

Branchburg Township School District
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

February 8, 2024

Executive Session – 6:30 p.m.

Public Meeting – 7:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Ms. Noto, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to public session at 5:42 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 5:42 p.m. by Board President, Vincent Carpentier, who stated that the meeting was convened in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, the Sunshine Law; notices were sent to the *Courier News*, filed with the Township Clerk and posted in the Branchburg Township Schools.

The following members of the Board of Education were present: Vincent Carpentier, Puja Desai, Kristen Fabriczi, Theresa Joyce, Robert Maider, Carmela Noto, Bindu Shah and Charles Tuma.

The following members were absent: None.

Also present were: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Karen Chase and Business Administrator/Board Secretary Sally Dolan.

II. The Secretary called the roll.

III. CALL TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Ms. Noto and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to Executive Session at 5:42 p.m. for BoardDocs training.

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Ms. Noto, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn BoardDocs training at 6:30p.m.

On a motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Shah and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to Executive Session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss Personnel, Student Matters, Contracts and Legal Issues.

On a motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn Executive Session at 7:30p.m.

On a motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to open Public Session at 7:30 p.m.

IV. The assembly saluted the flag.

V. Statement of Adequate Notice

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Chase recognized the following student artists:

- Madison Markey - Kindergarten - Teacher, Mr. Boehm
- Zoey Dewe - 1st Grade - Teacher, Mr. Boehm
- Thomas Heteji - 2nd Grade - Teacher, Mr. Boehm
- Thor Majors - 3rd Grade - Teacher, Mr. Boehm
- Yosi Almagor - 3rd Grade - Teacher, Mr. Boehm
- Ava Guirguis - 3rd Grade - Teacher, Mr. Boehm
- Christian Grande - 4th Grade - Teacher, Mrs. Rueger
- Kai Herman - 4th Grade - Teacher, Mrs. Rueger
- Ava Jaskewicz - 4th Grade - Teacher, Mrs. Rueger
- Olivia Asimoglou- 5th Grade - Teacher, Mrs. Rueger
- Alexis Kotrba-Fodera - 5th Grade - Teacher, Mrs. Rueger
- Caleb Uchitel Crow - 5th Grade - Teacher, Mrs. Rueger
- Annie Gamarello - 6th Grade - Teacher, Ms. Russo
- Lyric Peterson - 6th Grade - Teacher, Ms. Russo
- Quinn Kassick - 7th Grade - Teacher, Ms. Russo
- Shivali Betala - 8th Grade - Teacher, Ms. Russo
- Trisha Iyer - 8th Grade - Teacher, Ms. Russo
- Isabel Piotrowski - 8th Grade - Teacher, Ms. Russo

Dr. Chase also spoke about the following:

- The district advertised for the Middle School Principal position, and several candidates have already applied. Dr. Chase then went through the interview process; and
- Dr. Chase did a presentation on the Student Safety Data Report.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

VIII. GOVERNANCE

Motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi that Items VIII.A. and VIII.D. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items VIII.A. and VIII.D. were unanimously approved by Roll Call, with Ms. Fabriczi, Mr. Maider and Ms. Noto abstaining on Items VIII.A. and VIII.D.

There was no Governance Committee report.

Mr. Carpentier said details for the interview process for Mr. Dugan's replacement will be coming out shortly.

A. Approval of Minutes

It is recommended that the Board approve the Minutes of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of January 18, 2024.

B. Approval of Revised 2023-2024 School District Calendar

It is recommended that the Board approve the Revised School District Calendar.

C. Approval of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) Investigative Report

It is recommended that the Board approve the Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying Investigative Report for the period of January 18, 2024 through February 8, 2024, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq.

D. Approval of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) Findings Report

It is recommended that the Board approve the determination made by the Superintendent regarding the HIB Investigations reported by the Superintendent at the Board’s January 18, 2024 Meeting, which encompasses all HIB findings from January 2, 2024 through January 18, 2024. Attachment 1

IX. POLICY

Motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi that Item IX.A. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Item IX.A. was unanimously approved by Roll Call.

Ms. Desai said the Policy Committee met on February 1, 2024, and discussed the policy listed on the agenda to be abolished. She said this policy has been mandated as a high school graduation requirement, and is not applicable for middle school. Branchburg’s graduation ceremony will not be affected by this abolishment.

