



TO: EPC Representatives

FROM: Ken Swink, EPC Director

DATE: September 16, 2025

RE: Minutes of September 9, 2025

The Southwestern Ohio Educational Purchasing Council met in person and virtually via Zoom at its regular meeting on September 9, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. at Aullwood Audubon Center, 1000 Aullwood Road, Dayton, Ohio. Executive Board Committee Chairperson Scott Gilbert called the meeting to order.

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Stephens, Arcanum Butler; Tyler Alexander, Beavercreek; Carla Surber, Bradford; David Williamson, Brookville; Robert Fischer, Dan Bassler, Carlisle; Chuck Cowgill, Centerville; Dave Hargrove, Crayons to Classrooms; John Stanley, East Clinton; Scott Couch, Rachel Tait, Eaton; Deanna Knapke, Fort Recovery; Kelli Fromm, Franklin; Sarah Meadows, Greene Co ESC; Tim Hopkins, Huber Heights; Scott Butler, Mike Arlinghaus, Jamie Buchert, Lebanon; Jerry Ellender, Mad River; Ryan Goldschmidt, Marion; Brad McKee, Miami Valley CTC; Scott Gilbert, Montgomery Co ESC; Jennifer Couch, National Trail; Brandon Knecht, Northmont; Jeff Patrick, Northwestern; Mike Corcoran, Preble Co ESC; David Vail, Springboro; Julie Wallace, Springfield Clark CTC; Denise Robinson, Tecumseh; Bryan Wagoner, Tim Watts, Tri-County North; Kaydee Bayes, Trotwood Madison; Angie Chung-Kirby, Anthony Letersky, Twin Valley; Steve Verhoff, Upper Valley CC; Charles Thiel, Urbana; Erick Depew, Valorie Hill, Andrea Cook, Valley View; Marcus O'Brien, Vandalia Butler; Mike Watt, Wapakoneta; Tom Isaacs, Warren Co ESC; Buckie Caulley, Washington Courthouse; Curt Bone, Wilmington; **Vendors & EPC Staff:** Belinda Kenley, Sara Little, John Beckemeyer, Energy Optimizers USA; Jeff Evans, Mary Whitt, Evans Energy; Lauren Thomas, Drew Mastrino, Interface/Nora; Jon Green, Prodigy; Todd Linklater, Tremco; Ken Swink, Robin Houston, Bonnie Muckenthaler, JeanAnn Cloud, Cristi Goldshot, Mary Armstrong, Bri Listermann, Kendall Pollard, Desiree Bleh, Hallie Jay, Jeremy Kerr, EPC. **Via Zoom:** Jenna Jurosic, Brookville; Stephanie Hudson, Clark Co ESC; Kyle Lewis, Clinton DD; Robin Fisher, Dayton Regional STEM; Jeremy Pequignot, Franklin Monroe; Garth Whitaker, Greenon; Debbie Bulger, Miamisburg; Gina Selby, Minster; Tim Sies, Three Rivers; Kim Hagen, Tipp City; Jill Adams, Trotwood-Madison.

Presentation – [Lauren Thomas](#) and [Drew Mastrino](#) of [Interface](#) reviewed their EPC-approved program, which covers Carpet Tiles, Luxury Vinyl Tiles, and rubber flooring. [Flyers reviewing their products](#) were distributed.

Presentation – [Todd Linklater of Tremco Roofing](#) discussed their [AEPA](#) Roofing program with our EPC Members. A [flyer reviewing their products and services](#) was included in the packet.

Presentation – [Brian Smith](#), Director of Facilities at National Trail Local School and also President of [OPFMA](#), spoke about the 2025 Annual Ohio Facilities Management Association (OPFMA) Conference. An [invitation for the conference](#) was reviewed.



September 9, 2025 Minutes
Page 2

2026-1. Approval of Minutes - Motion of Robert Fischer of Carlisle Local Schools, seconded by Jeff Patrick of Northwestern Local Schools, that the [minutes of May 13, 2025](#), be approved. Motion carried.

2026-2. Membership Request Letters - Ken Swink reported that [Crayons to Classrooms](#), [Georgetown Exempted Village Schools](#), [Monroe Local Schools](#), [Northeastern Local Schools \(Defiance County\)](#), and [Northridge Local Schools \(Licking County\)](#) have requested membership in the EPC. The Executive Board approved this request at its September 9th morning meeting. Motion of Mike Watt of Wapakoneta City Schools, seconded by John Stephens of Arcanum Butler Local Schools, that the districts be approved for membership. Motion carried.

Welcome to the New School Year - Ken Swink thanked everyone for their continuing Membership with the Southwestern Ohio Educational Purchasing Council. The 2025-26 School Year will be the tenth year in which we will be waiving membership fees. A [list of EPC Programs and Services](#) was included in the membership meeting packet. If you need any assistance or have any questions about these programs, please contact us.

COMMITTEE PROGRAM REPORTS

Air Filters – Ken Swink reminded members that [Dayton Reliable Air Filter](#) pricing is valid through December 31, 2025. You may view the [vendor contact information, information on how to order, and Pricing](#) on the EPC Website.

