

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
AGENDA
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2026**

Call to Order:

Work Session: {Starts at 6:00 p.m.}

Work Session Meeting:

Roll Call:

Cynthia Baldacchini
Lauren Cox
Monica DiVito
Ember Loefflad
James Morris
Lauren Randle
Lindsey Selby
Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

Also in Attendance:

Van Cathcart, Superintendent
Katie Siciliano, Board Secretary
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

Agenda Items:

Board Discussion on Agenda Items

Non-Agenda Items:

Board Management Calendar
Aide in Lieu for Choice Student Transportation

Other Matters:

Motion to enter Executive Session

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____
All In Favor: _____

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Personnel:

Other Matters:

Board Member - Ethics Training

Motion to return to Regular Meeting:

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____
All In Favor: _____

Regular Meeting: {Starts no earlier than 6:30 pm but no later than 7:15 pm}

Roll Call:

Cynthia Baldacchini
Lauren Cox
Monica DiVito
Ember Loefflad
James Morris
Lauren Randle
Lindsey Selby
Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

Also in Attendance:

Van Cathcart, Superintendent
Katie Siciliano, Board Secretary
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

Salute to the Flag

Statement:

Notice of this meeting of the Lower Township Board of Education, listing the Agenda as known, was duly sent to the Cape May County Herald - Times Newspaper, The Press of Atlantic City, posted at the Municipal Building, and a copy thereof delivered to the Township Clerk; in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

District Mission Statement:

"Dedicated to academic excellence, Lower Township Elementary Schools will nurture and challenge all students in a safe and innovative learning community. By encouraging respect and responsibility, students become self-directed, passionate, lifelong learners who will reach their potential. We are dedicated to supporting all students in exceeding the New Jersey Student Learning Standards."

Vision Statement:

Every Student, Every Day, Learning, Teaching, Exploring, Succeeding.

2025-2026 District Goals:

1. The Lower Township Elementary School District will reduce chronic absenteeism across all four schools by a minimum of 3 percentage points by June 2026.
2. By June 2026, the district will complete the onboarding process with eduCLIMBER, with full implementation beginning in the 2026–2027 school year.

2025-2026 Board Goals:

1. Develop an understanding of the proper implementation of Board SMART goals through the stages of adoption, progress monitoring and achievement.
2. Establish Board norms as well as protocols of the roles and responsibilities of the Board and the Superintendent as standards of behavior expected of all Board members in their interactions with each other, the Superintendent, district staff and the community.
3. Develop a comprehensive understanding of district assessments used to measure student achievement, resulting in a better understanding of data and to better equip the Board in supporting district educational priorities.

This meeting will be conducted in accordance with:

District Policy: #0164 Conduct of Board Meetings

District Policy: #0167 Public Participation in Board Meetings

1} REPORTS:

- A}** Board President:
- B}** Superintendent:
- C}** School Business Administrator:
- D}** Presentations: **Recognize Kristen Casella, Sandman's Principal's Secretary for 'Educational Support Professional of the Year'**
- E}** **Committee Reports:**
 - Finance & Facilities Committee
 - Personnel & Management Committee
 - Curriculum & Instruction Committee
- F}** Board Comment:

2} APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January 7, 2026 Reorganization/Regular Meeting
Regular Meeting & Executive Meeting

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____

Discussion:

Vote:

Cynthia Baldacchini

Lauren Cox

Monica DiVito

Ember Loefflad

James Morris

Lauren Randle

Lindsey Selby

Patricia Smith

Gary Douglass

3} CONSENT AGENDA:

OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON CONSENT ITEMS ONLY:

PLEASE NOTE: Each speaker shall identify him/herself by giving their name and address and will be allowed to speak once for a period not to exceed four minutes. The public comment portion of all Board Meetings shall not exceed forty minutes in total. Prior to the roll call vote, any member of the board may ask for discussion on any of the items within the block.

The following items are believed to be items of a routine nature and will be moved as a block of action items. Prior to the roll call vote, any member may ask for discussion on any of the items without the block.

R. Routine Matters

R-1 Approval of Financial Statements:

Secretary's and custodian's reports for **December 2025** which are in agreement as certified by the Board Secretary, that no budgetary account has been over-expended, in violation of NJAC 6:20-2.12 (a), (d).

