



**TO: EPC Representatives**

**FROM: Ken Swink, EPC Director**

**DATE: September 11, 2026**

**RE: Minutes September 8, 2026**

The Southwestern Ohio Educational Purchasing Council met in person and virtually via Zoom at its regular meeting on September 8, 2026, at 12:30 p.m. at Aullwood Audubon Center, 1000 Aullwood Road, Dayton, Ohio. Executive Board Chairperson Scott Gilbert of Springboro Community Schools called the meeting to order.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** PJ Burgett, Ansonia; John Stephens, Arcanum Butler; Amit Gautam, Bellbrook Sugarcreek; Dan Bassler, Carlisle; Julie Lowe, Cedar Cliff; Jon Wesney, Chuck Cowgill, Centerville; Rachel Tait, Eaton; Kelli Fromm, Franklin; Sarah Meadows, Greene Co ESC; Bonnie Baldridge, Greenfield; Amy Ayers, Hardin Houston; Scott Butler, Lebanon; Christopher Fox, Dave Birch, Mad River; Brad McKee, Miami Valley CTC; Jeff Winchester, Mississinawa; Jennifer Bouch, National Trail; Deborah Carson, New Lebanon; Ann Ferraro, Brandon Knecht, Northmont; Mike Derringer, Preble Co ESC; Jean Borchers, Russia; Ben Kitchen, Southeastern; Scott Gilbert, Springboro; Jennifer Bruns, St Henry; Denise Robinson, Tecumseh; Bryan Wagoner, Tim Watts, Tri County North; Jill Adams, Trotwood Madison; Jeff Sakal, Troy Christian; Jeff Price, Troy; Steve Verhoff, Upper Valley; Andrea Cook, Valorie Hill, Valley View; Marcus O'Brien, Vandalia Butler; Mike Watt, Wapakoneta; Curt Bone, Wilmington; **Vendors & EPC Staff:** Maria Scherter, Marianne Weber, APP Architecture; Belinda Kenley, John Beckemeyer, Kim Callaway, Sara Little, Delaynie Tate, Energy Optimizers USA; Jeff Evans, Mary Whitt, Evans Energy; Ken Swink, Doug Merkle, Robin Houston, JeanAnn Cloud, Bonnie Muckenthaler, Desiree Bleh, Hallie Jay, EPC. **Via Zoom:** Carla Surber, Joe Hurst, Bradford; John Stanley, East Clinton; Jeremy Pequignot, Franklin Monroe; Garth Whitaker, Greenon; Cheyanne Solomon, Milton Union; Brian Smith, National Trail; Matt Heaston, Ohio Hi Point; Buckie Caulley, Washington Courthouse; Carolyn Huber, Wayne; Tom Massie, Xenia.

**2027-1. Approval of Minutes** - Motion of Ann Bernardo of Northmont City Schools, seconded by Mike Watt of Wapakoneta City Schools, that the [minutes of May 12, 2026](#), be approved. Motion carried.

**2027-2. Membership Request Letters** - Ken Swink reported that [Central Local Schools](#), [Columbus City Schools](#), [Kent City Schools](#), [Lake Local Schools](#), [Licking Heights Local Schools](#), [Napoleon Area City Schools](#), [Oak Hills Local Schools](#), [Old Fort Local Schools](#), [Patrick Henry Local Schools](#), [Perkins Local Schools](#), [Reynoldsburg City Schools](#), [Southern Hills Career & Technical Center](#), [St Rose Catholic School](#), [Village of Saint Paris](#), [West Branch Local Schools](#), and [West Holmes Local Schools](#). The EPC Executive Board approved this request at its September 8<sup>th</sup> morning meeting. Motion of John Stephens of Arcanum Butler, seconded by Marcus O'Brien of Vandalia Butler City Schools, that the districts be approved for membership. Motion carried.



