

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
EXECUTIVE SESSION
OCTOBER 23, 2024**

Meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present:

Lindsey Selby
Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Patricia Smith
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

Absent:

Cynthia Baldacchini

Also in Attendance:

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

Motion to enter Executive Session:

Motion: Vile Second: Thomas

All Voted In Favor

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

H.I.B.:

H.I.B.Mitnick #1- Mr. Samaniego reviewed the issues relative to this situation and this incident was considered a H.I.B.

Other Matters:

-Mrs. Ryan discussed the payment for food service worker cashier stipend for the 23-24 SY.

October 23, 2024

Motion to exit Executive Session:

Motion: Vile Second: Douglass

Discussion: None

All Voted In Favor

This session concluded at 6:55 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 (two) 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 October 23, 2024 at 6:40 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 2 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. #1 Mitnick School 2024-2025

“(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: Food service cashier stipend 2023-24 SY.

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“(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 (thirty) 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.

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 23, 2024**

Call to Order:

Work Session: Started at 6:00 p.m.

Work Session Meeting:

Roll Call:

Lindsey Selby
Joseph Thomas
Lauren Randle
Jonathan Vile
Lauren Cox
Patricia Smith
Monica DiVito
Gary Douglass

Absent:

Cynthia Baldacchini

Also in Attendance:

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

Agenda Items:

- Mrs. Smith had questions concerning non-FMLA in Motion P-3. Mrs. Ryan explained that the part-time employee is not eligible for FMLA.
- Mr. Thomas reviewed the bills and commented that the health benefits bill was very high.
- Mrs. Randle inquired about the free/reduced lunch qualifications for students. Mr. Vile interjected that Medicaid qualified families automatically qualify for free/reduced lunch.
- Mr. Douglass shared an email from Cynthia Baldacchini stating how much she appreciated all the work done at the Finance Committee meeting and thanked Mrs. Ryan.

-

Non-Agenda Items:

- Mrs. Smith explained the Superintendent Survey and the family letters that will be distributed to the parents concerning this survey.
- Mrs. Divito informed the Board to type their name on any tasks they interested in performing listed on the Google doc from the Board retreat.
- Mrs. Randle asked that the retreat calendar to be posted on the school website. Mrs. Ryan replied that she will have it posted.

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- The group briefly discussed the NJSBA Workshop sessions they attended this week, which included the Superintendent search, student absenteeism, and the Board Certifications.
- Mrs. Randle inquired about when the Preschool Facility Project and whether it will be completed by September 1st. Mr. Douglass replied that the Buildings and Grounds Committee are looking into possible options if the project is not completed on time.
- Mrs. Randle inquired about hiring another music teacher for the Mitnick school next year. Mr. Samaniego replied that this will be looked into and is dependent on our finances.

Other Matters:

Budget Calendar 2025-26- Mrs. Ryan informed the board of the updated details added to the 2025-2026 Budget Calendar.

Education Foundation- Mr. Samaniego informed the Board that the funds from the Fun Run will fund the meal program and Lane. The foundation will increase fundraising for a second grade playground.

- Mr. Douglass inquired about the Memorial playground to be replaced with another for Preschool and will funding come from the Preschool Grant. Mr. Samaniego replied yes to both questions.

Motion to exit Executive Session

Motion: Vile Second: Douglass

All Voted In Favor

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

H.I.B.

H.I.B. #1 Mitnick School 2024-25

Other Matters:

Food Service Cashier Stipend

Motion to return to Regular Meeting:

Motion: Vile Second: Thomas

All Voted In Favor:

Regular Meeting: Started at 6:55 p.m.

Roll Call:

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Patricia Smith

Monica DiVito

Gary Douglass

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Absent:

Cynthia Baldacchini

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.

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:

- Mr. Samaniego thanked Kurt Himstedt and Pat Carter for all the preparation they did for the Fun Run.

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- The Fun Run raised \$2,400.00 for Lane (therapy dog) and the Education Foundation.
- Our Joe Corbi fundraiser raised over \$9,000.00 for the students.
- The Optimist Club of Lower Township has donated \$1,500.00 to benefit the district's Daycare program for supplies and snacks.
- The Sandman school conducted their Special Area Night was very successful. Mr. Samaniego made a special thank you to Mr. Cathcart and Mrs. O'Shea for the preparation, planning, and carrying out the evening events.
- Just a reminder that the Halloween parades are next week.

C} School Business Administrator:

- Mrs. Ryan stated that at the CMCASBO meeting was last week, the state has informed districts to plan for flat state aid and/or a reduction in aid for the 2025-26 school year.
- Mrs. Ryan informed the Board that all of the district's ESSER funding has been spent, all of the final reports have been submitted and approved by the NJDOE.
- In mid-November, our auditor will be performing out 2023-2024 school year audit.
- Mrs. Ryan informed the Board that starting in December the County office will be conducting the mid-year budget reviews.

D} Presentations:

- Sarah Bowman, Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction and
Christina Granero, Supervisor of Academic Achievement - State Test Scores

E} Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds Committee:

- Mr. Douglass emailed minutes to all of the Board Members to review.

Curriculum Committee: None

Finance Committee:

- Mr. Vile thanked Mrs. Ryan for all her hard work with the Finance Committee Agenda, where we discussed the budget, Budget Calendar and Superintendent salaries.

Goals Committee: None

F} Board Comment:

- Mrs. Smith commented that she was very impressed with the Principal Reports this month. She also congratulated everyone on all their work in increasing student attendance this school year.
- Mrs. Selby thanked Mr. Cathcart for the great Special Area Night this week.

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- Mrs. Randle “cheered on” all of the families that attended Special Areas night and loved the “Wild Robot” book and movie day.
- Mrs. Cox thanked Mr. Himstedt for the Fun Run and mentioned how very nice it was to see everyone there.
- Mr. Vile stated he was very pleased that the student attendance numbers are increasing.
- Mrs. DiVito has a very positive feeling on the outlook of the direction of our district this school year.

2} APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

September 25, 2024

Regular Meeting & Executive Meeting

Motion: Smith Second: Vile

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Patricia Smith

Monica DiVito

Gary Douglass

Absent:

Cynthia Baldacchini

Abstained:

Lindsay Selby

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 Public

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.

-No Public Comments

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R. Routine Matters

R-1 Approval of Financial Statements:

Secretary's and custodian's reports for **September 30, 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: September 25, 2024 - October 23, 2024 {Backup R-2}

R-3 Approval of Bill List: September 25, 2024 - October 23, 2024 {Backup R-3}

R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: October 23, 2024 {Backup R-4}

R-5 Approval of Travel: None.

P. Personnel:

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

SUBSTITUTES NEEDING MORE DOCUMENTATION

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

James Hall, Bernadette Brogan, Christina McCann

SUBSTITUTE SCHOOL NURSE

Katie Cunha, Dannica Hill

SUBSTITUTE FOOD SERVICE WORKERS

Veronica Rodriguez, Zymia Carter

SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDES

Christina McCann, Veronica Rodriguez, Karen Thrane, Bernadette Brogan, Andrea Smith, Jamie West

SUBSTITUTE DAYCARE AIDE

Veronica Rodriguez, Karen Thrane, Amy Adams, Andrea Smith, Zymia Carter

SUBSTITUTE BUS DRIVER

Zymia Carter

SUBSTITUTE BUS AIDES

Andrea Smith, Jamie West, Zymia Carter, Abigail Bittings, Kayla Savage

SUBSTITUTE CAFETERIA AIDE

Veronica Rodriguez

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2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the FMLA for Employee #6031, effective 01/20/25 to 06/16/25.
3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the non-FMLA for Employee #5661, effective 9/26/24 to 11/2/24.
4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Keara Sorenson as Temporary 3rd Grade Teacher at the Maud Abrams School, effective 11/11/24 to 3/13/25. (Backup P-4)
5. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Laurie Magargal, as Temporary Administrative Assistant for Daycare, effective November 15, 2024 through April 30, 2025. (Backup P-5)
6. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the FMLA for Employee #5550, effective 1/2/25 to 5/4/25.
7. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the FMLA for Employee #4122, effective 1/13/25 to 5/27/25.

H. Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Board approve the H.I.B. School Self-Assessment scores for the 2023-2024 school year. (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 L1)

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
5200	Regulation	Attendance

E. Education:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Nursing Services Plan for the 2024-2025 school year. (Backup E-1)
2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Annual Preschool Operational Plan Update to the 2025-2026 3-Year Preschool Operational Plan. (Backup E-2)

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3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the submission of the district's preschool enrollment projections for the 2025 -2026 school year to the Department of Education. (Backup E-3)
4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following placement for the 2024-2025 school year: (Backup E-1)

Case #5187-A: Preschool student out of district placement to Cape May County Special Services School District.

Case #4922-A: 1st Grade student out of district placement to Cape May County Special Services School District.

F. Finance and Insurance:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Three-Year (2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026) Facility Comprehensive Maintenance Plan and Form M-1, as submitted. (Backup F-1)
2. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education adopt the 2025-2026 Budget Calendar. (Backup F-2)
3. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the Service Contract with the Commission with Blind and Visually Impaired, for 2024-2025 school year. (Backup F-3)
4. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorizes the School Business Administrator to pay bills during the month of November and report payments to the Board at the December 4, 2024 meeting.
5. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the submittal of the 2024-2025 PEA grant application, including the Budget Worksheet, by November 15, 2024.
6. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education to authorize the submittal of the 2025-2026 Application of State School Aid (ASSA).

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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

Education: E-1 to E-4

Finance and Insurance: F-1 to F-6

Motion: Vile Second: Thomas

Discussion: None

Voted Yes:

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Patricia Smith

Monica DiVito

Gary Douglass

Absent:

Cynthia Baldacchini

4} NON-CONSENT AGENDA: None

5} OLD/NEW BUSINESS: None

**6} OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC: *(public comment rules as read above apply):*
-No Public Comments**

- Mr. Thomas thanks all of the staff, Administration, Mrs. Ryan, Mr. Samaniego and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

7} GOOD OF THE ORDER:

A} Next Board Meeting: December 4, 2024

**B} Fire Drills: 10/14/24 - Memorial School; 10/18/24 - Mitnick School;
10/22/24 - Sandman School and Maud Abrams School**

C} Monthly Emergency Drill: 10/23/24 - Lockdown Drill

**D} Bus Evacuation Drills: 10/14/24 - Sandman School; 10/15/24 - Maud Abrams
School; 10/16/24 - Mitnick School; 10/17/24 - Memorial School;
10/21/24 - CMCSSS**

October 23, 2024

8} ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: Douglass Second: Selby

Discussion: None

All Voted in favor

This meeting concluded at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Ryan

School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary