance lead by School Board President Schultz Present

Board Roll Call: Mrs. Felicity Shultz, President Present

Mrs. Melissa Biedenkap, Vice-President Present

M.. Kelsey Bingaman, Treasurer Present

Mrs. Jillian Bair, Secretary Present

Mrs. Christina Lopez, Board Member Absent

Administration: Mr. Tim Casey, Principal (non-voting), Mr. Jim Mirabelli, Budget & Finance (non-voting), Mrs. Jillian Reed, Curriculum Coordinator (non-voting), Ms. Carrie Timlin, Food Service Director (non-voting)

Waive reading of minutes: ***The motion was made by Jillian and seconded by Melissa to waive the reading of the March 3rd, 2026 minutes.***

3 Yes No 1 Abstain 1 Absent

Approve minutes***: The motion was made by Jillian and seconded by Felicity to approve the minutes as presented, of March 3rd, 2026.***

3 Yes No 1 Abstain 1 Absent

First Public Hearing on *Agenda items only*

Visitors may comment or ask questions pertaining to any items listed on this agenda. Names and residence will be recorded before remarks are made.

Name/home school district Topic/Issue

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Finance Committee:

Mr. Jim Mirabelli, School Business Consultants reporting this evening:

Monthly Report: thru February 28, 2026

Monthly financials up to February 28, 2026 (copy provided). Statements that arrive late (as per practice) will be available at the next meeting. Total income and total expenses are almost equal. The IDEA Part B was a one-time revenue, so we're starting to see a little bit of a structural difference moving forward. Enrollment is down a little bit which will cause a lag in revenue, but the IDEA Part B will help balance us out.

Bank accounts are back at healthy levels after the budget stalemate earlier this year. We've been making a lot of progress with the audit (working on the 24-25 audit finalizations). The auditor has everything he needs to complete the audit.

Discussion/ Review of Accounts.

The motion was made by Felicity and seconded by Kelsey to approve the Finance Report as presented.

4 Yes _____No _____Abstain 1 Absent

Personnel Committee:

No report this evening

Carbondale Area School District Report:

No one from Carbondale School District was present to provide a report.

The motion was made by Felicity and seconded by Kelsey to approve the Carbondale Area School District report as presented.

4 Yes _____No _____Abstain 1 Absent

Principal's Report

1. Request for records: Mailings have been sent to school districts as the requests have come in.

2. Building Update: Gym Roof repair options/quotes. A leak has started in the gym (the roof is about 30 years old). Last year the part of the roof which extends over the music room was replaced due to leaking into the music room. Two contractors came out to look at it already and gave their bids, right around the $60k range for a full roof replacement. Waiting on two more bids. Options include one piece of rubber over the entire roof or pieces of rubber glued together over the whole roof - the pieces of rubber being the cheaper option but is a higher risk for future leaks due to the seams. Not asking for a vote yet as they're still gathering bids. Should have all four quotes together by the next board meeting in April. Ms. Schultz asked about a timeline for the roof repairs. Mr. Casey doesn't have a timeline as this isn't an urgent need, but once bids are received a decision will have to be made about which option will be taken and where the money will be pulled from.

3. Enrollment update: Enrollment: C'dale 78 FC 5 L'land 7 MV 1 Scr 1 MtV 5 WW 1 Tunk___ Abington ___ VV___WHi 1 VV 6 **Total 105**

4. Food Service/NSLP Update- In house meal program proposal. Ms. Timlin has been tasked with cost reduction in the food service program. She has discovered ways to decrease waste which increases cost savings, and has also located some grant money we can use. Currently exploring an in-house food program rather than outsourcing to a third party. Food was already coming in pre-cooked and needing to be warmed up - may need to purchase or upgrade some equipment in the kitchen but even with these updates it would save money in the long run. Current costs are about $90k per year, not including what's paid for milk, consumables, and FSD salary. We've been at a net loss for the last four years. Bringing in-house will reduce operating costs by nearly 30%. Would need to cross-train a couple of other staff in case Ms. Timlin and Ms. Edwards weren't available to run food service on any day. Keys to success would involve advance planning and utilization of available grants or entitlement programs. Mr. Mirabelli confirmed that the current food program has been resulting in losses over the last few years. Ms. Bingaman asked if Ms. Edwards was there 5 days a week; Ms. Timlin stated that she's currently there 3 days a week but may be available for more. She's currently on staff. Ms. Schultz asked about any plans for allergies or food sensitivities. Ms. Timlin has worked with Nurse Bonnie to identify which

students have allergies and making sure they don't sign up for those meals or replacing them with other options when needed. Thankfully, with such a small student population the number and variety of allergies have been limited so far. Ms. Schultz asked where the food would come from. Ms. Timlin stated we already have an account with Cisco and may work with Gold Star, then would work with local vendors to get other items as needed. Ms. Schultz asked for contingency plans if food distributors had a fall-through. Ms. Timlin stated that Cisco is a big enough company that they'd deliver weekly and can come another day during the week if weather caused a delay. We'll also have freezer and refrigerator space to store enough food that a delay in delivery shouldn't cause an issue. Costs to update equipment would be $16-17k but will result in long term cost savings. Ms. Wash asked if there would be still be alternative options for kids who don't want the planned lunches; Ms. Timlin is planning on continuing to offer the alternative bag lunch at least once a week. Mr. Swartzfager asked what would happen if Ms. Timlin is out and who would be training the staff. Ms. Timlin is planning on training staff on basic food preparation - the food plan itself will be designed to be as simple to implement as possible so that the backup staff can step up to prepare and serve the food without any issues if Ms. Timlin isn't available.

