

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES  
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 28, 2023**

Call to Order:  
(Meeting opened in Executive Session)

**Started at 6:00 p.m.**

**Roll Call:**

**Present**

Monica DiVito  
Lindsey Selby  
Joseph Thomas  
Charles Utsch  
Lauren Randle  
Jonathan Vile  
Lauren Cox  
Michael Mader  
Gary Douglass (Not present during meeting with Board Consultant)

**Also in Attendance:**

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent (Not present during meeting with Board Consultant)  
Frank Onorato, Interim Business Admin. (Not present during meeting with Board Consultant)  
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary  
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Meeting with Board Consultant  
Personnel Matters: Employee's #5284; #5856; #4694  
H.I.B. Maud Abrams #9 2022-2023  
H.I.B Sandman #7 2022-2023  
Litigation

**Motion: Vile      Second: Thomas**

**Discussion: None**

**All Voted in Favor**

**Motion to Adjourn Executive Session**

**Motion: Thomas      Second: Vile**

**All Voted in Favor**

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**Work Session Meeting: Started at 7:10 p.m.**

**Roll Call:**

**Present**

Monica DiVito  
Lindsey Selby  
Joseph Thomas  
Charles Utsch  
Lauren Randle  
Jonathan Vile  
Lauren Cox  
Michael Mader  
Gary Douglass

**Also in Attendance:**

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent  
Frank Onorato, Interim School Business Administrator  
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary  
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

**Agenda Items:**

-Board discussion concerning Mr. Onorato's job title to Fiscal Manager with the district.

**Non-Agenda Items:**

-Mr. Samaniego discussed the district recognizing the retirees at the July board meeting.  
-Mr. Mader updated the Board on the employment contract negotiations.  
-Mr. Samaniego updated the Board on the rehire of paraprofessionals for next school year.

**Motion to return to Regular Meeting:**

**Motion: Douglass Second: Vile**

**All Voted In Favor**

**Regular Meeting: Meeting started at 7:15 p.m.**

**Roll Call:**

**Present**

Monica DiVito  
Lindsey Selby  
Joseph Thomas  
Charles Utsch  
Lauren Randle  
Jonathan Vile  
Lauren Cox  
Michael Mader  
Gary Douglass

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**Also in Attendance:**

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent  
Frank Onorato, Interim School Business Administrator  
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.

**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

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**1} REPORTS:**

**A}** Board President: None

**B}** Superintendent: Mr. Samaniego explained the status of the HVAC district project. Mr. Samaniego mentioned that Extended School Year and Summer Tutoring programs had started last week and are running smoothly. In addition, Mr. Samaniego and Mr. Filachek have completed all bus driver training and have received their CDL licenses.

**C}** Assistant School Business Administrator: None

**D}** Presentations: None

**E}** Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds Committee: None

Curriculum Committee: Next meeting will be scheduled at the end of July.

Finance Committee: None

Goals Committee: Mrs. Randle reported that there was an increase in staff participation with the end of year staff surveys. Next meeting is scheduled in July.

**F}** Board Comment:

Mr. Mader thanked Mr. O'Shea for his assistance in the electric power outage at the Mitnick building. Mr. Mader also thanked Mr. Cathcart and all staff members who were involved in the preparation of the graduation for the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Sandman students. Mr. Thomas thanked Mr. Samaniego for the completion of his CDL license.

**2} APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

May 24, 2023

Regular Meeting & Executive Meeting

**Motion:** Selby      **Second:** Cox

**Discussion:** None

**Voting Yes:**

Monica DiVito  
Lindsey Selby  
Joseph Thomas  
Charles Utsch  
Lauren Randle  
Jonathan Vile  
Lauren Cox  
Michael Mader  
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

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*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 without the block.*

**R. Routine Matters**

**R-1 Approval of Financial Statements:**

Secretary's and custodian's reports for **May 31, 2023**, which are in agreement as certified by the Board Secretary, that no budgetary account has been over-expanded, in violation of NJAC 6:20-2.12 (a), (d).

**R-2 Approval of Transfers: May 24, 2023 – June 28, 2023 {Backup R-2}**

**R-3 Approval of Bill List: May 24, 2023 – June 28, 2023 {Backup R-3}**

**R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: May 2023 {Backup R-4}**

**R-5 Approval of Travel:**

**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***

*Russell Greenwald, JoAnn Greenwald*

***SUBSTITUTE PARAPROFESSIONALS***

*Russell Greenwald, JoAnn Greenwald*

***SUBSTITUTE SECRETARY/CLERK***

*Linda Cardaci*

***SUBSTITUTE DAY CARE AIDES***

*Katherine Mirgon, Justine Braciszewski*

***SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDES***

*Justine Braciszewski, Russell Greenwald*

***SUBSTITUTE BUS DRIVERS***

*Jeff Samaniego, Joseph Filachek, Joseph Peschi*

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2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Nicole Brooks as Long-Term Substitute Teacher for an FMLA for a Preschool Teacher effective 4/18/2023 to 6/16/2023, to be paid at BA Step 1 salary (prorated).
3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve FMLA for Employee #5712, effective 5/24/23 to 6/16/23.
4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Tonilynn Donzola as Speech Teacher for the ESY Summer Program for the 2022-23 school year. (Backup P-4)
5. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Patricia Ryan as School Business Administrator, effective July 1, 2023. (Backup P-5)
6. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Sara Damiana as Preschool Teacher at the Carl T. Mitnick School, effective September 1, 2023. (Backup P-6)
7. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Nicole Brooks as Preschool Teacher at the Carl T. Mitnick School, effective September 1, 2023. (Backup P-7)
8. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept the termination of employee #5856, effective immediately. (Backup P-8)
9. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accepts, with regret, the resignation of the following Part-Time Preschool Paraprofessionals:  
  
Employee # 5833; Employee #5218; Employee #5898; Employee #5907;  
Employee #4851
10. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education acknowledges with regret, that employee #5961 will not be rehired as a Part-Time Preschool Paraprofessional for the 2023-24 school year due to Reduction In Force (RIF).

11. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Frank Onorato, as Fiscal Manager effective July 1, 2023 through July 31, 2023 at the \$500 per day rate.
12. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Tracy Taylor as Accounting Clerk in the Business Office, effective July 12, 2023. (Backup P-12)
13. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Rachel Howgate, as Principal at the Carl T. Mitnick School, start date TBD, pending required documentation. (Backup P-13)

**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 #7 2022-2023; and H.I.B. Sandman #5 2022-2023. (Backup H-1)

**L. Legislative and Internal Policies:**

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept and approve the Security Drill Statement of Assurances. (Backup L-1)
2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Intervention and Referral Services Final Reports for school year 2022-2023. (Backup L-2)
3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the Statement of Assurances-Lead Testing. (Backup L-3)
4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Multidimensional Principal Performance Rubric (MPPR) as the School District's Principal Evaluation Instrument for the 2023-2024 school year.
5. On the recommendation of the Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching and the Rubric as the School District's Teacher Evaluation Instrument for the 2023-2024 school year.

**E. Education:** None.

**F. Finance and Insurance:**

1. On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorizes the Board Administrator to move up to: (Annual to year-end).

\$500,000, from current operations, to Capital Reserve as of June 30, 2024

\$300,000 from current operations to Maintenance Reserve as of June 30, 2024

2. On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorizes the district to maintain the district bid threshold at \$44,000 per N.J.S.A. 52:34-7.

3. On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the submittal of the FY-2024 IDEA=B Grant Application as follows: (Backup F-3)

IDEA – Basic                \$489,162

IDEA – PreK                \$ 28,090

4. On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education to accept and authorize the submittal of the FY 2024 ESEA Grant Application as follows: (Backup F-4)

Title IA                \$499,295

Title IIA                \$ 59,269

Title III                \$ 18,200

Title IV                \$ 37,766

5. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorizes the signature of the Cape May County Special Services School District Itinerant Agreement for the 2023-2024 school year. (Backup F-5)

6. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorizes an additional 15 days (summer months) in addition to the 2023-2024 Inter-local Agreement for Food Service Director between the Lower Township Board of Education and Lower Cape May Regional School District for cafeteria renovations in Richard M. Teitelman School.

7. That the Board approve the following Appointments and Resolutions, effective July 1, 2023:

**a. Board Secretary & Records Custodian** – Patricia Ryan

**b. Public Agency Compliance Officer (P.A.C.O.)** – Patricia Ryan

**c. Chief Equity/Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator** – Patricia Ryan



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- 8 On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Shared Services Agreement with Clayton Public School District for Business Office Support from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 for the cost of \$36,888. (Backup F-8)
9. On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve health and prescription benefits renewal through the Southern Coastal Regional Employee Benefits (health) and RX Alliance for (prescription) effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.
10. On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve dental benefits, through the Dental Alliance effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. **(MOTION WAS TABLED)**
11. On the recommendation of the Assistant Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the renewal of the accounting, payroll and personnel License and Support Agreement with Systems 3000 for the 2023-2024 school year. (Backup F-11)

**MOTION ON CONSENT AGENDA ON ALL MOTIONS LISTED BELOW:**

**Routine Matters: R-1 to R-5**

**Personnel: P-1 to P-13**

**Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: H-1**

**Legislative and Internal Policies: L-1 to L-5**

**Education: None**

**Finance and Insurance: F-1 to F-11 (Motion F-10 was Tabled)**

**Motion: Selby      Second: Cox**

**Discussion: None**

**Voting Yes:**

Monica DiVito (Voted "No" to motion P-13)

Lindsey Selby

Charles Utsch

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Michael Mader

Gary Douglass (Abstained vote to motion P-13)

**Voting No:**

Joseph Thomas

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**4} NON-CONSENT AGENDA: None**

**5} EXECUTIVE SESSION: Started at 7:30 p.m.**

Board discussed the Superintendent Evaluation process.

**Motion: Thomas Second: Vile**

**Discussion: None**

**Voting Yes:**

Monica DiVito

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Charles Utsch

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Michael Mader

**Also in Attendance:**

Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary

Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

**Not Present Due to Conflict**

Gary Douglass

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent

Frank Onorato, Interim School Business Administrator

**Motion to return to Regular Meeting:**

**Motion: Utsch Second: Thomas**

**All Voted In Favor**

**6} OLD/NEW BUSINESS: None**

**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: July 26, 2023**

**B} Fire Drills: 6/5/23 - Mitnick School; 6/6/23 - Memorial School; 6/12/23 - Maud Abrams School; 6/15/23 - Sandman School**

**Emergency Monthly Drill: Tabletop Drill**

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**9} ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**

**Motion: Thomas      Second: Mader**

**Discussion: None**

**All Voted in Favor**

**Time: 7:42 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted:

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

Patricia A. Ryan  
Assistant School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES  
EXECUTIVE SESSION  
JUNE 28, 2023**

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present**

Monica DiVito  
Lindsey Selby  
Joseph Thomas  
Charles Utsch  
Lauren Randle  
Jonathan Vile  
Lauren Cox  
Michael Mader  
Gary Douglass (Not present during meeting with Board Consultant)

**Also in Attendance:**

Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent (Not present during meeting with Board Consultant)  
Frank Onorato, Interim Business Admin. (Not present during meeting with Board Consultant)  
Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary  
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

**EXECUTIVE SESSION #1:**

The Board met with Mr. Anderson, Board Consultant, to discuss his services with the district.

**HIB**

- H.I.B. Maud Abrams #9 2022-2023- Mr. Samaniego reviewed the issues relative to this situation and it was considered a HIB.
- H.I.B Sandman #7 2022-2023- Mr. Samaniego reviewed the issues relative to this situation and it was not considered a HIB.

**Personnel Matters:** Employee's #5284; #5856; #4694

Mr. Samaniego discussed with the Board the termination of Employee# 5856 due to job performance and confidentiality issues.

Mr. Samaniego reviewed with the Board the evaluations and employment position for Employee# 4694.

Mr. Samaniego discussed the current litigation with former Employee#5530.

**Motion: Vile            Second: Thomas**

**Discussion: None**

**All Voted in Favor**

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**Motion to Adjourn Executive Session #1 at 7:10 p.m.**

**Motion: Thomas Second: Vile**

**All Voted in Favor**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION #2: Started at 7:30 p.m.**

Board discussed the Superintendent Evaluation process.

**Motion: Thomas Second: Vile**

**Discussion: None**

**Voting Yes:**

Monica DiVito  
Lindsey Selby  
Joseph Thomas  
Charles Utsch  
Lauren Randle  
Jonathan Vile  
Lauren Cox  
Michael Mader

**Also in Attendance:**

Patricia Ryan, Board Secretary  
Brett Gorman, Board Attorney

**Not Present Due to Conflict**

Gary Douglass  
Jeff Samaniego, Superintendent  
Frank Onorato, Interim School Business Administrator

This session concluded at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Patricia A. Ryan  
Assistant 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 June 28, 2023 at 6:00 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. Maud Abrams #9 2022-2023; H.I.B. Sandman #7 2022-2023

**“(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

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Authority, 124 N.J. 478, the employee(s) and nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality:  
Personnel Matters: Employee's #5284; #5856; #4694



**“(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.