

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2024**

Call to Order:

Work Session: Started at 6:00 pm.

Work Session Meeting:

Roll Call:

Lindsey Selby
Joseph Thomas
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
Patricia Smith
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

Absent:

Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary/School Business Administrator
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

Agenda Items:

- Mrs. DiVito inquired about the start date for the Temporary Transportation Supervisor.
- Mrs. Cox asked Mr. Samaniego if the teachers were being informed of the curriculum content.
- Mrs. Smith explained to the Board about the NJSBA delegates and the resolution to delegate assembly along with the policies throughout the state.
- The Cape May County School Board Association will hold a virtual meeting in February concerning the Board's role with the budget.
- Mrs. Ryan explained that a Technology Technician job description was created, which was needed to meet the requirements of QSAC.

Non-Agenda Items:

- There were discrepancies in the student absentee report for September and the report has been corrected and updated.
- Mr. Thomas inquired if the district was tracking Covid outbreaks.
- ● Mrs. Cox inquired about the absenteeism in the district and what percentage is considered high. Mr. Samaniego stated that if it's below 93%.
- Mrs. Smith suggested looking at patterns in the absenteeism.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Personnel Matters: Employees #4155; #5939

H.I.B. Mitnick #1 2023-2024

H.I.B. Sandman #2 2023-2024

H.I.B. Maud Abrams #4 2023-2024

January 24, 2024

Other Matters:

Temporary Transportation Supervisor

Motion: Thomas Second: Cox

Discussion: None

All Voted in Favor:

Motion to return to Regular Meeting:

Motion: Thomas Second: Smith

Regular Meeting: Regular meeting started at 7:03 pm.

Roll Call:

Lindsey Selby
Joseph Thomas
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

Absent:

Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Monica DiVito

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary/School Business Administrator
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."

January 24, 2024

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.

2021-2023 Board Goal:

The Lower Township Board of Education is committed to ensuring that we are providing a safe and supportive environment for our students as well as staff members. We recognize that a healthy workplace environment can have a positive impact on school district programs, ultimately having a positive impact on student achievement.

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 was pleased to announce that the Education Foundation Children's Dinner will be taking place again this year in March.
- Pre-K Snowflake Ball was postponed to this Friday 1/26@5:30.
- Mr. Samaniego met with the Superintendent of Cape Tech/Special Services/Wildwood about a new program allowing classroom aides to enroll to become a teacher.
- Formerly ELL now Multi Language Learners night will be on February 2 from 5:30-7:30 at the Mitnick School.
- The Lower Township Healthy Youth Coalition will run an art contest for grades 5-8 to design the t-shirts for the LT Police Dept. Summer Camp.

C} School Business Administrator: The safety committee had an initial meeting. They created a new Mission Statement and Board policies. Discussions included safety vests for staff to wear at arrival and dismissal, access road issues, speed bumps, and playground "fall zones".

D} Presentations: Acknowledge Irena Murray – Mr. Samaniego thanked Ms. Murray for her quick actions in helping a choking student at lunch. She was presented with a certificate and a gift from the Board.

E} Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds Committee: None

January 24, 2024

Curriculum Committee: Mrs. Cox stated that the Curriculum Committee met on January 18, 2024. She then read the curriculum statement to the Board.

Finance Committee: None

Goals Committee: None

F} Board Comment:

- Mrs. Smith informed the Board about the character trait program for Maud and Sandman, and she was very impressed with the words chosen by the Principals.
- Mrs. Cox is excited for the full curriculum review and outcome.

2} APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January 3, 2024

Reorganization Meeting, Regular Meeting & Executive Meeting

Motion: Thomas Second: Cox

Discussion: None

Voted in Favor:

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Lauren Cox

Cynthia Baldacchini

Patricia Smith

Gary Douglass

Absent:

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Monica DiVito

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.

-NO COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

The following items are believed to be items of a routine nature and will be moved as a block of action items.

R. Routine Matters

R-1 Approval of Financial Statements: Secretary's and custodian's reports for

January 24, 2024

November, 2023 and December, 2023, 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 6, 2023 - January 24, 2024** {Backup R-2}
- R-3 Approval of Bill List: January 3, 2024 - January 24, 2024** {Backup R-3}
- R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: January 2024** {Backup R-4}
- R-5 Approval of Travel: October 2023** {Backup R-5}

P. Personnel:

- 1.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the following substitutes be approved for the 2023-2024 school year, pending receipt of required documentation: (Backup P-1)

SUBSTITUTES NEEDING MORE DOCUMENTATION

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Hanna Christiansen, Bianca Leonard, Sara Mormello, Michele Hennig, Jennifer Kramer

SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDE

Bianca Leonard

SUBSTITUTE DAY CARE AIDES

Bianca Leonard, Julianna Stone

SUBSTITUTE FOOD SERVICE WORKER

Catherine Martin

SUBSTITUTE BUS DRIVER/BUS AIDE

Carli Eckel

- 2.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves FMLA for Employee #5566, effective January 22, 2024 to February 2, 2024, pending paperwork.
- 3.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Mark Hunter as Custodian in the District, on the 1st Step of the Custodian Salary Guide, effective February 1, 2024, pending documentation. (Backup P-3)
- 4.** On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Aimee Gallagher as Custodian in the District, on the 1st Step of the Custodian Salary Guide, effective February 1, 2024. (Backup P-4)

January 24, 2024

5. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Susan Roselli as Special Education Teacher at the Sandman Consolidated School, effective January 25, 2024 to June, 2024. (Backup P-5)
6. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Jennifer Boyle for placement of BA+15 on the LTEEA Teachers' Salary Guide to reflect an increase of credits to her degree, pending review of documentation, effective February 1, 2024. (Backup P-6)
7. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Job Description for Technology Technician. (Backup P-7)

H. Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying:

1. The Board affirms the actions taken by the Superintendent and the School Safety Teams, for H.I.B. Maud Abrams School #3 2023-2024. (Backup H-1)

L. Legislative and Internal Policies:

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 L-1)

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
8423	<i>Policy</i>	<i>School Safety Policy</i>

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following updated Board Goals for 2024-2025:

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.

