

*Branchburg Township School District*  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

January 19, 2023

**Executive Session – 6:30 p.m.**

**Public Meeting – 7:30 p.m.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

On a motion by Mrs. Shah, seconded by Mrs. Noto, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to public session at 7:02 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 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, David Dugan, Theresa Joyce, Carmela Noto, Bindu Shah and Charles Tuma.

The following members were absent: Kristen Fabriczi and Robert Maider.

Also present were: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Karen Chase, Interim Board Secretary Debe Besold.

**II.** The Secretary called the roll.

**III. CALL TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Mrs. Shah, seconded by Mrs. Noto, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to Executive Session at 7:03 p.m. to discuss Personnel, Student Matters, Contracts and Legal Issues.

On a motion by Mrs. Shah, seconded by Mr. Dugan, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn Executive Session at 7:30 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Tuma, seconded by Mrs. Noto, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to reconvene to public session at 7:30 p.m.

**IV.** The assembly saluted the flag.

**V.** Statement of Adequate Notice

**VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Chase mentioned that January is School Boards Recognition Month, and acknowledged the Board members for all they do for the district.

Dr. Chase acknowledged the following student artists:

- Mia Molini (Teacher: Chris Boehm)
- Siena Tyler (Teacher: Chris Boehm)
- Emily LaMarca (Teacher: Samantha Rueger)
- Nithya Shree Rayala (Teacher: Samantha Rueger)
- Jacqueline Chen (Teacher: Meghan Russo)
- Victoria Herron (Teacher: Meghan Russo)

## VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

## VIII. GOVERNANCE

Motion by Mrs. Desai, seconded by Mrs. Noto that Items VIII.A. through VIII.D. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items VIII.A. through VIII.D. were unanimously approved by Roll Call, with Mr. Carpentier abstaining on Item VIII.A.

Mr. Carpentier said the Committees have been form, and meeting invites will be going out shortly.

### A. Approval of Minutes

It is recommended that the Board approve the Minutes of the Executive Session and Annual Organization/Regular Meeting of January 3, 2023.

### B. School Board Recognition Month

**WHEREAS**, The New Jersey School Boards Association has declared January 2023 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 2023 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 2022-2023 Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement**

It is recommended that the Board approve the 2022-2023 Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement Officials.

D. Approval of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Report			
Building	Incident #	Date	Discussion
BCMS	SSDS# 012145	12/14/22	BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts the recommendation of the Superintendent that this incident did not meet the criteria of H.I.B. as defined in N.J. 18A:37-14.

**IX. POLICY**

There was no Policy Committee meeting report.

**X. EDUCATION**

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

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

There was no Education Committee meeting 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
Embracing the Whole Child NJCEC Spring 2023 Conference Mahwah, NJ	Emily Hansen 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/13/23	\$160.00	N/A	N/A	\$51.70	\$211.70
Embracing the Whole Child NJCEC Spring 2023 Conference Mahwah, NJ	Michele Jordan 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/13/23	\$160.00	N/A	N/A	\$56.40	\$216.40
NJAMLE Annual Conference Middletown Township, NJ	Vicki Brody 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/15/23	\$150.00	N/A	N/A	\$31.96	\$181.96
NJAMLE Annual Conference Middletown Township, NJ	Kristen Cardona 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/15/23	\$150.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$150.00
NJAMLE Annual Conference Middletown Township, NJ	Nicole Kepner 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/15/23	\$150.00	N/A	N/A	\$5.50	\$155.50
NJAMLE Annual Conference Middletown Township, NJ	Danielle Puglisi 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/15/23	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$38.54	\$38.54
NJAMLE Annual Conference Middletown Township, NJ	Beth Stanton 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/15/23	\$150.00	N/A	N/A	\$13.07	\$163.07
Restorative Practices West Orange, NJ	Matthew Barbosa 11-000-240-580-02- 000-020	3/14/23	\$279.00	N/A	N/A	\$10.00	\$289.00
Practical Early Intervention Strategies that Work Virtual	Kelly Boyle 20-270-200-500-02-649	4/4/23	\$279.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$279.00
Maximizing your Effectiveness as an Instructional Coach Virtual	Kristen Cardona 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/27/23- 3/28/23	\$595.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$595.00
Elementary Peer Mediation New Brunswick, NJ	Alexandra Gallo N/A	2/9/23	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Comprehensive Orton- Gillingham Virtual	Allison LeMieux 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/27/23- 3/31/23	\$1,500.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,500.00

B. Approval of Field Trips			
Trip	Coordinator	Grade	Purpose
Hillsborough Library Hillsborough, NJ	Emma Ryan	4 - 5 Autism Class	Students will practice social skills including greetings, questions and self-advocacy that they are learning in the classroom.
MathCounts Mercer County Competition Mercer County Community College West Windsor Twp., NJ	Christine Peterson	6-8	To participate in the Chapter level competition in hopes to move on to the state level.
Burnt Mills Potters Branchburg, NJ	Jennilyn Nelson	6-8	Enrichment Day activity.

<b>C. Approval of Contracted Educational Services</b>					
Vendor	Account Number	Student ID #	Rate	Effective Date	Discussion
Brookfield Schools For KEEPS Program New Brunswick, NJ	11-150-100-320-03-069-020	2991095513	\$45.00 (per hour)	1/3/23	Homebound Contracted Instruction. Not to exceed 10 hours per week.
Learn Well Summit, NJ	11-150-100-320-03-069-020	7929684310	\$70.82 (per hour)	1/16/23	Homebound Contracted Instruction. Not to exceed 5 hours per week.
Rutgers Health, University Behavioral Health Care Piscataway, NJ	11-150-100-320-01-066-SHS	3841027073	\$70.00 (per hour)	1/6/23	Bedside Contracted Instruction. Not to exceed 10 hours per week.

## **XI. HUMAN RESOURCES**

Motion by Mr. Tuma, seconded by Mrs. Joyce that Items XI.A. through XI.L., be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

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

Mr. Tuma said the Human Resources Committee met on January 18, 2023, and discussed the hiring of the new permanent School Business Administrator, which will be an addendum to this agenda as Item XI.L.

<b>A. Approval of Leave</b>				
Employee #	Account Number	Type of Leave	Dates	Discussion
4873	11-120-100-101-01-012-060	Paid Sick Leave	2/6/23-4/28/23	Estimated date of return is 4/29/23
4495	11-000-240-105-01-339-060	Intermittent FMLA	2/1/23-6/30/23	N/A

<b>B. Approval of Revision of Additional Hours</b>				
Name	Account Number	From	To	Discussion
Laurie Gorman	11-000-240-105-01-336-020	1/4/23-1/31/23 \$28.54 per hour (not to exceed 3 hours per day)	12/19/22-1/31/23 \$28.54 per hour (not to exceed 3 hours per day)	Temporary additional duties related to BCMS office needs

<b>C. Approval of Stipend Resignation</b>			
Name	Position	Location	Effective Date
Paul Mehnert	Intramurals	SBS	1/6/23

<b>D. Approval of New Parent Orientation</b>				
Name	Account Number	Rate	Date	Discussion
Melissa Bula Jaime Cifuentes Marissa Larramendia Cindee Straube Erica Viel	11-000-223-104-02-210	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 1.5 hours each)	5/11/23	Teachers participate in new parent orientation by speaking with parents, visit classrooms, and learn about programs at WES.

E. Approval of Personnel						
Name	Account Number	Position	Step/Level	Salary *	Dates	Discussion
Jordan Apsley	11-120-100-101-01-012-090	1st Grade Teacher	1/182	\$63,749 (prorated)	1/24/23-6/30/23	Replacing Colleen Repoli
Caryn Becker-Albert (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-219-104-01-168-340	Child Study Team Member	21/212	\$84,770 (prorated)	1/20/23-6/30/23	Temporary Replacement for Child Study Team Member
Alison Lehman (subject to delivery of documents)	11-120-100-101-01-012-060	Maternity Leave Replacement - Art Teacher	1/BA	\$59,449 (prorated)	3/24/23-6/16/23	MLR for Employee #5872

\*Salary is subject to change pending the 2022-2025 BTEA agreement

F. Approval of Revision of Leave			
Employee #	Account Number	From	To
5438	11-120-100-101-01-012-090	Paid Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence: 1/2/23-2/8/23 NJ Family Leave Act/FMLA: 2/9/23-4/28/22 Date of Return: 5/1/22	Paid Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence: 1/2/23-2/3/23 NJ Family Leave Act/FMLA: 2/6/23-4/25/23 Date of Return: 4/26/23
5723	11-230-100-101-01-072-060	Paid Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence: 1/6/23-3/6/23 NJ Family Leave Act/FMLA: 3/7/23-6/28/23	Paid Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence: 1/6/23-2/9/23 NJ Family Leave Act/FMLA: 2/10/23-5/15/23 Unpaid Leave: 5/16/23-6/8/23 Date of Return: 6/9/23

G. Approval of Additional Hours					
Name	Account Number	Position	Rate	Dates	Discussion
Michael Blaustein	11-000-270-160-01-465	Substitute Bus Driver	\$25 per hour (not to exceed a total of 23.75 hours per week)	1/20/23-6/30/23	To assist the transportation department with inventory organization

H. Approval of Non-Athletic Stipend					
Name	Account	Position	Stipend	Dates	Discussion
Margaret Ryan	11-401-100-101-01-078-020	GSA	\$1,886	1/20/23-6/30/23	New stipend to the BTEA

I. Approval of Transfers				
Name	From	To	Dates	Discussion
Christy Bitner	2nd Grade Teacher 11-120-100-101-01-012-090	Math Instructional Support Teacher 11-230-100-101-01-072-090	1/20/23-6/30/23 or after	Replacing Michelle Dooley
Danielle Puzzo	K-2 STEM Coach 11-000-221-176-01-013-090	3-5 STEM Coach 11-000-221-176-01-013-090	1/20/23-6/30/23	Replacing Erica Landesberg
Catie Rello	Math Instructional Support Teacher 11-230-100-101-01-072-090	K-2 STEM Coach 11-000-221-176-01-013-090	1/20/23-6/30/23 or after	Replacing Danielle Puzzo
Colleen Repoli	1st Grade Teacher 11-120-100-101-01-012-090	Math Instructional Support Teacher 11-230-100-101-01-072-090	1/20/23-6/30/23 or after	Replacing Catie Rello

<b>J. Approval of Substitute Pay Increase</b>		
<b>Position</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
Substitute Teacher	\$110 per day	\$125 per day (effective 2/1/23)
Substitute Instructional Aide	\$100 per day	\$115 per day (effective 2/1/23)
Substitute Bus Driver	\$22 per hour	\$25 per hour (effective 2/1/23)

**K. Approval of Substitute Teacher Consistency Compensation**

It is recommended that the Board approve the consistency compensation of \$200 per month to Substitute Teachers/Aides that work at least 50% of the available school days each month.

<b>L. Approval of Personnel</b>						
<b>Name</b>	<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
Sally Dolan	11-000-251-100-01-528	BOE	School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary	\$145,000 (prorated)	4/3/23- 6/30/23	Replacing Beverly Vlietstra

**XII. BUSINESS**

Motion by Mrs. Joyce, seconded by Mrs. Shah that Items XII.A. through XII.D. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

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

Mrs. Joyce said the Business Committee met, and discussed the following:

- Budget;
- Agenda items; and
- Discussed working with the Recreation Department to look at adding new programs where they can use our schools.

**A. Bill List**

It is recommended that the Board approve the List of Bills for the period December 23, 2022 through December 30, 2022, totaling \$931.00, and for the period December 23, 2022 through January 3, 2023, totaling \$1,957,188.03, and for the period January 4, 2023 through January 19, 2023, totaling \$219,218.75.

**B. Approval of Legal Services**

It is recommended that the Board approve Kenneth Rush, Esq., to provide legal services to the District for the 2022-2023 school year at an hourly rate of \$250, not to exceed \$7,500, to be paid from account #11-000-230-331-01-276, and sufficient funds are available in the 2022-2023 budget.

**C. Approval to Sell Specialized Equipment**

It is recommended that the Board approve the sale of three (3) pieces of specialized equipment to the Union Township School District per NJSA 18A:18A-45(c), in the amount of \$7,016.31.

**D. Acceptance and Award of Bid for Evening Custodial Services (Four Months)**

It is recommended that the Board acknowledge the following bids for the Evening Custodial Services (four month period), which were received on January 11, 2023:

Name	Base Bid (Four Months)	Total
ACB Services, Inc.	\$274,000.00	\$274,000.00
Aramark	\$287,100.98	\$287,100.98
Pritchard Industries	\$288,720.05	\$288,720.05
RNA Facilities Management	\$319,170.50	\$319,170.50
T.U.C.S. Services	\$305,600.22	\$305,600.22

It is recommended that the Board award the contract for the Evening Custodial Services to ACB Services for a cost of \$274,000, to be paid through accounts #11-000-262-420-04-420, #11-000-262-420-05-420, and #11-000-262-420-08-420, and there are sufficient funds in the 2022-2023 budget.

**XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**XIV. BOARD LIAISON REPORTS**

Mrs. Shah spoke about the following PTO event:

- The Harlem Wizards game will be held on March 17, 2023;
- The PTO is looking for staff and administrators to participate in the game;
- They received some generous sponsors for the event;
- The deadline for sponsors is January 31, 2023; and
- They are also looking for volunteers for the event.

**XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no second Executive Session.



**XVI. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mrs. Shah, seconded by Mrs. Desai, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Debe Besold  
Interim Board Secretary