

Branchburg Township School District  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

February 29, 2024

**Executive Session – 6:30 p.m.**

**Public Meeting – 7:30 p.m.**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to public session at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 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, Kristen Fabriczi, Theresa Joyce, Robert Maider, Bindu Shah and Charles Tuma.

The following members were absent: Puja Desai and Carmela Noto.

Also present were: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Karen Chase and Business Administrator/Board Secretary Sally Dolan, Ms. Kathryn Mantell of Nisivoccia LLP, and Board Attorney David Rubin, Esq.

The Secretary called the roll.

**CALL TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. to discuss Personnel, Student Matters, Contracts and Legal Issues.

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Ms. Fabriczi, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn Executive Session at 7:45 p.m.

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

The assembly saluted the flag.

Statement of Adequate Notice

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

David Rubin, Esq. gave an Ethics presentation to the Board.

Ms. Kathryn Mantell of Nisivoccia LLP gave a report on the district's 2022-2023 Audit.

Dr. Chase thanked the PTO, staff and teachers for all their hard work in planning the Harlem Wizards event.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Highton, and his son Trevan, thanked the Board for the wrestling program.

## B. GOVERNANCE

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Maider that Items B.1. through B.5. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items B.1. through B.5. were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

There was no Governance Committee report.

### # 1. Approval of Minutes

It is recommended that the Board approve the Minutes of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of February 8, 2024.

### #2. Approval of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) Investigative Report

It is recommended that the Board approve the Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) Investigative Report for the period of February 8, 2024 through February 29, 2024, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq.

### #3. 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 February 8, 2024 Meeting, which encompasses all HIB findings from January 18, 2024 through February 8, 2024.

### #4. Approval of 2023-2024 Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement

It is recommended that the Board approve the 2023-2024 Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement.

### #5. Approval of Revised 2023-2024 School District Calendar

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

## C. POLICY

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Maider that Item C.1. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Item C.1. was unanimously approved by Roll Call.

There was no Policy Committee report.

#1. **Policy and Regulations – Abolished**

Policy/Regulation	Title	Discussion
P 3432	Sick Leave	Abolished
R 3432	Sick Leave	Abolished
P 4432	Sick Leave	Abolished
R 4432	Sick Leave	Abolished

**D. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Maider that Items D.1. through D.5. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items D.1. through D.5. were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

Mr. Maider said the Curriculum and Instruction Committee met, and discussed the following:

- The Well-Being Professional Development day;
- Special needs for Special Education staffing; and
- Coaching for different sports in the middle school.

#1. **Conferences and 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.

Conferences/Workshops	Employee/Account Number	Date(s)	Registration Fee	Hotel	Meals/Exp.	Tolls/Parking/Mileage	Total
Foreign Language NJ Annual Conference, New Brunswick, NJ	Teresa Dovale 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/13/24	\$180.00	0	0	0	\$180.00
Foreign Language NJ Annual Conference New Brunswick, NJ	Lori Villanova 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/13/24	\$180.00	0	0	\$13.16	\$193.16
NJ Agriculture in the Classroom: Climate Change Chester, NJ	Lauren Bockus 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/18/24	0	0	0	\$42.00	\$42.00
NJ Agriculture in the Classroom: Climate Change Chester, NJ	George Moor 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/18/24	0	0	0	\$21.00	\$21.00
Add+VantageMR Course 1 Virtual	Colleen Repoli 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/11/24-5/13/24	\$995.00	0	0	0	\$995.00
Add+VantageMR Course 1 Virtual	Eileen Szajdecki 20-488-200-500-02-00	3/11/24-5/13/24	\$995.00	0	0	0	\$995.00
Restorative Justice: Elementary School Tiers 2 & 3 New Brunswick, NJ	Jennifer Anderson 20-270-200-500-02-649	4/25/24	0	0	0	\$9.40	\$9.40
Nonviolent Crisis Intervention New Brunswick, NJ	Kristen Cardona 11-000-223-580-02-144-999	4/30/24-5/2/24	\$4,349.00	0	0	0	\$4,349.00
NJASBO Workshop – Audit Review Whippany, NJ	Sally Dolan 11-000-251-580-01-585	4/11/24	\$125.00	0	0	0	\$125.00

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NJASBO 2024 Conference Atlantic City, NJ	Sally Dolan 11-000-251-580-01-585	6/5/24-6/7/24	\$500.00	\$238.00	\$147.50	\$132.44	\$1,017.94
Student Council Advisors Workshop 2024 East Windsor, NJ	Nicole Kepner 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/24/24 subject to change	\$35.00	0	0	\$15.79	\$50.79
Crisis Prevention Recertification New Brunswick, NJ	Anthony Maiorano 11-000-223-580-02-144-999	5/2/24	\$1,849.00	0	0	0	\$1,849.00
Increase Distracted Students' Attention, Engagement and Motivation Virtual	Monique Owczarek 20-488-200-500-02-00	4/23/24	\$279.00	0	0	0	\$279.00
OFAC Fingerprinting and School Bus Safety Training Flemington, NJ	Enea Yard N/A	4/19/24	0	0	0	0	0

**#2. Approval of Student Teacher**

Name	College/University	Certification	Location	Dates	Discussion
Kelly Zona	Centenary University	Elementary School Teacher in Grades K-6 and Teacher of Students with Disabilities	WES	9/1/24-5/2/25	Cooperating Teachers: Kimberly Cole and Jodi Harwood

**#3. Approval of Field Trips**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Branchburg Township Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Field Trips.

**#4. Approval of Service Project**

School	Group	Event Coordinator	Dates	Purpose
SBS	School-Wide	Kristen Kries	3/1/24-3/14/24	Stony Brook Can Knock Down Hunger will collect boxes of cereal for donation to a local food bank. The school will create a domino maze through the hallways.

**#5. Approval of Contracted Service**

Vendor	Account Number	Student ID #	Amount	Discussion
Behavior Therapy Associates Somerset, NJ	11-000-219-320-03-181-340	6389361523	\$3,300 (not to exceed)	Assessment

**E. PERSONNEL**

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Maider that Items E.1. through E.9., be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items E.1. through E.9., were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

There was no Personnel Committee report.

**#1. Approval of Personnel**

Name	Account Number	Position	Location	Step/Level	Salary/Rate	Dates	Discussion
Mahogany Butler (subject to delivery of documents)	11-214-100-106-01-059	Instructional Aide	WES	6/NA	\$22,145.76 (prorated)	3/4/24-6/30/24	Replacing Gabriella Luzi
Victoria Cabrera (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-262-110-01-363	Evening Custodian	BCMS	1/NA	\$41,371.20 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24	New Position

Rosa Eguluz (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-262-110-01-363	Evening Custodian	BCMS	1/NA	\$41,371.20 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24	New Position
Augusto Gallegos (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-262-110-01-370	Evening Custodian	WES	1/NA	\$41,371.20 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24	New Position
Beth Hopkins (subject to delivery of documents)	11-214-100-101-01-058	Special Education Teacher	SBS	BA/19	\$80,200.00 (prorated)	2/21/24-6/30/24	Replacing Emma Ryan
Kathleen MacMahon (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-270-160-01-462	Bus Aide	Transportation	N/A	\$18.63 per hour (not to exceed 4.75 hours per day)	3/4/24-6/30/24	Vacancy
Blanca Paredes (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-262-110-01-363	Evening Custodian	BCMS	1/NA	\$41,371.20 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24	New Position
Azucena Pineda (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-262-110-01-366	Evening Custodian	SBS	1/NA	\$41,371.20 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24	New Position
Grisell Rivera (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-262-110-01-370	Evening Custodian	WES	1/NA	\$41,371.20 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24	New Position
Maria Rivera De Lopez (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-262-110-01-363	Evening Custodian	BCMS	1/NA	\$41,371.20 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24	New Position
Kirsli Spinks (subject to delivery of documents)	11-000-222-110-01-259-999	Systems Administrator	BOE	N/A	\$77,500.00 (prorated)	4/2/24-6/30/24	Replacing John Beisler

**#2. Approval of Revision of Extra Duty Pay**

Name	Account Number	Position	Location	From	To	Discussion
Margaret Ryan	11-000-219-104-01-168-340	District Social Worker	District	6/19/23-8/31/23 \$68.05 per hour (not to exceed 51 hours)	6/19/23-6/30/24 \$68.05 per hour (not to exceed 53 hours)	Program development

**#3. Approval of Leave**

Employee #	Account Number	Type of Leave	Dates	Discussion
4974	11-240-100-101-01-075-500	Paid Sick Leave	3/11/24-4/5/24	Estimated date of return is 4/8/24
5751	11-424-100-178-01-013-060 11-424-100-178-01-013-090	FMLA/NJFLA	9/3/24-12/4/24	Estimated date of return is 12/5/24
4473	11-130-100-101-01-021-020	Paid Sick Leave	2/23/24-5/24/24	Estimated date of return is 5/28/24

**#4. Approval of Revision of Personnel**

Name	Account Number	Position	Location	Step/Level	Salary/Rate	From	To	Discussion
Laura Barker	11-130-100-101-01-021-020	Leave Replacement Social Studies Teacher (no tenure accrual)	BCMS	1/BA	\$61,329 (prorated)	12/18/23-3/4/24	12/18/23-3/18/24	Leave replacement for employee #4957
Lisa Crowe	11-110-100-101-01-001-090	Maternity Leave Replacement Kindergarten Teacher (no tenure accrual)	WES	1/BA	\$61,329 (prorated)	3/7/24-6/18/24	3/8/24-6/17/24	Leave replacement for employee #6040

**#5. Approval of Revision of RTI Coordinators**

Name	Location	Rate	From	To	Dates
Lauren Knoke	SBS	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 55 hours)	20-231-200-101-02-649	20-231-200-101-02-648	10/6/23-6/30/24
Danielle Puglisi	BCMS	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 55 hours)	20-231-200-101-02-649	20-231-200-101-02-648	10/6/23-6/30/24
Danielle Puzzo	WES	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 55 hours)	20-231-200-101-02-649	20-231-200-101-02-648	10/6/23-6/30/24

**#6. Approval of Substitute**

Name	Position	Rate	Dates
Lisa Crowe	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$125/\$115 per day	2/29/24-3/7/24

**#7. Approval of Lead Custodian Stipends**

Name	Account	Location	Rate	Dates
Russell Cobb	11-000-262-110-01-366	SBS	\$2,000 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24
Robert MacMahon	11-000-262-110-01-370	WES	\$2,000 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24
Hansi Murillo	11-000-262-110-01-363	BCMS	\$3,000 (prorated)	3/1/24-6/30/24

**#8. Approval of Revision of Leave**

Employee #	Account Number	From	To	Discussion
6126	11-120-100-101-01-012-090	Paid Sick Leave: 3/25/24-4/12/24	Paid Sick Leave: 3/6/24-3/27/24	Estimated date of return is 3/28/24
6040	11-110-100-101-01-001-090	Paid Sick Leave: 3/7/24-3/22/24 Personal Days: 3/25/24-3/27/24 FMLA/NJFLA: 3/28/24-6/18/24	Paid Sick Leave: 3/8/24-3/26/24 Personal Days: 3/27/24, 3/28/24, 4/5/24 FMLA/NJFLA: 4/8/24-6/17/24	Estimated date of return is 6/18/24
6063	11-000-270-160-01-462	Paid Sick Leave: 1/22/24-2/16/24	Paid Sick Leave: 1/22/24-2/20/24 (AM) Personal Days: 2/20/24 (PM), 2/21/24, 2/22/24, 2/23/24 (AM) FMLA: 2/23/24 (PM) - 2/26/24	Estimated date of return is 2/27/24
4874	11-213-100-101-01-057-020	Paid Sick Leave: 1/8/24-3/8/24	Paid Sick Leave: 1/8/24-6/18/24	Estimated date of return is 9/1/24

**#9. Approval of Termination**

Be It Resolved, that the employment of Employee #6022 be terminated, effective March 29, 2024.

**F. FINANCE AND FACILITIES**

Motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Maider that Items F.1. through F.9. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items F.1. through F.9. were unanimously approved by Roll Call, with Mr. Tuma voting "naye" on Item F.5.

Ms. Joyce said the Finance and Facilities Committee met, and discussed the following:

- The Referendum Committee met on February 28, 2024. Ms. Joyce gave an update on what was discussed at the meeting;
- They discussed the items on the agenda;
- Grants for facilities work; and
- The next Finance and Facilities meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2024.

**#1. Bill List**

It is recommended that the Board approve the List of Bills for the period February 9, 2024, totaling \$1,000.00, and for the period February 9, 2024 through February 16, 2024, totaling \$2,999.50, and for the period February 9, 2024 through February 23, 2024, totaling \$331,339.77, and for the period February 24, 2024 through February 29, 2024, totaling \$2,137,224.52.

#2. **Acceptance of 2022-2023 Audit and Auditors' Management Report**

It is recommended that the Board accept the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and the Auditors' Management Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. There were recommendations (see corrective action plan).

#3. **Acceptance of New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) Grant**

It is recommended that the Board approve the acceptance of a grant from New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) in the amount of \$29,223 for projects related to emergent and capital maintenance needs.

#4. **Approval of Resolution/Agreement for Participation in Coordinated Transportation Services**

It is recommended that the Board approve a Resolution/Agreement for Participation in Coordinated Transportation Services with Somerset County Educational Services Commission for the 2024-2025 school year.

#5. **Approval of 2024-2025 Somerville High School Tuition Rate**

It is recommended that the Board approve an estimated Somerville High School tuition rate of \$20,553 per pupil for the 2024-2025 school year.

#6. **Approval of Donation from the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation**

It is recommended that the Board approve acceptance of a donation of educational resources from the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation, with thanks for their generosity to the students of the Branchburg Township School District.

#7. **Acceptance of Section 15 Grant - State of New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA)**

**WHEREAS**, the Branchburg Township Board of Education will receive a Grant from the State of New Jersey Schools Development Authority for the following projects:

- Branchburg Central Middle School Boiler Replacement, DOE Project # 0510-020-23-R501, SDA Project # 0510-020-23-G5BZ, Grant # G5-6455 in the amount of \$161,852.40 (40% of the project costs of \$404,631.00) Branchburg Central Middle School Roof Replacement, DOE Project # 0510-020-23-R504, SDA Project # 0510-020-23-G5CA, Grant # G5-6456 in the amount of \$549,090.80 (40% of the project costs of \$1,372,727.00)
- Whiton Elementary School Boilers and Domestic HW Heaters - HVAC Mechanical Replacement, DOE Project # 0510-090-23-R501, SDA Project # 0510-090-23-G5CB, Grant # G5-6457 in the amount of \$337,569.60 (40% of the project costs of \$843,924.00)

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Branchburg Township Board of Education:

- Authorizes the execution and delivery of the Grant Agreement;
- Authorizes the Superintendent and School Business Administrator to execute and submit the appropriate grant documents to the Schools Development Authority; and
- Delegates Authority to the School Business Administrator for supervision of the school facilities project.

**#8. Capital Reserve Withdrawal**

WHEREAS, the Board of Education desires to withdraw from Capital Reserve funds in the 2024-2025 budget as follows:

Branchburg Central Middle School Boiler Replacement	\$ 404,631.00
Whiton Elementary School Mechanical Replacement	\$ 843,924.00
Total:	\$1,248,555.00

**#9. Approval of Amendment of Fiscal Year 2024 ESEA Grant Funds**

Allocation Source	Original Allocation	Additional Allocation	Final 2024 Allocation
Title IA	\$45,314	\$10,598	\$55,912
Title IIA	\$25,865	\$40	\$25,905
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$71,179</b>	<b>\$10,638</b>	<b>\$81,817</b>

**G. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no Public Comment.

**H. BOARD LIAISON REPORTS**

Ms. Joyce said the SEPAG town hall meeting was held on Tuesday evening, February 27, 2024 where Jennifer Anderson and her team gave a wonderful presentation about what is involved in the Special Education process, and identifying students with special needs. She said the meeting was recorded, and can be found on the district's website under "Organization".

**I. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

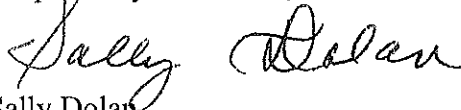
On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to Executive Session at 9:02 p.m. to discuss Student Matters.

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn Executive Session at 9:36 p.m.

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Ms. Shah, seconded by Mr. Tuma, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
 Sally Dolan  
 School Business Administrator/Board Secretary