

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
METUCHEN, NEW JERSEY**

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023

**MEETING MINUTES
of the Metuchen Board of Education**
Metuchen High School
400 Grove Avenue
Metuchen, NJ 08840

1. Call to Order

2. Flag Salute

3. Notice of Meeting

I hereby make this statement to indicate compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act known as Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of New Jersey, 1975, which became effective 90 days after enactment, January 19, 1976.

Notice of this meeting was given by providing the location, time and date of this meeting, and posting of the same on the front door of the Board of Education offices, by delivering copies to the Borough Hall and the Metuchen Public Library, The Home News and Tribune, The Criterion Sentinel, The Star Ledger, and by filing a copy with the Borough Clerk as prescribed by this law.

4. Roll Call

Mr. Benderly	P	Ms. Killean	P
Ms. Cook	P	Mr. Lifton	P
Mr. Derflinger	P	Mr. Solasky	P
Mr. Glassberg	P	Dr. Spigner	P
Dr. Johnson-Marcus	P	Mr. Suss	P

5. Showcase of Success

- ❖ Student Advisory Board Q&A - Eashaan Bhattacharyya and Sydney Gordesky
- ❖ Edgar Middle School Science Fair 1st Place Winners
 - 5th grade - Addie Puerzer - SOS: Save Our Soil
 - 6th grade - Gwen Falkovich and Shawn Falkovich - The Fly Trap
 - 7th grade - Sean Manopo and Gabriel Fingerman - Plant vs. Liquid
 - 8th grade - Samika Devarajan - The Effect of Household Chemicals on Plants

The students spoke and the Board made comments and asked questions.

6. Meeting Open to the Public *(for any topic)* - None

7. Presentations

- ❖ Budget Hearing - Dr. Caputo and Mr. Harvier gave the presentation.

8. Reports

- ❖ President’s Report - None
- ❖ Superintendent's Report - None
- ❖ Committee Reports

Mr. Benderly gave the report for the Garden State Coalition of Schools.

Ms. Cook gave a report for the Policy Committee.

Mr. Glassberg gave a report for the District Leadership Team and the Construction Committee.

Ms. Killean gave the report for the Curriculum Committee and The Extra-curricular/Athletics Committee.

Mr. Suss gave a report for the Finance Committee.

- ❖ Student Board Member Report - Mr. Solasky gave a report.

9. Old Business -None

10. New Business -None

11. Approval of Minutes of the Board of Education Meetings

April 11, 2023	Special Business Meeting (1)
April 11, 2023	Special Business Meeting (2)
April 11, 2023	Board Meeting

Mr. Lifton motioned. Mr. Glassberg seconded. Motion carried 9-0-0.

12. Meeting Open to the Public *(for any topic)*

13. Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools

(at this time the Board will take formal action on the following items – see attachments)

Often times it may appear to members of our audience that the Board of Education takes action with very little comment and in many cases a unanimous vote. Before a matter is placed on the agenda at a public meeting, the administration has thoroughly reviewed the matter with the Superintendent of Schools. If the Superintendent is satisfied that the matter is ready to be presented to the Board of Education, it is then referred to the appropriate board committee. The members of the board committee work with administration and the Superintendent to assure that the members fully understand the matter. When the committee is satisfied with the matter, it is presented to the Board of Education for discussion before any final action is taken. Only then, is it placed on the agenda for action at a public meeting.

A. PERSONNEL

Motion/Second/Comments/Roll Call

1. Appointment - Leave Replacement

Move to approve the appointment of Shannon Desch, Leave Replacement for Emily Mertz, 5th Grade Teacher at Edgar School, effective approximately April 27, 2023 through June 20, 2023, at a rate of \$291.89/day (Agenda 1/17/23, Section 13 A15).

2. Retirement - Certificated Staff

Move to accept, with regret, the retirement of Frank Jones, Industrial Arts Teacher at Edgar School, effective June 30, 2023.

3. Medical Leave of Absence - Extension

Move to approve the extension of the medical leave of absence of Mark Cooper, Custodian at Campbell School, through approximately May 1, 2023 (Agenda 3/28/23, Section 13 A7).

4. Volunteer Clubs – Additions

Move to approve the following additional Volunteer Clubs for the 2022-2023 school year as listed (Agenda 8/23/22, Section 13 A15):

Metuchen High School	
Club	Advisor
Chemistry Club	Jingjing Wang
Edgar Middle School	
Club	Advisor
Rubik's Cube Club	Emily Presuto

5. Medical Leave of Absence - Bus Driver

Move to approve the medical leave of absence of Denise Newcomen, Bus Driver for the Metuchen School District, through approximately May 2, 2023.

6. Edgar School Coaches - Revision

Move to rescind and approve the following Edgar Middle School Coach for the 2022-2023 school year (Agenda 06/08/2022, Section 13 A7):

Name	Assignment	2022-2023 Stipend
Rescind:		
John Butler	Volunteer Baseball Coach	\$0
Approve:		
John Butler	Baseball Coach	\$3556

7. Medical Leave of Absence - Paraprofessional

Move to approve the medical leave of absence of Christine Lacaskey, Paraprofessional at Campbell School, from approximately April 27, 2023 through approximately June 5, 2023.

8. Appointment of Substitute Teachers

Move to approve the appointment of the following additional substitute teachers for the 2022-2023 school year (Agenda 8/23/2022 Section 13 A16):

Substitute	Certification	Per Diem Rate
MaryKate McCunney	Substitute w/college credits	\$100/day
Sharon Mok	Substitute w/college degree	\$105/day

9. Special Education Parent Advisory Council Presenters

Move to approve the following as workshop presenters for Special Education Parent Advisory Council, for 2 hours each at \$48 per hr:

Christina Theiss	Lisa Granados	Patricia Lewis	Karen Calantoni	Julie Anderson
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Stephanie Angus	Lauren Thompson	Karen Logan	Nicole Benfatti	Courtney Crawford
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10. Mentor

Move to approve Emily Peluso to provide mentoring to Emily Rebelo for Speech license requirements at a rate of \$48/hr, not to exceed 30 hours.

Mr. Liftron motioned. Mr. Derflinger seconded. Motion carried 9-0-0. Dr. Caputo wished Frank Jones a happy and healthy retirement.

-----end of personnel section-----

B. FINANCE

Motion/Second/Comments/Roll Call

1. Treasurer of School Monies and Board Secretary’s Reports

Move to approve the Treasurer of School Monies’ Report, and Board Secretary’s Report as of February 28, 2023.

2. Payment of Bills

a) Board Secretary’s Certification

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2A.10(d), the Board Secretary has certified that as of April 25, 2023 no budgetary line item accounts have obligations and payments which exceed the amount appropriated by the Board of Education.

Michael A. Harvier, Board Secretary

Date

b) Approve the Following Items Submitted by the Board Secretary

Payment of bills and claims, as shown on the attached list(s) that have been certified by the Board of Education and filed in the Business Office.

3. Budget Transfers

Move to approve budget transfers effective February 28, 2023.

4. Parent Paid Tuition Rates for SY 2023-2024

Move to approve the Parent Paid Tuition Rates for SY 2023-2024 as follows:

Grade	2023-2024
Kindergarten	\$6,722.00
Grades 1-8	\$13,446.00
Grades 9-12	\$17,065.00
Children of Employees	
Kindergarten	\$3,360.00
Grades 1-8	\$6,722.00
Grades 9-12	\$8,532.00

Tuition has increased by 5% each year.

5. Professional Development

Move to approve the following professional development activities as shown on the following chart:

Start Date	End Date	Activity Title	Name	Building	Approved	Payment	FFPI Proposal #
4/27/2023	4/27/2023	Union Management Collaborative Partnership	Robbins, Evan Gouveia, Michele	MHS EMS	0	No cost	
4/27/2023	4/27/2023	Conference on Scaling Collaborative Partnerships in Public Education.	Fitzgibbon, David	CES	0	No cost	
5/3/2023	5/3/2023	State Board of Education Central Regional Public Testimony Hearing	Dougherty, Natalie	Central Office	0	No cost	
5/8/2023	5/8/2023	Natural Language Acquisition in Autism: Echolalia to Self Generated Language, Level 1 #e82	Peluso, Emily	Moss	\$69	FFPI	23-136
5/11/2023	5/11/2023	Restorative Justice	Miller, Jennifer	EMS	0	No cost	
5/11/2023	5/11/2023	Restorative Justice	Presuto, Emily	EMS	0	FFPI	
5/12/2023	5/12/2023	Natural Language Acquisition in Autism: Echolalia to Self-Generated Language (Treatment), Level 2 #e148	Peluso, Emily	Moss	\$49	FFPI	23-137
5/31/2023	5/31/2023	Triggers & Boundary Crossing	Granados, Lisa	MHS	\$60	FFPI	23-132
5/31/2023	5/31/2023	HEARTSAVER FIRST AID CPR/AED COURSE	Sobieniak, Tomasz	MHS	\$130.33	FFPI	23-134
6/1/2023	6/1/2023	NJ ELA Supervisor Workshop	Manziano, Lou	Central Office	0	No cost	
6/7/2023	6/11/2023	SPACE ACADEMY FOR EDUCATORS	Divanno, Rachel	EMS	\$999	FFPI	23-133
6/12/2023	6/14/2023	AP Reading	Wagenblast, Eileen	MHS	0	No cost	
6/12/2023	6/14/2023	AAC for Gestalt Language Processors	Peluso, Emily	Moss	\$376	FFPI	23-138

6. Transportation Jointures and Individual Routes 2023-2024

Move to approve the transportation jointures and individual routes for the 2023-2024 school year with the following districts and educational service commissions:
 Educational Services Commission of New Jersey, Somerset County Educational Services Commission, Monmouth / Ocean Educational Services Commission, Camden

County Education Services Commission, Mercer County Special Services School District, South Plainfield School District, Edison School District, Piscataway School District, and Woodbridge School District.

7. Transportation Providers 2023-2024

Move to approve South Plainfield School District, Durham School Services, Garas Transportation, Nelvi Transit Inc., D&L Bus Services, Mercy Transportation, Road to Success, Villani Bus, Layla Trans, Passaic Valley Coach, Raritan Valley Bus, and DeCamp Bus as transportation providers for the 2023-2024 school year.

8. Resolution

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BOROUGH OF METUCHEN IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING CREATION OF A SINKING FUND TO PAY SCHOOL DEBT, TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT TO THE SINKING FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,700,000, APPOINTMENT OF AN ESCROW AGENT AND EXECUTION OF AN ESCROW AGREEMENT

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BOROUGH OF METUCHEN IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, NEW JERSEY as follows.

SECTION 1. This Board of Education hereby authorizes the creation of a sinking fund for the payment of certain debt due with respect to the School District's Refunding Bonds, Series 2012 and Series 2015 (the "Prior Bonds"), maturing in the Fiscal Years 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 in amounts determined by the School Business Administrator with the advice of Phoenix Advisors, the School district's Municipal Advisor.

SECTION 2. This Board of Education hereby appoints Wilmington Trust to serve as Escrow Agent to create an Escrow Account for the sinking fund in accordance with an Escrow Agreement to be entered into by and between the Board of Education and the Escrow Agent. The Board President, the Superintendent and/or the Business Administrator/Board Secretary are hereby authorized to execute the Escrow Agreement in a form consistent with this resolution approved by McManimon, Scotland & Baumann, LLC, Bond Counsel to the School District, and the execution thereof by such officer or officers shall be deemed conclusive evidence of such approval. The appropriate representatives of the Board of Education are further authorized to implement the Escrow Agreement in accordance with its terms.

SECTION 3. This Board of Education further appropriates and authorizes the transfer of \$2,700,000 from the Capital Reserve Account for deposit in the Escrow Account for the sinking fund as set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-31(c) and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.1(h) for the payment of debt service in accordance with the Escrow Agreement.

SECTION 4. The Escrow Agreement may provide for the investment of funds on the advice of bond counsel in such manner as will not negatively affect the tax exemption of the Prior Bonds and shall be irrevocably pledged for the payment of principal and/or interest on the Prior Bonds in accordance with the Escrow Agreement.

SECTION 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

9. Adoption of the 2023-2024 School District Budget

WHEREAS, the Board of Education must adopt and submit a 2023-2024 school district budget to the New Jersey Department of Education.

WHEREAS, The Board of Education petitioned the Commissioner of Education to calculate our enrollment adjustment equal to 1.00 for any increase in enrollment for the 2023/2024 school year pursuant to NJSA 18A:7F-38(b)(2) and NJAC 6A:23-11.2(c), and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education received permission to utilize \$358,897 for an enrollment adjustment but will only be utilizing \$170,000 of that adjustment, and

WHEREAS, the enrollment adjustment funds will be restricted for 2.0 special education teachers, and an ELL teacher.

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is requesting authority to utilize \$726,473 in health care allowance and this allowance will be utilized by the end of the budget year and cannot be deferred or incrementally completed over a longer period of time.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Metuchen Board of Education adopt the 2023-2024 school district budget as follows:

	Appropriations	Local Tax Levy
Total General Fund	\$47,128,975	\$43,066,156
Total Special Revenue Fund	\$ 1,571,514	
Total Debt Service Fund	\$ 2,469,150	\$ 2,233,604

The supporting documentation of the budget included an itemization of certain expenditures required under administrative regulations. Maximum travel budget is established at \$85,000. Travel includes professional development that takes place outside the District.

Mr. Suss motioned. Ms. Cook seconded. Motion carried 9-0-0 for items 1 and items 3-9. Motion carried 8-01 for item 2. Mr. Benderly abstained.

-----end of finance section-----

C. POLICY

Motion/Second/Comments/Roll Call

1. Suspensions

The Board hereby acknowledges receipt of the suspension report summary for April 10, 2023 - April 21, 2023.

2. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

Move to affirm the findings of the previously reported cases:

- EMS033123001
- EMS033123002
- EMS033123003

Ms. Cook motioned. Dr. Spigner seconded. Motion carried 9-0-0.

-----end of policy section-----

D. CURRICULUM

Motion/Second/Comments/Roll Call

1. Curriculum Documents

Move to approve the following curriculum documents for the following subjects:

Curriculum Documents	
Subject	Grades
Health	3 & 4

2. Field Trips

Move to approve the following field trips for students in the Metuchen School District as shown:

School	Destination	Class/Group/ Purpose	Teachers/ Advisors	Date(s)	No. Of Students	Board Cost- Transportation	Number of Subs Needed
EMS	MAYO PAC Play: The Lightning Thief about Greek Mythology(Percy Jackson)	Grade 7; Students will be able to appreciate theater while learning more about Greek Mythology, which are currently studying in 7th grade social studies.	Michael Butler, Pam Stead, Ed Albanese, Shannon Connors, Andrea Elton, Linda Donahoe, Melissa Robbins, Thomas Dowling, Julie Hertzog, Judy Hoffman, John Butler, Raquel Williams	5/15/ 2023	195	0	2
MHS	Mount Tammany, Delaware Water Gap	Grades 9-12; Students will be able to experience one of the most popular hikes in NJ. This is stunning area of NJ with a steep climb up Mount Tammany	Anna Girin, Danielle Cermak	5/21/ 2023	46	0	No subs needed

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CES/ Moss	Merrill Park	<p>Grades K-4; Community based instruction to Merrill Park to learn and generalize social and emotional/behavioral goals, as well as communication goals and teaching appropriate behaviors. Express ideas for activities and initiate discussions. Discuss their own actions and efforts. Express needs verbally or nonverbally to teachers and peers without being aggressive. Develop an awareness of warning symbols and their meaning. Participate in conversations with others.</p>	<p>Katie McKenna, Farhana Khan, Margie Clark, Alicia Haller, Carmela Fogarile, Emily Peluso, Lori Anne DiSerio, Samantha Pauls, Brian Jeney, Kelly Vissichelli, Sonia Aswani, Abeera Omarzai, Michael Small, Rose Di Leonardo, Emily Donlin, Olivia Williams, Iffat Rouhi</p>	5/19/ 2023	17	\$70	No subs needed
EMS	New York City(The Village)	<p>Grades 11-12; The GSA students frequently research, learn about, and discuss LGBTQIA+history. They have become interested in events that occurred in New York City, specifically in Greenwich Village, that contributed to the modern LGBTQIA+movement. The students have created their own walking tour of 8 landmark locations in NYC that align with major events in history. We would like to conduct the walking tour as a group while students share facts about the importance of that location and landmark as well as how it contributed to LGBTQIA+history and culture.</p>	<p>Ann Leghorn-Ora pallo, Alexa Baird</p>	5/31/ 2023	10-15	0	1 sub needed

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EMS	Moss	Grades 7-8; Students from the EMS Fiddle club, as well as a select quintet of advanced musicians will go to Moss School music classes to perform for the Kindergarten students about the composers of the music they are playing, as well as the instruments that they are performing on.	Chris McEwan and Jordyn Gallagher	5/12/2023	23	\$80	No subs needed
EMS	Latin Port Restaurant	Grade 7; The students are working on a unit that revolves around the concepts of food and family. The restaurant Latin Port serves authentic Latin food, and it has opened right here in our Metuchen town. In light of providing our students with real-life meaningful activities and bringing some fun, learning, and joy to our 7th graders who have had a challenging year, we would like to propose this educational experience. The students will be able to engage in conversations in the target language by ordering, greeting, asking for the check, and paying native speakers of Spanish in the restaurant. Students will enhance their understanding of cultures by comparing and contrasting Latin food with American food. This trip will be done in 2 days so we can comfortably accommodate the students in this restaurant experience.	Andrea Elton, Linda Donohoe, Ashley Jaye	6/12/2023	100	0	4 subs needed
			Raquel Williams, Audra Smith, Linda Donohoe, Andrea Elton	6/14/2023	100	0	4 subs needed

Mr. Deflinger motioned. Dr. Johnson-Marcus seconded. Motion carried 9-0-0.

-----end of curriculum section-----

14. Meeting Open to Public (for any topic) -None

15. Announcements - Dr. Spigner made announcements.

16. Motion to Go Into Executive Session (*when applicable*)

Resolution to Close Meeting

BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to the Sunshine Act, N.J.S. 10:4-12 and 13, that the Board of Education will now meet in executive session to discuss _____ and that matters discussed will be disclosed to the public as soon as the reason for confidentiality no longer exist.

17. Adjournment

Mr. Lifton motioned to adjourn. Mr. Glassberg seconded. All in favor.

Adjournment at 9:21 pm.