

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
HELD ON MARCH 23, 2015
HAMILTON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Mays Landing, New Jersey
William Davies Middle School Library**

The Regular Meeting of the Hamilton Township Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Michael H. Duberson Memorial Library at the Davies Middle School by Mr. Eric Aiken, Board President.

**Call
To
Order**

Mr. Aiken led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Pledge of
Allegiance**

ANNUAL NOTICE OF MEETING

This meeting is being held in compliance with the Sunshine Law, having been advertised in the Press of Atlantic City and the Atlantic County Record and a notice posted with the Township Clerk on the Bulletin Board at the following locations: Mizpah Post Office, Mays Landing Post Office, Atlantic County Library, as well as all the schools of the district. A mechanical device is being used to record this meeting and this meeting is also being video-taped.

There are two opportunities to address the members of the Board. The Board values and welcomes comments and opinions from residents as long as remarks are not personal or discourteous. The public comment portion of the meeting allows the Board to listen to community members and to hear their opinions on school policy and operations.

The first public portion is reserved for persons wishing to speak about agenda items only. The second opportunity, following the action items, is when residents may address the Board on any school-related issue. Each speaker is asked to limit their comments to three minutes and you are not permitted to yield your time to another. The public comments portion of the meeting, during both sessions, will not exceed 30 minutes. Upon being recognized, persons wishing to speak should stand and identify themselves by name and address.

ROLL CALL

The following members answered roll call: Mrs. Stephanie Buchanan, Mr. Greg Cassidy, Mr. Greg Ciambone, Mrs. Amelia Francis, Mrs. Barbara Kupp, Mrs. Kimberly Melton, Mr. John Sacchinelli, and Mr. Eric Aiken. Quorum present.

**Roll
Call**

Absent: Mr. Derek Haye

V. Moment of silence for private reflection

Mr. Aiken thanked everyone who dealt with the emergency situation in the District

today.

XI. Approval of Minutes

1. Motion by Mr. Sacchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Kupp to approve the Regular and executive sessions of the meeting of February 23, 2015, as per attachment Minutes-1.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

2. Motion by Mr. Sacchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Melton to approve the Regular session minutes of the Board Retreat meeting of February 25, 2015, as per attachment Minutes-2.

Roll Call Vote: Seven in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. Abstained: Mr. Ciambrone (7-0-1)

CORRESPONDENCE

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anne Erickson spoke regarding Finance item #6 and Personnel item #4 on tonight's agenda. She feels that giving any raise at this time is not fair to the employees who will be losing their jobs due to budget cuts. Dr. Erickson urged the Board to be careful when allocating money.

Denise Brasher wanted to thank everyone in the District for keeping the children at Shaner safe today. She also noted that she is discouraged about the pattern of taxes for our citizens. Ms. Brasher noted unemployment statistics and poverty levels in the Mays Landing area. She would like the Board to look within the budget to see what can be done during tough financial times. Mrs. Brasher feels that there is money available through grants which can help the district.

Jonathan Diego spoke on behalf of his client, Kristina Carr, regarding Mrs. Carr's first grade son who attends Shaner as well as the after school program. He noted that Mr. and Mrs. Carr travel frequently and they would like to have the ability to make alternate arrangements for dismissal for their child on a daily basis. Mr. Diego noted that this is not permitted at this time, which makes it difficult for the child's parents. He would like to see this policy changed.

Mrs. Carr reiterated what Mr. Diego stated and is asking that the policy be changed to reflect changes made on a daily basis. She is asking that the three

day requirement be waived and phone calls be honored. Mrs. Carr noted that she is requesting the change for the safe dismissal of her son and does not want him to be on the bus without anyone at the stop to meet him.

Dr. Cappelluti stated that she has all of the information and will look into the policy and the Kid's Corner handbook.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Kupp noted that she attended the Davies School Art Exhibit at the Atlantic County Library and she was very impressed with the display presented by these students. Mrs. Kupp also noted the passing of Jim Reich who spent his entire teaching career at the Duberson School.

Mrs. Kupp also thanked everyone for their help at the Shaner School today. She also thanked the PTA for updating information throughout the day.

Mr. Ciambrone noted that everyone did a great job today at the Shaner School. He stated that there are things being done within the school that parents do not realize need to be done during an emergency. Mr. Ciambrone noted that the children were fed and well taken care of at the Hess School.

Mr. Aiken thanked everyone who participated in the guest reader gala held at the Shaner School. He noted that it was a great event for the children and he hopes it will continue. Mr. Aiken also thanked the residents of the township who supported the Greater Egg Harbor Regional School District referendum. He feels much needed improvements can now be made at Oakcrest.

Mrs. Buchanan noted how much her children enjoyed the movie night held by the Education Foundation recently and it was a great event. She also noted the Ricky McAvaddy Blood Drive recently held and what a great turn out there was for this.

SUPERINTENDENT/STAFF REPORTS

(A) Information Items

1. **Dates to Remember**

- a. March 23, 2015 – Board of Education Meeting – Davies School – 7:00 p.m.
- b. April 2-7, 2015 – Spring Break – Schools Closed
- c. April 8, 2015 – Facilities Committee Meeting – Board Office – 4:45 p.m.
- d. April 13, 2015 – Curriculum Committee Meeting – Davies School – 6:00 p.m.
- e. April 13, 2015 – Board of Education Meeting – Davies School – 7:00 p.m.
- f. April 15, 2015 – Personnel Committee Meeting – Board Office –

4:15 p.m.

g. April 27, 2015 – Board of Education Meeting and Public Hearing on the Budget – Davies School – 7:00 p.m.

- (B) Registration/Transfer Statistics for the Month of January, 2015, as per attachment X-B.
- (C) Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Incident Log, as per attachment X-C.
- (D) Student Discipline Reports for the month of February, 2015, as per attachment X-D.
- (E) *Presentation:* The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey – Certificate of Appreciation for Field Placements
Given by:
Kate Juliani, Representative from
Richard Stockton College
- (F) *Presentation:* Pre-School Grant Presentation
Given by:
Dr. Michelle M. Cappelluti
Superintendent
- (G) *Presentation:* 2015-2016 Budget Update
as per attachment X-G
Given by:
Dan Smith, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Mr. Aiken noted that the Board asked the Finance Committee to look at reducing the use of banked cap after the March 7th meeting and it appears the amount of banked cap was cut in half.

Mr. Aiken asked about the stipends that were reduced. Dr. Cappelluti noted that some stipends could be combined based on attendance for the current clubs and tutoring. She also noted that some expenses were allocated to the new preschool grant.

Mr. Sacchinelli asked about the budget deficit amount of \$1 million not equaling the tax rate increase of just under 10 cents if the value of a penny is roughly \$200,000.

Mr. Smith noted that ratables decreased over \$183 million which equated to a 7.2 cent tax increase just to keep the levy steady. He also noted that the administration is asking the Board to approve a tax levy increase up to the 2% cap; which he noted was an additional 1.6 cents. Mr. Smith noted that going to the 2% cap would be an 8.8 cent tax increase. He also noted the administration is asking for another 1.1 cents from the taxpayers to utilize \$230,000 in banked cap for a total of 9.9 cents.

Mr. Sacchinelli noted that the information should be clearer so that the average taxpayer can understand what is going on. Mr. Smith noted that the information was reviewed at the March 7th meeting and he will include more detailed information for the public hearing.

Mrs. Kupp noted that the committee looked at all areas of the budget and also considered items being funded by Title I. She noted that the committee can cut the budget and not raise taxes but it will be ugly.

Mrs. Buchanan asked about looking at scheduling and combining classes instead of eliminating programs. Dr. Cappelluti noted that we have to look at each school individually and schedules are looked at each year.

Mr. Sacchinelli noted that there are pages of foreclosures in the newspaper each week, and the Board needs to look at shaving the tax increase down a little more. He noted that a tax increase is needed, but he would like to see it shaved down.

Mr. Ciambone stated that he agreed with Mr. Sacchinelli and thinks the district needs to tighten up the budget, even if it hurts a little.

Mrs. Melton noted that the majority of the budget is salaries and benefits. She asked if the Board is saying to cut staff or cut clubs and activities. Mrs. Melton noted that the students would be affected if the district cuts sports and activities.

Mr. Aiken noted that other districts are in the same position and are making cuts. He stated that he understands the need to keep tax increases low, but he also understands the students need certain activities like athletics.

Mr. Sacchinelli asked Mr. Smith how much state aid has increased over the last four year. Mr. Smith noted that the aid has not increased from the State.

Mrs. Buchanan asked if the Board was voting on the final approval tonight. Mr. Smith noted that the State requires two approvals from the Board. He stated that the Board is voting tonight to approve the preliminary budget that will be sent to the County Office. Mr. Smith noted that the County will approve the budget for advertising and the district will advertise the budget in the newspaper. He noted that the Board is required to hold a public hearing on the budget which will be April 27, 2015. Mr. Smith noted that the Board will be asked to approve the final budget on that day. He also noted that changes can be made between now and April 27th if needed.

COMMITTEES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BUILDING/FACILITIES COMMITTEE - Mr. Ciambone

Motion by Mr. Ciambone, seconded by Mr. Sacchinelli, to approve the following motion, as presented:

1. To appoint Fraytak Veisz Hopkins Duthie, P.C. as the District's Architect of Record for the period March 24, 2015 through June 30, 2015.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – Mrs. Kupp

Motion by Mrs. Kupp, seconded by Mr. Sacchinelli, to approve the following motion, as amended:

1. To approve a Race to The Top-Preschool Expansion Cooperative Agreement for the 2015-2016 school year between the Department of Education and the Hamilton Township School District, as per attachment Curriculum-1.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

Motion by Mrs. Kupp, seconded by Mr. Sacchinelli, to approve the following motion, as presented:

2. To approve the revised 2014-2015 District Calendar, as per attachment Curriculum-2.

Changes due to snow days.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

FINANCE/SUPPLY COMMITTEE – Mrs. Melton

Motion by Mrs. Melton, seconded by Mr. Sacchinelli, to approve the following motions, as presented:

1. To approve budget transfers in the amount of

\$73,467.22, as per attachment Finance -1.

2. To accept the Superintendent's and Board Secretary's certification that they have reviewed all bills and purchase orders which are listed on the bill list, and hereby certify to the Board of Education that all purchase orders are sufficiently encumbered to cover the submitted bills, and further that all goods and services have been previously received.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

The following item has been included as an informational item:

3. Purchase orders issued for services, supplies and equipment in the amount of \$33,167.36, as per attachment Finance-3.

Motion by Mrs. Melton, seconded by Mr. Sacchinelli, to approve the following motions, as presented:

4. To approve the following bills and payroll in the total amount of \$2,133,984.95, as per attachment Finance -4:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
10	General Fund	\$1,166.00
11	Current Expense	1,824,382.93
12	Capital Outlay	144,447.10
20	Special Revenue	29,189.06
50	Cafeteria	134,799.86

5. To approve staff attendance at seminars, workshops and conferences, including costs related to applicable reimbursable expenses, during the 2014-2015 school year, as per attachment Finance -5.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

Motion by Mrs. Melton, seconded by Mrs. Kupp, to approve the following motion, as presented:

6. To approve Resolution #89 to Adopt the 2015-2016 Tentative Budget, as per attachment Finance-6.

Roll Call Vote: Six in favor: Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, and Mr. Aiken. Nay: Mrs. Buchanan. Abstained: Mr. Sacchinelli. (6-1-1)

PERSONNEL/NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE - Mr. Sacchinelli

All personnel actions are being taken by the recommendation of the Superintendent in accordance with 18A.

Motioned by Mr. Sacchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Melton, to approve the following motions as presented:

1. To approve district substitutes for the 2014-2015 school year, as per attachment Personnel-1.
2. To approve homebound instruction for the 2014-2015 school year, as per attachment Personnel -2.
3. To accept a resignation notice from Kenneth Berardis, Shaner School teacher, effective March 10, 2015 with his last day of employment to be March 25, 2015, as per attachment Personnel-3.
4. To approve a Contract between the Hamilton Township Board of Education and the Hamilton Township Supervisors, Coordinators and Directors Association (HTSCDA) for the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016, as per attachment Personnel-4.
5. To approve the salaries for the Hamilton Township Supervisors, Coordinators and Directors Association (HTSCDA) for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, as per attachment Personnel-5.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor #1, #2 and #3:
Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr.
Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs.
Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-
0)

Six in favor #4 and #5: Mr. Cassidy, Mr.
Ciambrone, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr.
Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. Nay: Mrs.
Buchanan and Mrs. Francis. (6-2-0)

Motion by Mr. Sacchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Melton, to approve the following motions, as presented:

6. To approve a Job Description for the Director of Early Childhood Education, as per attachment Personnel-6.
7. To approve the position of Director of Early Childhood Education with Position Control #22-01-00 BMI.
8. To approve a Job Description for Secretary for Pre-School, as per attachment Personnel-8.
9. To approve the position of part-time Secretary for Pre-School with Position Control #19-01-29.
10. To approve an intermittent Federal Family Medical Leave of Absence for Karen DeFeo, Davies School full-time Paraprofessional beginning April 1, 2015, as per attachment Personnel-10.
11. To approve Caitlin Ponticello as a full-time, 10 month Hess School Speech and Language Specialist for the period April 9, 2015 through June 30, 2015, B.A.+30, Step 1, with a total annual salary of \$52,175.00, pro-rated, as per attachment Personnel-11.

Ms. Ponticello is a replacement for Erica Breve who has resigned.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

POLICY COMMITTEE – Mrs. Buchanan

Motion by Mrs. Buchanan, seconded by Mrs. Melton, to approve the following motions, as presented:

1. To approve Policy #1110 – Organizational Chart on second reading.
2. To approve Policy #5339 – Screening for Dyslexia on second reading.
3. To approve Policy #2464 – Gifted and Talented Pupils on second reading
4. To approve Policy #3233 – Political Activities on second reading.
5. To approve Policy #3431.1 Family Leave – Teaching Staff on second reading.
6. To approve Policy #4431.1 – Family Leave – Support Staff on second reading.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE – Mr. Cassidy

Motion by Mr. Cassidy, seconded by Mrs. Melton, to approve the following motion, as presented:

1. To approve club/activity trips for the 2014-2015 school year, as per attachment Transportation-1.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

Mr. Aiken noted that the Transportation/Discipline Committee recently met with Mr. Clark and Mr. DiOrio to discuss HIB and student discipline. He noted that the committee discussed how HIB cases are determined and establishing an informational session with the PTA to give parents a better understanding of HIB.

RESOLUTIONS

None

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Goldstein noted a school ethics complaint against Mr. Aiken was filed by Margaret Capone. Mr. Goldstein explained the allegations against Mr. Aiken and also explained the lengthy process involved to defend the Board against the allegations.

Mr. Goldstein noted that the allegation is that Mr. Aiken violated the school ethics act by voting to confirm certain teachers to take maternity leave or family leave; that there is a nexus between that activity and the availability of his sister to teach more as a substitute teacher.

Mrs. Melton asked if the Board is paying Mr. Goldstein for all of this work. Mr. Goldstein noted that the Board has incurred legal costs associated with this filing, and additional costs will be incurred during the defense process.

Mr. Goldstein noted the claim is 15 pages long and there are several attachments as well. He also noted that this is just a motion to dismiss the claim.

Mr. Goldstein noted that one claim is that if Mr. Aiken votes in the affirmative for any motion brought forward by Dr. Cappelluti, that Dr. Cappelluti would look kindly at his vote and be inclined to direct the sub caller to call Mr. Aiken's sister more frequently for substitute positions.

Mr. Goldstein noted another allegation is that Mr. Aiken thanked members of the public at a board meeting for voting for him, and the reason for him thanking them was because the union members voted for him and now there is some sort of ability for the union and Mr. Aiken to have favors back and forth and now the Board will be generous in granting better

contracts to the union.

Mr. Goldstein noted that this is an expensive and time consuming situation. He noted that the allegations are serious and must be taken seriously.

Mr. Goldstein noted that all Board Members take an oath to follow the school ethics act and that he would certainly inform any Board Member if he felt they were violating the act.

Mr. Goldstein noted it is very difficult reasoning to think that Mr. Aiken is pulling the puppet strings of the union and that he has a side deal with Dr. Cappelluti to get additional work for his sister. He noted it is really a stretch, but it is the work we have ahead of us.

Mr. Sacchinelli asked Mr. Goldstein how many hours he has worked on this issue so far. Mr. Goldstein noted that he has spent no less than 16 hours on it. He noted that each allegation contains violations of conflict of interest statutes, Mr. Aiken's inability to be objective in working with the union, and one of the allegations says that Mr. Aiken single handedly negotiated the teachers' contract in return for union support during the election.

Mr. Ciabrone asked Mr. Goldstein how much he is paid per hour. Mr. Goldstein noted he is paid \$130 an hour. Mr. Ciabrone noted that we have already paid Mr. Goldstein 1% of the banked cap amount in the budget.

Mr. Goldstein noted he is trying to keep his time to a minimum, but it is clear that all of the allegations are directed to Mr. Aiken acting in his capacity of being a Board Member. Mr. Goldstein noted that he has discussed Mr. Aiken's indemnity in relation to this issue.

Mr. Sacchinelli asked how much time Mr. Goldstein spent on the previous advisory opinions the Board was working on. Mr. Goldstein noted that Mr. Smith did most of the work and his role was more oversight of the product supplied by Mr. Smith.

Mrs. Kupp asked if the total amount paid to Mr. Goldstein will be made public when this issue is resolved. Mr. Goldstein noted that he tries to make his invoice as detailed as possible and it will be clear how much time will be spent on this issue.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Aiken asked if the District was still looking into text alerts for parents. Dr. Cappelluti noted that the district is working on this and will follow-up with the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Cappelluti wanted to extend an invitation to all educators and parents to the Education Foundation Ed Camp to be held on Saturday, March 28, 2015 at the Davies School.

Jeff Gildiner wanted to inform everyone that the HTEA is a major sponsor of the Art Festival, the Blood Drive, and the Ed Camp. He noted that the HTEA will be major sponsors of 19 events this year.

Laura Miller asked about the reallocation of the Vice Principal to the Pre-K program and wanted to know what this meant. Dr. Cappelluti noted that this would mean that the Vice Principals' time would be shared between their regular duties and the Pre-K program.

Mrs. Miller stated that she voted for the GEHRHSD referendum because she knew what this money would be used for and where her tax money was going. She does not feel that our district is gaining anything from the budget presented and unfortunately the public cannot vote. Mrs. Miller also commented that she would like to see this district as a K-12 district.

Karen Petrongolo thinks that sports should stay in the budget and she feels these activities are needed for the children. Mrs. Petrongolo also questioned why there are three vice principals at the Davies School and only two at the Hess School.

Gayle Luderitz stated that her children both attend the

Davies School and she would like to support keeping sports and activities in the budget. She feels these activities are very important to the children, especially for their personal growth.

Bob Imlay noted that the incident which occurred at the Shaner School was handled very well. He asked if the residents in the area of the school could be informed of situations when they occur. Mr. Imlay noted that there are a lot of elderly people living in the area who become alarmed when they see police cars near the school.

Dan Cartwright, Principal of the Shaner School wanted to thank the school community for their actions during the emergency situation at the Shaner School today. He also thanked the Hess School for taking his students today.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Mr. Sacchinelli, seconded by Mr. Cassidy, to enter into executive session.

Resolved that pursuant to Sections 7 and 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, the public shall be excluded from that portion of the meeting involving discussion of:

- H.T.E.A. Negotiations
- Personnel Matters

Further resolved that the discussion of such subject matter in executive session can be disclosed to the public when formal action is taken on such subject matter or at any other appropriate time.

Further resolved the Board may take action on items discussed in executive session. Further resolved that the Board will be in executive session for approximately 20 minutes.

All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Ciambrone, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (8-0-0)

The Board entered into executive session at 9:25 p.m.

Mr. Ciambrone exited the executive session at 9:35 p.m.

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 10:07 p.m.

Mays Landing, NJ
March 23, 2015

PERSONNEL/NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE - Mr. Sacchinelli

All personnel actions are being taken by the recommendation of the Superintendent in accordance with 18A.

Motion by Mr. Sacchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Buchanan, to amend the termination date for Talia Morgan from March 9, 2015 to May 9, 2015.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor: Mrs. Buchanan, Mr. Cassidy, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Kupp, Mrs. Melton, Mr. Sacchinelli, and Mr. Aiken. (7-0-0)

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Mr. Sacchinelli, seconded by Mr. Cassidy, to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote: All in favor: (7-0-0)

The Hamilton Township Board of Education meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Daniel Smith
Board Secretary