

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
METUCHEN, NEW JERSEY**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

**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	Ms. Killean	P
Ms. Cheatham	P	Mr. Lifton	P
Mr. Derflinger	A	Ms. Shrestha	P
Mr. Glassberg	P	Dr. Spigner	A
Dr. Johnson-Marcus	P	Mr. Suss	P

**5. Showcase of Success** - None

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

**7. Presentations**

❖ Review of Baseline Data, Maintenance and Custodial, Transportation - Mr. Harvier gave his presentation. Board members made comments and asked questions.

❖ HIB and SSDS Report - Q1 September 2024-December 2024 - Dr. Caputo gave his presentation.

**8. Reports**

- ❖ President's Report - Dr. Johnson-Marcus gave a short announcement.
- ❖ Superintendent's Report - None
- ❖ Committee Reports

Mr. Glassberg gave a report on the Construction Committee.  
Ms. Killean gave a report on the Extra-Curricular Committee.  
Mr. Suss gave a report on the Finance Committee.

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

**9. Old Business** - None

**10. New Business** - None

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

January 28, 2025	Special Business Meeting (1)
January 28, 2025	Special Business Meeting (2)
January 28, 2025	Board Meeting

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

**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 Emily Presuto, 5th Grade Teacher at Edgar School, effective approximately June 6, 2025 through approximately December 4, 2025.

**2. Appointment - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the appointment of Emily Almeida, Special Education Teacher at Moss School, for the 2025-2026 school year, at a salary of \$61,000/year, Step 1A, effective August 27, 2025, pending receipt of NJ certification, through June 30, 2026.

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

Move to approve the leave of absence of Samantha Palermo, Student Assistance Counselor for Metuchen Public Schools, effective approximately May 2, 2025 through approximately December 4, 2025.

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

Move to approve the leave of absence of Christina Risitano, Special Education Teacher at Edgar School, effective approximately April 25, 2025 through approximately December 4, 2025.

**5. Retirement- Certificated Staff**

Move to accept, with regret, the retirement of Robert Strauss, Campbell School Teacher, effective June 30, 2025.

**6. Salary Adjustment – Custodial Longevity**

Move to approve a change in total salary for Jonathan Alijewicz, Custodian, from \$51,293/year to \$51,539/year as a result of completing 20 years of service, effective March 1, 2025.

**7. Special Education Substitute**

Move to approve the following Child Study Team/School Speech Language Pathology substitute at the professional rate of \$50/hour:

Laurie Walker
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**8. Appointment - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the appointment of Danielle Pallotta, Kindergarten Teacher at Moss School, for the 2025-2026 school year, at a salary of \$64,050/year, Step 3A, effective August 27, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**9. Appointment - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the appointment of Jessica Sorrenti, Kindergarten Teacher at Moss School, for the 2025-2026 school year, at a salary of \$65,625/year, Step 3E, effective August 27, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

**10. Leave of Absence - Paraprofessional**

Move to approve the leave of absence of Tina Huber, Paraprofessional at Moss School, effective February 3, 2025 through approximately February 14, 2025.

**11. Appointment - Certificated Staff**

Move to approve the appointment of Ryan Krum, Kindergarten Teacher at Moss School, for the 2025-2026 school year, at a salary of \$61,000/year, Step 1A, effective August 27, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**12. Appointment – Additional Event Staff**

Move to approve the following additional Event Staff for the 2024-2025 school year, effective January 28, 2025 (Agenda 8/8/23, Section 13, A10):

Michelle Schutz
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**13. Appointment of Substitutes**

Move to approve the appointment of substitutes for the 2024-2025 school year as listed on the chart below, effective February 10, 2025, pending completion of substitute training and criminal history clearance:

<b>2024-2025 Substitutes for Board Approval 2/11/25</b>
Pay Rates - \$105/day - Substitute with 30+ college credits
\$110/day - Substitute with bachelor's degree (no teacher cert)

\$115/day - NJ Teacher Certification	
\$16/hour - Paraprofessional Substitute	
\$16/hour - Secretary Substitute	
\$200/day - Nurse Substitute	
<b>Sub Name</b>	<b>Certification/Sub Category</b>
Diane Battaglia	Substitute paraprofessional
Danielle Pallotta	Substitute with teacher certification
Noelle Cammarano	Substitute paraprofessional
Melynda Johnson	Substitute with college degree

**14. Appointment – Additional Lunch Aide**

Move to approve the following additional lunch aide in the Metuchen Public Schools for the 2024-2025 school year, effective February 12, 2025, pending criminal history clearance:

Name	Rate
Constance Price	\$16/hour

**15. Leave of Absence - Extension**

Move to extend the leave of absence of Michele Brinkerhoff, School Nurse at Metuchen High School, through approximately May 7, 2025 (Agenda 1/28/25, Section 13, A10).

**16. Leave Replacement Extension**

Move to extend the appointment of Sue Fackler, leave replacement for Michele Brinkerhoff, School Nurse at Metuchen High School, through approximately May 7, 2025 (Agenda 1/28/25, Section 13, A17).

**17. Retirement - Certificated Staff**

Move to accept, with regret, the retirement of Jeanne Hughes, Edgar School Special Education Teacher, effective June 30, 2025.

**18. Edgar Spring Coaches**

Move to rescind and approve the appointments of the following coaches for the Spring 2024-2025 school sports session at Edgar School: (Agenda 5/28/24, Section 13, A5):

Name	Assignment	Stipend
<b>Rescind:</b> Drew Bandola	Softball Coach	\$3,700
<b>Approve:</b> Paul Mruczinski	Softball Coach	\$3,700

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

Dr. Caputo wished Robert Strauss and Jean Hughes a happy and healthy retirement.

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

**B. FINANCE**

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

**1. Settlement Agreement**

Move to approve the settlement agreement for Student #2028029.

**2. 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 #
1/30/2025	1/30/2025	Advanced K-12 Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Training (In-person) - Middlesex	Evans, Neyda	Edgar	\$12.90	Other	
2/6/2025	2/6/2025	AI in Education, Grades 4-12 ELA: Problems, Potentials and Possible Futures	Thompson, Lauren	Edgar	\$180	FFPI	25-110
2/19/2025	2/19/2025	Restorative Justices: Tier 3	Wang, Jingjing	MHS	\$0	No cost	
2/20/2025	2/20/2025	Meet Individual Needs in the Classroom: Utilizing Universal Design for Learning	Lewis, Patricia	Central Office	\$0	No cost	
2/20/2025	2/22/2025	NJMEA: All State Band Chaperone	Messenger, John	MHS	\$0	No cost	
2/25/2025	2/25/2025	Advanced K-12 Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Training (In-person) - Morris County	Azevedo, Suzy	Edgar	\$0	No cost	
2/27/2025	2/27/2025	Enjoy Thinking: Reimagining Elementary Math Education	Salit, Jaclyn	Campbell	\$100.34	FFPI	25-104
2/27/2025	2/27/2025	Reimaging Elementary Math Education	Fitzgibbon, David	Campbell	\$90	FFPI	25-103
3/5/2025	3/5/2025	Third Annual New Jersey Literacy Summit	Bormann, Kristina	Central Office	\$0	No cost	
3/5/2025	3/5/2025	Guiding Pre-K and Kindergarten Students to Better Behavior and Increased Learning	Young, Kelsee	Moss	\$295	FFPI	25-107
3/13/2025	3/13/2025	Building Thinking Classrooms with Peter Liljedahl	Kremer, Christine	Edgar	\$440	FFPI	25-102
3/13/2025	3/13/2025	Building Thinking Classrooms with Peter Liljedahl	Vergara, Laura	Edgar	\$440	FFPI	25-108
4/4/2025	4/4/2025	What's New in Young Adult Literature & How to Use It in Your Program (Grades 6-12)	Wagenblast, Eileen	MHS	\$325	FFPI	25-105
4/10/2025	4/10/2025	NJ PIEP Preschool Inclusion Leadership Conference	Lewis, Patricia	Edgar	\$45	Other	
4/25/2025	4/25/2025	PURPOSEFUL PLAY-BASED LEARNING: Enhance Students' Academic Progress and Social-Emotional Growth (Preschool, PreK, and Kindergarten)	Young, Kelsee	Moss	\$295	FFPI	25-109
5/22/2025	5/22/2025	Intersectionality: Shaping Experiences and Creating	Park, Ellen	MHS	\$333	FFPI	25-106

		Opportunities					
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**3. Acceptance of the 2023-2024 School Year Audit**

Move to accept the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), the accompanying Report to Management, and the synopsis prepared by the Superintendent, the Business Administrator, and Suplee, Clooney & Company, with no corrective action necessary for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2024.

**4. Resolution**

**WHEREAS**, the Metuchen Board of Education (“Board”) requires the services of a vendor to provide online auction services to sell the Board’s personal property which is no longer needed (“Services”); and

**WHEREAS**, GovDeals, an online auction provider, has a contract (012821-GDI) through the Sourcewell Cooperative to provide the Services; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of the contract is anticipated to be below the Board’s bid threshold; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board has determined it is in its best interests to award a contract for the Services to GovDeals through the Sourcewell Cooperative.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board hereby awards a contract for the Services to GovDeals in accordance with the terms and conditions of GovDeals’ Sourcewell contract.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Business Administrator is authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the purposes of this resolution.

**5. Out of District Placement**

Move to approve the placement of Student #2028029 at Cornerstone Day School for the 2024-2025 school year, at the dailey rate of \$472.75 with a pro-rated annual tuition of \$41,602, effective approximately February 12, 2025.

**6. Network Equipment**

Move to approve the expenditure of \$84,432.59 to Questivity to Erate for Network Equipment.

**7. Equipment Disposal**

Move to approve the disposal of obsolete equipment on the attachment.

**8. 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 February 11, 2025 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.

Mr. Suss motioned. Ms. Killean 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 January 27, 2025 - February 7, 2025.

**2. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying**

Move to affirm the findings of the previously reported case.

- EMS121824002

Dr. Johnson-Marcus motioned. Mr. Bhatt 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- Transportation	Number of Subs Needed
MHS	Jenkinson's Aquarium	Grades 9-12; Math and Community Based Instructions: Students will plan details of the trip financially and with time considerations; English Students will research and write about one aspect of the trip, including related career options, underwater ecosystems, specific sea life, or environmental sustainability.	Sarah Karger, Steve Cichetti, Adero Solomon, Ms. Sneedse 4-5 paraprofessionals	2/25/ 2025	50	\$0	4 subs needed
MHS	Brooklyn Bridge, Tenement Museum, Little Italy	Grade 10; This will show the immigrant experience in the late 1800 and early 1900's. This is part of the U.S. 1 curriculum.	Evan Robbins, Steve Cichetti, TBD	3/25/ 2025	70	\$0	5 subs needed

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MHS	Liberty Science Center	Grade 9; Instructional Objectives for the Liberty Science Center Trip Explore the Mechanisms of Gene Editing in Biotechnology Students will analyze CRISPR Cas9 as a gene-editing tool to treat genetic disorders like Cystic Fibrosis, connecting to Unit 9: Gene Expression and Biotechnology objectives on DNA-protein interactions and biotechnological solutions (HS-LS1-1, HS-LS3-1).	Lindsay Nalepa, Ryan Clapp, Jordan Leitner, Lauren Kim Mark Mooney Anais Ortega Nickolas Vosinas Nicholas Zaneto Seans Rappleyea Michael Warnock	3/26/2025	107	\$0	10 subs needed
MHS	Stabler Arena - Lehigh University	Grade 9-12; FRC Robotics District Championships	Kevin Smedley	4/3/2025	30	\$919.60	1 sub needed
			Kevin Smedley	4/4/2025	30	\$919.60	1 sub needed
			Kevin Smedley	4/5/2025 (Saturday)			no sub needed
MHS	The Eden School	Grades 9-12; Students will travel to the Eden School and Eden Autism Services to perform for students and adults with autism. Students will discuss the importance of community engagement and acceptance of those with special needs. Students will also be informed of the role that music plays for many individuals with autism.	Christopher McEwan and Jordyn Gallagher	4/8/2025	23	\$100	1 sub needed

**2. Leadership Intern**

Move to approve Jennifer Pasquale to complete internship requirements for the William Paterson University, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant Endorsement Program at Campbell School, with Dr. Karla Riera as her site-based mentor for the 2024-2025 school year.

**3. Professional Development 2024-2025**

Move to approve Living YES, LLC to provide Professional Development for Social Emotional Learning SEL for the 2024-2025 school year, not to exceed \$1,800/year.

**4. Student Observer**

Move to approve the placement of the following student observer from Rutgers Mason Gross School of the Arts in the Metuchen Public School District for the 2024-2025 school year:

Name	School	Cooperating Teacher
Antonio Guzman	MHS	John Messenger



**5. Curriculum Guides**

Move to approve the implementation of the following revised curriculum guides:

<b>Subject/Course</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Social Studies: Civics and the Foundation of Our Nation	6
Social Studies: Ancient Civilizations & the Role of the Citizen	7
Social Studies: Ancient and Medieval World History	8
English Language Arts	11

**6. Field Experience**

Move to approve Dilfuza Latipova to complete a four-hour field experience placement at Campbell School with Erin Santasieri as part of an alternate route program at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education, for the 2024-2025 school year.

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

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

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

**15. Announcements** - Ms. Cheatham 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**

Ms. Killean and Mr. Lifton respectfully acknowledged the death of a well loved educator.

Dr. Johnson-Marcus motioned to adjourn. Mr. Bhatt seconded. All in favor.

Adjournment at 8:44 pm.