Action Plan

- Board of Education members will become familiar with benchmark data to better understand and track student achievement.
- Board of Education members will increase knowledge of the financial resources allocated to achieve the district goal. Along with administration, the board will reflect on student achievement data to determine whether resources are being maximized and we are achieving the desired outcomes.
- Board of Education members will familiarize themselves with the District Professional Development Plan and ensure that adequate resources are available.

January 24, 2024

- Board of Education members will support the district in its effort to promote parent engagement through renewed opportunities like grade-level curriculum nights. The Board recognizes that strong community and parent involvement is an essential factor in increasing student achievement.

E. Education:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following placement for the 2023-2024 school year:
(Backup E-1)

Case #4948-A: Preschool student to be placed at the Cape May County Special Services School District.

Case #5117-A: Preschool student to be placed at the Cape May County Special Services School District.

2. On the recommendation of the Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, that the Lower Township Board of Education adopts the revised Math curriculum units to include the following resource, Big Ideas Learning. (Backup E-2)

F. Finance and Insurance:

1. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education to approve the district Safety Committee and Safety Committee Mission Statement. (Backup F-1)
2. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the revised Standard Operating Procedures Manual.
(Backup F-2)
3. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the amendment of the ARP ESSER II grant funding allocation.
4. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education to approve that the following employee's salary to be grant funded:

ARP ESSER (Acct# 20-487-100-101-00-000)

Shawn Gerry (74% of annual salary)

5. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Annual Financial Comprehensive Report and the Auditors Management Report for the 2022-2023 SY financial audit ending June 30,2023.
(Backup F-5)

January 24, 2024

6. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Change Order requests required in the completion of the district's HVAC Project. (Backup F-6)

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: H-1

Legislative and Internal Policies: L-1 & L-2

Education: E-1 & E-2

Finance and Insurance: F-1 to F-6

Motion: Smith Second: Cox

Discussion: None

All Voted in Favor

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Lauren Cox

Cynthia Baldacchini

Patricia Smith

Gary Douglass

Absent:

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Monica DiVito

4} ADDENDUM:

1. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the employment termination of Employee# 5939 effective 1/25/2024.

MOTION ON ADDENDUM A-1

Motion: Smith Second: Cox

Discussion: None

Voting Yes:

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Lauren Cox

Cynthia Baldacchini

Patricia Smith

Gary Douglass

January 24, 2024

Absent:

Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Monica DiVito

5} NON-CONSENT AGENDA: None

6} OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Samaniego congratulated the two newly hired custodians, Mr. Hunter and Ms. Gallagher.

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

-No Public Comments

8} GOOD OF THE ORDER:

A} Next Board Meeting: February 28, 2024

B} Fire Drills: 12/4/23 - Mitnick School; 12/13/23 - Maud Abrams School;
12/15/23 - Sandman School and Memorial School

C} Monthly Emergency Drill: Various testing of security systems

D} Bus Evacuation Drills: N/A

9} ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: Douglass Second: Thomas

Discussion: None

All Voted In Favor

Time: 8:17 pm

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Ryan
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
EXECUTIVE SESSION
JANUARY 24, 2024**

Meeting was called to order at 6:13pm.

Members Present:

Lindsey Selby
Joseph Thomas
Lauren Cox
Cynthia Baldacchini
Patricia Smith
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

Absent:

Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary/School Business Administrator
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Personnel Matters: Employees #4155; #5939

H.I.B. Mitnick #1 2023-2024

H.I.B. Sandman #2 2023-2024

H.I.B. Maud Abrams #4 2023-2024

Personnel Matters

- **Employee # 4155-** Employee demonstrated unprofessional behavior. An investigation will be conducted by DCP&P and the district.
- **Employee # 5939-** Part-time employee exhibited behavior which led to the employee's termination from the district.

H.I.B.

- **H.I.B. Mitnick #1 2023-2024** - Mr. Samaniego reviewed the issues relative to this situation and determined it was not considered a H.I.B.
- **H.I.B. Sandman #2 2023-2024-** Mr. Samaniego reviewed the issues relative to this situation and determined it was not considered a H.I.B.
- **H.I.B. Maud Abrams #4 2023-2024-** Mr. Samaniego reviewed the issues relative to this situation and determined it was not considered a H.I.B.

Other Matters

- The Board discussed the qualifications of the candidate recommended by Mr. Samaniego for the Temporary Transportation Supervisor position. The Board had decided to table motion Personnel #8.
- Mr. Gorman discussed the current changes to the Sidebar Agreement to be presented to the LTEEA.

Motion: Thomas **Second:** Cox

Discussion: None
All Voted In Favor

This session concluded at 7:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

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

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 7 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 24, 2024 at 6:13 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. Mitnick #1 2023-2024; H.I.B. Sandman #2 2023-2024; and H.I.B. Maud Abrams #4 2023-2024

“(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 is 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: Employee #4155 and Employee #5939

“(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.