BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOROUGH OF TOTOWA

MEETING MINUTES

10/15/2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of Totowa was held at Washington Park School Media Center, 10 Crews Street, Totowa, New Jersey on October 15, 2025.

1. Call To Order

President Antonucci called the meeting to order at 7:07 P.M. and led all present in the salute to the flag and remain standing for a moment of silence for our past and present troops.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:	Ms. Alesandrelli, Ms. Antonucci, Mr. Bierach, Ms. Carr, Mr. La Rose, Ms. Panepinto, Mr. Parlegreco and Dr. Vancheri
Members Absent:	Mr. Palazzo
Also Present:	Patricia Capitelli, Superintendent of Schools
	Vincent Varcadipane, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
	Mr. Raymond B. Reddin, Board Attorney

3. Open Public Meeting Notice

The following statement was read by Mr. Varcadipane:

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Municipal Building and notice was mailed to the North Jersey Herald News and The Record.

4. Public to be Heard

There was no public to be heard.

5. Professional Days

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the submitted Professional Days as per the attached.

6. New Jersey Department of Education School Self-Assessment

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the submission of the New Jersey Department of Education School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act for the period from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, for Memorial and Washington Park Schools.

7. NJSLEDS Special Education Submission 2025 - 2026

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Services, recommends that the Board approve the submission of the 2025 - 2026 NJSLEDS Special Education Submission on or about Friday, November 7, 2025.

8. Curricular Materials and Resources

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board of Education approve the following curricular materials and resources to be added to the approved Instructional Resource List:

GR	Subject	Title	Category	ISBN	Publishing Co.	Date
K-8	Math	https://www.zearn.org/	Website			
Grade 6-8	Social Studies	Exploring Civics & Economics	Textbook	9780079020543	McGraw-Hill	2024
K-8	All Subjects	https://www.formative.com/	Website		Newsela	
K-8	Reading	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)	Materials		University of Oregon	
K-8	Language Arts	Institute for Multi-Sensory Education (IMSE) & IMSE Lab Phonics & Morphology Materials				

9. Law Enforcement Against Drugs Program

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the Law Enforcement Against Drugs (L.E.A.D) program for the fifth-grade students. The program will consist of ten (10) classes beginning on Monday, November 3, 2025. Lessons will be conducted under the guidance of Mr. Todd Mitchell, School Resource Officer.

10. "Handle with Care" Restraint Training

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends that the Board approve the registration of Alycia Desmond for the "Handle with Care" Restraint Training Instructor Re-Certification class on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wayne, N.J. The cost for registration is $525.00.

11. "Handle with Care" Restraint Training

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends that the Board approve the registration of Erica Minde to the "Handle with Care" Restraint Training Instructor Re-Certification class on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wayne, N.J. The cost for registration is $525.00.

12. Approval - Battle of the Books

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the following dates and locations for Battle of the Books for the 2025 – 2026 school year:

Thursday, March 26, 2026 – Grade 5 – Washington Elementary School, Hawthorne
Tuesday, April 21, 2026 – Grade 6 – Lincoln Middle School, Hawthorne
Wednesday, April 22, 2026 – Grade 7/8 – Lincoln Middle School, Hawthorne
Friday, April 24, 2026 – Grade 4 – Beatrice Gilmore School, Woodland Park

Students will leave at approximately 10:00 A.M. and return to Washington Park School at approximately 1:30 P.M. Transportation to be provided by the Totowa Board of Education.

13. Passaic County Middle School Quiz Bowl

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends Washington Park School host the Passaic County Middle School Quiz Bowl on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, in the gymnasium from 9:30 A.M. to approximately 1:00 P.M.

14. Field Trip – Passaic Valley High School Holiday Show

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve a field trip for students in grades one through four to Passaic Valley High School for the Holiday Show. The show will take place on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, from approximately 9:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. The Totowa Board of Education will provide transportation.

15. Visitation St. Barnabas Health Fire Safety House

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the visitation of St. Barnabas' Health Fire Safety House for students in grade three on Wednesday, October 22, 2025.

16. Safety Town – Totowa Fire Department Visitation

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the visitation of the Totowa Fire Department to the kindergarten students on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, as part of Safety Town Week. This will include a visit to the kindergarten students at 1:00 P.M. on the playground to demonstrate how the fire engines operate. The firefighters will conclude their program with a short presentation to the preschool students in their classrooms.

17. Safety Town – Passaic County Sheriff's Department Visitation

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the visit of the Passaic County Sheriff's Department to the kindergarten students on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 9:30 A.M. as part of Safety Town Week.

18. CBI Trip Revision

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends that the Board approve the change of the CBI trip to Target on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, to Wednesday, April 15, 2026.

19. Revision Gifted and Talented Parent Meeting

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the change of the Gifted and Talented Parent Meeting from Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 3:30 P.M. to Monday, November 3, 2025, at 4:30 P.M. The meeting will take place in the Washington Park Media Center.

20. Gifted and Talented Schedule

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board of Education approve the Gifted and Talented Schedule for the 2025 – 2026 school year as per the attached.

21. Bus Evacuation Drills

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively approve the Bus Evacuation Drills at Washington Park School on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, conducted by Lauren Terranova.

22. Use of Facilities – P.T.O. Tricky Tray Basket Drop-Off

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board retroactively approve the request of the P.T.O. for Tricky Tray Basket Drop-Off as follows:

Wednesday, October 8, 2025, and Monday, October 27, 2025
Washington Park School Lobby
6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

The P.T.O. is also requesting the use of folding tables, chairs, and carts.

23. Use of Facilities - P.T.O. Holiday Gift Shop

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve the request of the Totowa P.T.O. Holiday Gift Shop Committee as follows:

Holiday Gift Shop Setup
Washington Park School All Purpose Room
Thursday, December 4, 2025 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

Holiday Gift Shop
Washington Park School All Purpose Room
Friday, December 5, 2025 3:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.

The P.T.O. is also requesting the use of the PA system, tables, and chairs.

24. NJ Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) District Performance Review

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve submission of the 2025-2026 District Placement Review and the Score Summary of the NJ Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) District Performance Review to the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Motion for approval of item 5-24

MOTION: Mr. Bierach
SECONDED: Mr. La Rose
VOTE: Unanimous (Ms. Panepinto abstained from all PTO related agenda items)

25. Informational

Back to School Night

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Self-Assessment

Safety Town

Student Council Cancer Walk

Dates for Your Information:

Oct. 22	Title I Parent Meeting, 4 P.M., MS
Oct. 23	Student Council Cancer Walk
Oct. 24	Student Council Cancer Walk (Rain Date)
Oct. 30	Washington, D.C. Parent Meeting, 6 P.M. WPS
Oct. 31	Halloween Celebrations
Nov. 5	Marking Period 1 Ends
Nov. 6 – 7	Schools Closed – NJEA Convention
Nov. 10	Marking Period 2 Begins
Nov. 13	Student/Faculty Volleyball Game, 6 P.M. WPS
Nov. 19	Board of Education Meeting, 7 P.M. WPS

Use of Facilities:

Oct. 27	P.T.O. Tricky Tray Basket Drop Off
Nov. 3	P.T.O. Executive Meeting
Nov. 18	P.T.O. Pie and Cookie Fundraiser Pickup
Nov. 24	P.T.O. Fall Picture Retakes

Use of Field:

Oct. – Nov.	P.A.L. Soccer and Softball	Mon. – Fri. 5:00 P.M. – Dusk Sat. – Sun. 9:00 A.M. – Dusk

Attachments:

Reports:

Discipline Reports

26. Committee Reports

Ms. Antonucci stated committee meetings were not held.

27. Executive Session

Executive session was not entered into and action was taken in public for executive items.

28. Substitute Teachers

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the following substitute teachers submitted by the Substitute Registry as per the attached.

29. Appointment - Yearbook Coordinator

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Ms. Tracy Emma to the position of Yearbook Coordinator for the 2025 – 2026 school year. Ms. Emma will receive a stipend of $2,000.

30. Appointment – Art Club Coordinator

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board appoint Ms. Tracy Emma to the position of Art Club Coordinator for the 2025 – 2026 school year. Ms. Emma will be compensated at the rate of $30 per hour.

31. Appointment - Student Council Advisors

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Ms. Erin Gander and Ms. Elaine Mostello to the position of Student Council Advisors for the 2025 – 2026 school year. Ms. Gander and Ms. Mostello will be compensated at the rate of $30 per hour.

32. Appointment - Gifted and Talented Instructor

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Mr. Hunter Smith to the position of Gifted and Talented Instructor for the 2025 – 2026 school year. Mr. Smith will be compensated at a rate of $30 per hour.

33. Appointment - Basketball Coaches

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Mr. Timothy Tracy to the position of Basketball Coach – Boys' Team and Mr. Joseph D'Amelio to the position of Basketball Coach – Girls' Team for the 2025 – 2026 school year. Mr. Tracy and Mr. D'Amelio will receive a stipend of $3,000, paid by the Totowa Education Foundation.

34. Appointment - Volleyball Coaches

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Mr. Timothy Tracy to the position of Volleyball Coach – Boys' Team and Mr. Joseph D'Amelio to the position of Volleyball Coach – Girls' Team for the 2025 – 2026 school year. Mr. Tracy and Mr. D'Amelio will receive a stipend of $1,750, paid by the Totowa Education Foundation.

Motion for approval of item 28-34

MOTION: Mr. Bierach
SECONDED: Mr. Parlegreco
VOTE: Unanimous (Dr. Vancheri abstained from all NRESC related items)

35. Approval of Minutes- September 17, 2025 – Regular Meeting

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the minutes of the meeting of September 17, 2025, as presented.

Motion for approval of item 35

MOTION: Ms. Panepinto
SECONDED: Dr. Vancheri
VOTE: Unanimous

36. Approval of Bills List – October

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the October Bills List as presented.

37. Acceptance of Financial Status Report – September

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary recommends the Board accept the Financial Status Report for the month of September 2025, as presented.

38. Monthly Financial Certification of the Board Secretary and the Board of Education – September

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary, recommends the Board certify that the major accounts and fund balances in the 2025-2026 budget have not been over expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the year.

39. Acceptance of Bank Reconciliations – September

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Bank Reconciliations for the month of September 2025, as presented.

40. Acceptance of Board Secretary Report – September

The Superintendent in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Board Secretary Report for the month of September 2025, as presented.

41. Acceptance of Treasurer of School Monies Report – September

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Treasurer Report for the month of September 2025, as presented.

42. Acceptance of Financial Summary Report – September

The Superintendent in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Financial Summary Report for the month of September 2025, as presented.

43. Approval of Line-Item Budget Transfers – September

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the following line item budget transfer for the month of September 2025, as presented. (See Attachment #1 Monthly Transfer Report)

44. Acceptance of Revenue Report – September

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Revenue Report for the month of September 2025, as presented.

45. Approval of Payment of Cafeteria Invoices

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve payment of the following cafeteria invoices.

Vendor	Description	Check #	Amount
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912091225	1684	$ 19,629.59
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912091925	1685	$ 15,352.97
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912092625	1686	$ 17,506.14
Mr. Urias	Recess Milk Refund	1687	$ 59.40
Ms. Eisele	Recess Milk Refund	1688	$ 47.30
TBOE Warrant Act	TPK Payment into Café	1689	$ 370.00

46. Approval of 2025-2026 Transportation Contract NRESC

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board approve the 2025-2026 school year transportation contract with North Region Educational Services Commission, Wayne as follows:

Route #	School	Contractor	Cost Per Route	Date
Q4158	Memorial School Totowa	Madison Coach	$ 12,110.00+726.60	9/15/25-10/31/25

47. Approval of Comprehensive Facilities Maintenance Plan

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board approve the M-1 form, Comprehensive Facilities Maintenance Plan and LRFP worksheet as per the state monitoring guidelines. (Attachment #2)

48. Approval of Chapters 192/193 Report of Nonpublic Auxiliary and Handicapped Service 2026-2027 Report

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board retroactively approve the 2026-2027 Report of Nonpublic Auxiliary and Handicapped Services. (See attachment #3)

49. Approval of 2024-2025 Nonpublic Project Completion Report

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board retroactively approve the 2024-2025 Nonpublic Project Completion Report. (See attachment #4) upon state appropriate funds.

50. Approval of 2024-2025 Nonpublic Project State Reimbursement

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board approve the state reimbursement for the 2024-2054 Nonpublic Projects in the amount of $7,431.00.

51. Approval of 2025-2026 Shared Service Agreements NRESC

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board approve the 2025-2026 shared service agreements with Northern Region Educational Services Commission, Wayne for school Psychological Evaluations at a rate of $400.00 per evaluation.

52. Approval of Out of District Contracts 2025-2026

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the out of district contract for students OOD-22-23-01, to Hand Over Hand at Kids Interactive Day School, in Oakland, for the 2025-2026 school year starting on September 2, 2025, until June 19, 2026, in the amount of $9,000.00.

53. Approval of 2025-2026 Purchasing Manual (Update)

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board approve the 2025-2026 Purchasing Manual update. The NJ Department of the Treasury announced that the quote threshold for QPAs has been increased from $6,600 to $7,950 starting July 1, 2025.

Motion for approval of item 36-53

MOTION: Dr. Vancheri
SECONDED: Ms. Panepinto
VOTE: Unanimous (Dr. Vancheri abstained from all NRESC related agenda items and POs, Mr. Bierach and Mr. Parlegreco abstained from PO # 26-01163 on item #36 Approval of Bills List - October)

54. Old Business

There was no old business.

55. New Business

There was no new business.

56. Hearing and Petition of Citizens

No citizens wished to be heard.

57. Other Matters of a Timely Nature

There was no other matters of a timely nature.

58. Adjournment

Upon motion by Mr. Bierach and seconded by Mr. La Rose this meeting was adjourned at 7:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent Varcadipane
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary