

Branchburg Township School District
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 18, 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 Mr. Tuma, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to public session at 6:33 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 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, Theresa Joyce, Bindu Shah and Charles Tuma.

The following members were absent: David Dugan, Kristen Fabriczi, Robert Maider and Carmela Noto.

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 Mr. Tuma and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to Executive Session at 6:33 p.m. to discuss Personnel, Student Matters, Contracts and Legal Issues.

On a motion by Mr. Tuma, seconded by Ms. Shah, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn Executive Session at 7:41 p.m.

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to open Public Session at 7:45 p.m.

IV. The assembly saluted the flag.

V. Statement of Adequate Notice

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Chase spoke about the following:

- School Board Recognition Month;
- Breakfast packs were given out to the students of Branchburg Central Middle School as part of a grant the district received from New Jersey Farmers; and
- The recent weather, and the impact it had on school closure.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Nicole Kepner, Monica Place, Scotch Plains, and teacher at Branchburg Central Middle School spoke about the Student Council, and how the students would like to start functioning as a government and not only as fundraisers for dances and other activities.

VIII. GOVERNANCE

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma that Items VIII.A. and VIII.E. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items VIII.A. and VIII.E. were unanimously approved by Roll Call, with Ms. Shah abstaining on Item VIII.E.

Mr. Carpentier said that Mr. Dugan was nominated and confirmed as Superior Court Judge by the Governor and Senate. Mr. Carpentier thanked Mr. Dugan for his invaluable contribution to the Branchburg Board of Education.

A. Approval of Minutes

It is recommended that the Board approve the Minutes of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of January 2, 2024.

B. School Board Recognition Month

WHEREAS, The New Jersey School Boards Association has declared January 2024 to be School Board Recognition Month, a time when all residents can acknowledge the contributions made by our local school board members; and

WHEREAS, The Branchburg Township Board of Education is one of 581 local school boards in New Jersey, which sets policies and oversees operations for public school districts; and

WHEREAS, The Branchburg Township Board of Education embraces the goal of high-quality education for all New Jersey public school students; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's local school boards help determine the educational goals for approximately 1.4 million children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's 5,000 local school board members, who receive no remuneration for their services, act as advocates for public school students as they work with administrators, teachers and parents for the betterment of public education; and

WHEREAS, School boards strive to provide the resources necessary to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs; and

WHEREAS, Boards of education provide accountability to the public; they communicate the needs of the school district to the public; and they convey to school administrators the public's expectations for the schools; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey can take pride in its schools, which rank among the nation’s best in key achievement indicators such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores, and the preparation for college through advanced placement offerings and SAT assessments; Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Branchburg Township Board of Education, does hereby recognize the services of local school board members throughout New Jersey as we join communities statewide in observing January 2024 as SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Branchburg Township Board of Education urges all New Jersey citizens to work with their local boards of education and public school staffs toward the advancement of our children’s education.

C. Approval of Revised 2023-2024 School District Calendar

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

D. 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 2, 2024 through January 18, 2024, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq.

E. 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 2, 2024 Meeting, which encompasses all HIB findings from December 7, 2023 through January 2, 2024. Attachment 1

IX. POLICY

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma 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.

There was no Policy Committee report.

A. Policy and Regulations Second Reading		
Policy/Regulation	Title	Discussion
P 3212	Attendance (M)	Revised
R 3212	Attendance (M)	Revised
P 4212	Attendance (M)	Revised
R 4212	Attendance (M)	Revised

X. EDUCATION

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma that Items X.A. through X.D. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items X.A. through X.D. 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
Foreign Language Annual Conference New Brunswick, NJ	Victoria Gerry 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/13/24	\$180.00	0	0	0	\$180.00
Foreign Language Annual Conference New Brunswick, NJ	Patricia Maloney 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/13/24	\$180.00	0	0	0	\$180.00
Foreign Language Annual Conference New Brunswick, NJ	Esthela Solano 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/13/24	\$180.00	0	0	0	\$180.00
Institute for Multi-Sensory Education: Comprehensive Training Virtual	Jaime Cifuentes 20-488-200-500-02-00	4/29/24- 5/10/24	\$1,500.00	0	0	0	\$1,500.00
Institute for Multi-Sensory Education: Comprehensive Training Virtual	Noelle Decowski 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/14/24- 5/16/24	\$1,500.00	0	0	0	\$1,500.00
Stop the Bleed Hillsborough, NJ	Nicole Bonaduce 20-270-200-500-02- 649	2/27/24	0	0	0	\$6.96	\$6.96
Stop the Bleed Hillsborough, NJ	Janet Hoffman N/A	2/27/24	0	0	0	0	0
Stop the Bleed Newark, NJ	Ling Zhang N/A	1/30/24	0	0	0	0	0

Conferences/Workshops (continued)	Employee/ Account Number	Date(s)	Registration Fee	Hotel	Meals/Exp.	Tolls/Parking/ Mileage	Total
NJASBO Workshop Purchasing Whippany, NJ	Sally Dolan 11-000-251-580-01- 585	3/21/24	\$125.00	0	0	0	\$125.00
Helping Kids to Read & Write Graphic Novels Virtual	Lauren Knoke 20-488-200-500-02-00	5/10/24	\$150.00	0	0	0	\$150.00
NJMEA State Conference Atlantic City, NJ	Amy Woodard 20-488-200-500-02-00	2/22/24- 2/24/24	\$195.00	0	0	\$92.12	\$287.12

B. Approval of Fundraisers/Service Projects

School	Group	Event Coordinator	Dates	Purpose
WES	2nd and 3rd Grade Students	Dawn Eelman	2/20/24- 3/5/24	For the culmination of the Active Citizenship unit in Social Studies, students will collect items to donate to. Hubert's Animal Welfare Center.
BCMS	Student Council	Nicole Kepner	2/9/24	Student Council will be selling concessions and raffle tickets for baskets as a way to fundraise for future Student Council events.
BCMS	Student Council	Nicole Kepner	2/15/24	Student Council will host a Minute to Win It competition. Tickets will be sold for the event and all proceeds will be donated to the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation.
BCMS	Student Council	Nicole Kepner	2/12/24- 2/16/24	Student Council will organize Valentine Grams, Sweetheart Bags and host a Grade Challenge War where the grade level that earns the most money will be able to enjoy a special privilege at lunch. All proceeds will be donated to the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation.

C. Approval of Well-Being Camp Outside Presenters

Vendor	Account Number	Cost	Dates	Discussion
Dr. BB Beba	20-270-200-500-02-649	\$300 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	Functional Nutrition
Maryann DeSapio	20-270-200-500-02-649	\$300 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	QiGong
Cindee Straube	20-270-200-500-02-649	\$500 (not to exceed)	2/16/24	Words of Gratitude
Dr. Foley Barnabas HealthCare	N/A	Included in flat rate of EAP	2/16/24	Time Management
Dr. Foley Barnabas HealthCare	N/A	Included in flat rate of EAP	2/16/24	Balancing Work, Family and Self
Marilyn Parra	N/A	N/A	2/16/24	Maximum Health & Wellness

D. Approval of Contracted Service

Vendor	Account Number	Student ID #	Amount	Discussion
Alexander Road Associates Princeton, NJ	11-000-219-320-03-181-340	3387911819	\$880 (not to exceed)	Evaluation

XI. HUMAN RESOURCES

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma that Items XI.A. through XI.J., be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

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

There was no Human Resources Committee report.

A. Approval of 2023-2024 Non-Athletic Stipend			
Name	Account Number	Position	Stipend
Nicole Orzel	11-401-100-101-01-078-060	Talent Show	\$662

B. Approval of Revision of Personnel								
Name	Account Number	Position	Location	Step/Level	Salary/Rate	From	To	Discussion
Deborah Archer-Cole	11-000-219-104-01-168-340	Leave Replacement CST Member	BCMS	27/212	\$98,670 (prorated)	1/2/24-6/30/24	1/2/24-3/13/24	Revision from 1/2/24 agenda due to incorrect exit date
Elizabeth Meyer	11-130-100-101-01-021-020	MLR - Language Arts Teacher (no tenure accrual)	BCMS	1/BA	\$61,329 (prorated)	1/24/24-2/8/24	1/2/24-2/8/24	Clerical error on date

C. Approval of Additional Winter Teacher Academy Presenters				
Name	Account #	Position	Rate	Discussion
Jennifer Racine	11-000-223-104-02-210-999	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 3 hours)	Envisioning your Envision Block Grades 4 and 5
Jennifer Racine	11-000-223-104-02-210-999	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 3 hours)	Envisioning your Envision Block Grades 1-3

D. Approval of Revision of Mentoring			
Mentee	Mentor	From	To
Katie Ollis	Erica Viel-DeSimone	9/1/23-6/30/24 \$550	9/1/23-3/28/24 \$550 (prorated)

E. Approval of Mentoring				
Mentee	Mentor	Fee	Dates	Discussion
Katie Ollis	Melissa Fitzgibbon	\$550 (prorated)	3/29/24-6/30/24	Fee to be paid by mentee via payroll deduction

F. Approval of Leave				
Employee #	Account Number	Type of Leave	Dates	Discussion
4874	11-213-100-101-01-057-020	Paid Sick Leave	1/8/24-3/8/24	Estimated date of return is 3/9/24

G. Approval of 2023-2024 Substitutes				
Name	Position	Rate	Dates	
Olivia English (subject to delivery of documents)	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$125/\$115 per day	1/11/24-6/30/24	
Khassondra Freeman-Martin (subject to delivery of documents)	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$125/\$115 per day	1/11/24-6/30/24	
Ida Kechula (subject to delivery of documents)	Substitute Nurse	\$225 per day	1/19/24-6/30/24	
Thomas Przybylski	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$125/\$115 per day	1/11/24-6/30/24	
Ashling Rodriguez (subject to delivery of documents)	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$125/\$115 per day	1/19/24-6/30/24	
Marisa Valdez (subject to delivery of documents)	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$125/\$115 per day	1/19/24-6/30/24	

H. Approval of Well-Being Camp In-House Presenters					
Name	Account Number	Position	Rate	Date	Discussion
Danielle Puzzo	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Let's Ball Ya'll!
Nicole Orzel	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Dance Cardio
Nicole Orzel	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Stretching for Well-being
Tara Forsyth	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Pickleball with Pals
Christy Bitner	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Well-being Walk
Kelly Evans	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Volley with All
Kelly Evans	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	"Corn"ament
Allison Lemieux	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Chair Yoga, Yin Yoga, and Mediation
Allison Lemieux	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Get Outside and Walk!
Cory Hanna	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Basketball Team Building
Cory Hanna	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Kickball Team Building
Suzanne Updegrove	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Hello Cupcake 2
Suzanne Updegrove	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Strategies to Differentiate High Achieving and Gifted Learners in the Classroom
Suzanne Updegrove	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Zentangles

Kristen Cardona	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Stop! Collaborate and Co-teach
Kristen Cardona	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	AI - How to leverage your time using these new tools!
Caroline Och	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	The Magic of Fur Friends
Monique Owczarek	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Creating Mystery Pictures
Allison Lemieux	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Diverse Read Alouds as Sliding Glass Doors
Lucy Plaza	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Differentiate by Self-Paced Learning
Danielle Puglisi	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	10 Ways to Increase Student Engagement in Mathematics
Meghan Russo	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Let's Make Friendship Bracelets
Meghan Russo	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Ceramic Trinket Dish Making
Meghan Russo	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Tie-Dye Tile Name Plates
Meghan Russo	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Dot Painting
Meghan Russo	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Back to Your Inner Child: Mindful Coloring Techniques
Liana Nemiroff	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Journaling
Zachariah Miracle	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Mindfulness Through Calligraphy
Joe Larramendia	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	3D Printing
Vicki Brody	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Smartphone Photography: Tips and Tricks
Emily Wronski	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Tie Dye
Michael Rusciano	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Acoustic Guitar Playing
Kristyn Perello	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	"Family" Feud
Kristen Cardona	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	What's the Tea?
John Gottshalk	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Playing With a Full Deck
Suzanne Updegrave	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Anomia: Ransom Notes & Anomia
Danielle Puglisi	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Play Your Cards Right
Zachariah Miracle	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Going Crazy With Cribbage
Kelly Boyle	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Dive into a Good Book
Kelly Boyle	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Book Swap
Catie Rello	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Cricut Crafting 101
Catie Rello	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Cookbook Collaboration
Tara Kolbe	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	Wellness with Pilates
Lauren Knoke	20-270-200-500-02-649	Teacher	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	2/16/24	The Power of a Morning Routine

I. Approval of Revision of Leave				
Employee #	Account Number	From	To	Discussion
5768	11-000-217-106-01-000-020	Paid Sick Leave: 9/5/23-9/18/23 Unpaid Leave: 9/19/23-1/12/24	Paid Sick Leave: 9/5/23-9/18/23 Unpaid Leave: 9/19/23-6/30/24	Estimated date of return is 9/1/24

J. Approval of Extra Duty Hours				
Name	Account Number	Position	Rate	Dates
Marco Jaimes	11-000-230-104-01-000	Videographer for Board of Education Meetings	\$30.85 per hour (minimum of 2 hours per meeting)	1/18/24-6/30/24

XII. FINANCE AND FACILITIES

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma that Items XII.A. through XII.B. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

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

There was no Finance and Facilities Committee report.

A. Bill List

It is recommended that the Board approve the List of Bills for the period January 3, 2024 through January 18, 2024, totaling \$1,248,817.47.

B. Approval to Amend Custodial Contract

It is recommended that the Board approve the amendment to the ACB Services, Inc. custodial contract for the term ending March 1, 2024.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

XIV. BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

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

Dr. Chase said there is a PTO sponsored meet and greet scheduled for next Wednesday in the Media Center at Branchburg Central Middle School where parents can meet with Dr. Chase and Branchburg Central Middle School Interim Principal, Christina Steffner.

Ms. Joyce said information will be coming out as to when the new date for the town hall meeting will be scheduled.

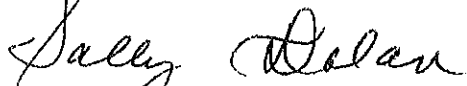
XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no second Executive Session.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sally Dolan

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary