

# RIVER EDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RIVER EDGE, NEW JERSEY 07661

*"Building Bright Futures Together"*

## Minutes of the Regular Public Meeting – April 28, 2021

6:30 PM Confidential Session (Review of non-tenured personnel)

7:30 PM Public Meeting

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**

Ms. Kang called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

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

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

Nays: None

Motion to Adjourn Closed Session

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

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

Nays: None

### **RECONVENE TO PUBLIC MEETING**

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

Ms. Kang called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Ms. Dansky read the Mission Statement.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present on roll call were Ms. Brown; Ms. Dansky; Mr. Sim; and Ms. Kang. Also present were Dr. Brockel, Mrs. Napolitano, and approximately 48 members of the public.

Ms. Doyle was absent

Mr. Herbst was absent

Ms. Juskeliene arrived at 7:05 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. Brockel reported on the following:

- Dr. Brockel sent out his District Status Report on Monday. It contained much of the information he would have reported on tonight.
- Dr. Brockel spoke about masks based on the new guidance from the CDC and the Governor's office. It pertains to fully vaccinated people. Fully vaccinated people are not required to wear their masks for outdoor activities. Masks are no longer required for outdoor dining. Fully vaccinated people must continue to wear their masks for crowded outdoor events. Masks are still required for indoor events. This does not apply to children because they have not been vaccinated. On May 10th, gathering limits for outdoor activities will increase to 500. This will help with planning for our sixth grade graduations. Indoor capacity for the end of the year events will increase by 50% of the seating capacity to a maximum of 250.
- We are anticipating a full re-opening in the fall. The most critical issue in staffing will be the decision of the Governor and Department of Education's decision on virtual learning. If they do allow virtual learning in the fall, we would like to identify staff that would be teaching virtual and identify the staff that would be teaching in-person. We would like to move away from the hybrid model.

### **PRINCIPAL**

Mrs. Heitman reported on the following:

- We had a second and third grade virtual enrichment program on Helping to Keep the Planet Clean on Monday and Tuesday. This was in honor of Arbor Day. Thank you to the PTO Enrichment Committee.
- The PTO is going to have an outdoor book fair and an outdoor plant sale in May.
- We are working on sixth grade activities in both schools. We are planning for outdoor graduations. June 16th is the date for Cherry Hill School and June 17<sup>th</sup> is the date for Roosevelt School.
- Mrs. Heitman and Mr. Henzel are planning for kindergarten orientation for both parents and students in person. We will have something for all new parents to our district in July and in August.
- Related Arts Teachers are beginning to go into classrooms. Physical Education Teachers are going outside. The Media Specialists are allowing children to take out books in kindergarten through second grade and we will keep moving to other grade levels.
- We have had successful Cyber Safety presentations for the fifth and sixth grade students on March 30th in both schools. Mrs. Heitman thanked Mr. James for this.
- The Middle School Principal, Richard Freedman, and Counselors came to discuss curriculum and Middle School courses. The students had to hand in their choice of World Language and select if they would like to take band or chorus. We are still collecting these and will submit it to the Middle School.

- Mrs. Heitman gave an update on our survey answers. In Cherry Hill School, we had about 530 students that had chosen in person instruction and 198 students that had chosen virtual instruction as of May 3rd. In Roosevelt School, we had about 417 students that had chosen in person instruction and 77 students that had chosen virtual instruction as of May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Mrs. Heitman thanked the custodians who have been working very hard on getting the schools ready.
- The last PDIA cycle started on April 21st for ELA in both schools. We also had a parent meeting for this cycle.

### **BOARD SECRETARY**

Mrs. Napolitano reported on the following:

- Mrs. Napolitano attended a state meeting where they spoke about Regionalization studies. Some districts have taken on the Regionalization studies. They can apply for some monies allocated which is in a grant. You may not get the monies back if you do the study though. ESSER II monies were also discussed. Those monies were recommended but not for positions because it's federal funding. They also spoke about the Chapter 44 Legislation that went through regarding the health care and financing regarding the state adopting the federal bid limits for projects.
- Our buildings and grounds staff have been working hard. They are making sure the properties are looking good and are cleaned for our Physical Education teachers to be having classes outside. We are also looking at the cleaning protocols, the filters have been changed on the air conditioners, and they are making sure we are ready for the May 1<sup>st</sup> return of additional students.
- Mrs. Napolitano reminded the board members to complete the Ethics and Financial Disclosure forms if they have not already done so. They are due to the county by this Friday.

### **PRESIDENT**

Ms. Kang reported on the following:

- Ms. Kang thanked Dr. Penelope Lattimer and Dr. Adele Macula for facilitating our Parent Academy last night on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and You. She also thanked Ms. Moran and Mr. James for leading this Academy and all of our Administrators who attended and supported the program.
- Ms. Kang reminded the board members there will be a virtual Bergen County School Board meeting tomorrow night at 6:30 PM.
- Ms. Kang asked the committee chairs to start thinking of dates for committee meeting for the month of May.

### **COMMITTEES REPORTS**

No committees reported at this meeting

## **MOTIONS TO BE ACTED UPON**

### **A. ADMINISTRATION/POLICY**

1. That the Board of Education approve the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of April 14, 2021.

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

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

2. That the Board of Education approve the staff development and travel as per the schedule for April 2021 including relevant mileage reimbursement. (Addendum)
3. That the Board of Education approve the revised River Edge Elementary School Calendar for the 2020-2021 school year. (Addendum)

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

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

4. **WHEREAS**, the River Edge board of Education is committed to ensuring an accessible, inclusive, diverse and equitable educational environment that respects and embraces students and staff from different social, economic, cultural, linguistic, intellectual, racial, educational, ideological and religious backgrounds , as well as family compositions, genders and sexual orientations; and,

**WHEREAS**, the River Edge Board of Education stands in solidarity with oppressed peoples in the United States and all around the world; and,

**WHEREAS**, schools play an active role in shaping the values of future leaders and members of the citizenry and will carry on the torch of freedom and justice for all people; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Rive Edge Board of Education recognizes that we have a particular obligation, to combat, racism, homophobia, antisemitism and other forms of bias and prejudice through our curricula and educational practices; and,

**WHEREAS**, although students, staff, and families, vary in countries of origin, citizenship status, political identity, languages, religions, nationalities, ethnicities, cultures, we are all Americans; and,

**WHEREAS**, members of our American community are experiencing a surge of harassment, racial discrimination, and violent attacks, and,

**WHEREAS**, the River Edge Board of Education seeks to emphasize equality and equity in the educational process; therefore, be it resolved that the River Edge Board of Education hereby take the following actions:

- Continue to promote and advocate for equality and equity through all approved policies
- Continue to advocate locally, countywide and statewide through the appropriate associations for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color.
- Support local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism.
- Further work to solidify alliances and partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encourage other local, state, regional and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis.

- Support efforts to be anti-racist and to combat discrimination and xenophobia while engaging actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.
- Promote and support policies and resources that prioritize the health of all people, such as bystander intervention programs.
- Encourage racial equity training among all school district partners, vendors and contractors.
- Condemn and denounce racism, xenophobia and intolerance in all forms.

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

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

**B. CURRICULUM/EDUCATION -None**

**C. BUILDING & GROUNDS - None**

**D. FINANCE/GRANTS/GIFTS**

1. That the Board of Education approve the bills & claims dated April 2021 totaling \$555,981.38 including checks #44329 through #44380 (Addendum). Payrolls dated March 15, 2021 and March 31, 2021, totaling \$1,265,077.82, issued therefore, a copy of such warrants list be attached as part of these minutes (Addendum).
2. That the Board of Education approve the Budget Transfers for the school year 2020-2021 as of March 31, 2021. (Addendum)
3. That the River Edge Board of Education approve the Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports for the period ending March 31, 2021.

Further, we certify that as of March 31, 2021 after review of the secretary's monthly financial reports (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the districts financial obligation for the remainder of the fiscal year. (Addendum)

4. That the Board of Education approve the 2021 Summer W.I.N. Academy with a tuition rate of \$75.00 per Extracurricular course plus supplies.

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

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

**E. PERSONNEL**

1. That the Board of Education accept, with regret, the resignation of Stacy Socha, Learning Disabilities Teacher/Consultant, effective June 30, 2021.

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

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

2. That the Board of Education with the recommendation of the Superintendent approve the extended Child Care leave of absence for Sara Caruolo for the 2021-2022 school year.

3. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent approve Christine Morales, Leave Replacement Teacher, effective on or about June 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021, MA, Step 2.
4. That the Board of Education approve the following staff members for Curriculum work April 2021 through June 2021 at a rate of \$50.00 per hour.

<b>CURRICULUM</b>	<b>CONTENT AREA</b>	<b>HOURS</b>
Ashley Adimando	Science	6
Sandy Gerbino	Science	6
Bianca Kim	Science	6
Christine O'Keefe	Science	6
Heather Rothschild	Science	6
Gabrielle Sagala	Science	6
Kelly Wendrychowicz	Science	6
Ashley Adimando	Visual Performing Arts/Theatre	6
Reem Bowers	Visual Performing Arts/Theatre	6
Caroline Church	Visual Performing Arts/Theatre	6
Gianna Hrnciar	Visual Performing Arts/Theatre	6
Bianca Kim	Visual Performing Arts/Theatre	6
Lauren Proda	Visual Performing Arts/Theatre	6
Kelly Wendrychowicz	Visual Performing Arts/Theatre	6

5. That the Board of Education post approve Courtney Sweet for Cycle III of the Post Dismissal Instructional Academy for the 2020-2021 School Year, as per contract.
6. That the Board of Education post approve the following teachers for Cycle IV of the Post Dismissal Instructional Academy for the 2020-2021 School Year, as per contract:

**Cherry Hill**

Reem Bowers  
Michelle Parisi  
Gabrielle Sagala

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

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

7. That the Board of Education approve the following position and stipend for the 2021 Summer W.I.N. Academy:

Supervisor of the Summer Academic Programs - \$4,000.00

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

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

- That the Board of Education approve the following position and stipend for the 2021 Summer W.I.N. Academy:

Supervisor of the Summer Extracurricular Programs- \$3,500.00

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

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

- That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve Nevin Werner, Supervisor of the Summer Academic Programs for the 2021 Summer W.I.N. Academy.

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

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

- That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve Chris Armen, Supervisor of the Summer Extracurricular Programs for the 2021 Summer W.I.N. Academy.

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

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

- That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Teacher compensation for the 2021 Summer W.I.N. Academy as follows:

\$50 per Academic (Intervention or Enrichment for ELA or Math) course per day  
\$33 per Extracurricular course per day

- That the Board of Education authorize the payment due to Dr. Tova Ben-Dov for unused sick days.

Fulfillment of positions based on enrollment in the program(s)

**F. RIVER EDGE SPECIAL EDUCATION**

- That the Board of Education post approve Daniel Adler, MD for Neurological Evaluations for the 2020-2021 school year, not to exceed \$800.00.

**G. REGION V ADMINISTRATION & TRANSPORTATION**

- That the Board of Education approve the bills & claims dated April 2021 totaling \$879,467.21 including checks #74519 through #74617.
- That the Board of Education approve the following Bid Contracts for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Route #	Transporter	Per Diem	Per Aide
2957	First Care Medical	\$249.00	\$40.00

3. That the Board of Education approve the cancel Bid Contracts for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Route #	Transporter	Per Diem	Per Aide
2957	Destiny 23	\$179.00	\$40.00

4. That the Board of Education post approve the following Quote Contracts for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Route #	Transporter	Per Diem	Per Aide
Q931	American Star Transportation	\$260.00	\$48.00
Q951	American Star Transportation	\$210.00	\$48.00
Q972	Sun Transportation	\$159.00	\$40.00
Q970	American Star Transportation	\$195.00	\$48.00

5. That the Board of Education approve the following Addendum Contracts for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Route #	Transporter	Per Diem
1132	We Care Transportation	\$277.26
1133	We Care Transportation	\$307.77
1529	Rinaldi Transportation	\$429.74
2235	We Care Transportation	\$284.76
2480	Swift Transportation	\$427.89
2554	We Care Transportation	\$212.62
2723	We Care Transportation	\$446.78
2957	First Care Medical	\$578.00
Q939	All Points Transportation	\$296.50
Q946	All Points Transportation	\$213.50

6. That the Board of Education approve the following Renewal Contracts for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Route #	Transporter	Per Diem	Per Aide
1132	We Care Transportation	\$179.76	\$45.00
1133	We Care Transportation	\$210.27	\$45.00
1304	Valley Transportation	\$155.31	\$23.00
1541	Valley Transportation	\$217.21	\$30.00
1814	Valley Transportation	\$108.03	\$15.00
1834	Morgan Transportation	\$167.37	\$30.00
1857	Valley Transportation	\$161.87	\$21.00
1858	Valley Transportation	\$176.23	\$25.00
2163	Pro Trans Transportation	\$197.64	\$50.00
2221	Valley Transportation	\$101.54	\$19.75
2228	We Care Transportation	\$222.15	\$42.00
2235	We Care Transportation	\$235.76	\$49.00
2311	Valley Transportation	\$124.00	\$28.75
2318	We Care Transportation	\$268.97	\$55.00
2319	Swift Transportation	\$189.40	\$40.00
2327	Pro Trans Transportation	\$133.85	\$50.00
2332	Valley Transportation	\$173.91	\$37.00



2409	Valley Transportation	\$140.91	\$42.00
2472	Valley Transportation	\$627.18	\$85.00
2475	Valley Transportation	\$50.88	\$24.00
2480	Swift Transportation	\$168.89	\$50.00
2554	We Care Transportation	\$137.62	\$35.00
2640	Morgan Transportation	\$167.89	\$56.00
2643	Morgan Transportation	\$167.89	\$56.00
2655	Morgan Transportation	\$336.35	\$30.00
2739	Triumph Invalid Coach	\$228.58	\$30.00

7. That the Board of Education approve the following Quote Contracts for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Route #	Transporter	Per Diem	Per Aide
Q973	American Star Transportation	\$190.00	N/A

8. That the Board of Education cancel the following Addendum Contract for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Route #	Transporter	Per Diem	Per Aide
2957	Destiny 23	\$179.00	\$40.00

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

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

Nays: None

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Dansky stated on April 24<sup>th</sup> we conducted the Second Chance Toys Drive. We collected hundreds of toys that were in perfect condition. It was a very successful event.

Ms. Dansky stated the topic for the Bergen County School Board meeting tomorrow night is the Pandemics Effect on Special Education.

Ms. Dansky attended the CAL (County Association Leadership) on Monday. They spoke about County Meetings being in-person again and whether or not they can offer them in a hybrid model starting in the fall.

Ms. Kang spoke about having our River Edge Board of Education Meetings in person again. We will plan for the June 2<sup>nd</sup> board meeting to be in-person. Discussions took place about having the meetings in a hybrid model. Ms. Kang stated we will continue to explore this discussion.

Mr. Sim asked about the status of the results of the 2019-2020 Region V audit. Mrs. Napolitano responded she is hoping to have it in one month.

### **PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Dana Hosey (219 Voorhis Avenue): what does the resolution A4 mean on tonight's agenda? Are we changing anything in the curriculum? Ms. Kang responded and explained the resolution.

Sebastian Muscarella (781 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue): has anyone heard if there will be a virtual option for next school year and will it be implemented at the elementary level? Dr. Brockel responded it has been discussed among us but nothing is official yet.

Lauren Thiffault (159 Greenway Terrace): what is stopping us from going full day now and having lunch? Dr. Brockel responded we will have to hire additional staff for lunch because their needs to be properly certified staff while the children eat lunch in the lunchroom/classrooms.

Kate Daibes (749 Williams Avenue): is there any discussion of a graduation for the Pre-k at New Bridge? Mrs. Heitman responded there will be something for the Pre-k students. We are just not sure exactly what it will be yet.

Ariana Hastings (107 Adams Avenue): can you tell me how many board seats are up for re-election? Ms. Kang responded there are three seats up for November elections.

Susan O' Donnell (485 Bogert Road): what was the final decision on the school calendar? Ms. Kang responded the board members just approved the revised calendar tonight. We will give a snow day on June 8<sup>th</sup> and we will end the school year two days earlier. Communication to families will be sent out.

Ariana Hastings (107 Adams Avenue): is there any way to have parents involved in the Superintendent hiring? Ms. Kang responded the board is currently looking to hire a search firm now. We are looking on ways to include the community on how to get input from them.

Carmen Philbin (219 Dorchester Road): during previous meetings, a fellow parent inquired about removing masks during recess. With the warmer days, has there been any further consideration given to this? Can it be made optional for students to wear their masks while outside? Ms. Kang responded this is up to the nurses and administrators. Dr. Brockel responded the latest information from the CDC states fully vaccinated people are not required to not wear their masks for outdoor activities. Fully vaccinated people must continue to wear their masks for crowded outdoor events. This does not apply to children because they have not been vaccinated.

Lauren Thiffault (159 Greenway Terrace): what happens if so many districts are trying to hire aides and we can't hire enough aides? What will the next plan be so we can have that full day in September? Dr. Brockel responded it will help the aides we already have become certified and we will continue to advertise.

Ariana Hastings (107 Adams Avenue): can class parents help out/volunteer in anyway? Ms. Kang responded the best way for this is to have parents start to get fingerprinted or have background checks if they are interested in volunteering.

Ariana Hastings (107 Adams Avenue): Can someone send me that process? Ms. Kang responded we will get back to you with that information.

Jenna Heydt (282 Taft Court): prior to covid, parents volunteered at lunch time. Why are we concerned about liability now? Ms. Kang responded a parent volunteer was to help the PTO with the lunch fundraisers they were not responsible to help watch the children.

Dana Hosey (219 Voorhis Avenue): if all students are not vaccinated in September, will all children still need to wear a mask? Dr. Brockel responded we try to follow what the CDC, the Governor's Office, and our local health department.

Kiersten Eng (921 Bogert Road): what is stopping us from hiring lunch aides now? Ms. Kang responded it's a process and it takes time.

Kirsten Apa (175 Voorhis Avenue): why can't the certified aides be hired now? Is it a budget issue?  
Ms. Kang responded we are waiting to see what the plan is for the scheduling, seeing how many aides we may need, and then putting the ad out to hire them.

Kiersten Eng (921 Bogert Road): wouldn't we want to start finding them now instead of waiting?  
Dr. Brockel stated the guidelines may change in September. We have 3 feet of distance now and that go away in September.

Michelle Bressack (708 Millbrook): has reducing the 14 day quarantine been discussed? The CDC recommends 10 days now. Other towns are doing 10 days? Why do we still do 14? Ms. Kang responded we follow the River Edge Department of Health and since we are still in the orange zone we are recommended to do the 14 days of quarantine.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Motion made by Ms. Dansky, seconded by Mr. Sim to convene into closed session at 8:39 PM.

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

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

### **RECONVENE**

Motion made by Mr. Sim, seconded by Ms. Dansky to reconvene and adjourn the regular public meeting at 9:22 PM.

Voice vote all Ayes

Louise Napolitano  
Board Secretary/Business Administrator