A. Policy and Regulations to be Abolished		
Policy/Regulation	Title	Discussion
P 5460	Eighth Grade Graduation	Abolished

X. EDUCATION

Motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi that Items X.A. through X.H. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items X.A. through X.H. were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

There was no Education Committee report.

A. Conferences/Travel

WHEREAS, the employees listed below are requesting Board of Education authorization to attend the conferences/workshops listed below; and

WHEREAS, the attendance at the stated function was previously approved by the Chief School Administrator as work related within the scope of the work responsibilities of the attendee and within the funds budgeted for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, the attendance at the function was approved as promoting delivery of instruction or furthering efficient operation of the school district; and fiscally prudent;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes attendance at the stated conferences/workshops and reimbursement for the related expenses in accordance with Board policy on conference and workshop attendance.

Conferences/Workshops	Employee/ Account Number	Date(s)	Registration Fee	Hotel	Meals/ Exp.	Tolls/Parking /Mileage	Total
AMTNJ Spring Conference Piscataway, NJ	Danielle Puzzo 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/15/24	\$215.00	0	0	0	\$215.00
AMTNJ Spring Conference Piscataway, NJ	Aleksandr Tylin 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/15/24	\$215.00	0	0	0	\$215.00
A Practical Approach to Management and Discipline Virtual	Alyssa Riva 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/18/24	\$159.00	0	0	0	\$159.00
A Practical Approach to Management and Discipline Virtual	Samantha Turner 20-488-200-500-02-00	5/7/24	\$159.00	0	0	0	\$159.00
English Language Learners Conference Virtual	Victoria Avila 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/6/24- 3/7/24	\$545.00	0	0	0	\$545.00
English Language Learners Conference Virtual	Tiffany Stulack Polak 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/6/24- 3/7/24	\$545.00	0	0	0	\$545.00
Tap the Full Power of a Writing Workshop Virtual	Victoria Avila 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/15/24	\$150.00	0	0	0	\$150.00
Tap the Full Power of a Writing Workshop Virtual	Tiffany Stulack Polak 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/15/24	\$150.00	0	0	0	\$150.00
Transforming Your Classroom/School with AI Piscataway, NJ	Joseph Larramendia 20-488-200-500-02-00	2/21/24	\$100.00	0	0	\$5.73	105.73
Transforming Your Classroom/School with AI Piscataway, NJ	Danielle Puglisi 20-488-200-500-02-00	2/21/24	\$100.00	0	0	0	\$100.00
Linkit! Spring User Group North Plainfield, NJ	Jennifer Anderson 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/8/24	0	0	0	\$4.42	\$4.42
Linkit! Spring User Group North Plainfield, NJ	Erica Landesberg N/A	3/8/24	0	0	0	0	0

Conferences/Workshops	Employee/ Account Number	Date(s)	Registration Fee	Hotel	Meals/Exp.	Tolls/Parking /Mileage	Total
Linkit! Spring User Group North Plainfield, NJ	Danielle Puglisi 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/8/24	0	0	0	\$15.04	\$15.04
Linkit! Spring User Group North Plainfield, NJ	Catherine Rello N/A	3/8/24	0	0	0	0	0
Linkit! Spring User Group North Plainfield, NJ	Beth Stanton N/A	3/8/24	0	0	0	0	0
I&RS to MTSS - Implementing MTSS to Meet NJ I&RS Virtual	Jennifer Anderson 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/12/24	\$75.00	0	0	0	\$75.00
I&RS to MTSS - Implementing MTSS to Meet NJ I&RS Virtual	Erica Landesberg 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/12/24	\$75.00	0	0	0	\$75.00
I&RS to MTSS - Implementing MTSS to Meet NJ I&RS Virtual	Michelle Nash 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/12/24	\$75.00	0	0	0	\$75.00
I&RS to MTSS - Implementing MTSS to Meet NJ I&RS Virtual	Beth Stanton 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/12/24	\$75.00	0	0	0	\$75.00
Improve ELL Students Learning Virtual	Victoria Avila 20-488-200-500-02-00	4/10/24	\$279.00	0	0	0	\$279.00
Helping English Learners Exit your ELL Program Virtual	Victoria Avila 20-488-200-500-02-00	5/14/24	\$279.00	0	0	0	\$279.00
Nurturing a Class of Avid Readers Virtual	Kelly Boyle 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/25/24	\$150.00	0	0	0	\$150.00
Meeting Character & Learning Lessons Virtual	Kelly Boyle 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/26/24	\$150.00	0	0	0	\$150.00
50 Best Strategies for Teaching English/Language Arts Virtual	Kristen Cardona 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/19/24	\$279.00	0	0	0	\$279.00
Shifting the Balance: Balanced Literacy New Brunswick, NJ	Kristen Cardona 20-488-200-500-02-00	4/17/24	\$180.00	0	0	0	\$180.00
The Witches of Salem 1692 Ewing, NJ	Stephanie Formus 20-488-200-500-02-00	2/29/24	\$270.00	0	0	0	\$270.00
Powerful, Practical Strategies for Working with/ "I Don't Care" Students Virtual	Michele Jordan 20-488-200-500-02-00	4/25/24	\$279.00	0	0	0	\$279.00
School Climate and Anti-Bullying Conference Atlantic City, NJ	Caroline Oeh 20-270-200-500-02-649	5/21/24	\$249.00	0	0	\$54.56	\$303.56
Guided Math: Differentiate Your Math Instruction Virtual	Catherine Rello 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/18/24	\$279.00	0	0	0	\$279.00
Practical Applications of the Science of Reading Virtual	Amanda Roper 20-488-200-500-02-00	4/12/24	\$279.00	0	0	0	\$279.00
Human Resources Requirements, Best Practices & the Law Virtual	Enea Yard 11-000-230-580-01-303	4/18/24	\$40.00	0	0	0	\$40.00

2/8/2024

B. Approval of Service Agreement				
Vendor	Account Number	Rate	Dates	Discussion
K&M Literacy, LLC West Hartford, CT	20-488-200-500-02-00	\$5,000 (not to exceed)	2/2024- 6/2024	District wide professional learning and consultation. 5 visits

C. Approval of Service Project				
School	Group	Event Coordinator	Dates	Purpose
BCMS	Student Council	Nicole Kepner	March 2024	The Student Council will work with United Way to collect school supplies that will be donated to a local partner school in need of supplies.

D. Approval of Additional Well-Being Camp Outside Presenters				
Vendor	Account Number	Cost	Dates	Discussion
Helga Nashed Yoga for Well-Being	11-000-223-320-02225-999	\$195 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	Resilient Nervous System
Creature Comfort Pet Therapy	11-000-223-320-02225-999	\$50 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	Therapy Dogs

E. Approval of Revision of Well-Being Camp Outside Presenters					
Vendor	Account Number		Cost	Dates	Discussion
	From:	To:			
Dr. BB Beba	20-270-200-500-02-649	11-000-223-320-02225-999	\$300 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	Functional Nutrition
Maryann DeSapio	20-270-200-500-02-649	11-000-223-320-02225-999	\$300 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	QiGong
Cindee Straube	20-270-200-500-02-649	11-000-223-320-02225-999	\$500 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	Words of Gratitude

F. Approval of Acceptance of Grant Funds					
Grantor	Grant Name	Requester	Location	Check #	Amount
Branchburg Education Foundation	Hallway Sensory Paths	Dee Shober	WES	1332	\$2,050

G. Approval of 2023-2024 One to One Instructional Assistants					
Vendor	Account	Student ID #	Cost	Dates	Discussion
Somerville Board of Education	11-000-100-562-03-105-000	9172033606	\$48,128.00	9/6/23- 6/30/24	One to One Instructional Assistant for Somerville High School Student
Somerville Board of Education	11-000-100-562-03-105-000	8379002949	\$30,225.15	12/8/23- 6/30/24	One to One Instructional Assistant for Somerville High School Student
Somerville Board of Education	11-000-100-562-03-105-000	9676224959	\$38,778.00	9/6/23- 6/30/24	One to One Instructional Assistant for Somerville High School Student

H. Approval of Contracted Service				
Vendor	Account Number	Student ID #	Amount	Discussion
Adam Krass Consulting Rutherford, NJ	11-000-219-320-03-181-340	3165361129	\$1,960 (not to exceed)	Evaluation and training

XI. HUMAN RESOURCES

Motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabrizi that Items XI.A. through XI.H., be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items XI.A. through XI.H., were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

There was no Human Resources Committee report.

A. Approval of Resignations				
Name	Account Number	Position	Location	Effective Date
Gabriella Luzi	11-213-100-106-01-057-060	Instructional Aide	SBS	1/22/24
John Marsigliano	11-213-100-106-01-057-060	Instructional Aide	SBS	2/16/24

B. Approval of Leave				
Employee #	Account Number	Type of Leave	Dates	Discussion
6125	11-110-100-101-01-001-090	Paid Sick Leave Personal Days Unpaid Leave FMLA/NJFLA	5/6/24-6/17/24(AM) 6/17/24 (PM) 6/18/24 9/1/24-11/1/24	Estimated date of return is 11/4/24
6126	11-120-100-101-01-012-090	Paid Sick Leave	3/25/24-4/12/24	Estimated date of return is 4/15/24
6063	11-000-270-160-01-462	Paid Sick Leave	1/22/24-2/16/24	Estimated date of return is 2/19/24

C. Approval of Personnel							
Name	Account Number	Position	Location	Step/Level	Salary/Rate	Dates	Discussion
Cathleen Ciarelli (subject to delivery of documents)	11-213-100-101-01-057-090	Maternity Leave Replacement Special Education Teacher (no tenure accrual)	WES	1/BA	\$61,329.00 (prorated)	2/6/24- 11/12/24	Leave replacement for employee #5596
Lisa Crowe (subject to delivery of documents)	11-110-100-101-01-001-090	Maternity Leave Replacement Kindergarten Teacher (no tenure accrual)	WES	1/BA	\$61,329.00 (prorated)	3/7/24- 6/18/24	Leave replacement for Employee #6040
Christina Coste (subject to delivery of documents)	11-213-100-106-01-057-090	Instructional Aide	WES	10/NA	\$24,547.25 (prorated)	2/12/24- 6/30/24	New Position

Amy Williams (subject to delivery of documents)	11-215-100-106-01-059-090	Instructional Aide	WES	10/NA	\$24,547.25 (prorated)	3/4/24-6/30/24	New Position
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D. Approval of Revision of Leave

Employee #	Account Number	From	To	Discussion
5745	11-130-100-101-01-021-020	Paid Sick Leave: 4/29/24-5/13/24 (AM) Personal Days: 5/13/24 (PM)-5/15/24 (AM) FMLA/NJFLA: 5/15/24 (PM) - 10/24/24 Unpaid Leave: 10/25/24-12/23/24	Paid Sick Leave: 4/29/24-5/13/24 (AM) Personal Days: 5/13/24 (PM)-5/15/24 (AM) FMLA/NJFLA: 5/15/24 (PM) - 10/24/24 Unpaid Leave: 10/25/24-3/31/25	Estimated date of return is 4/1/25
4588	11-000-217-106-01-000-020	Paid Sick Leave: 1/12/24-1/29/24	1/12/24-2/2/24	Estimated date of return is 2/5/24
5596	11-213-100-101-01-057-090	Paid Sick Leave: 4/8/24-6/5/24 Personal Days: 6/6/24, 6/7/24, 6/10/24 FMLA/NJFLA: 6/11/24-11/12/24	Paid Sick Leave: 2/5/24-4/5/24 (AM) Unpaid Leave: 4/5/24 (PM) Paid Sick Leave: 4/8/24-6/3/24 Personal Days: 6/4/24, 6/5/24, 6/6/24 FMLA/NJFLA: 6/7/24-11/12/24	Estimated date of return is 11/12/24

E. Approval of Additional Well-Being Camp In-House Presenters

Name	Account Number	Position	Rate	Date	Discussion
Christopher Boehm	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Coloring with Chris
Stephanie Formus	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Pet Therapy
Catie Rello	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Popcorn and a Podcast

F. Approval of Revision of Extra Duty Pay

Position	Account Number	From	To	Rate
Winter Dance Chaperones	11-401-100-101-01-078-020	Brian Bodnar Cassandra DeVita Keith LaBadie Alyssa Riva Randi Venturini Date: 1/26/24	Cassandra DeVita Jaclyn Furnari Keith LaBadie Carly Moor Randi Venturini Date: 2/9/24	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 3 hours each)

G. Approval of Revision of Guided Study

Name	Position	From	To	Dates
Nathan Fehnel Zachariah Miracle Sonia Pereira	Guided Study	\$41 per hour (not to exceed \$5,000 total) 20-490-100-100-01-000	\$41 per hour (not to exceed \$7,378 total) 20-490-100-100-01-000 20-489-100-100-02-000	9/8/23-6/30/24

H. Approval of Revision of Mentoring

Mentee	Mentor	Fee	From	To	Discussion
Katie Ollis	Melissa Fitzgibbon	\$550 (prorated)	3/29/24-6/30/24	2/5/24-6/30/24	Fee to be paid by mentee via payroll deduction

2/8/2024

XII. FINANCE AND FACILITIES

Motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi that Items XII.A. through XII.I. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items XII.A. through XII.I. were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

Ms. Joyce said the Finance and Facilities Committee met on February 1, 2024, and discussed the following:

- QSAC;
- Long Range Facilities Plan update;
- Grants; and
- The next meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2024.

A. Bill List

It is recommended that the Board approve the List of Bills for the period January 15, 2024 through January 31, 2024, totaling \$1,033,068.75, and for the period January 19, 2024 through February 8, 2024, totaling \$2,480,684.08, and ratify the Payroll for the period January 1, 2024 through January 12, 2024, totaling \$978,765.22, and ratify the Payroll for the period January 16, 2024 through January 31, 2024, totaling \$973,809.17.

B. Secretary's Report

The Report of the Secretary for December 2023 has been submitted for Board review. As required by N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)(3) I, Sally Dolan, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, certify that no line item account has been over expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the District's financial obligations this fiscal year.

It is recommended that the Secretary's Report for December 2023 be accepted and filed, and the Board of Education hereby certifies that no major account has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)(4) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the District's financial obligations for the remainder of the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

C. Treasurer's Report

It is recommended that the Treasurer's Report be accepted and filed for the month of December 2023.

D. Line Item Transfers

It is recommended that the Board accept the list of Line Item Transfers for the month of December 2023.

E. Monthly Transfer Report

It is recommended that the Board approve the Monthly Transfer Report for the month of December 2023.

F. Approval of Donation from the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation

It is recommended that the Board approve acceptance of a donation of educational resources from the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation, with thanks for their generosity to the students of the Branchburg Township School District.

G. Approval of Contract for School Physicians

It is recommended that the Board approve a contract with the Hunterdon Family Medicine at Bridgewater in the amount of \$5,500 for the 2024-2025 school year with funding to be paid through account #11-000-213-330-01-129, and sufficient funds are available in the 2024-2025 budget.

H. Approval to Pay Bills

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:19-4.1, the Board of Education approves the School Business Administrator to issue payment of bills for February 8, 2024 through February 29, 2024 prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of February 29, 2024, and with the approval and consent of the Superintendent of Schools, and then present said bills to the Board at the February 29, 2024 meeting for ratification.

I. Approval of Transportation Jointure with Bound Brook School District

It is recommended that the Board approve the Joint Transportation Agreement between the Branchburg Township Board of Education and the Bound Brook School District for the following 2023-2024 routes:

Host	Service	Cost to Bound Brook
Branchburg Township Board of Education	Athletic Trips September 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	\$90.00 per hour per bus (Driver & 54 Passenger Bus)
	Academic Trips September 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	\$90.00 per hour per bus (Driver & 54 Passenger Bus)
	Athletic Trips September 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	\$90.00 per hour per bus (Driver & 24 Passenger Bus)
	Academic Trips September 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	\$90.00 per hour per bus (Driver & 24 Passenger Bus)

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

XIV. BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Shah said the Harlem Wizards game is scheduled for March 1, 2024.

Mr. Carpentier said he attended the Somerset County Educational Services Commission meeting where the following was discussed:

- Audit results; and
- Teacher Awards

Ms. Joyce said the next Special Education Parents Advisory Group (SEPAG) town hall meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., and it will be a virtual meeting.


XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no second Executive Session.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ms. Desai, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sally Dolan

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary