

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
METUCHEN, NEW JERSEY**

**TUESDAY, MAY 14, 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, and by filing a copy with the Borough Clerk as prescribed by this law.

**4. Roll Call**

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

**5. Showcase of Success**

❖ MHS Jazz Ensemble

The MHS Jazz Ensemble is one of the most recognized performing scholastic jazz ensembles in the state. They are 9-time NJAJE State Jazz Prelims Bronze Medalists, 5-time NJAJE State Jazz Finals Silver Medalists, and most recently a NJAJE State Jazz Prelims Gold Medalist. On Saturday, April 27, they placed third with a gold rating while hosting the NJAJE State Jazz Finals Competition, competing against 27 bands from throughout the state. This year the band also had the opportunity to perform with grammy and tony award-winning jazz musicians Wilbur Whitman, Nathan Ecklund and Wayne Escoffery. The MHS Jazz Ensemble is known throughout the state as honoring classic jazz big band and swing, studying the great band leaders such as Duke Ellington and Count Basie. Today they will be performing a medley of Ella Fitzgerald hits featuring vocalist, and NJAJE State Outstanding Soloist Winner, Katherine Meyer.

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

**7. Presentations**

- ❖ Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights/HIB Official Grade 2022-2023 SY - Dr. Caputo read the results.

**8. Reports**

- ❖ President's Report - None
- ❖ Superintendent's Report - Dr. Caputo gave a short report.
- ❖ Committee Reports

Mr. Glassberg gave a report on the Construction Committee.

Mr. Suss gave a report on the Extra-Curricular Committee and Finance/Facilities Committee.

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

**9. Old Business** - None

**10. New Business** - None

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

April 24, 2024	Special Business Meeting (1)
April 24, 2024	Special Business Meeting (2)
April 24, 2024	Board Meeting

Mr. Lifton motioned. Mr. Derflinger seconded. Motion carried 6-0-1. Mr. Bhatt abstained.

**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)*

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. Reappointment - Non-Tenured Administrators**

Move to approve the reappointment of the following non-tenured administrators for the 2024-2025 school year as shown on Attachment 1 (first page).

**2. Reappointment - Non-Tenured Teachers**

Move to approve the reappointment of the following non-tenured teachers for the 2024-2025 school year as shown on Attachment 1 (second through fourth pages).

**3. Leave of Absence - Custodian**

Move to approve the leave of absence of Magdaline Jean-Gilles, Custodian at Edgar School, effective April 17, 2024 through approximately June 3, 2024.

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

Move to approve the leave of absence of Megan Shapiro, First Grade Teacher at Campbell School, effective approximately October 4, 2024 through approximately May 1, 2025.

**5. Salary Adjustment - Custodial Longevity**

Move to approve a change in total salary for Angela Moreno, Custodian, from \$48,422/year to \$48,636/year as a result of completing 15 years of service, effective June 1, 2024.

**6. Retirement - School Secretary**

Move to accept, with regret, the retirement of Kathleen Mallory, School Secretary at Metuchen High School, effective August 1, 2024.

**7. Appointment- Additional Substitutes**

Move to approve the appointment of additional substitutes for the 2023-2024 school year, effective May 14, 2024, pending completion of substitute training and criminal history clearance:

Last Name	First Name	Position	Rate
Graziano	Judith	Substitute teacher with certification	\$115/day
Graf	Kenneth	Substitute teacher with certification	\$115/day
Hogrebe	Tony	Substitute teacher with certification	\$115/day

**8. Leave of Absence - Bus Driver**

Move to approve the leave of absence of Anna Szwast, Bus Driver, from May 6, 2024 through approximately July 31, 2024.

**9. Appointment - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the appointment of Tara Siesputowski, LDTC at Edgar Middle School, for the 2024-2025 school year, at a salary of \$64,759/year, Step 3G, effective August 26, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

**10. Leave of Absence - Secretary**

Move to approve the leave of absence of Kate Eosso, Campbell School and Special Services Secretary, from April 26, 2024 to approximately June 10, 2024.

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

Move to approve the leave of absence of Michele Herold, Integrated Preschool Teacher at Moss School, effective August 26, 2024 through approximately February 3, 2025.

Mr. Lifton motioned. Mr. Glassberg seconded. Motion carried 7-0-0.  
Dr. Caputo wished Kathy Mallory a happy and healthy retirement.

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

**B. FINANCE**

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

**1. 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 #
5/3/2024	5/3/2024	NJPSA MLL Leadership Committee	Dougherty, Natalie	Central Office	0	No cost	
5/22/2024	5/22/2024	Building Thinking Classrooms	Kremer, Christine	EMS	\$299	FFPI	24-145
5/31/2024	5/31/2024	NJ TESOL Spring Conference	Fisher, Janelle	Moss	\$404	FFPI	24-144
6/1/2024	8/14/2024	Elevate Conference 2024	Spring, Christina	CES	\$57	FFPI	25-003
6/3/2024	6/7/2024	Orton Gillingham Online Training	Wolford, Alexis	EMS	\$1,500	Other	
6/6/2024	6/6/2024	Behavior Blueprint: Designing a Space that Says "Yes!"	Young, Kelsee	Moss	0	No cost	
6/7/2024	6/7/2024	NJCIE Inclusion Leadership Conference Summer 2024	Omark, Lindsey	CES	\$195	FFPI	24-146
6/7/2024	6/7/2024	NJCIE Inclusion Leadership Conference Summer 2024	Pasquale, Jennifer	CES	\$175	FFPI	24-174

**2. Resolution - NJSIG**

The Metuchen Board of Education hereby approves the submission of a grant for the 2024 Safety Grant Program through the New Jersey Schools Insurance Group's ERIC NORTH Sub-fund for the purposes described in the application in the amount of \$6523.00 for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

**3. Parent Paid Tuition Rates for SY 2024-2025**

Move to approve the Parent Paid Tuition Rates for SY 2024-2025 as follows:

Grade	2024-2025
Kindergarten	\$6,722.00
Grades 1-8	\$13,446.00
Grades 9-12	\$17,065.00
<b>Children of Employees</b>	
Kindergarten	\$3,360.00
Grades 1-8	\$6,722.00
Grades 9-12	\$8,532.00

**4. Transportation Jointures and Individual Routes 2024-2025**

Move to approve the transportation jointures and individual routes for the 2024-2025 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, South

Plainfield School District, Edison School District, Piscataway School District, and Woodbridge School District.

**5. Transportation Providers 2024-2025**

Move to approve South Plainfield School District, Durham School Services, Garas Transportation, D&L Bus Services, Mercy Transportation, Road to Success, Irvin Raphael Inc, Shamrock Stagecoach, Layla Trans, Passaic Valley Coach, Raritan Valley Bus, DeCamp Bus, and Villani Bus as transportation providers for the 2024-2025 school year.

**6. 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 May 14, 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.

**7. Appointment- Clinical Therapeutic Counseling and Behavioral Services**

Move to approve the appointment of the following to provide therapeutic mental health services for the 2024-2025 school year:

- Effective School Solutions- to provide Therapeutic Mental Health Services for an annual contract of \$308,700/year
- Wellspring Center for Prevention to provide counseling services for an annual rate of \$97,920/year

Mr. Suss motioned. Dr. Spigner seconded. Motion carried 7-0-0.

-----**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 22, 2024 - May 10, 2024.

**2. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying**

Move to affirm the findings of the previously reported case.

- METHS032824001
- EMS041824001

**3. District Calendar**

Move to approve the Parent-Teacher Conference dates for the 2024-2025 district calendar.

Mr. Lifton motioned. Mr. Suss seconded. Motion carried 7-0-0.

-----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- Transp	Number of Subs Needed
MHS	Middlesex County College	Music and Art students participated in the Middlesex County Teen Arts Festival and the following groups/students were selected to move onto the next round which is the NJ State Teen Arts Festival: 2 instrumental groups, 1 solo musical theatre, 1 solo musical theatre, 1 solo vocal, 1 2D visual art.	Ashley Jaye, John Messenger, Kelly Murphy, Stefeny Krombholz	6/4/24	40	\$140(bus) / \$200(truck)	1 sub needed
Moss	Campbell Elementary School	Grade K; Kindergarten students will tour Campbell School to meet principal and other administration/staff, first grade teachers and see where they will be going to first grade in September.	Stephanie Kandel, Emily Sporer, Sarah Jensen, Janelle Fisher, Jennifer Korpon, Karen Brock, Pam Malone, Sarah Masters	6/3/24 Session 1: 9:30a.m .-12:35p .m. Session 2 from 10:30a. m.-1:35 p.m.	100	\$120	1 sub needed
MHS	Campbell Elementary School	Grades 9 and 11; MHS Tree Ambassadors will be making presentations and leading a tree planting event at CES and EMS	Yoko Kato	5/22/24	7	\$90	1 sub needed

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CES	What's the Scoop	Grades 1-4; Community based instruction to What's the Scoop to generalize communication goals outside of the classroom and practice attending within the community. SL 2.1; SL 2.2; SL 2.6	Samantha Murphy, Brian Jeney, Lori Anne Diserio, Kelly Vissichelli, Patricia Koybashi, Emily Almeida, Debbie DeCerbo, Dorothea Parker, Abeera Omarzai, Rose Di Leonardo, Kinjal Vakharia, Emily Bianchi, Isabella Massaro	6/7/24	9	\$0	no subs needed
MHS	Moss School	Grades 9-12; Lessons on S.E.L. The Breaking the Chain Through Education club will be coming to Moss School to do lessons on Social Emotional Learning. The Moss students and the MHS students will be developing a puppet show based on Zones of Regulation. The story will involve someone unable to go to school and his/her friends get together to help them be able to go to school. As they go through the story, they will change the outfit on the puppet to reflect the emotions they are feeling. The children will then perform their puppet show for the other groups.	Evan Robbins	5/22/24	25	\$0	1 sub needed
CES	Yogi Berra Museum	Grade 3; Students will work in teams to challenge themselves with physical obstacles, think critically about how athletes and others have overcome adversity, discuss famous "Yogi-isms" meanings and playful language, learn about batting averages using real baseball cards and consider what it means to fail at the plate 70% of the time	Rubinowitsch, Hunt Salit, Bethe Anderson, Zalek, Wong Delaney, LoPresti	3/4/25 3/5/25 3/6/25 3/7/25	46 46 46 46	\$0 \$0 \$0 \$0	no subs needed
CES	Edgar Middle School	Grade 4; Students will attend 5th Grade	Tom Yakowenko	6/6/24	176	\$200	no subs needed

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		Orientation.					
MHS	Norvin Green-Wyanokie High Point	<p>Grades 8-12; Students in the Outdoor Wellness Club will participate in a hiking trip to Norvin Green State Forest. The Norvin Green Forest is located in the New Jersey Highlands near the Wanaque reservoir and offers a variety of rugged terrain for hikes with outstanding views. Wyanokie High Point has one of the best views in the state. Students will be able to demonstrate proper hiking techniques on rugged terrain, focusing on safety, pace-setting, and efficient energy use. Students will also practice Leave No Trace principles to minimize impact on the natural environment during and after the hike. Students will improve physical fitness through hiking, focusing on building endurance and leg strength on the forest's rugged terrain. Students will also understand the experience mental health benefits of spending time outdoors, including stress reduction and improved mood.</p>	Anna Girin, Danielle Cermak, Nick Vosinas, Lauren Scala	6/1/24	40	\$0	no subs needed

**2. Faculty Training**

Move to approve the following staff to provide faculty training for the 2023-2024 school year, at the rate of \$49/hour:

Name	Workshop	# of hours
Dana Donatelli	Suicide Awareness and Prevention	2
Samantha Rubin	Suicide Awareness and Prevention	2

**3. In-service Trainers**

Move to approve the following certified staff to provide Professional Development for the In-service day on May 24, 2024, to be paid from ESSER grant funds at the rate of \$49/hour:

Name	Workshop	# hours
Mark Mooney	CPR/AED and First Aid training	6
Julie Youngman	CPR/AED and First aid training	6
Nicholas Zaneto	CPR/AED and First aid training	6
Christina Dybas	Safety Care Recertification	5.5
Isabella Massaro	Safety Care Recertification	5.5



Dana Donatelli	Suicide Awareness and Prevention	2
Anne Burnett	Co-Teaching Best Practices	4
Amanda Shorr	Co-Teaching Best Practices	4
Lindsey Omark	Embedding SEL	4
Jennifer Pasquale	Embedding SEL	4
Patricia Lewis	Maximizing Instructional Opportunities for Paraprofessionals	4

**4. Professional Development - Non-certificated Staff**

Move to approve the following non-certified staff to provide Professional Development for the In-service day on May 24, 2024, at the rate of \$25.09/hour.

Name	Workshop	# of hours
Hope Serratelli	Maximizing Instructional Opportunities for Paraprofessionals	4

**5. Professional Development Presenter**

Move to approve Dr. Eddie Cohen of The Energy Museum, to provide Professional Development for the In-service day on May 24, 2024, at the rate of \$800/day, to be paid with FFPI funds as shown:

Last Name	First Name	Amount	FFPI Number
Clapp	Ryan	\$42.11	24-147
Green	Samantha	\$42.11	24-148
Kato	Yoko	\$42.11	24-149
Keagle	Joseph (Joe)	\$42.11	24-150
Klee	Martin	\$42.11	24-151
Lezama	Ann	\$42.11	24-152
Jaworski	Trey	\$42.11	24-153
Wang	Jing Jing	\$42.11	24-154
Korellis	Lauren	\$42.11	24-155
Nalepa	Lindsay	\$42.11	24-156
DiVanno	Rachel	\$42.11	24-157
Robbins (NT3)	Melissa	\$42.11	24-158
Ronk	Ed	\$42.11	24-159
Southern (NT1)	Andrew	\$42.11	24-160
Wetzel	Ginny	\$42.11	24-161
Risitano (NT4)	Christina	\$42.11	24-162
Haller (NT2)	Alicia	\$42.11	24-163
McLaughlin	Beth	\$42.11	24-164
Van de Castle	Karen	\$42.11	24-165

**6. Professional Development Presenter**

Move to approve Jiannan Cheng, Assistant Professor of Music and Orchestral Activities from Rowan University, to provide Professional Development for the In-service day on May 24, 2024 at the rate of \$300/day, to be paid using FFPI funds as show:

Last Name	First Name	Amount	FFPI Number
Messenger	John	\$37.50	24-166
Flynn	John	\$37.50	24-167
Keyes	Robyn	\$37.50	24-168
McEwan	Christopher	\$37.50	24-169
Gallagher	Jordyn	\$37.50	24-170
Stofa-Krombholz	Stefeny	\$37.50	24-171
Peckhardt	Christofer	\$37.50	24-172
Thomas	Margie	\$37.50	24-173

**7. Literacy Coach**

Move to approve BDO, Deanne Opatosky, as the Literacy Coach for the 2023-2024 school year using ESSA Title IIA funds not to exceed \$30,630 and using ESSER III funds not to exceed \$4,170 (Agenda 09/12/23, Section 13, B3).

Mr. Derflinger motioned. Dr. Johnson-Marcus seconded. Motion carried 7-0-0.

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

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

**15. Announcements** - Mr. Bhatt 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. Dr. Johnson-Marcus seconded. All in favor.

Adjournment at 8:33pm.