BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOROUGH OF TOTOWA

MEETING MINUTES

10/16/2024

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 16, 2024.

A motion was made by Dr. Vancheri and seconded by Mr. Parlegreco to have Ms. Alesandrelli act as President for the October 16, 2024, Board of Education meeting. The motion was passed unanimously by roll call vote.

1. Call To Order

Acting President Alesandrelli called the meeting to order at 7:06 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. Carr, Ms. Coiro, Mr. La Rose, Mr. Palazzo, Mr. Parlegreco and Dr. Vancheri
Members Absent:	Ms. Antonucci and Mr. Bierach
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

Ms. Carla Grant of 88 Grant Ave, Totowa NJ 07512 stepped forward. Ms. Alesandrelli read the following statement. "For the record please state your name and address. We appreciate you coming forward here tonight. Please speak clearly. You do have three minutes to speak and please note we as a board take all concerns, views, and or statements very seriously. However, we may or may not have the opportunity to address your concerns at this time. The floor is yours Ms. Grant.

Ms. Grant stated surrounding districts have brought back parent teacher conferences and Totowa has not. Ms. Grant would like to see them brought back. Ms. Grant stated she feels there is a large gap in communication between the parents and the teachers and that the school has a breakdown in communication. Ms. Grant stated she spoke with Mr. Compel and Ms. Capitelli about this issue. She also stated she does not feel should should have to chase people for a response for four days. Ms. Grant stated this was not the first time and she had a similar issue with an eighth grade teacher last year with her other son. Ms. Grant hopes to see change and the district needs to build on their communication.

Ms. Alesandrelli thanked Ms. Grant for stepping forward and asked if there was anyone else that would like to speak.

Ms. Doreen Peranio, eighth grade teacher stepped forward. Ms. Peranio stated she was the teacher Ms. Grant was talking about. She stated there was communication back and forth in regard to the incident discussed, however, a date and time to have a full conversation could not be agreed upon. Mr. Bower had to release Ms. Peranio from her recess duty in order to have a time that worked for both parties.

Ms. Alesandrelli thanked Ms. Peranio and no other public wished 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. Cardiac Action Plan

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the 2024 - 2025 Cardiac Action Plan as per the attached.

7. New Jersey Department of Education School Self-Assessment

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends 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 of July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024, for Memorial and Washington Park Schools.

8. NJSMART Special Education Submission 2024 - 2025

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Services, recommends the Board approve the submission of the 2024 - 2025 NJSMART Special Education Submission on or about Friday, November 8, 2024.

9. "Handle with Care" Restraint Training

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends the Board approve the registration of Alycia Desmond to the "Handle with Care" Restraint Training Instructor Re-Certification class on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wayne, N.J. The cost for registration is $525.00.

10. "Handle with Care" Restraint Training

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends the Board approve the registration of Erica Minde to the "Handle with Care" Restraint Training Instructor Re-Certification class on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wayne, N.J. The cost for registration is $525.00.

11. Home Instruction Revision

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve home instruction for Student #24-25-01 beginning on Thursday, September 12, 2024, through Friday, December 20, 2024. LearnWell will provide ten (10) hours per week at the rate of $59.50/hour with one (1) hour of administrative/prep time for every three (3) hours of instruction.

12. Approval - Battle of the Books

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the following dates and locations for Battle of the Books:

Friday, March 21, 2025 – Grade 5 – Washington School, Hawthorne

Tuesday, April 1, 2025 – Grade 4 – Beatrice Gilmore School, Woodland Park

Wednesday, April 9, 2025 – Grade 7/8 – Lincoln Middle School, Hawthorne

Thursday, April 10, 2025 – Grade 6 – Lincoln Middle School, Hawthorne

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. Gifted and Talented Schedule

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board of Education approve the Gifted and Talented Schedule as per the attached.

14. Basketball Schedule

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the Boys and Girls Basketball Schedule for the 2024 - 2025 school year as per the attached.

15. 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 Monday, September 30, 2024, conducted by Lauren Terranova.

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

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

Thursday, October 24, 2024, and Monday, November 4, 2024
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.

17. Use of Facilities – Pie and Cookie Dough Fundraiser

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the request of the P.T.O. for the Pie and Cookie Dough Fundraiser as follows:

Tuesday, November 19, 2024
Washington Park School Cafeteria
3:30 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.

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

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

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends 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 5, 2024 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

Holiday Gift Shop
Washington Park School All Purpose Room
Friday, December 6, 2024 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.

Motion for approval of item 5-18

MOTION: Ms. Coiro
SECONDED: Mr. Parlegreco
VOTE: Unanimous

19. Informational

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. 24	Student Council Cancer Walk
Oct. 25	Student Council Cancer Walk (Rain Date)
Oct. 29	Washington, D.C. Parent Meeting, 6 P.M. WPS
Oct. 31	Halloween Celebrations
Nov. 6	Marking Period 1 Ends
Nov. 7 – 8	Schools Closed – NJEA Convention
Nov. 11	Marking Period 2 Begins
Nov. 12	Student/Faculty Volleyball Game, 6 P.M. WPS
Nov. 20	Board of Education Meeting, 7 P.M. WPS

Use of Facilities:

Oct. 24	P.T.O. Tricky Tray Basket Drop Off
Nov. 4	P.T.O. Tricky Tray Basket Drop Off
Nov. 4	P.T.O. Executive Meeting
Nov. 18	P.T.O. Fall Picture Retakes
Nov. 19	P.T.O. Pie and Cookie Fundraiser Pickup

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

20. Committee Reports

Ms. Alesandrelli stated committee meetings were not held.

21. Executive Session

A request for executive session was made to discuss personnel matters and other business excluded from the Open Public Meeting by Law. The Board entered executive session at 7:18 p.m.

Mr. Reddin said, in Executive Session the Board will be discussing personnel and legal matters. The discussion will last approximately thirty (30) minutes and no action will be taken.

Motion for approval of item 21

MOTION: Mr. La Rose
SECONDED: Dr. Vancheri
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board returned from executive session at 8:01 P.M.

22. Approval – Salary Special Education Aides

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the salaries of the Special Education Aides for the 2024 – 2025 school year as per the attached.

23. Approval - Medical Leave of Absence

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board approve a medical leave of absence for Richard Mastriani, Custodial Engineer, as follows:

a. Mr. Mastriani began his medical leave on Monday, July 1, 2024, through a date to be determined.
b. Mr. Mastriani used fifty-two (52) vacation/sick days from Monday, July 1, 2024, through Friday, September 13, 2024.
c. FMLA will be invoked from Monday, September 16, 2024, through a date to be determined. Benefits will be retained in accordance with FMLA.
d. His annual benefit contribution will be charged. Benefit costs will be incurred by Mr. Mastriani for any further additional time absent outside the FMLA 12-week period.

24. Approval – Revision Medical Leave of Absence

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the revision to the medical leave of absence for LouAnn Martinez, Elementary School Teacher, beginning on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, through Wednesday, January 1, 2025. Ms. Martinez will return to work on Thursday, January 2, 2025, and will use seventy-five (75) sick days.

25. Resignation – Custodial Engineer

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board accept the resignation of Glenn Nicholls, Custodial Engineer, effective Wednesday, October 9, 2024.

26. Resignation – Special Education Aide

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board accept the resignation of Sandra Cittrich, Special Education Aide, effective Friday, October 25, 2024.

27. Retirement – Cheryl Migliaccio

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board accept the retirement of Cheryl Migliaccio, Special Education Teacher, effective Wednesday, January 1, 2025.

28. Appointment – Special Education Teacher

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Ms. Christine Cifelli, Special Education Teacher, for the Totowa School District for the 2024 - 2025 school year on a date to be determined. Ms. Cifelli will be placed on BA Step-12, $82,335.00 (prorated), of the contracted teachers' salary guide pending a successful criminal background check, positive references, and approval of her Disclosure and Review of Applicants Employment History.

29. Appointment – Elementary School Teacher

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends that the Board appoint Ms. Kathy Wilson, Elementary School Teacher, for the remainder of the 2024 – 2025 school year, beginning on Monday, November 18, 2024. Ms. Wilson will be placed on BA Step-3, $57,655.00 (prorated), of the contracted teachers' salary guide pending a successful criminal background check, positive references, and approval of her Disclosure and Review of Applicants Employment History.

30. Posting – High-Impact Tutors

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the posting of the position of High-Impact Tutors for students in grades three and four.

31. Appointment – Special Education Teacher

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Ms. Sylwia Skerett, Special Education Teacher, for the Totowa School District for the 2024 - 2025 school year on a date to be determined. Ms. Skerett will be placed on BA Step-6, $65,960.00 (prorated), of the contracted teachers' salary guide pending a successful criminal background check, positive references, and approval of her Disclosure and Review of Applicants Employment History.

32. Appointment – Custodial Engineer

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Mr. Matthew Snell, Custodial Engineer, for the Totowa School District for the 2024 – 2025 school year beginning on Monday, October 21, 2024. Mr. Snell will be compensated at an annual rate of $39,000.00 (prorated) in accordance with the contracted custodial engineers' salary guide and according to the Articles of Agreement between the Totowa Board of Education and the Totowa Education Custodial Engineers, Article XI, Salaries.

Motion for approval of item 22-32

MOTION: Mr. La Rose
SECONDED: Ms. Coiro
VOTE: Unanimous (Dr. Vancheri abstained from item #29 Appointment - Elementary School Teacher)

33. Approval of Minutes- September 25, 2024 – Regular Meeting

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the minutes of the meeting of September 25, 2024, as presented.

Motion for approval of item 33

MOTION: Mr. Parlegreco
SECONDED: Ms. Coiro
VOTE: Unanimous

34. Approval of Minutes- September 25, 2024 – Executive Session

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the minutes of the Executive Session during the meeting of September 25, 2024, as presented.

Motion for approval of item 34

MOTION: Dr. Vancheri
SECONDED: Mr. Palazzo
VOTE: Unanimous

35. 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.

36. 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 2024, as presented.

37. 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 2024-2025 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.

38. 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 2024, as presented.

39. 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 2024, as presented.

40. 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 2024, as presented.

41. 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 2024, as presented.

42. 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 2024, as presented. (See Attachment #1 Monthly Transfer Report)

43. 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 2024, as presented.

44. 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 #912091324	1626	$ 11,116.93
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912092024	1627	$ 17,946.01
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912092724	1628	$ 24,754.29

45. Unemployment Compensation Account

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board retroactively approve check #230 from the school district's Unemployment Compensation Account in the amount of $264.00 to the State of New Jersey, Department of Labor Division of Employer Accounts for chargeable benefits.

46. 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)

47. Approval to Close Provident Bank Account (Previously Lakeland Bank)

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board approve closing the Provident Bank Account (previously Lakeland Bank) and transferring the funds to Board of Educations Warrant Account at Valley Bank. The September reconciled balance is $1,072,129.09.

48. Approval of ESEA Title I Part A Amendment

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the amendment to the ESEA Title I Part A 2024-2025 Grant to adjust the purpose of Title I funds from a push-in program to a pull-out program for a teacher for Title I programs. Monies will remain the same as previously allocated for the original purchase.

49. Approval of ESEA - Title I Salary & Benefits

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the following ESEA Title I funds in the amount of $20,603.00 for the salary/benefits for Ms. Jenna Laudi, Washington Park School Teacher for an Instructional Pull Out Program. This amount represents 12% of the salary and benefits for Ms. Laudi. Salary will be charged to account 20-231-100-100-000-000-060 and benefits will be charged to 20-231-200-200 -000-000-060.

50. Approval of ESEA Title I Part A Amendment (Carry Over)

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the amendment to the ESEA Title I Part A 2024-2025 Grant to increase the balances in the amount of $23,161.00 for Nonpublic funds for professional development. These monies are carry over monies and reclassifications from the 2023-2024 ESEA Title I Part A grant.

51. Approval of ESEA Title II Amendment (Carry Over)

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the amendment to the ESEA Title II 2024-2025 Grant to increase the balances in the amount of $6,645.00 for teacher salaries and benefits for Title II programs. There was also a $1,178.00 increase for Nonpublic funds for professional development. These monies are carry over monies from the 2023-2024 ESEA Title II grant.

52. Approval to Transfer Funds

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the transfer of funds from Fund 12 to Fund 30 in the amount of $3,107,599.00. Funds are being transferred to fund 30 to be accounted for in accordance with State guidelines with respect to projects that also receive funding through a ROD Grant.

Motion for approval of item 35-52

MOTION: Mr. La Rose
SECONDED: Ms. Coiro
VOTE: Unanimous (Dr. Vancheri abstained from all NRESC related agenda items and Bills and Mr. Parlegreco abstained from PO #25-01142 on item #35 Approval of Bills List - October)

53. Old Business

There was no old business.

54. New Business

There was no new business.

55. Hearing and Petition of Citizens

No citizens wished to be heard.

56. Other Matters of a Timely Nature

There was no other matters of a timely nature.

57. Adjournment

Upon motion by Mr. La Rose and seconded by Ms. Coiro this meeting was adjourned at 8:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent Varcadipane
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary