

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
METUCHEN, NEW JERSEY**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2024**

**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 Star Ledger, and by filing a copy with the Borough Clerk as prescribed by this law.

**4. Roll Call**

Mr. Bhatt	A	Dr. Johnson-Marcus	P
Ms. Cook	P	Ms. Killean	P
Mr. Derflinger	P	Mr. Lifton	P
Ms. Dimbeng	P	Dr. Spigner	P
Mr. Glassberg	P	Mr. Suss	P

**5. Showcase of Success**

- ❖ Edgar Middle School 8th Grade First Place Winners  
Adam Skvarcek and Jaymin Shah - Is Bounty the Quicker Picker Upper?
- ❖ Student Advisory Board - Alex Sidney and Nyome

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

**7. Presentations**

- ❖ Final Budget Hearing - Dr. Caputo and Michael Harvier
  - Motion to open public hearing

Ms. Killean motioned. Dr. Johnson-Marcus seconded. All in favor.

- Present budget
- Accept comment from public - No comment from the public.
- Motion to close public hearing

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

- ❖ District Goals Update - Dr. Caputo gave his presentation.

**8. Reports**

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

Ms. Cook gave a report on the Policy Committee.

Ms. Killean gave a report on the Curriculum Committee and the Extra-Curricular /Athletics Committee.

Mr. Glassberg gave a report on the Construction Committee.

Dr. Johnson-Marcus gave a report on the Human Relations Commission.

Dr. Spigner gave a report on the Equity Committee.

Mr. Suss gave a report on the Finance/Facilities Committee.

- ❖ Student Board Member Report - Ms. Dimbeng gave a report.

**9. Old Business - None**

**10. New Business - None**

**11. Approval of Minutes of the Board of Education Meetings**

April 9, 2024	Special Business Meeting (1)
April 9, 2024	Special Business Meeting (2)
April 9, 2024	Board Meeting

Mr. Lifton motioned. Dr. Johnson-Marcus seconded. Motion carried 8-0-0.

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

**13. Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools**

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

Oftentimes 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. Leave of Absence - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the leave of absence of Samantha Murphy, Special Education Teacher at Campbell School, effective approximately September 20, 2024 through approximately February 24, 2025.

**2. Leave of Absence - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the leave of absence of Elizabeth Rentenberg, ELA Resource Teacher at Campbell School, effective approximately September 12, 2024 through approximately February 7, 2025.

**3. Appointment - Additional Substitutes**

Move to approve the appointment of the additional substitutes for the 2023-2024 school year, effective April 17, 2024 pending completion of substitute certification, substitute training and criminal history clearance:

Last Name	First Name	Position	Rate
Hausser	Sarah	Paraprofessional substitute	\$16/hour
Connors	Cassidy	Paraprofessional substitute	\$16/hour
Porretto	Rebecca	Substitute teacher with certification	\$115/day

**4. Instructional Stipends - Extension**

Move to extend the following Edgar School instructional stipends for the 2023-2024 school year, from April 12, 2024 through June 19, 2024 as listed (Agenda 01/23/2024, Section 13 A10):

Name	Assignment	Instructional Stipend Prorated
Alicia Haller	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated
Veronica Araneo	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated
Sydney Rudin	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated
Christina Risitano	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated
Chrissy Kremer	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated

**5. Instructional Stipends - Extension**

Move to extend the following Metuchen High School instructional stipends for the 2023-2024 school year, from May 4, 2024, through May 14, 2024, as listed (Agenda 01/23/2024, Section 13 A22):

Name	Assignment	Instructional Stipend Prorated
Alexa Baird	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated
Jacquelyn Jacobi	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated
Lauren Kim	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated
Amanda Shorr	6th period instructional	\$8400.00 Prorated

**6. Appointment - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the appointment of Morgan Schleuss, 5th Grade Math/Science Teacher at Edgar Middle School, for the 2024-2025 school year, at a salary of \$60,559/year, Step 3A, effective August 26, 2024 through June 30, 2024.

Mr. Lifton motioned. Mr. Glassberg seconded. Motion carried 8-0-0.

-----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 29, 2024.

**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 24, 2024 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 December 31, 2023.

**4. School Health Insurance Fund (SHIF)**

Move to approve the Schools Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) as the district's medical and prescription insurance carrier effective July 1, 2024. Move to approve the attached health documents (see attachment).

**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 #
4/17/2024	4/17/2024	ASCD/NJASCD Whole Child Conference	Herzog, Tania	Central Office	\$149	other	
5/3/2024	5/3/2024	Sustainability Summit	Divanno, Rachel	Edgar	\$89.18	FFPI	24-139
5/9/2024	5/9/2024	Engaging Students in Middle School Civics	North, Jennifer	Edgar	0	No cost	
5/17/2024	5/17/2024	Orton Gillingham for Speech Language Pathologists	Bianchi, Emily	Campbell	\$275	FFPI	24-143
5/17/2024	5/17/2024	Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines	Lewis, Patricia	Edgar	0	No cost	

5/31/ 2024	5/31/ 2024	NJTESOL NJBE Systems of Support Multilingual Learners Spring Conference 2024	Kandel, Stephanie	Moss	\$395	FFPI	24-140
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**6. Nonpublic Security Aid**

Move to approve the following nonpublic security aid for the 2023-2024 school year. These expenditures are required for the district to fulfill certain legal obligations under state legislation to administer federal or state funds provided to nonpublic schools within our jurisdiction.

School	Vendor	QTY	Item #	Description	Price	Total
Apple Montessori School	CDW-G	1	6732134	Airphone 7 Touch Screen Handset	\$1,808.96	\$1,808.96

**7. Technology Equipment Disposal**

Move to approve the disposal of the obsolete equipment on the attached manifest.

**8. Distribution of ESSA Title I Salary Funds**

Move to approve the use of ESSA Title I teacher salary funds for RTI Math Teacher Tomasz Sobieniak, not to exceed \$33,792.00 in salary and \$21,672 in benefits for the 2023-2024 school year.

**9. Adoption of the 2024-2025 School District Budget**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education must adopt and submit a 2024-2025 school district budget to the New Jersey Department of Education.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Metuchen Board of Education adopt the 2024-2025 school district budget as follows:

	Appropriations	Local Tax Levy
<b>Total General Fund</b>	\$54,644,529	\$44,204,044
<b>Total Special Revenue Fund</b>	\$1,351,514	
<b>Total Debt Service Fund</b>	\$7,099,561	\$4,156,779

The supporting documentation of the budget included an itemization of certain expenditures required under administrative regulations. Maximum travel budget is established at \$90,000. Travel includes professional development that takes place outside the District.

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education is requesting authority to utilize \$278,415 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.

Included in the general fund budget is \$5,700,000 to be withdrawn from the board of education's approved Capital Reserve Account to supplement the approved November 8, 2022 referendum of \$84,436,225 for the Moss Elementary School, Edgar Middle School, Metuchen High School and Campbell Elementary School improvements authorized by the referendum. The additional Capital Reserve funds are needed in addition to the approved \$84,436,225 for the capital projects because costs are now higher than expected due to inflationary economic forces since the development of the costs pre-referendum.

**10. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING USE OF INVESTMENT EARNINGS FOR DEBT SERVICE**

**WHEREAS**, The Board of Education of the Borough of Metuchen in the County of Middlesex, New Jersey has investment earnings on its School Bonds, dated July 18, 2023 (the "Bonds"), that are not needed to be reserved to pay to the Federal Government arbitrage rebate in accordance with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and the Board's covenants made with respect to the Bonds; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-4.2(e), a board of education may by resolution authorize interest earning to be transferred to the debt service fund or the general fund in its discretion; and

**WHEREAS** this Board has now determined it to be in the best interest of the school district to utilize \$480,000 of interest earned on the Bonds for the payment of debt service on the Bonds;

**Now, Therefore, be it resolved by this Board, as follows:**

**Section 1.** \$480,000 of interest earnings on the Bonds shall be transferred from the Capital Projects Fund 30 to the Debt Service Fund 40 for the payment of debt service due on the Bonds;

**Section 2.** This resolution shall go into effect immediately.

Mr. Suss motioned. Dr. Spigner seconded. Motion carried 8-0-0.

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

**C. POLICY**

**Motion/Second/Comments/Roll Call**

**1. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying**

Move to affirm the findings of the previously reported case.

- METHS031824001
- EMS040824001

**2. Suspensions**

The Board hereby acknowledges receipt of the suspension report summary for April 5, 2024 - April 19, 2024.

Ms. Cook motioned. Dr. Derflinger seconded. Motion carried 8-0-0.

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

**D. CURRICULUM**  
**Motion/Second/Comments/Roll Call**

**1. 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	No. of Subs needed
MHS	Jostens Yearbook Cover Workshop	Grade 11; We are planning next year's yearbook with my incoming editors.	Adam Levy	5/17/ 2024	8	\$0	1 sub needed
MHS	Campbell Elementary School	Grade 11-12; The Science National Honor Society is bringing students to Campbell School to teach science lessons in Mr. Nolde's science classes. Students are creating their own lessons about science topics of their choice.	Ryan Clapp	5/28/ 2024	21	\$80	1 sub needed
MHS	Six Flags	Grade 12; Senior Class Trip- Students have facilitated fundraisers throughout the school year to raise monies for their final trip as students before graduation.	Emily Caponigro, Alexa Baird, Nickolas Vosinas, Anais Ortega, Anna Girin, Christopher Giddes, Sean Rappleyea, Jacquelyn Jacobi, Mark Mooney, Adam Levy	5/29/ 2024	176	\$0	10 sub needed

MHS	The Plaza, Metuchen	Grades 7-12; This is our annual District Jazz Festival, held on the Plaza in Metuchen each year. It is a showcase of all of our jazz programs from 7-12 grade along with collaborations with the MHS Chamber Orchestra. This is the 5th year we have held this.	John Messenger, John Flynn, Chris McEwan	6/5/2024	75	\$250	no subs needed
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**2. Curriculum Writers - Revision**

Move to rescind and approve the following curriculum writers and amounts for the 2023-2024 school year:

Subject	Author	Amount
<b>Rescind:</b> Algebra 1 (Grade 7/8/9)	<b>Rescind:</b> Emily Caponigro	\$650
<b>Approve:</b> Algebra 1 (Grade 7/8/9)	<b>Approve:</b> Danielle Kennedy	\$650

**3. Curriculum Document**

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

Curriculum Document	
Subject	Grades
US II	9-12

Mr. Derflinger motioned. Ms. Cook seconded. Motion carried 8-0-0.

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

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

**15. Announcements** - Ms. Cook and Dr. Johnson-Marcus 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 9:33 pm.