BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOROUGH OF TOTOWA

MEETING MINUTES

11/20/2024

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 November 20, 2024.

A motion was made by Mr. La Rose and seconded by Ms. Carr to have Ms. Alesandrelli act as President for the November 20, 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 and Mr. Palazzo,
Members Absent:	Ms. Antonucci, Mr. Bierach, Mr. Parlegreco and Dr. Vancheri
Also Present:	Patricia Capitelli, Superintendent of Schools
	Vincent Varcadipane, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
	Mr. Raymond B. Reddin, Board Attorney

Ms. Capitelli presented a plaque to Ms. Hackbarth to celebrate her retirement. Ms. Capitelli thanked Ms. Hackbarth for her dedication to the students and the Totowa community. Ms. Capitelli stated on behalf of the Board, Faculty and Administration we wish you the best in your retirment.

Ms. Hackbarth thanked everyone.

Ms. Capitelli presented Ms. Maria Sagui with a plaque and highlighted all of Ms. Sagui career highlights. She thanked Ms. Sagui for her dedication to the Totowa School district. Ms. Capitelli stated Ms. Sagui took a medical leave replacement for Pre-K, never missed a day of work and did everything asked of her. Ms. Capitelli stated it was very appreciated and thanked Ms. Sagui again.

Ms. Sagui thanked the Board, the Administration and all of her colleagues throughout her career.

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 Hearing

Ms. Alesandrelli asked for a first and a second to open the meeting for a public hearing to discuss an amendment to Ms. Capitelli's contract.

Motion for approval:

MOTION: Mr. La Rose
SECONDED: Ms. Coiro
VOTE: Unanimous

No one stepped forward with any questions or concerns during the public hearing or the public portion of the meeting. Ms. Alesandrelli asked for a first and a second to close the public hearing.

Motion for approval:

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

5. Professional Days

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

6. Bus Evacuation Drills

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively approve the Bus Evacuation Drills at Memorial School on Wednesday, October 23, 2024, with Routes 1-8, conducted by Joseph Compel.

7. 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 Wednesday, October 23, 2024, with Routes 1-8, conducted by David Bower.

8. Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends the Board approve the submission of a waiver from participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program for the 2025 – 2026 school year based on the Totowa School District having less than forty (40) eligible students enrolled. The district will continue to participate with the waiver.

9. Law Enforcement Against Drugs Program

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve 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, December 2, 2024. Lessons will be conducted under the guidance of Mr. Todd Mitchell, School Resource Officer.

10. 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 Tuesday, December 17, 2024, in the gymnasium from 9:30 A.M. to approximately 1:00 P.M.

11. Basketball Schedule - Revision

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

12. Volleyball Schedule

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

13. Field Trip – Passaic Valley High School Holiday Show

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve a field trip for students in grades kindergarten through four to Passaic Valley High School for the Holiday Show. The show will take place on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, from approximately 9:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. The Totowa Board of Education will provide transportation.

14. Eighth Grade Trip – Broadway Play

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the students in eighth grade to attend the Broadway Play – *Aladdin* on Wednesday, March 19, 2025. Students will leave Washington Park School at approximately 11:15 A.M. and return at approximately 6:00 P.M. The Totowa PTO will provide funding for the tickets and transportation will be provided by the Totowa Board of Education.

15. Assembly – Darryl McDaniels

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the assembly, Darryl McDaniels, 'Run DMC', for grades four through eight on Wednesday, November 27, 2024. The assembly's theme is respect, and the program is free for the district.

16. Use of Facilities - Holiday Parade

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the request of the Totowa Fire Department to utilize the Washington Park School Gymnasium and parking lot on Saturday, November 30, 2024, from approximately 3:00 P.M. through 9:00 P.M. The gym and parking lot will be used by the Totowa, Woodland Park, and Little Falls firefighters.

17. Use of Facilities – P.A.L. Basketball

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively approve the request for the Totowa P.A.L. Basketball for practice for their basketball teams, Grades Three through Eight, as follows:

Washington Park School Gymnasium
Monday through Friday 5:45 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.
Memorial School Gymnasium
Monday through Friday 5:45 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.

The programs will run from Monday, November 11, 2024, through Friday, March 14, 2025. The P. A.L. understands that all school-related and prior approved activities have priority over the use of facilities. If the Totowa Titan's games run into overtime, the P.A.L. further understands that the P.A. L. children will wait in the foyer until the game has ended.

Motion for approval of item 5-17

MOTION: Ms. Carr
SECONDED: Mr. La Rose
VOTE: Unanimous

18. Informational

Bus Evacuation Drills

Student Council Cancer Walk

Student Faculty Volleyball Game

Dates for Your Information:

Nov. 27	One Session Day – 1:20 P.M. Dismissal
Nov. 28-29	Thanksgiving Recess – Schools Closed
Dec. 3	Winter Concert Grade 1 – WPS 5:30 P.M.
Dec. 3	Winter Concert Grade 2 – WPS 6:30 P.M.
Dec. 3	Winter Concert Grade 3 – WPS 7:30 P.M.
Dec. 5	Winter Concert WPS – 7:00 P.M.
Dec. 6	P.T.O. Holiday Gift Shop – WPS 6:30 P.M.
Dec. 11	Passaic Valley Holiday Show
Dec. 11	Board of Education Meeting – WPS 6:00 P.M.

Use of Facilities:

Dec. 5	P.T.O. Holiday Gift Shop Setup
Dec. 6	P.T.O. Holiday Gift Shop
Dec.	P.A.L. Basketball (MS/WPS)

Attachments:

Correspondence – Senator Kristin Corrado
Smart Dog – Memorial School Newsletter

Reports:

Discipline Reports

19. Committee Reports

Ms. Alesandrelli stated committee meetings were not held.

20. 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 7:16 p.m.

Mr. Reddin said, in Executive Session the Board will be discussing personnel and legal matters. The discussion will last approximately twenty (20) minutes and no action will be taken.

Motion for approval of item 20

MOTION: Mr. La Rose
SECONDED: Mr. Palazzo
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board returned from executive session at 8:04 P.M.

21. Substitute Teachers

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the following substitute teachers submitted by the Substitute Registry:

Priority III
Turano, Sarah

22. Stipend – Permanent Substitute

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively approve the stipend for Ms. Carolyn Luisa, Permanent Substitute, beginning on Monday, October 28, 2024, until a date to be determined. Ms. Luisa will be compensated $200.00 per day.

23. Stipend – Permanent Substitute

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively approve the stipend for Ms. Sloan Mandry Booth, Permanent Substitute, beginning on Monday, October 28, 2024, until Friday, December 20, 2024. Ms. Booth will be compensated $200.00 per day.

24. Stipend – Special Education Aide/Substitute

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively approve the stipend for Ms. Angela Siano, Special Education Aide/Substitute, beginning on Monday, November 4, 2024, until Friday, December 20, 2024. Ms. Siano will be compensated $200.00 per day.

25. Appointment – Special Education Aide

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively appoint Ms. Nicole Messier, Special Education Aide, for the Totowa School District for the 2024-2025 school year. Ms. Messier began on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, and will be compensated at an hourly rate of $17.75 per hour.

26. Appointment – Special Education Aide

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively appoint Ms. Laishla Valentin, Special Education Aide, for the Totowa School District for the 2024-2025 school year. Ms. Valentin began on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, and will be compensated at an hourly rate of $17.75 per hour.

27. Appointment – Special Education Teacher

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Ms. Tamara Emont, Special Education Teacher, for the Totowa School District for the remainder of the 2024 - 2025 school year on a date to be determined. Ms. Emont will be placed on MA+30 Step -10, $85,105.00 (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.

28. Appointment – Administrative Assistant

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board appoint Ms. Hena Bowden, Administrative Assistant, for the Totowa School District for the remainder of the 2024 - 2025 school year on a date to be determined. Ms. Bowden will be compensated $39,370.00 (prorated), of the contracted Administrative Assistants' salary guide pending a successful criminal background check, and positive references.

29. Reassignment – Kassandra Antao

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Kassandra Antao from Resource Room Teacher Memorial School to Grade 3 Teacher on a date to be determined.

30. Resignation – Occupational Therapist

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board accept the resignation of Alisha Romano, Occupational Therapist, effective Friday, January 3, 2025.

31. Resignation – Special Education Aide

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board accept the resignation of Julia Spagnola, Special Education Aide, effective Friday, January 17, 2025.

32. Resignation – Special Education Aide

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively accept the resignation of Nicole Messier, Special Education Aide, effective Wednesday, November 13, 2024.

33. Approval – After-School Tutors

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the following staff members as after-school tutors for the Beyond the School Day High Impact Tutoring Program for the 2024-2025 school year:

Anna Marie Stabile	Kassandra Antao
Kimberly Lubba	Jenna Laudi

34. Approval - Amended 2023-2028 Superintendent's Contract

The Board approves the amended contract of the Superintendent of Schools for the 2023-2024, 2024 -2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027, and 2027-2028 school years. (as per the attached)

35. Approval - Maternity Leave

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the maternity/childcare leave of absence for Kellie Macaluso as follows:

Ms. Macaluso will begin her maternity/childcare leave Monday, February 10, 2025, through Wednesday, June 18, 2025, as per the following provisions:

1. Leave is granted without pay and benefits.
2. A. Leave will start on Monday, February 10, 2025.
   B. Medical leave will be invoked from Monday, February 10, 2025, through Friday, March 21, 2025.
   C. Ms. Macaluso will use fifty-two (52) sick/personal days from Monday, February 10, 2025, through Friday, May 2, 2025.
   D. FMLA will be invoked from Monday, March 24, 2025, through Wednesday, June 18, 2025 - twelve (12) weeks. Benefits will be retained in accordance with FMLA.
   E. Ms. Macaluso will return on Thursday, June 19, 2025.
   F. Her annual benefit contribution will be charged. Benefit costs will be incurred by Ms. Macaluso for any further additional time absent outside the FMLA 12-week period.

Motion for approval of item 21-35

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

36. Approval of Minutes- October 16, 2024 – Regular Meeting

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the minutes of the meeting of October 16, 2024, as presented.

Motion for approval of item 36

MOTION: Mr. La Rose
SECONDED: Ms. Coiro
VOTE: Unanimous

37. Approval of Minutes- October 16, 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 October 16, 2024, as presented.

Motion for approval of item 37

MOTION: Mr. Palazzo
SECONDED: Mr. La Rose
VOTE: Unanimous

38. Approval of Bills List – November

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

39. Acceptance of Financial Status Report – October

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary recommends the Board accept the Financial Status Report for the month of October 2024, as presented.

40. Monthly Financial Certification of the Board Secretary and the Board of Education – October

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.

41. Acceptance of Bank Reconciliations – October

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Bank Reconciliations for the month of October 2024, as presented.

42. Acceptance of Board Secretary Report – October

The Superintendent in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Board Secretary Report for the month of October 2024, as presented.

43. Acceptance of Treasurer of School Monies Report – October

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Treasurer Report for the month of October 2024, as presented.

44. Acceptance of Financial Summary Report – October

The Superintendent in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Financial Summary Report for the month of October 2024, as presented.

45. Approval of Line-Item Budget Transfers – October

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

46. Acceptance of Revenue Report – October

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Revenue Report for the month of October 2024, as presented.

47. 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 #912101124	1629	$ 28,941.05
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912101824	1630	$ 1,629.15
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912102524	1631	$ 5,782.84
Pomptonian Food Service	Invoice #912110124	1632	$ 19,579.39
Service Plus Inc.	Invoice #1034683-IN	1633	$ 1,401.85
Shivali Patel	Lunch Balance Reimbursement	1634	$ 2.06

48. Approval of 2024-2025 District Report of Transported Resident Students

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board retroactively approve the 2024-2025 District Report of Transported Resident Students. (See attachment #2)

49. Approval of the 2025 Budget Calendar

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the 2025 Budget Calendar. (See attachment #3)

50. Approval of 2024-2025 Transportation Contract NRESC

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board retroactively approve the 2024-2025 school year transportation contract with North Region Educational Services Commission, Wayne as follows:

Route #	School	Contractor	Cost Per Route	Date
Q3693	Memorial School-Totowa	Prestige Xpress	$ 2,860.00+171.60	10/21/24-11/29/24

51. Unemployment Compensation Account

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends that the Board retroactively approve check #231 from the school district's Unemployment Compensation Account in the amount of $870.65 to the State of New Jersey, Department of Labor Division of Employer Accounts for chargeable benefits.

52. Acceptance of the 2023-2024 Audit

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and Management Report for the period of July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, as prepared by Lerch, Vinci & Bliss. Ms. Capitelli stated no audit recommendations were noted in the report or on the prior year's audit. No recommendations were noted.

53. Approval of 2024-2025 IDEA Grant - Amendment

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary, recommends the Board retroactively approve the 2024-2025 IDEA Grant Amendment. Unexpended monies in the amount of $1,497.00 for Non-Public Basic. The unexpended monies from the 2023 -2024 IDEA Grant will be allocated in the amended 2024-2025 IDEA Grant for OT, Speech, Instructional Aides, PD and or Counseling.

Motion for approval of item 38-53

MOTION: Mr. La Rose
SECONDED: Ms. Coiro
VOTE: Unanimous

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. La Rose and seconded by Mr. Palazzo this meeting was adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent Varcadipane
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary