

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOROUGH OF TOTOWA**

MEETING MINUTES

09/02/2020

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of Totowa was held at Washington Park School Media Center, 10 Crews Street, Totowa, New Jersey and in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:48-8(b), and guidance from the NJ Department of Community Affairs Division of Local Government Services via Zoom on September 2, 2020.

1. Call To Order

President Guarneri called the meeting to order at 7:11 P.M. and led all present in the salute to the flag and remain standing for a moment of silence for our past and present troops.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Ms. Alesandrelli, Ms. Antonucci, Mr. Bierach, Mr. Guarneri,
Mr. Kerwin, Mr. Reynoso and Mr. Tangora

Members Absent: Ms. Carr and Ms. DeCeglie

Also Present: Patricia Capitelli, Superintendent of Schools
Vincent Varcadipane, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Mr. Raymond B. Reddin, Board Attorney

Ms. Capitelli called Ms. Cheryl Johnson up to present her with a gift for her retirement. Ms. Capitelli thanked Ms. Johnson for all of her hard work and dedication over her 50 years in the Totowa School District.

Ms. Johnson wanted to thank all of her co-workers, her grade level team, administration and boards of education that she has worked with over the years. She will truly miss everyone.

Mayor John Coiro also wanted to present Ms. Johnson with a plaque of a proclamation passed by the Totowa Borough Council in her honor. Mr. Coiro stated he had Ms. Johnson as a teacher for English and Writing and could remember her passion for teaching the students. Mr. Coiro read a portion of the proclamation and wished Ms. Johnson all the best in her retirement.

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3. Open Public Meeting Notice

The following statement was read by Mr. Varcadipane:

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Municipal Building and notice was mailed to the North Jersey Herald News and The Record.

4. Public to be Heard

Mr. Guarneri asked Mr. Varcadipane if there were any questions from the public. Mr. Varcadipane stated that he will read all of the public questions per participant before a response is given.

Ms. Jeanette Reynolds of 122 Elizabeth Place asked:

Will the children who are attending in person instruction be provided with laptops for specials classes at home?

Ms. Capitelli responded that if a parent wanted to sign out a laptop for specials they would have the opportunity to do so.

Ms. Alison Carlo of 576 Totowa Road asked:

My children are virtual. Will they be informed of the exact process prior to Friday? Being that this is brand new it would be nice to have a little time to ask for clarification if needed being that they start next Tuesday and getting the information Friday (the usual date) doesn't give much time.

Ms. Capitelli responded that the virtual letter will be going out tomorrow morning. Teacher information and class information is always delivered the Wednesday or Thursday prior to the holiday weekend.

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Ms. Jennifer Britting of 93 Sutton Ave stated and asked the following:

Thank you to the board, administration, and teachers for preparing as best as we possibly can for a safe reopening. As the days get closer to the start, and as I am in my own school and classroom preparing, the questions seem to be endless because we all need to rethink how we previously did things both at home and in school. Here are a few questions I have for tonight in thinking ahead:

1. Communication needs to be paramount, especially for the health and well being for all those involved. Will teachers be utilizing a group email to communicate effectively with all of the parents in class at the same time (blind copied) in order to share information? Will Principals speak directly to their respective schools in a similar manner? How will our home to school communication look this year?
2. Is there a protocol put in place for bathroom usage? If so, please share for both Memorial and Washington Park.
3. What will the first day of school look like once children are inside? What information could you share in advance to help us best prepare our children as to what to expect.

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions.

Ms. Capitelli responded that notification to all parents will be posted on our district website as well as a text message blast informing parents of useful information or new posts to our website. Teachers will communicate with parents on a case by case basis and that all students have Microsoft Teams. Teachers can use their discretion to communicate as a group or on an individual basis.

Bathrooms will be used with a bathroom pass. The students have to sign in and out when going to the bathroom for contact tracing purposes. Students will have a break during the day as well to wash hands.

The first day of school will be similar to other first days of school. Homeroom teachers will pass out materials, books, laptops and go over new and old procedures with the students.

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Mr. Nick Deleon of 93 Sutton Ave asked the following:

School is literally 6 days away and we have yet to receive any information in regards to who our children's teachers are going to be.

Furthermore, we have not received any other information regarding how virtual learning is going to work.

Why is the district waiting until the last minute to release this information especially with the holiday weekend quickly approaching and school starting immediately thereafter?

Ms. Capitelli responded that the virtual letter will be going out tomorrow morning. Teacher information and class information is always delivered the Wednesday or Thursday prior to the holiday weekend.

5. District Goals and Objectives

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the District Goals and Objectives for the 2020 - 2021 School Year as per the attached.

6. Cardiac Action Plan

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the 2020 - 2021 Cardiac Action Plan as per the attached.

7. Calendar Revisions

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the following 2020 - 2021 calendar revisions:

Schools Closed - Election Day Tuesday, November 3, 2020

Schools Open - Wednesday, November 4, 2020

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8. Northern Region Educational Services Commission Contract

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends the Board approve the contract for Child Study Team Evaluations with the Northern Region Educational Services Commission for the 2020 - 2021 school year at the rate of \$150 per IEP and \$95 per IEP meeting attended.

9. Merit Goals

The Board approves the Quantitative Merit Goals (Increasing Student Literacy Skills, Improving Math Performance, and Integrating Technology) and the Qualitative Merit Goals (Implementing Paperless Communication and Developing Self-Awareness and Self-Management Skills) of the Superintendent for the 2020 - 2021 school year as per the attached. The Board further approves the submission of the Superintendent's Merit Goals Submission forms to the Executive County Superintendent for approval.

10. P.T.O. Meetings - 2020 - 2021 School Year

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the P.T.O. activities for the 2020 - 2021 School Year as follows:

P.T.O. Executive Meetings: September 14th, October 5th, November 2nd, January 4th (January 5th - Snow Date), February 1st (February 2nd - Snow Date), March 1st (March 2nd - Snow Date), April 12th, May 10th, and June 10th.

General Meetings: October 13, 2020, March 9, 2021, and June 7, 2021. The P.T.O. is also requesting the use of tables, chairs and, a podium with microphone and chairs for guests spaced 6 feet apart.

11. Home Instruction

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of Special Education, recommends the Board approve home instruction for student #20-21-01 beginning on Tuesday, September 8, 2020, for five (5) hours per week for a length of time to be determined. Instruction will be provided by Gina McQuin and Erica Wolpert.

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Motion for approval of items 5-11

MOTION: Mr. Reynoso
SECONDED: Mr. Tangora
VOTE: Unanimous

12. Informational

Student Safety Data System

Restart & Recovery Plan

13. Committee Reports

Mr. Guarneri said committee meetings were not held.

14. Executive Session

A request for executive session was made to discuss personnel matters and other business excluded from the Open Public Meeting by Law. The Board entered executive session at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Reddin said, in Executive Session the Board will be discussing personnel and legal matters. The discussion will last approximately twenty (20) minutes and no action will be taken. Mr. Reddin also stated that most of the prior questions were in regards to reopening. Ms. Capitelli did a good job at answering the questions, however, the board might not be able to answer all questions. If you call the administration during the day there are no time constraints and they might be able to better answer your questions.

Motion for approval of item 14

MOTION: Ms. Alesandrelli
SECONDED: Ms. Antonucci
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board returned from executive session at 7:55 P.M.

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15. 2020 - 2021 Substitute Teacher Listing

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the 2020 - 2021 Substitute Teacher Listing submitted by the Substitute Registry. (see attached)

16. Resignation - Ashley Gaccione

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board retroactively accept the resignation of Ashley Gaccione, Office Aide, for the Totowa School District, effective Monday, August 3, 2020.

17. Resignation - Nakea Beers

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board accept the resignation of Nakea Beers, Teacher for the Totowa School District, effective Monday, October 19, 2020.

18. Retirement - Andrea Piccirillo

The Superintendent recommends the Board accept with regret the retirement of Andrea Piccirillo, Teacher for the Totowa School District, effective December 31, 2020.

19. Reassignment - Tracy Emma

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Tracy Emma from Art - grades 4-8 to Reading - grade 6 for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

20. Reassignment - Valerie Feenan

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Valerie Feenan from Technology Education - kindergarten - grade 2 teacher to TPK, Kindergarten Virtual teacher for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

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21. Reassignment - Saranda Lipovica

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Saranda Lipovica from Teacher - grade 4 to Teacher grades 3-4 Virtual for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

22. Reassignment - Kimberly Lubba

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Kimberly Lubba from Social Studies Teacher grade 6 to Writing Teacher grades 5-8 Virtual for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

23. Reassignment - Katherine Muehter

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Katherine Muehter from Kindergarten - grade 2 Art and LEAP grades 1 and 2 to Teacher grades 1 and 2 Virtual for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

24. Reassignment - Melissa Stys

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Melissa Stys from Resource Room - grades 3-4 to Teacher grade 4 for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

25. Reassignment - Jennifer Tafuri

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Jennifer Tafuri from Reading Teacher - grade 6 to Reading Teacher - grade 8 for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

26. Approval - Family First Coronavirus Response Act

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve a Family First Coronavirus Response Act Leave for Lindsey Miglino beginning Wednesday, September 2, 2020, through Wednesday, November 25, 2020.

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27. Approval - Family First Coronavirus Response Act

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve a Family First Coronavirus Response Act Leave for Donna McAteer beginning Wednesday, September 2, 2020, through Tuesday, September 15, 2020. Ms. McAteer will be on unpaid leave from Wednesday, September 16, 2020, for an undetermined amount of time.

28. Resignation - Laura Long

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board accept the resignation of Laura Long, Educational Support Aide, for the Totowa School District, effective Wednesday, September 2, 2020.

29. Reassignment - Nakea Beers

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Administrative Team, recommends the Board approve the reassignment of Nakea Beers from Pre-K/Specials Teacher to Social Studies Teacher - grade 6 for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Motion for approval of item 15-29

MOTION: Ms. DeCeglie

SECONDED: Ms. Antonucci

VOTE: Unanimous

Mr. Kerwin logged off after Executive.

30. Approval of Bills List – September 2, 2020

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board accept the September 2, 2020 Bills List as presented.

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Motion for approval of item 30-35

MOTION: Mr. Reynoso
SECONDED: Mr. Tangora
VOTE: Unanimous

36. Old Business

There was no old business.

37. New Business

There was no new business.

38. Hearing and Petition of Citizens

There were no citizens to be heard.

39. Other Matters of a Timely Nature

There were no other matters of a timely nature.

40. Adjournment

Upon motion by Mr. Reynoso and seconded by Mr. Tangora this meeting was adjourned at 8:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Vincent Varcadipane
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

