

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
METUCHEN, NEW JERSEY**

**THE ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES
of the Metuchen Board of Education**

Metuchen High School
400 Grove Avenue
Metuchen, NJ 08840

**Tuesday, January 6, 2026
7:00pm**

1. Call to Order by Pro-Tem Chair, Michael A. Harvier, Board Secretary

2. Sunshine Statement and Announcement of Purpose 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.

3. Flag Salute

4. Administration of Required Oaths to the Board Members Elected on November 4, 2025.

Jennifer Zimmerman and Alicia Killian recited their required oaths aloud, administered by Mr. Harvier. Eric Suss was absent.

5. Roll Call

Mr. Bhatt	P	Ms. Killean	P
Ms. Cheatham	P	Ms. Michaels-LaMorte	P
Mr. Derflinger	P	Dr. Spigner	P
Mr. Glassberg	P	Mr. Suss	A
Dr. Johnson-Marcus	P	Ms. Zimmerman	P

6. Announcement of Election Results

Candidates in Ballot Order	Total Votes
Alicia Killian	4,500
Eric Suss	4,325
Jennifer Zimmerman	4,309

7. Pro-Tem Chair Will Conduct Election of the Board President

Mr. Harvier asked for nominations for Board President. Mr. Glassberg nominated Dr. Johnson-Marcus. Dr. Spigner seconded.

Votes for Board President

Board Member	Vote	Board Member	Vote
Mr. Bhatt	Yes	Ms. Killean	Yes
Ms. Cheatham	Yes	Ms. Michaels-LaMorte	Yes
Mr. Derflinger	Yes	Dr. Spigner	Yes
Mr. Glassberg	Yes	Mr. Suss	Absent
Dr. Johnson-Marcus	Yes	Ms. Zimmerman	Yes

8. President Takes Chair

Dr. Johnson-Marcus takes chair.

9. Board President Will Conduct Election of the Board Vice-President

Dr. Johnson- Marcus nominates Mr. Deflinger for the Board Vice President. Ms. Cheatham seconded.

Votes for Board Vice President

Board Member	Vote	Board Member	Vote
Mr. Bhatt	Yes	Ms. Killean	Yes
Ms. Cheatham	Yes	Ms. Michaels-LaMorte	Yes
Mr. Derflinger	Yes	Dr. Spigner	Yes
Mr. Glassberg	Yes	Mr. Suss	Absent
Dr. Johnson-Marcus	Yes	Ms. Zimmerman	Yes

10. Meeting Open to the Public on all Previous Items - None

11. Presentation/Discussions

Governor's Educators of the Year and Educational Services Professionals:

- Moss: Stephanie Kandel and Sandra Spinelli - Ms. Asprocolas gave a speech for the GEOY and the ESP for Moss School.
- Campbell: Erin Santasieri and Jodi Reiner - Dr. Cosatanza gave a speech for the GEOY and the ESP for Campbell School.
- Edgar: Rick Carter and Courtney Crawford - Dr. Caputo gave a speech for the GEOY and the ESP for Edgar School.
- MHS: Emily Caponigro and Dana Donatelli - Dr. Caputo gave a speech for the GEOY and the ESP for Metuchen High School.

Paraprofessional of the Year:

- Neha Jansari - Dr. Bonassisa gave a speech for the Paraprofessional of the year.

12. Remarks by President - Dr. Johnson-Marcus made remarks.

13. Report of Superintendent - Dr. Caputo gave remarks.

14. Committee Reports - None

15. Student Board Member Report

Ms. Michaels-LaMorte gave her student report.

16. Old Business - None

17. New Business

Gave an opportunity for the newly elected Board Member to speak.

18. Meeting Open to the Public - None

(for comments on the recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools)

19. Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Meetings

Move to approve the minutes of the following meetings:

December 16, 2025	Special Business Meeting (1)
December 16, 2025	Special Business Meeting (2)
December 16, 2025	Board Meeting

Dr. Johnson- Marcus motioned. Mr Bhatt seconded. Motion carried 7-0-1. Ms. Zimmerman abstained.

20. 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 Stephanie Kandel, Teacher at Moss School, effective January 12, 2026 through approximately February 10, 2026.

