

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
REORGANIZATION AND REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 2, 2025**

Call to Order:

Reorganization Meeting: Started at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present:

Joseph Thomas

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Cynthia Baldacchini

Patricia Smith

Monica DiVito

Gary Douglass

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent

Patricia Ryan, 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.

2022-2024 Board Goal:

Establish a system with district leadership to ensure that board policies are consistently being implemented and enforced.

2024-2025 Board Goals:

Support the district's effort to enhance student achievement, staff development, and parent engagement through policy and advocacy while maintaining the fiscal integrity of the budget.

1/2/2025

1. Board Secretary will administer the Oath of Office to elected and re-elected Board Members:

Three Year Term

Monica DiVito
Patricia Smith
James Morris

2. **Election of the President**

Motion to appoint Board Secretary as temporary chair to conduct the election of the president.

Motion: Thomas Second: DiVito
All Voted in Favor

Board Secretary will take nominations for President of the Lower Township Board of Education commencing January 2, 2025 until the next Reorganization Meeting in 2026.

Mr. Thomas nominated Mr. Douglass to be President of Lower Township Board of Education commencing January 2, 2025 until the next Reorganization Meeting in 2026.

Motion: Vile Second: DiVito

Voted Yes:

Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
James Morris
Patricia Smith
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

3. **Election of the Vice President**

The Board President will conduct the nomination of the Vice President.

Mrs. DiVito nominated Patricia Smith to be Vice President of Lower Township Board of Education commencing January 2, 2025 until the next Reorganization Meeting in 2026.

Motion: Vile Second: Douglass

Voted Yes:

Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle

1/2/2025

Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
James Morris
Monica DiVito
Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

4. Lower Township Elementary School Code of Ethics: Each Board Member will sign the Affidavit. ***Each member signed the Affidavit form on 1/2/2025.***

R. REORGANIZATION:

1. That the Board approve the following Appointments and Resolutions, for the fiscal year January 2, 2025 until the Reorganization Meeting 2026, as listed below;
- a. **Board Secretary & Records Custodian** – Patricia Ryan
 - b. **ESEA Coordinator** – Sarah Bowman
 - c. **Homeless Liaison/DC&P Coordinator** – Julia Sangillo
 - d. **Public Agency Compliance Officer (P.A.C.O.)** – Patricia Ryan
 - e. **Section 504 Compliance Officer** – Debra Keeler
 - f. **Chief Equity/Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator** – Patricia Ryan
 - g. **Annuity & Investment Planners & Disability Insurance:**
 - Crest Financial Services
 - Equitable Group
 - Lincoln Investment
 - Siracusa
 - Sturdy Financial Services
 - AFLAC
 - AIG
 - Colonial Life
 - Franklin Insurance
 - Prudential
 - h. **Treasurer** – Lauren Read
 - i. **IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Coordinator** – Gary O’Shea

Motion: Nominating **Lauren Cox** to represent the Lower Township Board of Education as the ***Delegate*** to the New Jersey School Boards Assembly.

Motion: **Douglass** **Second:** **DiVito**
Discussion: **None**

1/2/2025

Voted Yes:

Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
Patricia Smith
James Morris
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

Motion: Nominating **Cynthia Baldacchini** to represent the Lower Township Board of Education as the ***Alternate Delegate*** to the New Jersey School Boards Assembly:

Motion: Smith Second: Randle

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
Patricia Smith
James Morris
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

2. "BANK DEPOSITORIES and DIRECT DEPOSIT"

RESOLVED, that as "Sturdy Bank", "NJARM", "The Bank of New York", "First Hope Bank" (Lease) and Sterling National Bank {ESIP} depositories for any and all monies that will be credited from time to time for any and all debt service;

AND, as the above stated bank is the paying agent for such debt service when due;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that an account in the name of this Board be kept with the "Sturdy Bank", "The Depository Trust Co.", "First Hope Bank" (Lease) and "Sterling National Bank {ESIP}" for the deposit in said bank to the credit of this Board from time to time, of any and all monies for said debt service;

RESOLVED, that the Cash Management Plan presented by Sturdy Bank, be approved for the Sweep Account and the Unemployment Trust Money Market Account, as provided in Board Policy #3300;

RESOLVED, that the following accounts titled, as listed below, in the name of the Board of Education, be kept with the Sturdy Bank for the deposit in said bank, to the credit of the Board from time to time, of any/all monies, checks, drafts, notes, acceptances or other evidence of indebtedness, whether belonging to the Board or otherwise, which may be or hereafter come into its possession, and that the said bank be and is hereby authorized to make payment from the funds on deposit with it open and according to the checks, drafts, notes, or acceptances of this Board signed, effective July 1, 2018.

RESOLVED, in accordance with P.L. 2013 c. 28, which the Board of Education require mandatory direct deposit for all employees for net pay, effective February 1, 2017, in a specific banking institution, based on information provided by the employee.

"BANK DEPOSITORIES"

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER	AUTHORIZE SIGNATURE/TRANSFERS
Checking Sturdy General Acct.	Lower Township Board of Education General Acct.	XXXXX0521	1. Board President or Board Vice President 2. Board Treasurer 3. Board Secretary or Business Administrator
Checking Sturdy Pay Acct.	Lower Township Board of Education Payroll	XXXXX0548	1. Board Treasurer or Board Secretary or Business Administrator
Checking Sturdy Agency Acct.	Lower Township Board of Education Agency Acct.	XXXXX9574	1. Board Treasurer or Board Secretary or Business Administrator
Money Market Sturdy Trust Acct.	Lower Township Board of Education Unemployment Trust	XXXXX0080	1. Board Treasurer or Board Secretary or Business Administrator
Checking Sturdy Cafeteria Acct.	Lower Township Board of Education Cafeteria Fund	XXXXX0556	1. Board Secretary or Business Administrator 2. Cafeteria Supervisor
Checking Sturdy Student Activity Acct.	Lower Township Board of Education Student Activity Acct.	XXXXX1326	1. Board President or Board Vice President 2. Board Treasurer 3. Board Secretary or Business Administrator

Checking Sturdy	Bond Proceeds	XXXXXX2696	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board President or Board Vice President 2. Board Treasurer 3. Board Secretary or Business Administrator
Checking Day Care Operations	Lower Township Board of Education Day Care Operations	XXXXXX3805	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board President or Board Vice President 2. Board Treasurer 3. Board Secretary or Business Administrator
Checking Sturdy	Bond Funded Acct.	XXXXXX7799	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board President or Board Vice President 2. Board Treasurer 3. Board Secretary or Business Administrator
Investment Acct. NJARM	Bond Proceeds	XXXXXX300	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board Secretary or Business Administrator

3. "PETTY CASH FUND - NEW JERSEY RIGHT TO KNOW/OPRA COPY COST - BOARD OFFICE"

WHEREAS, THE LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION, has the need to make immediate payments for delivered items of small purchases and provide copies to the public, as requested;

WHEREAS, THE LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION, maintains a cash on hand, not to exceed \$1,300 (\$500 – Board Office/\$200 Each School);

WHEREAS, all funds will be returned to the current expense budget on June 30, 2025;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board Secretary be responsible for petty cash funds established for the 2025-2026 school year, or until the next Reorganization Meeting;

ALSO, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the fees for documentation of New Jersey Right to Know and all Open Public Records Act documents, be consistent with law and Board Policy.

4. "UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS AND CHARGES 2025-26"

WHEREAS, THE LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION, has the need to transfer funds for unemployment claims and charges;

1/2/2025

WHEREAS, the payments are made from the unemployment trust account;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that transfer funds for unemployment claims and charges are authorized.

5. "AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS"

WHEREAS, THE LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION, has the need to advertise for bids according to the "Public School Contracts Law", N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(b) and use contracts issued by the State Cooperative Purchasing Bureau;

WHEREAS, the bid threshold will remain at \$44,000.00 (effective September 1, 2022);

WHEREAS, the following purchase areas may be advertised for solicitation of bids or state contract use:

PURCHASE AREAS

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Photocopiers | Equipment Lease Agreement |
| Computer Equipment | Roof Replacement & Repair |
| Custodial Supplies | Buildings & Grounds Repair |
| Maintenance Equipment | Electrical & Plumbing |
| School Supplies | Office Supplies |
| Copier Paper | Audio Visual Equipment |
| Gasoline/Fuel Oil/Natural Gas/Electric | |
| School Transportation Equipment | |
| Asbestos Removal Services | |

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board Secretary be authorized to advertise for bids or utilize the State Cooperative Purchasing Bureau, according to the Public School Contracts Law using the \$44,000.00 bid limit.

MOTION ON FINANCE REORGANIZATION #1-#5

Motion: Cox Second: Smith

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

- Joseph Thomas
- Lauren Randle
- Jonathan Vile
- Lauren Cox
- Cynthia Baldacchini
- Patricia Smith
- James Morris
- Monica DiVito
- Gary Douglass

MOTION TO ADJOURN REORGANIZATION MEETING

Motion: Douglass Second: Vile

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

- Joseph Thomas
- Lauren Randle
- Jonathan Vile
- Lauren Cox
- Cynthia Baldacchini
- Patricia Smith
- James Morris
- Monica DiVito
- Gary Douglass

MOTION TO CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

Motion: Douglass Second: Randle

Voted Yes:

- Joseph Thomas
- Lauren Randle
- Jonathan Vile
- Lauren Cox
- Cynthia Baldacchini
- Patricia Smith
- James Morris
- Monica DiVito
- Gary Douglass

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: None

B} Superintendent:

- Mr. Samaniego congratulated all of the new board members including Mrs. Smith, Mrs. DiVito and Mr. Morris.
- Mr. Samaniego informed the Board that the Lower Township Education Foundation will be conducting their fundraising dinner on January 29 at Five West to benefit the LTES Children's Dinner Program.

1/2/2025

- C} School Business Administrator: None
- D} Presentations: None
- E} **Committee Reports:**
 - Building and Grounds Committee: None
 - Curriculum Committee: None
 - Finance Committee- Mr. Vile announced that the next meeting will be in a few weeks.
- F} **Board Comment:**
 - Mr. Douglass and the entire board wished everyone a Happy New Year and they are looking forward to another great year.

2} **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

December 4, 2024
Regular Meeting & Executive Meeting

Motion: Vile Second: Baldacchini

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
Patricia Smith
James Morris
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

3} **CONSENT AGENDA:**

OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON CONSENT ITEMS ONLY: None

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.

- ***NO PUBLIC COMMENTS***

1/2/2025

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 within the block.

R. Routine Matters

R-1 Approval of Financial Statements:

Secretary's and custodian's reports for **November 2024** 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 5, 2024 - January 2, 2025 {Backup R-2}

R-3 Approval of Bill List: December 5, 2024 - January 2, 2025 {Backup R-3}

R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: None

R-5 Approval of Travel: None

P. Personnel:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the following substitutes to be approved for the 2024-2025 school year, pending receipt of required documentation: (Backup P-1)

SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDES

Deborah Starr, Paula Aita

SUBSTITUTE DAYCARE AIDE

Deborah Starr

SUBSTITUTE BUS AIDE

Deborah Starr

SUBSTITUTE FOOD SERVICE WORKER

Deborah Starr, Paula Aita

SUBSTITUTE CAFETERIA AIDE

Michele Raphael, Paula Aita

SUBSTITUTE CUSTODIAN

Stephen Hilbert

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Emma Karch as Temporary Preschool PSD Teacher at the David C. Douglass Veterans Memorial School, effective 12/16/24 to 2/28/25. (Backup P-3)
3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept, with regret, the retirement of John Champion, Custodian in the District, effective 4/1/25. (Backup P-4)

- 4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Carol Sabo as Temporary Part-Time School Social Worker, effective 1/17/25 to 6/16/25. (Backup P-4)

H. Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: None

L. Legislative and Internal Policies: None

E. Education: None

F. Finance and Insurance:

- 1. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the award for Alternate #2 and Alternate #3 bids for the Preschool Facilities Expansion Project at the Memorial School for upgrades to the smoke detectors and heat detectors.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2025 TOILET ROOM RENOVATION Alternate #2 and Alternate #3 bids to be awarded as follows:

<u>Bidder Award</u>	<u>Alternate #2</u>	<u>Alternate #3</u>
Marino General Contractors	\$39,000	\$39,000

NOTE: The funding for this project will include the Preschool Facilities Expansion Grant Funds and the Alternate bids will utilize the Bond Referendum (Series 2022) funding. (Backup F-1)

MOTION ON CONSENT AGENDA ON ALL MOTIONS LISTED BELOW:

Routine Matters: R-1 to R-5

Personnel: P-1 to P-4

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: None

Legislative and Internal Policies: None

Education: None

Finance: F-1

Motion: Smith Second: Randle

Discussion: None

1/2/2025

Voted Yes:

Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Patricia Smith
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
James Morris
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

- Mr. Samaniego congratulated Mr. Champion on his retirement in April.

4} NON-CONSENT AGENDA: None

5} OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

- Mr. Douglass announced that the board will create an Ad HOC Committee for discussing personnel issues. This committee will include Monica DiVito, Cynthia Baldacchini, Lauren Cox, and Joseph Thomas.

6} OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC:

(public comment rules as read above apply):
-NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

7} GOOD TO THE ORDER:

- A}** Next Board Meeting: Work session: January 22, 2025
- B}** Emergency Drill: Notification Communication Tests
- C}** Fire Drills: 12/4/24 - Maud Abrams School; 12/5/24 - Mitnick School;
12/11/24 - Memorial School & Sandman School

- Executive Session commenced at 6:15 p.m.

8} EXECUTIVE SESSION:

New Board Member Introduction

- Mr. Douglass, Mr. Samaniego, and Mrs. Ryan left the Executive Session due to conflict.

Motion: Randle Second: Baldacchini
Discussion: None
All Voted in Favor

1/2/2025

9} ADJOURNMENT

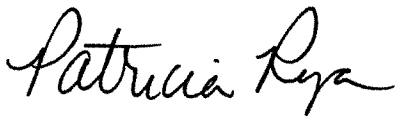
MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: Thomas Second: Vile

All Voted in Favor

Time: 6:44 pm

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Ryan".

Patricia Ryan
School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
REORGANIZATION MEETING-EXECUTIVE SESSION
JANUARY 2, 2025**

Meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present:

Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
James Morris
Patricia Smith
Monica DiVito

Not Present do to Conflict

Gary Douglass
Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary/School Business Administrator

Absent

Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion to enter Executive Session

Motion: Randle Second: Baldacchini

Discussion: None

All Voted in Favor

New Board Member Introduction

- The board members discussed the candidates to be interviewed for the Superintendent position with Mr. Morris, due to interviews scheduled mid-January.

- ***No action was taken during this meeting***

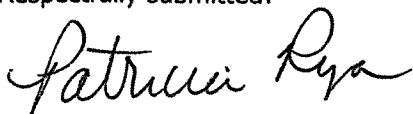
MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: Thomas Second: Vile

All Voted in Favor

This session concluded at 6:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted:



Patricia Ryan
School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION 1/2/2025**

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 1 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 2, 2025 at 6:15 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”

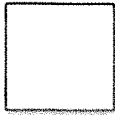
“(5) Any matter involving the purchase lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed.” The nature of the matter, described as specifically 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. vs. 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: Board discussion with New Board Member

1/2/2025



“(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 30 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.