

# **RIVER EDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**RIVER EDGE, NEW JERSEY 07661**

*“Building Bright Futures Together”*

## **Minutes of the Regular Public Meeting – June 29, 2020 – 6:00 PM**

The Board of Education, Borough of River Edge, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey conducted this meeting through a Zoom Meeting.

### **CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE**

Mr. Herbst called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Ms. Dansky read the Mission Statement.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present on roll call were Ms. Brown; Ms. Dansky; Ms. Juskeleiene; Ms. Kang; Mr. Herbst. Also present were Dr. Ben-Dov, Mrs. Napolitano, and approximately 32 members of the public.

Ms. Doyle was absent

Mr. Sim arrived at 6:15 PM

### **OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE**

Mrs. Napolitano read the Open Public Meeting Act Notice.

### **SPECIAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Public Comment on Agenda Items - None

### **REPORTS**

### **SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Ben-Dov reported on the following:

- Dr. Ben-Dov thanked everyone for all of their hard work for the 2019-2020 school year.
- We have been requested by the Mayor and Council to use the fields at Cherry Hill School and Roosevelt School for REGAL. We called our insurance representative and we are covered for liability. Dr. Ben-Dov and the board members gave them permission to use the fields.
- Dr. Ben-Dov was handed a resolution by the Borough today honoring all River Edge graduates. They recognized them and listed their names. Dr. Ben-Dov thanked the Borough and she is very happy they did this for the graduates.

- On Friday, the Governor published his recovery plan called “The Road Back.” River Edge is acknowledged on page 4 because Dr. Ben-Dov and Ms. Moran were invited to attend a stake- holders meeting based on the NJTSS grant we received.
- Dr. Ben-Dov summarized the Governor’s report. One of the features of this 104 pages document are is the fact that in many areas it’s a generalized report. It specifies basic demands and then leaves local control to the districts for some of the internal arrangements. It’s a specific report in that it calls for the basic minimum standards and requirements. All districts need to comply with these requirements. The main domains are **1). Conditions of Learning.** It includes health and safety guidelines. The big item in this report is concerns for social/emotional of students, staff, and families. It also talks about testing, social distancing, PPE, cleaning practices, physical education, recess, extra curriculum activities, multi-tiered systems of support, food and transportation. **2). Leadership and Planning.** It states that a pandemic response team should be created. Our district already has a fully functioning Re-opening Task Force. The team should include all different constituents, which we already have. Scheduling is also in this domain. There needs to be an in-person component. A hybrid model will need to be practiced by most districts. For staffing, we need to outline the expectation of staff and it may be different from the regular responsibilities staff has. We are also asked to consider staff circumstances. Training for staff will be health protocols, social/emotional area and how to deliver instruction in a hybrid model consistently across grades and curriculum, technology, curriculum scope and sequence, and variety of assessments. There is a requirement to inform families four weeks/30 days before school begins. **3). Policy and Funding.** Mrs. Napolitano spoke about this and outlined the areas they spoke about: **A).** to provide guidance for most effective use of our federal funding Cares Act. **B).** FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). They will provide reimbursement up to 75% for certain expenditures. **C).** State School Aid. Aid has already been cut for the 2020-2021 school year. **D).** Purchasing –Cooperative purchasing to get the best prices, and E-Rate program, technology. **E).** Use of Reserve Accounts. River Edge allocated \$200,000 at year end of Maintenance Reserve. **4). Continuity of Learning.** There is a discussion about the delivery of services for Special Education students. There is discussion of technology and connectivity that must be provided to every child. In the Curriculum/Instruction and Assessment section the district must develop the plan to address what the Governor is calling “unfinished learning.” We need to determine which standards are the most important for each grade level and each subject and to address those gaps before moving on. Pre-assessment needs to take place for information on how to proceed. We have to develop these pre-assessments and determine the scope and sequence of the most important standards. Collaboration is encouraged and professional learning is discussed. A lot is left to local decisions.
- Dr. Ben-Dov stated we developed the Re-opening Task Force over a month ago and divided it into seven sub-committees. The sub-committees started their work and have gone in the right direction. We need to tighten up with the guidance we were just given. Dr. Ben-Dov contacted the chairs of the committees last night and asked them to reconvene their committee in the next week and to look at the following: assess where we stand relative to the expectations of the Governor’s plan in each area, outline the goals that still need to be accomplished, establish timelines, look at resources to meet our goals and to look at questions pertaining to interfacing with other committees in order to meet each committee’s goal. I am meeting with the Chairs on July 7<sup>th</sup>, At that point we will see what each committee comes up with in their meetings. Dr. Ben-Dov thanked all of the committee members for being so dedicated to their committee work.

- We are planning on sending a survey sometime next week to the parents and staff for their feedback and opinions. The survey will not be anonymous. Dr. Ben-Dov needs to know who will be attending in September to get the composition of what our classrooms can be. We are hoping to have a progress report for the board members at the July 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting on what our plans will be for September. We will have our plan for the parents at the end of July/beginning of August.
- Dr. Ben-Dov and her colleagues in Bergen County are disappointed they did not receive guidance in the medial component. We “begged” for something specific on this topic such as: “under which conditions do we close a classroom or the school if Covid-19 is present in a student of a faculty member?” We did not receive any universal information on this topic, but we are still hoping for additional guidelines.

## **PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Daniel Katz (276 Valley Road, River Edge) Mr. Katz stated it is hard to account for every situation so the district needs to be flexible. He asked if it is possible to get W.I.N. support for all students over the summer and utilize extra space for the older students to have virtual learning. Mr. Katz volunteered his expertise with this virus because he is a doctor and is well accustomed to how the virus spreads.

Dr. Ben-Dov asked Dr. Katz if he would be available to be a resource for the Health and Safety Subcommittee. He said yes. Dr. Ben-Dov explained we offer W.I.N. for July but that went by the teacher’s assessments and recommendations. Dr. Ben-Dov already had a discussion on how the young students need face to face more than anyone else. Students will not eat in the lunch room so we have that additional space to use for the older students for learning, if needed.

Lana Bolobanic (229 Dorchester Road, River Edge) asked if parents are allowed to purchase Plexiglas dividers for their child in lieu of wearing a mask. Dr. Ben-Dov stated we will not be looking for parents to make individual arrangements that are structural. Students can wear a shield instead of a mask, if masks are difficult for them. Dr. Ben-Dov also stated we need consistency in the classroom for all the students.

Alethia Crespo (287 Valley Road) asked what the hybrid options are. Dr. Ben-Dov stated hybrid model means there is in-person instruction and virtual instruction. The most typical way in virtual instruction is synchronous and asynchronous. Another option is live streaming. We will come up with the most practical model for students and teachers. Ms. Crespo asked if this will be a full time model. Dr. Ben-Dov stated yes, it will not be a full-time in person but it will be a full-time hybrid.

Scott Levy, (235 Kensington Road, River Edge) asked if the survey was going to all of the parents. Dr. Ben-Dov answered yes.

## **PRINCIPAL**

No Principal attended this meeting

## **BOARD SECRETARY**

Mrs. Napolitano reported on the following:

- Building and Grounds met for our Re-opening Task Force Committee. They are looking at air quality, infusing fresh air in the classrooms, and cubic square feet. They created a mock social distance classroom to see what it would look like. We are cleaning and working on our projects. We hired an extra part-time custodian to clean the touched surfaces in the buildings and we are continuing to order supplies.

## **PRESIDENT**

Mr. Herbst reported on the following:

- Mr. Herbst stated we have the state guidelines and we got a head start by starting our Re-opening Task Force last month. There has been a lot of work that has gone into this and we will continue to work on it.
- Mr. Herbst asked the board if they were available for a board meeting on Wednesday, July 15th. The board replied yes, and set it for 6:00PM.
- Mr. Herbst reminded the board members to continue to work on the Superintendent's Evaluations. He would like it to be completed by the July 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

## **COMMITTEES**

No Committee Reported at this meeting

### **MOTIONS TO BE ACTED UPON**

A. **ADMINISTRATION/POLICY** - None

B. **CURRICULUM/EDUCATION** – None

C. **BUILDING & GROUNDS**

1. That the Board of Education approve for dual use of room 023 in the Cherry Hill School for the 2020-2021 school year.
2. That the Board of Education approve for dual use of room 131 in the Cherry Hill School for the 2020-2021 school year.
3. That the Board of Education approve for dual use of room 137 in the Cherry Hill School for the 2020-2021 school year.
4. That the Board of Education approve for dual use of room 243 in the Cherry Hill School for the 2020-2021 school year.
5. That the Board of Education approve for dual use of room 103 in the Roosevelt School for the 2020-2021 school year.

**Motion by: Ms. Brown Seconded by: Ms. Dansky**

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Ms. Juskeliene, Ms. Kang, Mr. Sim, Mr. Herbst

Nays: None

**D. FINANCE/GRANTS/GIFTS**

1. That the Board of Education approve the proposed school tax payment schedule for the 2020-2021 school year as per the attached. (Addendum)
2. That the Board of Education approve the acceptance and the submission of application for the SFY 2020-2021 Cares Act Grant as follows:

Public	\$27,573
Non-Public	\$28,425
Cares Act Total	\$55,998

3. That the River Edge Board of Education rescind the following motion:  
**WHEREAS**, NJAC 6A:23A-14.3 and 14.4 permit a Board of Education to establish and/or deposit into certain reserve accounts at year end, and

**WHEREAS**, the aforementioned statutes authorize procedures, under the authority of the Commissioner of Education, which permit a Board of Education to transfer anticipated excess current revenue or unexpended appropriations into reserve accounts during the month of June by Board resolution, and

**WHEREAS**, the River Edge Board of Education wishes to deposit anticipated current year surplus into their Capital Reserve account and Maintenance Reserve Account at year end, and

**WHEREAS**, the River Edge Board of Education has determined to designate surplus for the year end June 30, 2020 as follows:

- Maintain a Fund Balance not-to-exceed the state mandated 2% cap plus allowable adjustments
- Plus an additional \$500,000 to be appropriated in the 2021-2022 Budget
- The excess above these amounts is to be transferred to the Capital Reserve Account in an amount not to exceed the maximum allowable amount which is defined by the districts Long Range Facility Plan

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the River Edge Board of Education that it hereby authorizes the district's School Business Administrator to make this transfer consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

4. **WHEREAS**, NJAC 6A:23A-14.3 and 14.4 permit a Board of Education to establish and/or deposit into certain reserve accounts at year end, and

**WHEREAS**, the aforementioned statutes authorize procedures, under the authority of the Commissioner of Education, which permit a Board of Education to transfer anticipated excess current revenue or unexpended appropriations into reserve accounts during the month of June by Board resolution, and

**WHEREAS**, the River Edge Board of Education wishes to deposit anticipated current year surplus into their Capital Reserve account and Maintenance Reserve Account at year end, and

**WHEREAS**, the River Edge Board of Education has determined to designate surplus for the year end June 30, 2020 as follows:

- Maintain a Fund Balance not-to-exceed the state mandated 2% cap plus allowable adjustments
- Plus an additional \$500,000 to be appropriated in the 2021-2022 Budget
- Plus an additional \$200,000 to be transferred to Maintenance Reserve Account
- The excess above these amounts is to be transferred to the Capital Reserve Account in an amount not to exceed the maximum allowable amount which is defined by the districts Long Range Facility Plan

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the River Edge Board of Education that it hereby authorizes the district's School Business Administrator to make this transfer consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

**Motion by: Mr. Sim Seconded by: Ms. Dansky**

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Ms. Juskeliene, Ms. Kang, Mr. Sim, Mr. Herbst  
Nays: None

**E. PERSONNEL**

1. WHEREAS, the River Edge Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") and Dr. Tova Ben-Dov, entered into an Employment Agreement for the term commencing July 1, 2017 and expiring July 1, 2022 (hereinafter referred to as the "Present Employment Agreement"); and

WHEREAS, the Board and the Superintendent desire to rescind the Present Employment Agreement prior to its conclusion, and enter into a new Employment Agreement for a term retroactive to July 1, 2019 and expiring July 1, 2022 (hereinafter referred to as the "Succeeding Employment Agreement"); and

WHEREAS, this Employment Agreement has been submitted to and approved by the Interim Executive County Superintendent, according to standards adopted by the Commissioner of Education, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7-8(j).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby rescinds the Present Employment Agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby appoints Dr. Tova Ben-Dov as the Superintendent of Schools for the River Edge School District for the period beginning on July 1, 2019 and expiring on July 1, 2022, in accordance with the terms of the Succeeding Employment Agreement annexed hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves the attached Succeeding Employment Agreement with Dr. Tova Ben-Dov for the position of Superintendent of Schools for the foregoing period of appointment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board hereby authorizes the Board President and School Business Administrator to execute the Succeeding Employment Agreement on behalf of the Board.

2. BE IT RESOLVED that the River Edge Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") appoints Louise Napolitano as the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary for the River Edge School District for the period beginning on or about July 1, 2020 and ending on June 30, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Employment Agreement has been submitted to and approved by the Executive County Superintendent, according to standards adopted by the Commissioner of Education, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7-8(j).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves the Employment Agreement with Louise Napolitano for the position of School Business Administrator/Board Secretary for the foregoing period of appointment, which Employment Agreement is attached to this Resolution and made a part hereof.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby authorizes the Board President and the Superintendent to execute, on behalf of the Board, the Employment Agreement by and between the Board and Louise Napolitano.

3. WHEREAS, the River Edge Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") and the River Edge Education Association (hereinafter referred to as "REEA") have negotiated a successor collective negotiations agreement (hereinafter referred to as the "CNA") for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 school years; and

WHEREAS, the REEA has, by a majority vote of its membership, ratified the CNA.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby ratifies and approves of the terms of the CNA for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 school years, which is attached to this Resolution and made a part hereof; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby authorizes the Board President and the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to execute, on behalf of the Board, the CNA by and between the Board and the REEA.

4. That the Board of Education approve the following staff members for Summer Curriculum work at a rate of \$50.00 per hour.

<b>CURRICULUM</b>	<b>HRS</b>
Janel Blake	6
Alrick Douglas	6
Katherine O'Reilly	6
Kelly Wendrychowicz	6
Nicole Campbell	6
Lauren Proda	6

5. That the Board of Education approve the Job Description for the School Mental Health Clinician. (Addendum)
6. That the Board of Education accept, with regret, the resignation of Andrea Flower, Resource Room Teacher, effective June 30, 2020.
7. That the Board of Education accept, with regret, the resignation of Laura Moynihan, Bus Driver, effective June 30, 2020.

**Motion by: Ms. Kang Seconded by: Ms. Brown**

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Ms. Juskeliene, Ms. Kang, Mr. Sim, Mr. Herbst

Nays: None

**F. RIVER EDGE SPECIAL EDUCATION - None**

**G. REGION V ADMINISTRATION & TRANSPORTATION**

1. WHEREAS, the River Edge Board of Education (the "Board") is the lead education agency ("LEA") for the Bergen County Region V Council for Special Education ("Region V"); and

WHEREAS, Region V provides shared services for its member districts such as evaluations, direct services, and consultation; and

WHEREAS, as the LEA, the Board must approve the consultant agreements of the providers that Region V utilizes to deliver shared services to its member districts.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, re-approves the consultant agreements of the following Region V Shared Services Consultants, Psychologists, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultants, Social Workers, Speech Language Specialists, Occupational and Physical Therapists, and Translators to provide evaluations, direct services, and consultation, to non-public and public schools for member districts upon request for the 2020-2021 school year:

Sara Engel	Speech	Direct Service
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**Motion by: Ms. Dansky Seconded by: Mr. Sim**

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Ms. Juskeliene, Ms. Kang, Mr. Sim, Mr. Herbst  
Nays: None

**OLD / NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Sim attended the virtual Delegate Assembly Meeting on Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION** – No more public discussion at this time

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made by Mr. Sim, seconded by Ms. Brown to adjourn the regular public meeting at 7:16 PM.

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Ms. Juskeliene, Ms. Kang, Mr. Sim, Mr. Herbst  
Nays: None

Louise Napolitano  
Board Secretary/Business Administrator