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**Welcome to the New School Year** - Ken Swink thanked everyone for their continuing Membership with the Southwestern Ohio Educational Purchasing Council. The 2026-27 School Year will be the eleventh 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 informed members that [Dayton Reliable Air Filter](#) pricing is good through December 31, 2026. There have been zero price increases since awarding this vendor in January 2025. [A flyer is included in the meeting packet, and pricing is available on the EPC Website.](#)

**Classroom/Office Supplies** – Ken Swink announced that our current Classroom & Office Supply program was bid in November 2021 and allowed for up to four 1-year extensions, which we have fully exhausted. We are starting a new bid process, which will go out to potential vendors around November and be awarded and in place when the current bid expires on January 31, 2027. We are asking our schools to complete a [survey to assist us in improving this program](#). A list of all [EPC Classroom & Office Supply Updates](#) was included in today's meeting packet along with a flyer from [Friends Office showcasing their ice melt products](#).

Ken also informed the membership that Nasco has been purchased by School Specialty, who will stop honoring Nasco pricing on September 10, 2026. We removed these items from our pricing spreadsheet, but you may use your AEPA discount on any School Specialty purchases. You may view [current EPC Classroom & Office Supply pricing here on the EPC Website](#).

**\*Copy Paper** – Ken Swink stated that we are requesting approval with Millcraft and Sterling Paper through October. The lowest cost 8 ½ x 11 White Copy Paper pricing with Millcraft is \$35.06, and Sterling Paper's is \$35.50. Members will receive a 1% discount for payments made within 30 days, and you will also earn a 1% rebate paid by the EPC each November. As a reminder, neither vendor should be charging fuel surcharges, credit card fees, or any other extra charges. The only exception is if you are within their listed counties, which may incur an additional charge determined at the time of order placement. You can view [EPC Paper Pricing on the EPC Website](#).

**Design Build & Performance Contracting Services** – Ken Swink reminded members of our recently awarded [EPC Design Build and Performance Contracting Service Program](#). [Contact information for all awarded vendors](#) is listed on the EPC Website. [Belinda Kenley](#) of [Energy Optimizers, USA](#), [Jeff Evans](#) of [Evans Energy](#), and [Marianne Weber](#) of [App Architecture](#) all introduced themselves and answered any questions. Flyers from [Energy Optimizers USA](#), [Evans Energy](#), and [TriTech](#) were distributed.



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**\*Drug & Alcohol Testing** – Ken Swink reported that the EPC has secured [Drug & Alcohol Testing pricing](#) through July of 2027. Recommended vendors include Grand Lake Health System/Joint Twp Hospital, Great Lakes Biomedical, Highland District Hospital, Kroger Health, Kroger's Little Clinic, Mercer Health, Mobile Health Services, Premier Occupational Health, and Wilson Health. Some of our vendors have added student drug testing pricing this year. One of our newest vendors, Great Lakes Biomedical, has also provided flyers on their [Drug Free Club](#) and [School Bus Driver Program](#).

**\*Facility Products & Solutions** – Ken Swink announced that the EPC's [Facility Products and Solutions Program](#) has been newly rebid. Recommended vendors to approve include Alcor Supply Co, Brady Plus, Ferguson, and Trifecta Pharmaceuticals USA. Items include Disinfectants, Dust & Wet Mops, Urinal Mats, Mats, Feminine Hygiene, Liners, First Aid, Paper Towels, Toilet Tissue, and more. Flyers showcasing Ferguson's [Product Categories](#), [Brands Carried](#), and their [Traction Melt](#) were distributed.

**\*Food Service** – Bonnie Muckenthaler reviewed the [EPC Food Service Updates for September](#) with the membership. Topics of the September EPC Food Service Update include: 2026-27 Food Service Bid Results, adding additional items to bid, the biennial state budget reimbursement, Nutritional Consolidated Reports, Whole Milk for Health Kids Act of 2025, the cutoff dates for SWEPC Commodity Co-Op Enrollment (October 15, 2026), and the SWEPC Annual Showcase and New Item Food Show (November 4, 2026, at the Bridgewater Banquet and Conference Center in Powell OH). The 2026-27 List of [EPC Approved Food Service Vendors](#) and information on our upcoming [ServSafe Training](#) were also included in the meeting packet. If you need food service-related assistance, have procurement questions, or are interested in our Food Service Consulting program, please get in touch with [Bonnie Muckenthaler](#).

**\*Furniture** – Ken Swink recommended approval for extending [EPC Furniture Discounts](#) with AmTab, Early Childhood (Discount School Supply), Friends Office, John R. Green/Kurtz Bros, K-Log Inc, Really Good Stuff, School Outfitters, School Specialty, SchoolsIn, Today's Classroom and Tom Sexton & Associates.

**Insurances** – Doug Merkle reported that the EPC Insurance team has been sending out email invites to upcoming open enrollment information meetings. Feel free to contact the Benefits office with any Health Insurance/Benefit questions at [Benefits@epcschools.org](mailto:Benefits@epcschools.org) or 937-890-3725 Ext. 1.

**LED Lighting & Energy Savings Programs** – [Belinda Kenley](#) of [Energy Optimizers USA](#) reminded members they are welcome to contact them with any questions or if they are interested in a [No-Cost Energy and Lighting Audit](#). A flyer on [why schools choose Energy Optimizers USA](#) was included in the meeting packet. Also, a big thank you to [Energy Optimizers USA](#) for continuing to sponsor our EPC General Membership meeting lunches for our members.



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**Liability Fleet & Property Insurance** – Ken Swink reported that EPC Liability Fleet & Property Insurance continues to grow. We had 55 schools participating 2 years ago, and now we are up to 117 schools. If your district is interested in a quote from our EPC Liability Fleet & Property Insurance program, feel free to reach out to Ken Swink at [Ken.Swink@epcschools.org](mailto:Ken.Swink@epcschools.org) or 937-890-3725 Ext. 1003.

**\*Library Books** – Ken Swink reported that the [2026-27 EPC Library Book Discounts](#) were extended over the summer with Bound to Stay Bound, Capstone, Follett Content Solutions, and Mackin. Our program includes only vendors offering a larger-than-standard discount or other incentives, such as free shipping without a minimum order.

**\*Transportation** – Ken Swink requested approval for [2027 model year Passenger Vans, Pickup Trucks, Dump Trucks, Flat Bed Trucks, and Utility Vehicles](#). Recommended vendors include American Bus, Beau Townsend Ford, Box Maxey Ford, Bus Service Inc (BSI), Cardinal Bus Sales & Service, Heritage Fire Equipment, Hill International Trucks, Myers Equipment Corp, and Valley Truck Centers. Our [School Bus Bid Opening](#) will be held at the EPC Office on Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Bus Bids will be posted on the [EPC website](#) and emailed to all EPC Members. [Transportation Supplies](#) and [Bus Camera Pricing](#) is valid through February 28, 2027 and are available on the EPC Website.

**Utilities** – Ken Swink announced that [Maha Kashani](#) of IGS is [offering a unique regulatory opportunity for EPC Member Districts in the AES Ohio Utility that may help reduce transmission costs for your district](#). Several EPC members have already explored this opportunity, with four districts taking advantage of it to date. Northmont City Schools, the first district to participate, has already realized approximately \$46,000 in savings. Brandon Knecht of Northmont City Schools spoke to the membership about his experience and how excited they are to receive these savings. At the conclusion of today's meeting, Maha began sending emails to districts who had RSVP'd to today's EPC Membership Meeting, outlining their potential savings by building. If you are interested and have not yet heard from Maha, please email her at [Maha.Kashani@igs.com](mailto:Maha.Kashani@igs.com). Ken also shared an article published on August 4, 2026, in the Dayton Daily News titled "[Grid Group Expects Elevated Electric Prices to Persist](#)".

**Workers' Compensation** – Fall EPC/Hunter Consulting Safety Training Dates should be announced via email soon.

**2027-3. Motion of Chuck Cowgill of the Centerville City Schools, seconded by Kelli Fromm of Franklin City Schools, that the \*programs be approved via consent. Motion carried.**



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#### **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, 2026, was \$1,744,923.84. Please contact [JeanAnn](#) with any questions or concerns.

**Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)** – An update on [Automated External Defibrillators \(AEDs\)](#) was included in the meeting packet.

**AEPA** – Ken Swink shared AEPA flyers from [CDWG \(Putting AI to Work Across Your Network\)](#) and [Quill \(Stock Up and Save More\)](#).

**2027-4 Motion to adjourn by Brandon Knecht of Northmont City Schools, seconded by John Stephens, Arcanum Butler Local Schools. Meeting adjourned at 1:09 p.m.**