

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
SPECIAL REGULAR SESSION MEETING
MAY 13, 2025**

Meeting called to order:

Regular Meeting started at 3:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Present:

Lauren Cox
James Morris
Joseph Thomas
Jonathan Vile
Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

Absent:

Cynthia Baldacchini
Monica DiVito
Lauren Randle

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary

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} NON-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

F. Finance and Insurance:

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the increase in expenditures as described below:

***BUDGET CHANGED FOR TAX LEVY INCENTIVE AID AT THE PUBLIC HEARING ON APRIL 30,2025 ***

FINAL Budget Adoption with all other resolutions re-adopted.

Adoption of the FINAL BUDGET, with modifications to the TENTATIVE BUDGET approved by the Interim Executive County Superintendent:

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education adopted a tentative budget on March 19, 2025, and submitted it to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval, and

WHEREAS, the tentative budget was approved by the Executive County Superintendent of Schools on April 9, 2025, and

WHEREAS, the tentative budget was advertised in the legal section of the Cape May Star & Wave newspaper on April 23, 2025, and

WHEREAS, in the proposed FY2026 State Budget, certain districts had the opportunity to apply to the Commission of Education to increase expenditures, including an allocation of Tax Levy Incentive Aid, in order to satisfy the thoroughness and efficiency standards established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-46.

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education is below local fair share and spending below adequacy to be eligible to participate in this program.

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education is **eligible to increase** expenditures by \$ 5,829,767 and qualify for Tax Levy Incentive Aid in the amount of \$ 291,488.

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education has been approved the Tax Levy Incentive Aid to allow an increase of \$132,867 to general fund tax levy and additional tax levy incentive aid from the state of \$6,643, total increase of \$139,510 and

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education has been granted approval to increase expenditures by \$139,510 based on the need to purchase technology equipment for instructional needs, which includes thirty-seven (37) Promethean Smartboards and one (1) Smartboard stand for the Maud Abrams classrooms and sixty-six (66) Dell Chromebooks for students districtwide.

WHEREAS, the **FINAL BUDGET** including the increase in accordance with the tax levy incentive aid was presented to the public during a public hearing held at the Carl T. Mitnick School Library, 905 Seashore Road, Cape May NJ, on April 30th, 2025.

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has now determined to make modifications to the Tentative Budget as follows:

Increase in Revenues:

Revenue Budget Line	Description	Tentative Budget	Final Budget	Change	Explanation
10-1210-000	Tax Levy	\$20,227,622	\$20,360,489	\$132,867	Tax Levy Incentive Program
10-3190-000	Other State Aid	\$0.00	\$ 6,643	\$ 6,643	Tax Levy Incentive Aid
TOTAL		\$20,227,622	\$20,367,132	\$139,510	

Increase in Appropriations:

Budget Appropriation Line	Description	Tentative Budget	Final Budget	Change	Explanation
11-190-100-610-00	-37 Promethean Smartboards - 1 Smartboard Stand - 66 Dell Chromebooks	\$365,000	\$504,510	\$139,510	Technology Equipment for Instructional needs
TOTAL		\$365,000	\$504,510	\$139,510	

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in consideration of the above, the Board of Education hereby adopts the following **FINAL Budget for 2025-2026 SY:**

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Tax Levy</u>
General Fund	\$ 27,192,333	\$ 20,360,489
Special Revenue	\$ 5,205,679	\$ 0
Debt Service	\$ <u>1,483,230</u>	\$ <u>569,105</u>
Total Base Budget	<u>\$ 33,881,242</u>	<u>\$ 20,929,594</u>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, to acknowledge that the 2025-2026 school budget, as described, results in General Fund Tax Levy of **\$20,360,489**.

Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement 2025-2026

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Lower Township Board of Education established \$17,000 as the maximum travel amount for the current school year and has expended \$368.00 as of this date; now **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, to a maximum expenditure of \$17,000 for the 2025-2026 school year.

Capital Reserve Withdrawal – Other Capital Projects

BE IT RESOLVED, that included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve – Other Capital Projects in the amount of \$150,000 for other capital project costs of Preschool Facility Project. The total cost of this project is \$150,000 which represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Maintenance Reserve Withdrawal

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

Motion: To **adopt the budget or adopt the budget as amended** from the Public Hearing on the 2025-2026 Lower Township Elementary School District Budget

Motion: Douglass **Second:** Thomas

Discussion: None

Vote:

Lauren Cox
James Morris
Joseph Thomas
Jonathan Vile
Patricia Smith
Gary Douglass

Absent:

Cynthia Baldacchini
Monica DiVito
Lauren Randle

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

3} **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion: Vile **Second:** Thomas

All Voted in Favor:

Time: 3:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Patricia Ryan
Business Administrator/Board Secretary