COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS

F I N A L M I N U T E S

MEETING OF:

STATE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY

TIME: 10:44 A.M.

Held at

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

2525 North 7th Street

CoPA HUB, Eaton Conference Room

Harrisburg, PA 17110

as well as

VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

August 17, 2026

State Board of Psychology
August 17, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS:

Donald McAleer, Psy.D., Chair
Arion Claggett, Acting Commissioner of Professional and Occupational Affairs - Absent
David Zehrung, Ph.D., Vice Chair
Jade Logan, Ph.D.
Daniel Warner, Ph.D.

BUREAU PERSONNEL:

Lindsay Szymanski, Esquire, Board Counsel
Sparkle Thompson, Board Administrator
Jacqueline Wolfgang, Esquire, Senior Regulatory Counsel
J. Patrick Greene, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Todd Kriner, Esquire, Board Prosecution Liaison
Jason T. Anderson, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Nicholas Kahler, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Ronald K. Rouse, Esquire, Senior Counsel, PA Office of General Counsel
Holly Hoffman, Legal Analyst, Department of State
Danie Bendesky, Special Assistant for Strategic Initiatives
Shana M. Walter, Esquire, Deputy Chief Counsel, Prosecution Division
CJ Restemeyer, Esquire, Office of General Counsel

ALSO PRESENT:

Rachael Baturin, MPH, JD, Deputy Executive Director Pennsylvania Psychological Association
Molly Cowan, Director of Professional Affairs, Pennsylvania Psychological Association
Andrew Worek, Attorney, Eckert Seamans
Douglas S. Roberts, Psy.D., Christiana Care Health Services Inc.
Harshal Dear, Communications Director, Kayden's Korner, National Safe Parents Organization
Michael Huss
Jen Schestock
Call-In # 1-860-754-7795
Call-In # 1-412-980-5438
Erin Badstuebner, Sargent’s Court Reporting Service, Inc.

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State Board of Psychology

August 17, 2026

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[Pursuant to Section 708(a)(5) of the Sunshine Act, at 9:00 a.m. the Board entered into Executive Session with Lindsay Szymanski, Esquire, Board Counsel, for the purpose of conducting quasi-judicial deliberations on a number of matters that are currently pending before the Board and to receive the advice of counsel.]

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The regularly scheduled meeting of the State Board of Psychology was held on Monday, August 17, 2026. Donald McAleer, Psy.D., Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:44 a.m.

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[Lindsay Szymanski, Esquire, Board Counsel, noted the meeting was being recorded, and voluntary participation constituted consent to be recorded.

Ms. Szymanski stated the Board entered into Executive Session for the purpose of conducting quasi-judicial deliberations on a number of matters that are currently pending before the Board and to receive the advice of counsel.]

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[Donald McAleer, Psy.D., Chair, requested an introduction of Board members and attendees. A quorum of Board members was present.]

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Approval of Minutes - June 15, 2026

CHAIR MCALEER:

Okay, next item is the approval of the draft minutes. I've had a chance to review them. I assume other folks have had a change to review. Any comments, corrections, etcetera from the Board?

Hearing none, I'd entertain a motion to accept the draft minutes of the June meeting.

DR. WARNER:

I make a motion.

DR. ZEHRUNG:

I second.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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Report of the Prosecutorial Division

[J. Patrick Greene, Esquire, Board Prosecutor, presented the Consent Agreement and Order for Agenda Item 3, Case No. 25-63-008202.]

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MS. SZYMANSKI:

Regarding the Consent Agreement at Item No. 3 on your Agenda, which is Case No. 25-63-008202, after discussion in Executive Session, I believe the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Consent Agreement.

DR. WARNER:

I propose to move to a vote.

MS. SZYMANSKI:

Can we have a second?

DR. ZEHRUNG:

Zehrung, I second.