2. Rescind and Approve - Edgar Middle School Coaches

Move to rescind and approve the appointment of the following coaches for the 2025-2026 school year at Edgar Middle School (Agenda 05/27/2025, Section 13, A2):

Name	Assignment	Stipend
Rescind: Marcus Farris	Winter Boys Basketball Head Coach	\$3,774
Approve: John Butler	Winter Boys Basketball Head Coach	\$3,774

3. Appointment - Leave Replacement

Move to approve the appointment of Rheanna Andersen, Leave Replacement for Stephanie Kandel, Teacher at Moss School, effective approximately January 7, 2026 through approximately February 10, 2026 at a rate of \$329.73/day.

4. Appointment - Leave Replacement

Move to approve the appointment of Lisa Lombardi, Leave Replacement for Lindsay Nalepa, Teacher at Metuchen High School, effective approximately January 12, 2026 through approximately February 10, 2026 at a rate of \$329.73/day.

5. Extension - Leave Replacement

Move to approve the extended appointment of Bruce Peragallo, Leave Replacement for Michelle Huff, Teacher at Edgar Middle School and Metuchen High School, through approximately January 23, 2026 (Agenda 12/16/25, Section 13, A2).

6. Resolution - Administrative Leave

Be it resolved, employee #102225 was placed on administrative leave with pay on December 23, 2025.

7. Adjustment - Leave Replacement

Move to approve the adjusted end date of Maria DiLorenzo, Leave Replacement for Jessica Lanigan, Teacher at Metuchen High School, through January 14, 2026 (Agenda 10/14/25, Section 13, A12).

8. Appointment of Substitutes

Move to approve the appointment of substitutes for the 2025-2026 school year as listed on the chart below, effective January 7, 2026, pending completion of substitute training and criminal history clearance:

2025-2026 Substitutes for Board Approval 1/6/26	
Teacher sub with certification - \$125/day	
Teacher sub with bachelor's degree - \$120/day	
Teacher sub with 30+ credits - \$115/day	
Nurse sub - \$210/day	
Para sub - \$105/day	
Nurse 1:1 sub - \$280/day	
Sub Name	Certification/Sub Category
Tommy Jurcsek	Substitute with college credits
Brian Humbarger	Substitute with college degree

9. In-service Planning

Move to approve the following certified staff for In-service Planning on January 16, 2026, and to be paid at the hourly rate of \$51 / hour, as indicated below:

Staff Name	Topic	Not to exceed
Alyssa Dugasz	Google Forms Tips & Tricks	2.25 hours
John Messenger	Sight Reading Factory Simplified	2.25 hours
Karen Logan and Beth McLaughlin	Lumio	2.25 hours each
Caroline Forde	Peardeck	2.25 hours

Julia Vaughn	Classroom Screen	2.25 hours
Alexis Wolford	AAC Devices	2.25 hours
Sarah Valovcin & Katie Upshaw	Classroom Management Tech Hacks	2.25 hours each
Raquel Williams	AI-Powered Creativity for the World Language Classroom	2.25 hours
Emily Caponigro & Stephanie Tortolani	Teaching with Mathmedic	2.25 hours each
Lauren Thompson	Sidekick AI: Your New Co-Teacher!	2.25 hours
Andrea Agnone	Accessibility with AI: Supporting Diverse Learners	2.25 hours
Margo Banner & Jenn Gumbrecht	Charcoal Mindfulness	2.25 hours each
Julie Youngman & Mark Mooney	Volleyball	2.25 hours each
Beth Abbott	Board Games & Connections	2.25 hours
Bob Ulmer	Move & Refresh	2.25 hours
Nick Zaneto	Game, Set, PD! Pickleball Edition	2.25 hours
Beth McLaughlin & Karen Logan	Create with Cricut: Personalized Crafts for Staff	2.25 hours each
Julie Youngman, Molly Grant, Mark Mooney, Bob Ulmer, Nick Zaneto and Drew Bandola	CPR Training	2 hours each
Lindsey Nalepa and Emily Caponigro	Student Voice	2.25 hours each

10. Leave of Absence - Certificated Staff

Move to approve the leave of absence of Eileen Wagenblast, English Teacher at Metuchen High School, effective January 2, 2026 through approximately February 2, 2026.

11. Leave of Absence - Certificated Staff

Move to approve the leave of absence of Danielle Cermak, Teacher at Metuchen High School, effective January 27, 2026 through approximately February 27, 2026.

12. Retirement - Certificated Staff

Move to accept, with regret, the retirement of Michael Clarke, Teacher at Metuchen High School, effective June 30, 2026.

13. Rescind - Formal Mentor

Move to rescind the following formal mentor teacher to work with the following mentee teacher for the 2025-2026 school year(Agenda 12/16/25, Section 13, A25):

New Teacher/Leave Replacement	School	Mentor	Payment Traditional Route \$550.00 Alternate Route \$1,000.00
Rescind: Maria DiLorenzo	MHS	Eileen Wagenblast	

Dr. Johnson-Marcus motioned. Mr. Derflinger seconded. Motion carried 7-0-1. Ms. Zimmerman abstained.

Dr. Caputo honored Michael Clarke and wished him 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 #
1/5/2026	1/5/2026	School Climate for Adults: The Elephant in the Room	Calantoni, Karen	Moss	\$195	FFPI	26-095
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Dybas, Christina	MHS	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Youngman, Julie	MHS	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Valovcin, Sarah	Moss	\$0	Other	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Donatelli, Dana	Moss / MHS	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Williams, Raquel	Edgar	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Vaughn, Julia	Edgar	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Kish, Gina	Campbell	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Omark, Lindsey	Central Office	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Rodriguez, Bianca	Campbell	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Wright, Danielle	Moss	\$0	No cost	
1/14/2026	1/14/2026	RU Capacity Building Workshop	Tocci, Bailey	Campbell	\$0	No cost	
1/15/2026	1/15/2026	New Jersey ELA Supervisor Meeting	Manziano, Louis	Central Office	\$0	No cost	
1/21/2026	1/22/2026	Capturing Kids Hearts	Fitzharris, Amy	Edgar	\$550	FFPI	26-098
1/21/2026	1/22/2026	Capturing Kids Hearts	Kaye, Lindsay	Edgar	\$550	FFPI	26-096
1/21/2026	1/22/2026	Capturing Kids Hearts	Palmer, Suzanne	Edgar	\$550	FFPI	26-097
1/21/	1/22/	Capturing Kids Hearts	Robbins, Melissa	Edgar	\$550	FFPI &	26-099

2026	2026				other	
1/26/2026	1/26/2026	Site Visit for Science Curriculum (Millburn)	Robbins, Melissa	Edgar	\$0	No cost
1/26/2026	1/26/2026	Site Visit for Science Curriculum (Millburn)	Divanno, Rachel	Edgar	\$0	No cost
1/26/2026	1/26/2026	Site Visit for Science Curriculum (Millburn)	Herzog, Tania	Central Office	\$0	No cost
1/26/2026	1/26/2026	Site Visit for Science Curriculum (Millburn)	Lemerich, Kathryn	Central Office	\$19.27	Other
1/26/2026	1/26/2026	Site Visit for Science Curriculum (Millburn)	Lewis, Patricia	Central Office	\$0	No cost
1/29/2026	1/29/2026	Building Bridges: Creating a Safe and Affirming School Environment for Members of the LGBTQIA+	Forde, Caroline	Edgar	\$0	No cost
1/29/2026	1/29/2026	Building Bridges: Creating a Safe and Affirming School Environment for Members of the LGBTQIA+ Community	Manziano, Louis	Central Office	\$0	No cost
1/29/2026	1/29/2026	Building Bridges: Creating a Safe and Affirming School Environment for Members of the LGBTQIA+ Community	Herzog, Tania	Central Office	\$0	No cost
2/7/2026	2/7/2026	NJIDA PRESENTS WIFFT: Winter Institute Food For Thought	Bormann, Kristina	Campbell	\$175	FFPI
2/7/2026	2/7/2026	NJIDA PRESENTS WIFFT: Winter Institute Food For Thought	Omark, Lindsey	Central Office	\$140	FFPI
2/11/2026	2/12/2026	RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION: Powerful Strategies to Strengthen Your Tier 1 and Tier 2 Reading Instruction (Grades K-6)	Valovcin, Sarah	Moss	\$695	FFPI
2/18/2026	2/18/2026	Fractions to Functions	Schleuss, Morgan	Edgar	\$179	FFPI
2/24/2026	2/24/2026	The Heart of the Matter Summit: Building Inclusive, Safe, and Supportive School Communities	Lemerich, Kathryn	Central Office	\$94.46	Other
2/27/2026	2/27/2026	NJ STEM Pathways STEM Month Kickoff Event & District Leaders Meetup: NJ: Advancing Curriculum and Innovation in the Age of	Lemerich, Kathryn	Central Office	\$27.12	Other

		AI					
3/9/2026	3/9/2026	2026 Annual New Jersey Women's Leadership Conference	Manziano, Louis	Central Office	\$295	Other	
3/10/2026	3/10/2026	NJCTE Annual Conference	Manziano, Louis	Central Office	\$130	Other	
3/16/2026	3/16/2026	NJCCEC 2026 Spring Conference	Corrigan, Lauren	Campbell	\$225	FFPI	26-093
4/23/2026	4/23/2026	Teaching Fractional Reasoning and Operations for Understanding: Grades 1-5	Corrigan, Lauren	Campbell	\$159	FFPI	26-092

2. Duties of Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Move to approve the following duties/position of Michael A. Harvier, Business Administrator/Board Secretary through December 31, 2026:

- a) PACO-Public Agency Compliance Officer for Affirmative Action.

3. Change Order M&M Construction

Move to approve the change orders as listed below:

Change Order #	Description	Amount
31	PCO #122 Dated 11/5/2025 – Hudl camera work – PJ Smith ADD: \$1,797.09 PCO # 125 Dated 11/13/2025 – ASI 53 MHS Gym Corner – Depalma. ADD \$3,413.55 PCO # 126 Dated 11/13/2025 – RM408A Outlets – PJ Smith ADD \$4,196.52	\$9,407.16
32	PCO # 66H Dated 11/13/2025 ASI 26 Musco Changes – PJ Smith Add \$61,111.38 PCO # 91B Dated 11/20/2025 – Contaminated Soils Loading 10/7-10/20 Add \$33.025.45	\$94,136.86

4. Nonpublic Technology Aid

Move to approve the following nonpublic technology aid for the 2025-2026 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 of Metuchen	CDW-G	1	7875797	Dell 24 Monitor-P24254	\$200.20	\$200.20
Apple Montessori of Metuchen	CDW-G	1	755133	HDMI Cable w Audio	\$8.47	\$8.47

Dr. Johnson -Marcus motioned. Ms. Cheatham seconded. Motion carried 7-0-1. Ms. Zimmerman abstained.

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

C. POLICY

Motion/Second/Comments/Roll Call

1. Suspensions

The board hereby acknowledges receipt of the suspension report for December 15, 2025 - January 2, 2026.

2. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

Move to affirm the findings of the previously reported cases:

- EMS111025001
- METHS111325002

3. Second Readings of Policies and Regulations

Move to approve the second readings of the following policies and regulations:

- ❖ P 2530 Resource Materials (Revised)
- ❖ R 2530 Resource Materials (Revised)
- ❖ P 2535 Library Material (M) (New)
- ❖ R 2535 Library Material (M) (New)
- ❖ P 9130 Public Complaints
- ❖ R 9130 Public Complaints

Dr. Johnson-Marcus motioned. Dr. Spigner seconded. Motion carried 7-0-1. Ms. Zimmerman abstained.

-----**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	Campbell	Grades 11-12; The Science National Honor Society will go to Campbell School where members of the SNHS will teach science lessons to students.	Ryan Clapp	1/15/2026	18	\$90	no subs needed
MHS	Cai's Cafe	Grades 10-12; Students will observe real world	Elizabeth Dorsa and	1/22/2026	20	Pending MP	1 sub needed

		small business operations at a local café and apply marketing concepts by collaborating on logos and promotional materials for protein bars created by nutrition students at MHS. This experience connects classroom learning to authentic business practices and highlights cross-disciplinary collaboration.	Kate Lemerich					(PM Only)
MHS	Target/ Menlo Mall food court	Grade 12,18-21 Program: This trip will give students the opportunity to practice social and communication goals, utilize problem solving strategies and apply academic and technical skills in authentic recreation and leisure settings.	Dawn Valovcin, Michelle Schutz, Joe DiMeglio, Marilyn Levine	1/23/ 2026	6	\$70	no subs needed	
CES	Majestic Lanes	Grades 3-8; This trip will give students the opportunity to practice social and communication goals, utilize problem solving strategies and apply academic and technical skills in authentic recreation and leisure settings.	Brian Jeney and Lexi Wolford	1/30/ 2026	8	\$60	no subs needed	
MHS	Walmart	Grade 12,18-21 Program: This trip will give students the opportunity to practice social and communication goals, utilize problem solving strategies and apply academic and technical skills in authentic recreation and leisure settings.	Dawn Valovcin, Michelle Schutz, Joe DiMeglio, Marilyn Levine	2/6/ 2026	6	\$70	no subs needed	
MHS	News 12 NJ	Grade 12,18-21 Program: This trip will give students the opportunity to practice social and communication goals, utilize problem solving strategies and apply academic and technical skills in authentic recreation and leisure settings.	Dawn Valovcin, Michelle Schutz, Joe DiMeglio, Marilyn Levine	2/13/ 2026	6	\$70	no subs needed	

MHS	Middlesex County Fire Academy	Grades 9-12; 2026 NJ Consumer Bowl Competition: Provides students with authentic, competitive learning that reinforces key concepts in personal finance, consumer economics and decision making.	Elizabeth Dorsa	2/18/2026 (Potential rain date: 3/4/2026)	5	\$120	1 sub needed
EMS	Stonewall National Monument Visitor Center	Grades 11-12; This trip has become a tradition for the MHS GSA 11th and 12th graders. The trip is focused on honoring and recognizing historical sites related to the LGBTQ+ Pride movement, centered around Greenwich Village.	Ann Leghorn-Orapallo and Lou Manziano	2/20/2026	10	\$0 (train trip)	no subs needed
MHS	Algonquin Theater	Grade 12,18-21 Program: This trip will give students the opportunity to practice social and communication goals, utilize problem solving strategies and apply academic and technical skills in authentic recreation and leisure settings.	Dawn Valovcin, Michelle Schutz, Joe DiMeglio, Marilyn Levine	2/27/2026	6	\$120	no subs needed
MHS	Liberty Science Center	Grade 9; Students will engage in hands-on, curriculum aligned science activities.	Trey Jaworski, Lindsay Nalepa, Christina Dybas, Ryan Clapp, Lauren Kim, Mark Mooney, Anais Ortega, Nick Vosinas, Nick Zaneto, Sean Rappleyea, Michael Warnock. Backups: Kate Lemerich and	3/5/26	82	\$0	Up to 11 subs needed

			William McDuffie					
MHS	NYC-La Bonne Soupe and Moulin Rouge	Grade 12: Students will be able to make meaningful connections between classroom learning and real-world cultural expressions, enhancing both their linguistic proficiency and cultural understanding.	Anna Girin	4/22/2026	18		\$0	2 subs needed

Dr. Johnson-Marcus motioned. Mr. Derflinger seconded. Motion carried 7-0-1. Ms. Zimmerman abstained.

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

21. Reorganization

a. Set Regular Meetings of the Board of Education

Move to approve the Board of Education Meeting Schedule for 2026.

b. NJSBA Code of Ethics

Move to approve the adoption of the NJSBA Code of Ethics for 2026.

Dr. Johnson-Marcus motioned to approve 21a and 21b. Mr. Bhatt seconded. Motion carried 8-0-0.

22. Meeting Open to the Public (for anything you wish to discuss) - None

23. Announcements - Ms. Cheatham made announcements.

24. Motion to Go Into Executive Session (when applicable)

Dr. Johnson-Marcus motioned to go into executive session. Mr. Glassberg seconded. All in favor.

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.

25. Adjournment

Adjournment at 7:45 pm.

Vincent Caputo
Vincent Caputo (Jan 28, 2026 10:06:17 EST)

20260106 Board Minutes

Final Audit Report

2026-01-28

Created:	2026-01-28
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