

STEP, Inc. Board Meeting Minutes
4:00 p.m., Monday, December 15, 2025
2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport and via Teams

Board Attendance: Randall Allison, Angelic Hardy, Nicole Hayes, Joanne Ludwikowski, Jack McKernan, Scott Metzger, Brenda Nichols, Jacqueline Oliva, Matthew Rickard, Abigail Roberts, Jeffrey Snyder, Lindsay Stamm, Tia Walker, Patti Wylie

Board Members Not Attending: Aron Carter

Staff Attending: Rachelle Abbott, Laurel Cowher, Aron Haefner, Patricia Kiessling, Jamey Williams

Guests: Erin Brouse, Valerie Fessler, Carrie Pauling

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairperson Abigail Roberts.
2. All members, staff, and guests present introduced themselves.
3. STEP Board of Directors Governance Committee Chair Brenda Nichols presented the resignations of Aron Carter, Randall Allison, and Patti Wylie to the board. The three resigning members were recognized for their service and dedication to STEP. On motion of Joanne Ludwikowski and second by Nicole Hayes, the resignations were approved.
4. STEP Board of Directors Governance Committee Chair Brenda Nichols presented Erin Brouse, Valerie Fessler, and Carrie Pauling as board member candidates. Erin Brouse, of the Williamsport Area School District, and Carrie Pauling, as designee of 83rd Legislative District Representative Jamie Flick, were proposed as Public Sector board members; Valerie Fessler, Director of Community and Economic Development at the City of Williamsport, was proposed as a Private Sector member. On motion of Jeffrey Snyder and second by Scott Metzger, the three proposed members were approved.
5. On motion of Brenda Nichols and second by Joanne Ludwikowski, the minutes of the November 17, 2025, STEP Board of Directors meeting were approved.
6. No additional members of the public were present.
7. Patricia Kiessling presented the financial reports for October 2025, including an organization-wide report on revenue and expenditures categorized by program and a consolidated statement of activities and statement of financial position. On motion of Jack McKernan and second by Lindsay Stamm, the financial reports were approved.
8. Aron Haefner presented the programmatic reports from November 2025, including STEP Head Start Parent Community Association reports and minutes. On motion of Randall Allison and second by Brenda Nichols, the programmatic reports were approved.
9. Patricia Kiessling provided information on the following grants: Truist Substitute Aide Pool Program in the amount of \$50,000; and LIHEAP Crisis in the amount of \$430,613. On motion of Lindsay Stamm and second by Valerie Fessler, the grants were approved.
10. Laurel Cowher, STEP Head Start Director, provided the board with information on the 2026-2027 Selection Priorities. No substantive changes from the 2025-2026 Selection Priorities were noted. On motion of Brenda Nichols and second by Jeffrey Snyder, the Selection Priorities were approved.
11. Laurel Cowher provided a programmatic update on Head Start activities to the board.
12. Rachelle Abbott provided information about STEP's 2025 Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) survey. It was noted that the score was largely in line with recent years, with a slight decrease likely due to the survey's deployment timing during state and federal budget impasses.
13. Aron Haefner provided an update on the STEP Transportation Facility construction, sharing photos of recent construction progress.

14. Rachelle Abbott and Nicole Hayes, Committee Chair, provided an update on the planning for STEP's 60th Anniversary. The signature event will be held on May 30, 2026 at Bald Birds Brewing in Jersey Shore. \$30,000 in sponsorship funding has been secured.
15. Rachelle Abbott provided a current events update, focusing on the current legislative status of the Weatherization Assistance Program and the Community Services Block Grant, as well as work being done by the advocacy group of the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania.
16. In other business, Rachelle Abbott shared that STEP will be part of the group organizing Dream Week activities on and around Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January 2026, including the Peace Walk on the holiday itself.
17. The next board meeting will be Monday, January 26, 2026, at 2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport, and via Teams.
18. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on motion of Joanne Ludwikowski followed by unanimous consent at 5:05 p.m.