

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES  
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING  
JULY 26, 2023**

Call to Order:

**Work Session: Started at 6:00 pm**

**Work Session Meeting:**

**Roll Call:**

**Present:**

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

**Absent:**

Michael Mader

**Also in Attendance:**

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

**Agenda Items:**

Mr. Douglass had questions on the mentoring practices for an administrator.

**Non-Agenda Items:**

- Mrs. Ryan explained the Board of County Commissioners Resolution #429-23 to the State of New Jersey concerning enacting an equitable and transparent school funding program.
- Mr. Douglass requested the addition of an addendum to vote on the new contract and salaries.
- Mr. Samaniego discussed the staff wellness program and mentioned adding wellness to the mission statement. Mr. Samaniego will reach out to the wellness committee to start up this program. Mrs. Randle would also like to include mental health to staff.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Personnel Matters: Employee #5284; #4051  
Discuss the Enhanced Sick Leave Law for school district employees

**Motion: Selby      Second: Vile**  
**Discussion: None**  
**All Voted In Favor:**

**Motion to return to Regular Meeting:**  
**Motion: Vile      Second: Utsch**  
**All Voted In Favor:**

**Regular Meeting: Meeting started at 6:53 pm.**

**Roll Call:**

**Present:**

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

**Absent:**

Michael Mader

**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.”

**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

**Honoring Retirements for the 2022-2023 School Year:**

Kathleen Brooks (17), Debra Douglass (22), Doreen Gantz (14), Tara Geisel (28), Barbara Hart (31), Richard Lowe (12), Karen Moorby (16), Patricia O’Shea (35), Eileen Oleksiak-Hall (20), JoAnn Sturm (33), Janet Sweeten (34), and Sharon Yarwarsky (30)

**1} REPORTS:**

**A} Board President:** None

**B} Superintendent:** Mr. Samaniego discussed the status of the district HVAC upgrades and new playground fencing at Mitnick. Mr. Samaniego mentioned that a few of our district committees met this month including Buildings & Grounds Committee, Board Goals Committee, and Donated Sick Leave Committee.

**C} School Business Administrator:** None

**D} Presentations:** None

**E} Committee Reports:**

Building and Grounds Committee - Mr. Douglass updated the board on the HVAC system, solar panels, and the improvement of the building gardens.

Curriculum Committee - Mrs. DiVito reminded that the next meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2023.

Finance Committee - None

Goals Committee - Mrs. Randle mentioned that the last meeting was on July 19, 2023. The end of the year school surveys were reviewed and there was a great turnout. Mrs. Randle feels that mental health support needs to be discussed for staff.

**F} Board Comment:**

The Board addressed the retirees and thanked them for all their years of service with the district.

Mr. Vile thanked all that participated in the negotiations.

**2} APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

June 28, 2023 Regular Meeting & Executive Meeting

**Motion: Vile            Second: Selby**

**Discussion: None**

**Present:**

**Voting Yes:**

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

**Absent:**

Michael Mader

**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 without the block.*

**R. Routine Matters**

**R-1 Approval of Financial Statements: None**

**R-2 Approval of Transfers: June 28, 2023 - July 26, 2023 {Backup R-2}**

**R-3 Approval of Bill List: June 28, 2023 - July 26, 2023 {Backup R-3}**

**R-4 Approval of Cafeteria Report: None.**

**R-5 Approval of Travel: None.**

**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**

*Colleen Spirito, Christine Meiskey, Jordan Surran*

**SUBSTITUTE PARAPROFESSIONAL**

*Jordan Surran*

**SUBSTITUTE CLASSROOM AIDES**

*Lisa Harpster, Brittany Faircloth, Zoe Lord, Jessenia Jimenez, Megan DelRio, Colleen Spirito, Mariel Halbruner, Jordan Surran, Jasmine Mallek*

**SUBSTITUTE CAFETERIA AIDES**

*Lisa Harpster, Jessenia Jimenez, Megan DelRio, Mariel Halbruner, Kimberly Phillips, Jasmine Mallek*

**SUBSTITUTE FOOD SERVICE WORKERS**

*Jessenia Jimenez, Amina Abdelmajid, Patricia Burk, Megan DelRio, Kimberly Phillips, Jasmine Mallek*

**SUBSTITUTE DAY CARE AIDES**

*Brittany Faircloth, Zoe Lord, Jessenia Jimenez, Megan DelRio, Mariel Halbruner*

**SUBSTITUTE BUS AIDES**

*Brittany Faircloth, Jessenia Jimenez, Megan DelRio, Mariel Halbruner*

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves to rehire Fotini Bilios as a Paraprofessional at the Carl T. Mitnick School for the 2023-24 school year.
3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the following transfers for the 2023-24 school year:

<b><u>Staff Member</u></b>	<b><u>Current Position</u></b>	<b><u>Transferred To</u></b>
Nicole Brooks	Preschool @ Mitnick	Preschool @ Memorial
Jessica Bryan	Preschool @ Mitnick	Preschool Co-Teacher @ Mitnick
Casey Heinicke	Preschool @ Memorial	Preschool Co-Teacher @ Memorial
Christopher Griffith	Custodian	Lead Night Custodian @ Mitnick

4. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Michelle Patterson as 6th Grade Teacher at the Sandman Consolidated School, effective September 1, 2023, pending receipt of required documentation. (Backup P-4)
5. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education the FMLA for the following employees:

<u>EMPLOYEE #</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATES</u>
#5203	Bus Driver	11/27/23 - 2/23/24
#5823	School Nurse	1/10/24 - 5/1/24

6. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education accept, with regret, the retirement of Madeleine Morris, 5th Grade Intervention Teacher at the Sandman Consolidated School, effective October 1, 2023. (Backup P-6)
7. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Sharon Holden as School Secretary at the Carl T. Mitnick School, effective August 1, 2023. (Backup P-7)
8. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the on-call daily substitutes being rehired for the 2023-2024 school year. (Backup P-8)
9. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves Shawn Gerry as 5th Grade Teacher at the Sandman Consolidated School, effective September 1, 2023, pending required documentation. (Backup P-9)
10. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the following Mentors for the 2023-2024 school year:

<u>Staff Member</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Mentor</u>
Nicole Brooks	Preschool @ Memorial	Tammy Hughes
Sara Damiana	Preschool @ Mitnick	Tracy Rutherford
Michelle Patterson	6th Gr. @ Sandman	JoAnne McLaughlin
Rachel Howgate	Principal @ Mitnick	John King
Shawn Gerry	5th Gr. @ Sandman	Genee Voumard

11. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Beverly Righter, School Nurse at the David C. Douglass Veterans Memorial School, for placement of MA on the LTEEA Teachers' Salary Guide, to reflect an increase of credits to her degree, pending review of documentation, effective September 1, 2023. (Backup P-11)
12. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approved Susan Roselli as Temporary 6th Grade Teacher at the Sandman Consolidated School effective September 1, 2023 to January 4, 2024. (Backup P-12)
13. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approves the 2023-2024 employment Contract between the Lower Township Board of Education and Patricia A. Ryan, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, as approved by the Executive County Superintendent. (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 #9 2022-2023 and H.I.B Sandman #7 2022-2023. (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>
2419	Policy	School Threat Assessment Teams

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the submittal of the Application for Dual Use of Educational Space 2023-2024 school year (not required in 23-24 school year)/Toilet Room Facilities (required for the 2023-2024 school year) for Early Intervention, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Classrooms for 2023-2024 school year. (Backup L-2)

**E. Education:**

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Lower Township Board of Education approved a District Waiver Request based on the grouping age ranges and ELP of consecutive grade span of our English Language Learners. The district currently has 16 ELLs in 2nd grade, 11 ELLs in 3rd grade, 8 ELLs in 4th grade, 8 ELLs in 5th grade, and 10 ELLs in 6th grade. ELP levels range from entering to bridging. Implementing a full-time bilingual education program would cause our district group students of multiple age ranges into a class and would inhibit developmentally appropriate instruction. (Backup E-1)

2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education confirms that the WIDA Access Test Student Score Reports were mailed via USPS on July 24, 2023 to the parents of all Multilingual Learners. (Backup E-2)
  3. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the LTES Remote Learning Plan for the 2023-2024 School Year. (Backup E-3)
- F. Finance and Insurance:**
1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Karen Wadding of Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD), to provide volunteer visitation services with her three therapy dogs for the 2023-2024 school year. (Backup F-1)
  2. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve dental benefits through Delta Dental, effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. (Backup F-2)
  3. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve a 3-Year Interlocal Services Agreement with Lower Cape May Regional Board of Education for Web Design and Related Services and Site Lock for \$7,750 annually. (Backup F-3)
  4. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Joint Transportation Agreement hosted by Cape May County Special Services to transport student J.D. to Pinelands Learning Center starting September 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 for \$460/diem at total cost of \$82,800. (Backup F-4)
  5. On the recommendation of the Assistant School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the ACCASBO JIF to apply the district's total dividend into the Aggregate Excess Loss Contingency Fund (A.E.L.C.F.) for any future financial needs- Resolution #2023-1. (Backup F-5)
  6. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve Hy-Point Dairy Farms, Inc. to provide milk and dairy products to the district for the 2023-2024 school year. (Backup F-6)
  7. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education authorize the School Business Administrator to make appropriate transfers and issue checks effective for the school year ending June 30, 2023 and will be reported at the next meeting. (Annual-Year End)



8. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the participation and approval of the Teach STEM Classes in Nonpublic Grant Award FY2024 with Bishop McHugh Regional Catholic School, to be taught by district employee, Joseph Bridgeman, after regular school hours. (Backup F-8)
  
9. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the Transportation Contract for the 2023-24 SY to transport student N.A. to the DCF Regional School, Cherry Hill Campus for \$75/day, for the days enrolled. (Backup F-9)
  
10. On the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve that the district is in compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), as per the district’s Internet Safety policy (Policy #2361), which enables eligibility in the E-Rate program. (Backup F-10)

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

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

**Personnel: P-1 to P-14**

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

**Legislative and Internal Policies: L-1 to L-2**

**Education: E-1 to E-3**

**Finance and Insurance: F-1 to F-10**

**Motion: Cox          Second: Selby**

**Discussion: None**

**Voting Yes:**

Monica DiVito - Abstained from Motion P-14.

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Charles Utsch

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Gary Douglass

**Absent:**

Michael Mader

**4} ADDENDUM**

1. On the recommendation of the Superintendent and the School Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2028 Lower Township Elementary Education Association Contract. (Backup P-14)
2. On the recommendation of the Superintendent and the school Business Administrator, that the Lower Township Board of Education approve the July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 Unaffiliated and Administrators salaries increased by 3.25%.

**MOTION ON ADDENDUM**

**Motion:** Vile            **Second:** Selby

**Discussion:** None

**Voting Yes:**

Monica DiVito

Lindsey Selby

Joseph Thomas

Charles Utsch

Lauren Randle

Jonathan Vile

Lauren Cox

Gary Douglass-Abstained due to conflict

**Absent**

Michael Mader

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

**6} EXECUTIVE SESSION: None**

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

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

Mrs. Salerno and the Association thanked the negotiation team and the Board for approving the contracts.

**9} GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

**A} Next Board Meeting:** August 23, 2023

**B} Fire Drills:** Summer School (Carl T Mitnick) - July 28, 2023

**10} ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**

**Motion: Utsch      Second: Selby**

**Discussion: None**

**All Voted In Favor:**

**Time: 7:10 pm**

Respectfully submitted:



Patricia A Ryan

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**LOWER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES  
EXECUTIVE SESSION  
JULY 26, 2023**

Meeting was called to order at 6:17 pm.

**Members Present**

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

**Absent:**

Michael Mader

**Also in Attendance:**

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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**Personnel Matters:** Employee #5284; #4051

**Other Matters:** Discuss the Enhanced Sick Leave Law for school district employees

The Board discussed a "Personal Needs Plan" for the excessive absences by Employee# 4051.

The Board discussed the new contract and salaries presented by the Association from the negotiation process.

Mrs. Selby solidified a discussion schedule with the board members concerning Employee# 5284.

Mrs. Ryan and Mr. Gorman explained the changes in the Enhanced Sick Leave Law and the possible impact it will create with our employee absences.

This session concluded at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia A. Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Patricia A 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 5 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 July 26, 2023 at 6:17 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 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: Personnel Matters: Employee #5284; #4051



**“(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 35 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.