CHAIR MCALEER:

Thank you, may I have a roll.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously. The Respondent at Agenda Item No. 3, Case No. 25-63-008202, is Meredith Barber, Psy.D.]

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Report of Board Counsel

MS. SZYMANSKI:

At Item No. 4, we have a psychology corporate fictitious name approval.

And at this time, I believe the Chair would entertain a motion to deny the psychology corporate fictitious name of the Free Therapy Project, PLLC at Item No. 4 on your Agenda.

CHAIR MCALEER:

May I have a motion please?

DR. WARNER:

I would make a motion to vote.

MS. SZYMANSKI:

Can we have a second?

DR. ZEHRUNG:

Zehrung, I second.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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Report of Board Counsel - Regulatory Report

[Jacqueline Wolfgang, Esquire, Senior Regulatory

Counsel, noted the Board was provided a report reflecting the status of regulations for their review.

Regarding 16A-6317, Continuing Education, Ms. Wolfgang stated the regulation updates Section 41.59 and clarifies continuing education (CE) requirements. The proposed regulation was published on May 31, 2025 with a 30-day public comment period. She noted the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) submitted comments recommending clarifying changes to Section 41.59. She noted the revisions recommended by IRRC were highlighted in yellow for the Board. She added the recommendations were clarifying and non-substantive.

Ms. Wolfgang explained the Board also received a comment from Kayden's Korner and National Safe Parents Organization (NSPO). The comment urged the Board to promulgate regulations regarding domestic violence, child abuse training, custody evaluators, court evaluators, court experts, reunification therapy, parental alienation theory, and implementation of federal Kayden's Law as well as Pennsylvania Act 8 of 2024. The laws are intended to improve safety in child custody proceedings involving allegations of abuse and encourage states to

establish appropriate training requirements for judges and other professionals involved in custody matters. She noted the laws do not impose a general training mandate on all licensed professionals so she did not recommend any amendments to the Board's regulation with respect to the comment. She added the explanation was included in the Preamble.

Harshal Dear, Communications Director, Kayden's Korner, National Safe Parents Organization, was permitted to provide comments on public comments the organizations submitted. She stated the federal and state laws specifically speak to education regarding domestic violence and coercive control for judges and other family court professionals that are involved in custody matters. She stated, since a high number of psychologists are used as expert witnesses in custody cases, it would be appropriate for the Board to include specific educational requirements in the regulation. She added her written letter provides specific details regarding number of hours and type of training needed. She also explained she provided written documentation from the American Psychology Association and the American Psychiatric Association regarding evidence-based research into parental alienation, reunification therapy, and reunification

therapy camps as treatment. She requested the Board update training to match Kayden's Law, because a large number of psychologists are practicing specifically in child custody. She also noted the same professionals are diagnosing families or individuals with parental alienation despite the diagnosis not being recognized nationally or by the World Health Organization.

Ms. Wolfgang noted Ms. Dear's points were important; however, she added the recommendations were outside the scope of the regulation. Additionally, she noted the matters discussed are under the custody court system and their statutory requirements for training in the administrative court code.

Chair McAleer asked for any additional comments from the Board regarding the regulation. Dr. Warner questioned the lack of distinction between home study and distance education. He noted home study is a specific kind of asynchronous education; however, there are other ways to do distance education while still being synchronous. He emphasized the importance of live interaction.

Ms. Wolfgang explained the Board made changes to the regulation to modernize the language. She noted

the decision regarding home study and distance education was decided prior to the regulation being published as proposed. Chair McAleer noted the Board entertained comments and the vast majority of people were in favor of the changes. He asked for additional Board comments.

Dr. Logan stated, while she was not on the Board at the time of the regulation being written, she stated the regulatory process was followed, and she was in favor of continuing the process. Dr. Zehrung agreed with Dr. Logan, noting that while he individually affirmed the value of interactive learning experience, the Board should not relitigate what was done prior to current members joining the Board.]