R-2 Approval of Transfers: December 2025 {Backup R-2}

R-3 Approval of Bill List: January 8, 2026 - January 28, 2026 {Backup R-3}

R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: December 2025 {Backup R-4}

R-5 Approval of Travel: October 2025 & January 2026 {Backup R-5}

P. Personnel:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the following substitute be approve for the 2025-2026 school year, pending receipt of required documentation: (Backup P-1)

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Makenzie Larkin, Karly Gleeson, Hannah Stone, Michelle Gilbert

SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDES

Makenzie Larkin, Chloe Frame, Nichole Hamilton, Stephanie Hannum, Karly Gleeson, Marianne Linnington

SUBSTITUTE DAY CARE AIDES

Nichole Hamilton, Karly Gleeson

SUBSTITUTE CAFETERIA AIDES

Nichole Hamilton, Marianne Linnington

SUBSTITUTE BUS AIDES

Nichole Hamilton, Stephanie Hannum, Marianne Linnington

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept, with regret, the retirement of Diane Wunder, Principal's Secretary at the Carl T. Mitnick School, effective April 30, 2026. (Backup P-2)

- 3.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept, with regret, the retirement of Krista Risley, Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist at the David C. Douglass Veterans Memorial School, effective April 1, 2026. (Backup P-3)
- 4.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept the resignation of Veronica Rodriguez, Daily Part-Time Cafeteria Aide at the Maud Abrams School, effective February 13, 2026. (Backup P-4)
- 5.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Susan Roselli as Temporary Media Specialist at the Sandman School at the rate of \$269.85 per diem, effective January 5, 2026 to June 15, 2026. (Backup P-5)
- 6.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Nicole Connor as Temporary 5th Grade Resource Room Teacher at the Sandman Consolidated School at the rate of \$269.85 per diem, effective on or about March 3, 2026 to June 2026. (Backup P-6)
- 7.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Haley Bieber, Kindergarten LLD Special Education Teacher at the Carl T. Mitnick School, for placement of MA on the LTEEA Teachers' Salary Guide, to reflect an increase of credits to her degree, effective February 1, 2026. (Backup P-7)
- 8.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Riley DeCamillo, Preschool Teacher at the David C. Douglass Veterans Memorial School, for placement of BA+30 on the LTEEA Teachers' Salary Guide, to reflect an increase of credits to her degree, effective February 1, 2026.
- 9.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following Non-FMLA:

<u>EMPLOYEE</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>
#4239	Custodian	11/20/25 - 2/12/26
#4690	Teacher	1/13/26 - 4/20/26
#6112	Daily PT Bus Aide	1/20/26 - 3/2/26
#5230	Teacher	2/2/26 - 6/15/26 Intermittent

- 10.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following on-call substitutes as daily part-time staff:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Peyton Bortner	60 Credit Aide @ Mitnick	1/5/26
Danae Allen	Cafeteria Aide @ Sandman	1/8/26

11. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the revised Job Description for Principal/Vice Principal. (Backup P-11)

H. Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: None

L. Legislative and Internal Policies: None

E. Education:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Lower Cape May Regional High School Teacher Cadets Program to allow participating students to shadow selected teachers in the classroom throughout the day with specific requirements as per the Curriculum Map provided. (Backup E-1)

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following placement for 2025-2026: (Backup E-2)

Case #4968-A - 1st Grade student to Cape May County Special Services School District

3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the application of the Literacy Initiative for Families and Thriving Communities (LIFT) Grant, Cohort 2.

F. Finance and Insurance:

1. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education to approve and accept the Annual Audit, to be read into the public record (if applicable), for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025: (Complete document was distributed under separate cover.)

FYE 6/30/2025- Annual School Audit Lower Twp Schools

Findings & Recommendations:

- #1. Administrative Practices and Procedures – None.
- #2. Financial Planning, Accounting and Reporting – None.
- #3. School Purchasing Programs – None.
- #4. School Food Service – None.
- #5. Student Body Activities – None.
- #6 Day Care Program- None.
- #7. Application for State School Aide – None.
- #8. Pupil Transportation – None.
- #9. Facilities and Capital Assets – None.
- #10. Miscellaneous – None.
- #11. Status of Prior Year Audit Findings/Recommendations – None.

FYE 6/30/2025- Annual School Audit Lower Twp Schools

Findings: None.

Recommendation: None.

Corrective Action Plan: None.

2. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the pass-through Special Services Tuition Contract between Lower Township Elementary Schools and Middle Township Board of Education for Student # 19355 for September 2, 2025 through December 31, 2025, at the rate of \$12,240.64 (Backup F-2)
3. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the transportation of 1st grade student (file # 5230-A) to CHOP Behavioral Health Program: Children's Intensive Emotional And Behavioral Services.
4. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the transportation of Kindergarten student #19795 to Cape May Special Services School District.
5. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the application for the Literacy Initiative for Families and Thriving Communities Grant for \$40,000.00 meant to cultivate home-based literacy habits and foster strong family engagement in children's literacy development.
6. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the amendment of the 2025 - 2026 Title IA, Title IIA, and Title III grant fund allocations.
7. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the application for the NJ Learning Acceleration Program: High Impact Tutoring Grant for \$80,000.

MOTION ON CONSENT AGENDA ON ALL MOTIONS LISTED BELOW:

Routine Matters: R-1 to R-5

Personnel: P-1 to P-11

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: None

Legislative and Internal Policies: None

Education: E-1 to E-3

Finance: F-1 to F-7

Motion: _____ Second: _____

Discussion:

Vote:

Cynthia Baldacchini
Lauren Cox
Monica DiVito
Ember Loefflad
James Morris
Lauren Randle
Lindsey Selby
Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

4} NON-CONSENT AGENDA:

5} OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

6} OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC: *(public comment rules as read above apply):*

7} GOOD TO THE ORDER:

- A}** Next Board Meeting: Work session: February 25, 2026
- B}** Emergency Drill: 1/23/26 Lockdown Drill
- C}** Fire Drills: 12/10/25 & 1/7/26 Sandman School; 12/10/25 & 1/9/26 - Maud Abrams School; 12/22/25 & 1/7/26 - Mitnick School; 12/9/25 & 1/7/26 - Memorial School

Motion to enter Executive Session

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____

All In Favor: _____

8} EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Other Matters:

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____

Discussion:

Vote:

All in Favor: _____

9} ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____

1/28/2026

All in Favor: _____

Time: _____

F.Y.I

1. Attendance/Enrollment
2. Sandman School Reports
3. Maud Abrams School Reports
4. Mitnick School Reports
5. Memorial School Reports.
6. Supervisor of Special Services Report
7. Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds Reports
8. Supervisor of Transportation Reports
9. Food Service Profit & Loss Report
10. Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction Report
11. Supervisor of Academic Achievement Report
12. Day Care Reports

February Calendar

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

WHEREAS, while the Sen. Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.) requires all meetings of the Lower Township Board of Education to be held in public, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) sets forth nine (9) types of matters that may lawfully be discussed in "Executive Session," i.e. without the public being permitted to attend, and

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education has determined that ____ issue permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) to be discussed without the public in attendance shall be discussed during an Executive Session to be held on January 28, 2026 at _____ P.M. and

WHEREAS, the nine (9) exceptions to public meetings set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) are listed below, and next to each exception is a box within which **the number** of issues to be privately discussed that fall within that exception shall be written, and after each exception is a space where additional information that will disclose as much information about the discussion as possible without undermining the purpose of the exception shall be written.

"(1) Any matter which, by express provision of Federal law, State statute or rule of court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from public discussion." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

"(2) Any matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the federal government." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

"(3) Any material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy such as any records, data, reports, recommendations, or other personal material of any educational, training, social service, medical, health, custodial, child protection, rehabilitation, legal defense, welfare, housing, relocation, insurance and similar program or institution operated by a public body pertaining to any specific individual admitted to or served by such institution or program, including but not limited to information relative to the individual's personal and family circumstances, and any material pertaining to admission, discharge, treatment, progress or condition of any individual, unless the

individual concerned (or, in the case of a minor or incompetent, his guardian) shall request in writing that the same be disclosed publicly."



"(4) Any collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions of which are proposed for inclusion in any collective bargaining agreement, including the negotiation of terms and conditions with employees or representatives of employees of the public body"



"(5) Any matter involving the purchase lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is Personnel matters



"(6) Any tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public provided that their disclosure could impair such protection. Any investigations of violations or possible violations of the law." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____;



"(7) Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body's/or may become a party. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer." The parties to and docket numbers of each item of litigation and/or the parties to each contract discussed are and nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:



"(8) Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public

meeting." Subject to the balancing of the public's interest and the employee's privacy rights under South Jersey Publishing Co. v. New Jersey Expressway Authority, 124 N.J. 478, the employee(s) and nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality:



"(9) Any deliberation of a public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty upon the responding party or the suspension or loss of a license or permit belonging to the responding party as a result of an act of omission for which the responding party bears responsibility." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is

WHEREAS, the length of the Executive Session is estimated to be ____ minutes after which the public meeting of the Board shall reconvene and proceed with business.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lower Township Board of Education will go into Executive Session for **only** the above stated reasons;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) will be made public at a time when the public's interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure. For each of the above items, the estimated date by which such disclosure can be made and/or the occurrence that needs to take place before disclosure can be made are listed below (attach separate sheet if necessary)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary, at the present public meeting, shall read aloud enough of this resolution so that members of the public in attendance can understand, as precisely as possible, the nature of the matters that will privately be discussed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary, on the next business day following this meeting, shall furnish a copy of this resolution to any member of the public who requests one at the fees allowed by N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.