Classroom/Office Supplies – Ken Swink shared flyers from [Friends Office on how to customize your meetings](#), and [John R. Green/Kurtz Bros on their products and services](#). [John R. Green is also having a contest to design their next catalog cover](#). Winning teachers will receive gift certificates for store items as well as a pizza party for their class.

Cloud Communication Systems – No report. WebEx, Go-To-Meeting, Multi-party video, Mobility, Redundancy, Disaster recovery, recording, easy-to-use management tools (web-based from anywhere), and Free phones, are just some of the features available to EPC Members from [Nebula Solutions](#). Please email Nebula Solutions at epc@nebulasolutionsinc.com for your no-cost, no-obligation analysis or call 888-824-1755 with any questions.

***Copy Paper** – Ken Swink announced that the EPC Copy Paper Program was extended with current vendors through October 31, 2025. The lowest-priced white 8 ½ x 11 Copy Paper is Millcraft's Natural Choice AJ8931 at \$32.50/case or Sterling Distribution's HiWhite at \$34.50/case. Both vendors will guarantee their paper and also offer a 1% discount if paid in net 30 days. We will continue to request pricing extensions every two months.



September 9, 2025 Minutes

Page 3

***Design Build & Performance Contracting Services** – Ken Swink explained that we have secured a [6-month extension for the EPC Design Build and Performance Contracting Services Program](#) instead of our usual 1-year extension, so we can update our bid specifications and have time for our legal counsel to review them prior to doing a new bid.

[Belinda Kenley](#) of [Energy Optimizers, USA](#), shared a flyer on [How to Navigate Upcoming Rate Increases with EOU](#). [Mary Whitt](#) of [Evans Energy](#) shared a [flyer on safer and more efficient buildings to offset today's higher electric demand charges](#), and [Jon Green](#) of [Prodigy Building Solutions](#) shared their [flyer, which reviews their areas of expertise](#). All three Design Build representatives gave updates and were available for questions.

***Drug & Alcohol Testing** - Ken Swink reported that the EPC has secured [Drug and Alcohol Testing pricing](#) through July of 2026. The recommended Vendors include Citran Occupational Health, Grand Lake Health Systems/Joint Township Hospital, Highland District Hospital, Kroger Health, Mercer Health, Mercy Health, Mobile Health Services, Premier Occupational Health, TriHealth/Bethesda Care, and Wilson Occupational Health. Kroger is our newest provider of this program. While they are not the cheapest vendor on the list, they certainly have a lot of locations to choose from if you are in an area with few options.

[Drug & Alcohol Testing pricing, location listings, and hours of operation](#) are available on the EPC Website. Services include: Drug Screening, Alcohol Breath Tests, T8 Physicals, Pre-Employment Physicals, Return-to-Duty Physicals, Tetanus Shots, Flu Shots, and more. If any district is currently utilizing a provider who is not on our list, feel free to [reach out to us](#) and share their contact information. We will contact them to see if they would like to participate in our program.

***Facility Products & Solutions** – Ken Swink announced that [Facility Products and Solutions discounted pricing with Cintas](#) was recently extended through May 31, 2026. Items included on this program include Garments/Uniforms Rentals, Floor Mats, Clinic Supplies and Feminine Hygiene. Contact [Amanda Rowe](#) at [Cintas](#) for questions or ordering.

***Food Service** – Bonnie Muckenthaler shared [EPC Food Service Updates for September](#) with the membership. Topics of the September EPC Food Service Update include the 2025-26 Food Service Bid Results, Reduced Price Meal Reimbursement through Fiscal Year 2027, and the announcement of upcoming events which include a Pre-Administrative Review Training (October 15, 2025 at the EPC Office in Vandalia), the cutoff date to enroll in the SWEPC Commodity Co-Op (October 15, 2025) and the SWEPC Commodity Annual Showcase & new Item Food Show (November 5, 2025 at the Bridgewater Banquet Center). The [2025-26 List of EPC Approved Food Service Vendors](#) was included in the meeting packet.



September 9, 2025 Minutes
Page 4

Food Service (Continued) - Bonnie also announced that the EPC Food Service Program is growing, and introduced our newest Food Service Consultants - Jeremy Kerr & Hallie Jay. Jeremy is a Registered Dietitian with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and dual Master's degrees in Food and Nutrition Sciences and in Dietetics and Nutrition. His professional background spans project management and administrative leadership roles, both domestically and internationally, before transitioning into dietetics. He joined the EPC in July 2025, where he combines his management expertise with his nutrition training to support schools and districts in meeting compliance standards and strengthening foodservice operations. Hallie earned her master's degree in public health nutrition from Liberty University, where she found her passion for child nutrition and school meal programs. She works to ensure school districts feel confident and prepared through the Administrative Review Process and currently oversees compliance for eight districts within our EPC compliance program. Hallie enjoys building strong relationships with school districts, partnering with food service teams to provide personalized support, resources, and solutions that align with each district's unique goals and challenges. Welcome, Jeremy & Hallie!