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MS. WOLFGANG:

At this time, I believe the Chair would entertain a motion to approve the final regulation, the Preamble and Annex at 16A-6317, Continuing Education, and direct Regulatory Counsel to move the final form rulemaking through the regulatory process.

DR. WARNER:

I make a motion to vote.

CHAIR MCALEER:

David?

DR. ZEHRUNG:

Zehrung, I second.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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[Ms. Wolfgang explained the remaining steps of the regulatory process for 16A-6317, noting she anticipated a public IRRC hearing in October or November.

Ms. Szymanski explained 16A-6320, General Revisions, was a general update to the regulations to conform with Act 53 of 2026, 63 PA C.S. 3107.1, and 63 PA C.S. 3104. In addition, the regulation modernized language.

Ms. Wolfgang noted there was a substantive change made after the regulation underwent legal review. Ms. Szymanski explained the Pennsylvania Psychological Association (PPA) suggested it made little sense to permit an individual with a license in Canada to practice in the Commonwealth on a

temporary basis under subsection (c) but not consider them for licensure without examination under subsection (a). She further explained the Act does not authorize the Board to issue unrestricted licenses based solely on Canadian licensure; however, Canadian licensees can go through Act 41. Ms. Wolfgang noted the regulation had been amended based on the issue.]

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MS. SZYMANSKI:

At this time, I believe the Chair would entertain a motion to approve the proposed regulation, the Preamble and Annex for 16A-6320, General Revisions, and direct Board Counsel to move the proposed rulemaking through the regulatory process.

DR. WARNER:

I'd like to make a motion to vote.

DR. ZEHRUNG:

Zehrung, I second.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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Report of Board Chairperson

[Donald McAleer, Psy.D., Chairperson, shared the Board made a presentation at the PPA Convention after the June Board meeting. The Board's activities, current regulations, and finances were discussed. He added, for the last several years, the Board had given one-hour presentations with consistently good feedback; however, the Board could consider a longer presentation for next year's convention.

Dr. Logan noted PPA may have a set schedule, and the Board may need to request more time far in advance.

Molly Cowan, Director of Professional Affairs, Pennsylvania Psychological Association, stated submissions would be due later this year and anything requested would be considered. She added, if the Board gave PPA a sense of the length of time wanted, they would work it into the schedule.]

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Report of Acting Commissioner - No Report

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Report of Board Administrator

MS. SZYMANSKI:

I believe the Chair would entertain a

motion to provisionally deny the application to practice psychology of Jayne Eckley, Psy.D. at Item No. 8 on your Agenda.

DR. WARNER:

I'd like to make the motion.

DR. ZEHRUNG:

I second.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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Report of Committees - No Report

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New Business

[Donald McAleer, Psy.D., Chairperson, explained the majority of the Board will be attending a meeting in Nevada at the time of the October Board meeting so it was felt the meeting should be moved from the original date of October 19, 2026 to October 26, 2026.]

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CHAIR MCALEER:

So we do need a motion to change the

October meeting to October 26th.

DR. WARNER:

I make a motion to vote.

DR. ZEHRUNG:

Zehrung, I second.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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MS. SZYMANSKI:

Then we do have an Item No. 10 on our Agenda, which is a PSYPACT 2026 Annual Meeting.

I believe the Chair would entertain a motion to send one member to attend the PSYPACT Annual Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, taking place between November 16th and 17th.

DR. WARNER:

I make a motion.

DR. ZEHRUNG:

Not sure if I can second or not, but if I can, sure, I'll second.

McAleer, aye; Zehrung, aye; Logan, aye; Warner, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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Correspondence - None

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FYI Items

[Donald McAleer, Psy.D., Chairperson, shared several Board Members and possibly Board Counsel would be attending the annual meeting of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards in October 2026. He noted the meeting was an opportunity for jurisdictional boards from the United States, Canada, and the territories to meet and address issues common to everyone.