5. Benefits Renewals/Rates -Equitable Disability and Dental Plan (see attached). Health insurance will remain the same (only a 4.4% increase in price). This Wednesday, Tim Kelly (our benefits person) will be coming to the school to explain other benefits available to staff. We'll be shifting from Standard to Equitable for dental coverage which is a slightly lower cost (decreased by $525 per year). Long and short-term disability will also be switched from Standard to Equitable. Long term disability will be raised from $4k to $5k per month available to staff. Life insurance will also be shifted to Equitable. These changes and rates will be in effect for two years.

6. RVAT Assessment by State Police scheduled for Mar 25, 2026. A report will be shared with Mr. Casey and the board with recommendations on what should be adjusted. Part of this assessment will involve visiting the grounds at night to determine the sufficiency of lighting and security.

7. Personnel Update - not covered in the meeting due to parents being present.

The motion was made by <u>Melissa</u> and seconded by <u>Jillian</u> to approve the Principal's Report as presented by Mr. Casey.

<u>4</u> Yes _____No _____Abstain <u>1</u> Absent

<u>Curriculum update:</u>

Mrs. Jillian Reed, Curriculum Coordinator

- PSSA School Assessment Coordinator Training for Test Administrators and Proctors. Certificates are due to Mrs. Reed by March 30th - most staff have submitted their certificates already.
- After School Tutoring Last Day 3/26/26
- Upcoming PDE Data Summit 3/29/26-4/1/26 and Mrs. Reed will be in attendance/off campus during this time.
- Ms. Timlin will be escorting students to the ImagineX Creative Careers Field Trip for Art Club 3/25/26
- Armature Artist in Residence (partnered with the NEIU). Ms. Rice has come twice so far and did some introductory drawings with middle schoolers.
- Just finished up the Railriders reading contest. Ms. Norton has taken the lead on that and will be tallying up the reading logs.
- Warrior Night Recap - Kindergarten, 2nd, and 4th grades presented. Kindergarteners talked about Roman gods/goddesses, 2nd graders presented the "corny adventures of the southwest", and 4th graders taught us about the early settlements of Roanoke and Jamestown.

The motion was made by <u>Felicity</u> and seconded by <u>Kelsey</u> to approve the curriculum update as presented by Mrs. Reed.

<u>4</u> Yes _____No _____Abstain <u>1</u> Absent

<u>Education Committee</u>:

No report this evening.

<u>Policy Committee:</u>

Felicity Schultz, Chairperson

<u>Building and Grounds Committee:</u>

No report this evening

Outstanding/Old Business Matters:

New Business Matters:

Second Public Hearing of Visitors regarding school-related topics.

Need to accept the resignation of Jamie Swartzfager.

The motion was made by Melissa and seconded by Kelsey to approve the resignation of

4 Yes _____No _____Abstain 1 Absent

Name/home school district/Topic/Issue

Claire Cueto (Carbondale Area). Her son (EZ) was the focus of an investigation into accusations of racial discrimination. An investigation was conducted by a law firm. The firm determined that the school did not target this child via racial discrimination. She was told this was going to be an unbiased third party providing the investigation. No one reached out to her to ask what evidence she had for the accusation. She points out that this is the school's attorney's office, therefore she suggests it is not unbiased. She has a meeting with the board of education to discuss the results of the investigation. She is giving the school board one more opportunity to investigate in a non-biased way. Ms. Cueto is more than happy to share the evidence she has.

Ms. Schultz shared that the lawyers who did the review did not have any ties to the school although they work for the same law firm. Fell Charter was also not a part of their process and did not direct the firm to conduct the investigation in any particular way. Fell Charter provided the information requested by the firm and provided the family's contact information.

Ms. Cueto called the lawyer's office this morning and said that they confirmed Fell Charter is a client of the firm. She does not feel that the investigation was fair and truly un-biased.

Ms. Schultz reiterated that the board itself cannot do an investigation because we have to be able to objectively vote on the results. Ms. Cueto

emphasized that she did not feel the investigation was conducted thoroughly (no one reached out to her) and

Ms. Wash (Carbondale Area). Agreed that there are systemic concerns with the way students with special education services are treated in the school. She will also be meeting with the school soon about a situation which occurred with her son, who also has an IEP, and she is concerned

Mr. Swartzfager (Carbondale Area) asked if when investigations occur, the full report is given to all board members so that everyone is in full knowledge of the facts. From his perspective with related situations, it seems like the board is not fully involved or he questions the sufficiency of investigations conducted by the principal or others designated by the board.

Ms. Schultz acknowledged that most investigations are conducted by the school principal. When an investigation is completed by the principal, the board reviews and asks other questions before making recommendations. Mr. Swartzfager asked where the principal was trained in conducting investigations. Ms. Schultz reiterated that it is part of the principal's duties to conduct fair and objective investigations when necessary, and it's the board's duty to review the details and press for more action when needed.

Next Board Meeting Date: Monday, April 27, 2026 @ 6:00p.m.

Virtually and in person at 777 Main St., Simpson, PA .

Adjournment: called at 7:09 p.m. by Felicity ,seconded by Kelsey :