The EPC Food Service Consulting program gained eight additional schools for this school year, bringing the program up to 36 districts. If you need food service-related assistance, have procurement questions, or are interested in our Food Service Consulting program, please [contact Bonnie Muckenthaler](#).

***Furniture** – Ken Swink announced that the furniture committee made recommendations of vendors offering furniture discounts. The following vendors were recommended for approval: AmTab, Early Childhood (Discount School Supply), Friends Office, K-Log, Kurtz Bros/John R. Green, Learning Environments, Really Good Stuff, School Outfitters, SchoolsIn, Today's Classroom, Tom Sexton & Associates, and Wayfair. These vendors offer discounts of up to 75% off manufacturer list prices and represent 197 manufacturers. Furniture categories include: Instructional Classroom Furniture, Filing & Storage Cabinets, Workstations, Cafeteria, Library, Science, Laboratory, and more. You may view all [Furniture Discounts on the EPC Website](#).

Insurances – Cristi Goldshot reported that Open Enrollment invitations have been sent out to participating districts. If you need a member of the EPC Benefits Team to travel to your district for your open enrollment meetings, please reach out to the EPC as early as possible so we can get you on our schedule.

LED Lighting & Energy Savings Programs – [Belinda Kenley](#) of [Energy Optimizers, USA](#) reminded members they are welcome to contact her if they have any questions or if they are interested in a [No Cost Energy and Lighting Audit](#). Thank you to Belinda and Energy Optimizers, USA for sponsoring today's lunch for our members.

Liability Fleet & Property Insurance – Ken Swink announced that World Risk Management has been purchased by Gallagher. Your support contacts will remain the same.



September 9, 2025 Minutes
Page 5

***Library Books** - Ken Swink reported that [2025-26 EPC Library Book Discounts](#) were extended over the summer with Bound To Stay Bound, Capstone, Children's Plus, Delaney Educational, Follett Content Solutions, Mackin and Rainbow Book Company. Only vendors that are offering a larger than standard discount or other incentives such as free shipping without a minimum order are recommended for approval.

***Transportation** – Ken Swink announced that the EPC recently conducted a bid for 2026 Vehicles. Bids were received for [2026 Passenger Vans, Pickup Trucks, Dump Trucks and Flat Bed Trucks](#). Recommended vendors include American Bus, Beau Townsend Ford, Bus Service Incorporated (BSI), Hill International, Myers Equipment Corporation, and Tim Short Auto Group.

Ken strongly recommended that schools view the information [regarding HB 54 and the Use of 12-Passenger Vehicles for Student Transportation](#) that was shared with us by Heather Free from the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce's (ODEW) Pupil Transportation office. You may also view the [longer PowerPoint version](#) that was presented at the July 30, 2025, EPC Educational Vendor Fair's Transportation Seminar on the EPC Website. You may also want to consult with your school's legal counsel prior to your purchase if considering a 12-Passenger Van.

Ken also reported that the EPC School Bus Bid that was originally awarded on May 16, 2025 has been extended. Please view our list of [EPC Approved Bus Vendors and their varying extension dates](#) on the EPC Website.

Utilities/Natural Gas – Ken Swink reviewed the [Navigating Energy Market Volatility Report prepared by Maha Kashani from IGS Energy](#). Our long-running rate of 0.033 kWh in 2024 went to 0.56 kWh in 2025, and this rate increase was attributed to an 800% rate increase in capacity costs, which are entirely passed on through the utility and are separate from the EPC energy rate. We have watched the market every day for the past 9 months looking for hedging opportunities in 2026 and the market has come down from 0.07 kWh to 0.06kWh over these months but is stubbornly holding near 0.06. In addition to following our hedging strategy, we are at a point where districts need to consider other options, including demand response and sustainability projects, to curb capacity charges.

Our January – June of 2026 natural gas is 60% hedged at 3.965 Dth and we came close to our last 20% hedge order at 3.70 Dth last week, but we are still watching for this opportunity. We have been successful securing our hedges from a market high of 4.80 Dth earlier this year, but unfortunately our current 60% hedge is 8% higher than last winter. Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) exports are projected to grow an additional 25% in 2026 and another 25% in 2027, which continues to pressure prices upward.



September 9, 2025 Minutes
Page 6

Workers' Compensation – No Report.

2026-3. Motion of Erick Depew of Valley View Local Schools, seconded by David Williams of Brookville Local Schools, that the *programs be approved via consent. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Financial Report – JeanAnn Cloud reviewed the [financial summary of the general operating fund](#). The balance of the General Fund as of August 31, 2025, was \$1,181,272.77. Please contact [JeanAnn](#) with any questions or concerns.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) – [A flyer from AEDVenture was shared with the membership, which announces rebates have increased from \\$250 to \\$400 each on LP CR Plus AEDs.](#) Please contact [Mr. Doug Huffman of AEDventure](#) with any questions or to order.

AEPA – Ken Swink reviewed an [AEPA Flyer highlighting Scoreboards and Digital Displays from Daktronics](#).

Motion to adjourn by David Vail of Springboro Community Schools, seconded by Rachel Tait of Eaton Community Schools. Meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.