Chair McAleer noted his appreciation for the comments from Kayden's Korner. He stated the issues addressed by Kayden's Korner are not general training for all psychologists but are for those psychologists engaged in legal work and child custody.

Chair McAleer commented the next Board meeting was scheduled for October 26, 2026, followed by December 21, 2026; however, there may be another meeting scheduled in the interim.]

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Public Comment

[Harshal Dear, Communications Director, Kayden's Korner, National Safe Parents Organization, thanked the Board for giving her the opportunity to speak. She reiterated her comments from earlier in the meeting. She stated there was prior precedent for the Board taking action for similar issues such as in 2024 regarding conversion therapy. She asked for similar regulations to be passed for the case of reunification therapy and parental alienation.]

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[Jen Schestock agreed with Ms. Dear's comments. She stated there are known issues within the Pennsylvania court system. She added she has spent thousands of dollars for court ordered meetings that are not covered by insurance. She implored the Board to take the concerns presented by Ms. Dear seriously.]

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[Douglas S. Roberts, Psy.D., Christiana Care Health Services Inc., stated he submitted a reactivation application in April, and his continuing education had been continuously denied for review through the automated letters he received. He has been trying to get his continuing education manually reviewed and hoped he would not have to wait until the October

Board meeting.

Ms. Szymanski stated his transcripts would be investigated after the meeting and would be submitted to a committee for review. The application could potentially be approved before the October meeting if full Board review is not needed.]

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[Michael Huss expressed support for Ms. Dear's proposal regarding state and federal Kayden's law. He stated practitioners under the Board's purview are making diagnoses and recommending treatments that are not supported by evidence. Regarding reunification treatment, he stated the Board should consider it to be unprofessional conduct in the same way that they have with respect to conversion therapy.]

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[Ms. Wolfgang clarified the conversion therapy policy is not a regulation and did not establish a binding norm. The conversion therapy policy was a statement of policy issued by the Board alongside other boards. She stated the Board could consider a similar statement of policy regarding the concerns raised by Ms. Dear. She reiterated Ms. Dear's concerns were separate and apart from what was proposed in the continuing education regulation. With respect to

conversion therapy, she noted the statement of policy basically advises the public of the Board's viewpoint.

Ms. Logan asked if a statement of policy could be considered. Ms. Wolfgang replied research could be done and there could be policy discussions. She added Ms. Dear's proposal is more comprehensive than the CE regulation and should be considered separately. She pointed out Act 8 of 2024 and the federal Kayden's Law were not specific to psychology and did not direct the Psychology Board to draft regulations. She strongly recommended any consideration related to the proposal happen outside of the context of the continuing education regulation.

Ms. Dear thanked Ms. Wolfgang for the potentially alternative direction. She offered to continue discussions to explore the pathway leading to a statement of policy.]

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Adjournment

CHAIR MCALEER:

Hearing no other comments, I will call for a motion to adjourn.

DR. WARNER:

I would make that motion.

CHAIR MCALEER:

Thank you, Dan. And I don't think we need a second for that. Thank you very much for your attendance today and the continued work that you do, and we will all be in touch. Thank you do much.

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[There being no further business, the State Board of Psychology Meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.]

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing summary minutes of the State Board of Psychology meeting, was reduced to writing by me or under my supervision, and that the minutes accurately summarize the substance of the State Board of Psychology meeting.



Erin Badstuebner,
Minute Clerk
Sargent's Court Reporting Service, Inc.

STATE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY
REFERENCE INDEX
August 17, 2026

TIME	AGENDA
9:30	Executive Session
10:44	Return to Open Session
10:44	Official Call to Order
10:45	Roll Call
10:47	Approval of Minutes
10:48	Report of Prosecutorial Division
10:51	Report of Board Counsel
10:52	Report of Regulatory Counsel
11:19	Report of Board Chairperson
11:23	Report of Board Administrator
11:24	New Business
11:27	FYI Items
11:29	Public Comment
11:43	Adjournment