

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2025**

Call to Order:

Work Session: Started at **6:02 p.m.**

Roll Call:

Present:

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

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

Agenda Items:

- Mrs. Randle asked about the pods at Memorial and wanted to know the treatment plan for the asbestos issue and Mrs. Ryan explained the process to the Board.
- Mrs. Cox mentioned how impressed she was by the low number of HIB cases this school year.

Non-Agenda Items: None

Other Matters:

- Mr. Samaniego explained the 2024–2025 school year calendar changes due to two snow days, which also aligns with LCMR School District:
 - March 14th the district will have an early dismissal day for students and In-Service day for staff
 - June 17th will be the last day of school for students only (early dismissal)
 - June 18th will be an In-Service day for all staff.
- Mrs. Smith stated that she thought it would be beneficial to re-establish our Board committees and suggested a Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Finance and Facilities Committee, and a Personnel and Management Committee.
- Mr. Douglass clarified the process in which the Board should take to add items to the agenda.

Motion to enter Executive Session

Motion: **Baldacchini** **Second:** **Vile**

All Voted In Favor

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Personnel: None

Other Matters:

Mr. Douglass discussed ethics responsibilities as a board member.

1/22/2025

Motion to return to Regular Meeting:

Motion: Baldacchini **Second:** Cox

All Voted In Favor:

Regular Meeting: Started at 6:28 pm.

Roll Call:

Present:

Cynthia Baldacchini

Lauren Cox

Monica DiVito

James Morris

Lauren Randle

Joseph Thomas

Jonathan Vile

Patricia Smith

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 and 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.

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 announced the Education Foundation is having a spaghetti dinner fundraiser next week at Five West Pub to help with their family food program.
- Mr. Samaniego informed the Board that our district was chosen by Acme to receive food gift cards, which we will provide to our families in need.
- The PTA will hold the KISS dance at Mitnick school on February 6th and 7th at the Mitnick school.
- The Education Foundation is dedicating the Mitnick Library to Mr. Rotchford, tentatively on March 4th.

C} School Business Administrator: None

D} Presentations: *Board's Role in the Budget Process*- Patricia Ryan, Business Administrator

E} Committee Reports: None

Building and Grounds Committee: None

Curriculum Committee:

- Mrs. DiVito stated that the committee met on January 21st, and they discussed the cumulative review process, HIT Grant, professional development, and the Preschool Expansion Project.

Finance Committee:

- Mr. Vile explained the committee met on January 17, and they discussed how to maintain Daycare funds, various maintenance costs, the Preschool Expansion Project, 2025-2026 school year budget, and the Superintendent salary range.

F} Board Comment:

- Mrs. Smith believes that a change in the structure of the Board committees will help with the budget process.
- Mrs. Randle thanked the transportation department for making it through the cold weather and that she is looking forward to utilizing community resources with family engagement.

1/22/2025

2} APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
January 2, 2025 Reorganization Meeting and Executive Session

Motion: Vile Second: Smith

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

Cynthia Baldacchini
Lauren Cox
Monica DiVito
James Morris
Lauren Randle
Joseph Thomas
Jonathan Vile
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 within the block.

R. Routine Matters

R-1 Approval of Financial Statements:

The secretary's and custodian's reports for **December 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: January 2, 2025 - January 22, 2025 {Backup R-2}

R-3 Approval of Bill List: January 2, 2025 - January 22, 2025 {Backup R-3}

R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: January 22, 2025 {Backup R-4}

R-5 Approval of Travel: November 2024 {Backup R-5}

P. Personnel:

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

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Mia Rafter, Nada Nasr, Katherine Black, Anne Regan

SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDES

Pamela Murray, Kristen Connelly, Katherine Black, Anne Regan

SUBSTITUTE DAY CARE AIDE

Anne Regan

SUBSTITUTE CAFETERIA AIDE

Pamela Murray

- 2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept, the resignation of Thomas Connelly, School Security at the Sandman School, effective January 24, 2025. (Backup P-2)
- 3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept, with regret, the retirement of Richard Hooyman, Technology Assistant, in the District, effective May 1, 2025. (Backup P-3)
- 4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept, with regret, the retirement of Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent in the District, effective July 1, 2025. (Backup P-4)
- 5. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Carolann Mastalski, Preschool Master Teacher at the Carl T. Mitnick School, for placement of BA+15 on the LTEEA Teachers' Salary Guide, to reflect an increase of credits to her degree, effective February 1, 2025. (Backup P-5)
- 6. 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>
Hailey Gain	60 Credit Aide @ Mitnick	12/2/24
Megan Spencer	Cafe Aide @ Mitnick	1/2/25
Joan Hunt	Food Service	1/2/25
Jack Pasternak	Bus Driver	12/3/24

- 7. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Intermittent FMLA for Employee #4690, effective 1/8/25 to 6/30/25, as needed.

H. Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: None

L. Legislative and Internal Policies:

1/22/2025

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the first reading for the following revisions to existing or new Policies and Regulations: (Backup L1)

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
5512	Policy	Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying
5533	Policy	Student Smoking
5533	Regulation	Student Smoking
7441	Policy & Regulation	Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings and on School Grounds
9320	Policy & Regulation	Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies
5516	Policy	Use of Electronic Communication Devices
5516	Regulation	Use of Electronic Communication Devices
5701	Policy	Academic Integrity (TABLED)
5710	Policy	Student Grievance

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the Revised 2024-2025 District Calendar. (Backup L-2)

E. Education: None

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 and the Recommendations and Corrective Action Plan, to be read into the public record (if applicable), for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024: (Complete document was distributed under separate cover.)

FYE 6/30/2024- Annual School Audit Lower Township 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. Application for State School Aide – None.
- #7. Pupil Transportation – None.
- #8. Facilities and Capital Assets – None.
- #9. Miscellaneous – Day Care Program- (Finding No. 2024-001)
- #10. Status of Prior Year Audit Findings/Recommendations- No prior year audit findings/recommendations.

FYE 6/30/2024- Annual School Audit Lower Twp Schools

Findings: Day Care Program No. 2024-001
Recommendation: Detailed cash receipt records maintained for Day Care Program
Corrective Action Plan: Create spreadsheet to show detailed cash receipts deposits.
Review/print deposit detail reports from SmartCare system.
Keep all bank deposit forms available to review.

2. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approved the Change Order request required in the completion of the district's HVAC Project. (Backup F-2)
3. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve removing and disposing of asbestos located at the Memorial School Building to Pernaco Inc., totaling \$69,914, which will utilize funding from the Preschool Facilities Expansion Grant. (Backup F-3)
4. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Construction Management Services to Greyhawk for the Preschool Facilities Expansion Project located at the Memorial School Building, totaling \$29,424, which will utilize funding from the Preschool Facilities Expansion Grant. (Backup F-4)
5. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the contract for Educational Services provided by Department of Children and Families for student contract #25BKEF effective July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. (Backup F-5)

MOTION ON CONSENT AGENDA ON ALL MOTIONS LISTED BELOW:

Routine Matters: R-1 to R-5

Personnel: P-1 to P-7

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: None

Legislative and Internal Policies: L-1 & L-2 (TABLED Policy 5701)

Education: None

Finance: F-1 to F-5

Motion: Douglass Second: Vile

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

Cynthia Baldacchini

Lauren Cox

Monica DiVito

James Morris

Lauren Randle

Joseph Thomas

Jonathan Vile

1/22/2025

Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

4} NON-CONSENT AGENDA:

- Mr. Samaniego thanked Tom Connelly for all he has done for the district and congratulated Rich Hooyman on his retirement coming up in May.

5} OLD/NEW BUSINESS: None

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: February 26, 2025
- B}** Emergency Drill: 1/15/25 - Lockdown Drill
- C}** Fire Drills: 1/17/25 - Sandman School; Maud Abrams School & Memorial School

Motion to enter Executive Session

Motion: Thomas Second: Cox

All Voted in Favor

8} EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Entered Session at 6:50 p.m.

Motion: Thomas Second: Baldacchini

Discussion: None

All Voted in Favor:

9} ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: Thomas Second: Cox

Discussion: None

All Voted in Favor:

This meeting concluded at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Ryan
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
EXECUTIVE SESSION
JANUARY 22, 2025**

Meeting was called to order at 6:20 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present:

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

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

Motion to enter Executive Session

Motion: Baldacchini **Second:** Vile

All Voted In Favor

EXECUTIVE SESSION 1:

Personnel: None

Other Matters:

Mr. Douglass discussed proper ethics as a board member and a person in the community.

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 6:28 p.m.

Motion: Baldacchini **Second:** Thomas

All Voted in Favor

Motion to re-enter Executive Session: Started at 6:50 p.m.

Motion: Thomas **Second:** Cox

All Voted in Favor

(Mr. Samaniego, Mr. Douglass and Mrs. Ryan left the room due to conflict.)

EXECUTIVE SESSION 2:

Other Matters:

Discussion of Superintendent candidates for the second round of interviews.

Discussion: None

All Voted in Favor

9} ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: Thomas Second: Cox

All Voted in Favor:

This session concluded at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Ryan

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**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 2 issues 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 22, 2025 at 6:20 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”

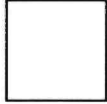
“(5) Any matter involving the purchase lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed.” The nature of the matter, described as specifically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