

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
AGENDA
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 25, 2026**

Call to Order:

Work Session:

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:

Other Matters:

Motion to enter Executive Session

Motion:_____ **Second:** _____

All In Favor: _____

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Personnel:

Superintendent Evaluation Pre-Conference

Other Matters:

H.I.B. Sandman #5 2025-2026; H.I.B. Sandman #6 2025-2026

Motion to return to Regular Meeting:

Motion:_____ **Second:** _____

All In Favor: _____

3/25/2026

Regular 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

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.

3/25/2026

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: **2026 - 2027 Budget Update**

D} Presentations: **Meg Desmond, Counselor of the County by the Cape Atlantic Counselors' Association**

E} **Committee Reports:**

Finance & Facilities Committee

Personnel & Management Committee

Curriculum & Instruction Committee

F} Board Comment:

2} APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

February 25, 2026 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 **February 2026** 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: February 2026 {Backup R-2}

R-3 Approval of Bill List: February 26, 2026 - March 25, 2026 {Backup R-3}

R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: February 2026 {Backup R-4}

R-5 Approval of Travel: March & April 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

Shirley Robinson, Michelle Simmons

SUBSTITUTE 60 CREDIT AIDES

James Monahan

SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDES

James Monahan

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Sharon Holden as Principal's Secretary at the Carl T. Mitnick School effective May 1, 2026 on Step 4 of the LTEEA's Secretary's Salary Guide at the rate of \$43,037.00 and a Stipend of \$1,250.00 as Principal's Secretary. (In district transfer) (Backup P-2)
3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Jessica Bryan, Preschool Instructional Coach at the David C. Douglass Veterans Memorial School, for placement of BA+15 on the LTEEA Teachers' Salary Guide, to reflect an increase of credits to her degree, effective April 1, 2026. (Backup P-3)

3/25/2026

4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Lindsay Dowe, School Nurse at the Sandman Consolidated School, for placement of BA+30 on the LTEEA Teachers' Salary Guide, to reflect an increase of credits to her degree effective April 1, 2026. (Backup P-4)
5. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Summer Externship for Learning Disability Teacher Consultant (LDTC) Stephanie Meehan, from Rowan University effective July 1, 2026 through August 15, 2026 with Alison Paras, Case Manager. (Backup P-5)
6. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Lori Lybarger of Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD), to provide volunteer visitation services with her therapy dog, Betty, to provide dog therapy at the Maud Abrams School for the 2025-2026 school year, on an as needed basis. (Backup P-6)
7. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following teachers from the Wildwood Crest School District to observe classroom interactions: (Backup P-7)

<u>Observing Teacher</u>	<u>Teacher Being Observed</u>	<u>Grade Level</u>
Amie Ostrander	Jessica Breuss	1st Grade
Stephanie Benson	Alyssa Gannon	Kindergarten

8. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following Non-FMLA/FMLA/FLI:

<u>EMPLOYEE</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>
#5287	Teacher	3/1/26 - 3/6/26 Non-FMLA
#5077	Teacher	5/18/26 - 10/23/26 - FMLA
		10/24/26 - 12/23/26 - FLI

9. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the transfer of Brittney Delano from the Senior Cook at Carl T. Mitnick School to the Senior Cook at Charles W. Sandman Consolidated School effective January 1, 2026. Transfer includes a salary decrease from \$27,035 to \$25,615 per the LTEA Contract.
10. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the resignation of Allison Morey, 2nd Grade Teacher at the Carl T. Mitnick School, effective April 17, 2026. (Backup P-10)

H. Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying:

1. The Board affirms the actions taken by the Superintendent and the School Safety Teams, for HIB #3 Maud Abrams 25-26; HIB #1 Mitnick 25-26; HIB #2 Mitnick 25-26. (Backup H-1)

L. Legislative and Internal Policies:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the second reading for the following revisions to existing or new Policies and Regulations: (Backup L-1)

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
0142	Policy	Nepotism
1220	Policy	Employment of Chief School Administrator
1552	Policy	Sexual Harassment - Staff
1552	Regulation	Sexual Harassment - Staff

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Revised 2025-2026 District Calendar. (Backup L-2)
3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the 2026-2027 District Calendar. (Backup L-3)

E. Education: None

F. Finance and Insurance:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education to approve the adoption of the Tentative Budget for FY 2026-2027:

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2026-27 School Year using the 2026-2027 state aid figures and the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	Budget	Local Tax Levy
General Fund	\$26,545,433	\$21,398,412
Special Revenue Fund	\$5,353,683	
Debt Service Fund	\$1,480,980	\$ 912,398
Total Base Budget	\$33,349,349	\$22,310,810

And to advertise said tentative budget in the Star and Wave in accordance with the form required by the State Department of Education and according to law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held at the Lower Township Board of Education located at the Carl T. Mitnick School on Wednesday, April 29, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2026-2027 School Year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the district establish a maximum of \$17,000 in the 2026-2027 school year for travel related expenditures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Lower Township Board of Education includes in the proposed budget a Health Care Costs adjustment as calculated in the budget software and pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-38 subsection (d) in the amount of \$630,713.00. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health care premiums.

Capital Reserve Withdrawal - Other Capital Projects

BE IT RESOLVED that included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve - Excess Costs & Other Capital Projects, for \$150,000 for Security Door Replacement for several district external doors. The use of \$150,000 of capital reserve will allow the district to improve the facilities by replacing 20 year old exterior doors.

Maintenance Reserve Withdrawal

BE IT RESOLVED that as per N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2(d) the general fund appropriations include a \$175,000 withdrawal from the Maintenance Reserve Account for use on required maintenance activities for a school facility as reported in the comprehensive maintenance plan pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-20.5.

- 2. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education to approve the submission of the 2026-2027 Preschool Budget. (Backup F-2)
- 3. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Cape May County Special Services School District 2026-2027 school year and ESY tuition rates below:

ESY- Tuition	\$ 3,600
ESY- One-to One Aide	\$ 3,100
ESY- Transportation	\$ 2,550
Preschool Disabilities	\$ 45,500
Autism	\$ 47,500
Emotional Regulation Impairment	\$ 49,500
Multiple Disabilities	\$ 41,500

- 4. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Resolution and Indemnity & Trust Agreement, attached, to renew membership in the Atlantic & Cape May Counties Association of School Business Officials Joint Insurance Fund (ACCASBO JIF) for the three year membership term commencing on July 1, 2026. (Backup F-4)

3/25/2026

- 5. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the increase in the Daycare rates for the 2026-2027 school year.

AM Only Daycare	\$133.85 per month	\$ 36.50 per week	\$ 6.70 per day
PM Only Daycare	\$257.14 per month	\$ 64.28 per week	\$ 12.85 per day
AM & PM Daycare	\$388.70 per month	\$ 97.18 per week	\$ 19.44 per day

- 6. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve voiding of 2023 - 2024 SY uncashed checks (Backup F-6)
- 7. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the renewal of a three (3) year software license contract for fund accounting, personnel and payroll with Systems 3000, Inc. which was effective 07/01/2025 at an annual license fee of \$ 29,462.00 for 2025 - 2026, \$30,051.00 for 2026-2027 and \$30,652.00 for 2027-2028. (Backup F-7)
- 8. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education confirms the award of a Contract to Turn-Key Technologies for 6-strand Fiber Optic Cabling per Form 470 # 260010993 Proposal - E-RATE Funded. (Backup F-8)
- 9. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education confirms the award of a Contract to Questivity for APC UPS maintenance and technical support/BMIC per Form 470 # 260010992 Proposal - E-RATE Funded. (Backup F-9)
- 10. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the following equipment on GovDeals:

Lenovo Lenovo 100e Chromebooks As Is - Parts Only	Qty 42	Starting Bid: \$10.00
Samsung Chromebook 2	Qty 2	Starting Bid: \$10.00
Dell Latitude Laptops - As Is - Parts Only	Qty 12	Starting Bid: \$10.00
Dell Desktops Optiplex - Parts Only	Qty 5	Starting Bid: \$10.00
iPads - Parts Only	Qty 6	Starting Bid: \$10.00
Lenovo n22 Chromebooks	Qty 30 \$15.00 Each	Starting Bid: \$10.00
Samsung XE503c32	Qty 30 \$15.00 Each	Starting Bid: \$10.00

MOTION ON CONSENT AGENDA ON ALL MOTIONS LISTED BELOW:

- Routine Matters: R-1 to R-5**
- Personnel: P-1 to P-10**
- Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: H-1**
- Legislative and Internal Policies: L-1 to L-3**
- Education: None**
- Finance: F-1 to F-10**

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____

3/25/2026

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: April 29, 2026
- B}** Emergency Drill: March 20, 2026 - Lockdown
- C}** Fire Drills: 3/10/26 - Memorial School & Sandman School; 3/13/26 - Maud Abrams School; 3/20/26 - Mitnick School

8} ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: _____ **Second:** _____

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
- April 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 March 25, 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."

H.I.B. Sandman #5 2025-2026; H.I.B. Sandman #6 2025-2026

"(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:
Superintendent Evaluation Pre-Conference



“(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.