

**RIVER EDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION
RIVER EDGE, NEW JERSEY 07661**

“Building Bright Futures Together”

Minutes of the Regular Public Meeting – October 6, 2021

The Board of Education, Borough of River Edge, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey met in the Media Center, Roosevelt School, 711 Summit Avenue, River Edge, NJ 07661 and conducted this meeting through a Zoom Meeting.

CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

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

MISSION STATEMENT

Ms. Kang read the Mission Statement.

ROLL CALL

Present on roll call were Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Ms. Doyle, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeliene, Mr. Sim, Ms. Kang. Also present were Dr. Brockel, Mrs. Napolitano, Mr. Henzel and approximately 43 members of the public.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE

Mrs. Napolitano read the Open Public Meeting Act Notice.

SPECIAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Lauren Thiffault (159 Greenway Terrace): how will the ARP IDEA grant money be used? Mrs. Napolitano responded we have received additional ARP IDEA money for both public and non-public. The grant was written in conjunction with the Special Education office as far as different items that are allowable and what we can use it for. Ms. Thiffault asked if we used last year’s money? Mrs. Napolitano responded we use the IDEA money each year. We receive certain funding based on our needs and population. Ms. Thiffault asked about the details of the River Edge Virtual Instruction Plan for the 2021-2022 school year. Dr. Brockel responded this is a required plan that will go into effect if the District had to close down. It outlines certain things that we would be doing. The plan is for a full school day.

Sebastian Muscarella (781 5th Avenue): how are the September 22nd minutes and the second reading for policy 5141.10 being on tonight’s agenda for approval. He asked if language was added to the policy stating the policy would no longer be in effect if executive order 251 expires. The public has not seen the meeting minutes and wants to know if there is evidence in the minutes that suggest those comments were taken. Ms. Kang responded the board has seen and read the minutes and they will be published after the board approves it. Our attorney did not recommend we put an expiration date on the policy because it will bind the future board. The board needs to review any policy where there are any mandates or state changes in legislation.

Accept PTO Gifts for the 2020-2021 School Year:

Dr. Brockel spoke about the wonderful gifts provided to Cherry Hill School, Roosevelt School and the New Bridge Center by the PTO. Dr. Brockel stated we are very fortunate to have a PTO that was able to work through this very difficult year. They were able to give such wonderful gifts even though not much fundraising was available. Dr. Brockel highlighted some of the gifts from the 2020-2021 school year and thanked the PTO for all they do for the schools, students, and teachers!

D. FINANCE/GRANTS/GIFTS

1. That the Board of Education accept the Roosevelt, New Bridge Center, and Cherry Hill Schools PTO Gifts for the school year 2020-2021. (Addendum)

Motion by: Ms. Kang Seconded by: Mr. Sim

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

Nays: None

REPORTS

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Brockel reported on the following:

- Dr. Brockel stated at this point, there have been seven cases of positive tests for COVID-19 since the beginning of the school year. One was a result of travel and the others were involved in the same family. There have been no new cases last week or this week. This is an encouraging trend.
- The trifold partitions in the lunchrooms are no longer going to be required as of today. They are optional for families if they want them. None of the literature from the CDC, the Governor's Office, the State and Local Department of Health, and the Department of Education has recommended their use. The District used them in the classrooms last year and we continued their use in lunchrooms this school year. This was used to deter children from leaning into each other, like a barrier, when unmasked. This didn't work out because children were leaning around the barriers to speak to and be with their classmates.
- Every three years the State Department of Education conducts an evaluation of each District. The evaluation is called QSAC (Quality Single Accountability Continuum). The evaluation covers five categories: Instruction and Program, Fiscal Management, Governance, Operations, and Personnel. We are currently meeting to be sure that the standards in each category are in place. The evaluation is planned to occur in midwinter.
- Dr. Brockel thanked our families for their support during these very difficult times and stated we keep taking steps toward normalcy.

PRINCIPAL

Mr. Henzel reported on the following:

- Mr. Henzel stated Start Strong Assessments took place on September 22nd, September 23rd, and September 24th. Grades 4, 5, and 6 took an ELA and a Math Assessment. In addition to ELA and Math, the 6th graders also took the Science Assessment. Each Assessment was one hour long. We hope to have the results in a few weeks.
- Roosevelt School held its annual book fair. A special thank you to Ms. Arabia and the rest of the volunteers who made it so successful.
- Both schools had their school pictures taken by Image Arts Studios. Parents should expect to see their prints in about a week or so.
- This week is the Week of Respect and both schools are participating in the same theme days. Ms. Blake and Mr. Douglas are organizing each day's activities.
- We are so thrilled to have Liberty Science Center back in the schools to work with the students. Throughout the course of the school year, Liberty Science Center will work with every student across every grade level.

BOARD SECRETARY

Mrs. Napolitano reported on the following:

- There is a motion on tonight's agenda (D2) to approve to recycle 361 Chromebooks to CFES USA. These are outdated Chromebooks that could not be used as parts in the District so we are recycling them for \$674.00.
- There is a motion on tonight's agenda (D3) to approve the ARP IDEA Grant. This is additional IDEA Grant money for both the Public and Non-Public Schools.
- There is a motion on tonight's agenda (E1) to approve to hire a new night Custodian.
- New Jersey School Board Association Virtual Workshops will be from October 26th through October 28th. The Board Members and Administrators are all signed up. Mrs. Napolitano encourages them to attend.
- Mrs. Napolitano had a conference call with Standard and Poor's Financial Services for the bond we are refinancing. The call went very well. The questions included many areas on school finances and the River Edge economy and the community. There were questions with Mrs. Napolitano our auditor, our bond counselor, and our financial advisors. The bond should be going for sale next week.
- Mrs. Napolitano attended a school funding law webinar. They discussed the funding formula which is our State Aid.
- Information was sent to all the candidates from New Jersey School Boards regarding a regional information session that any interest candidate can register for.

PRESIDENT

- Ms. Kang thanked the board members for approving the 2012 Bond Board refunding. She also thanked Mrs. Napolitano for going through the process.
- We had a successful River Edge Day and she thanked Mrs. Danahy, Mr. Herbst, Mr. Sim, and Ms. Brown for attending. She also thanked our custodians for helping with preparing our tables, chairs, signs, and tents.
- The virtual New Jersey School Board Association Workshops will be on October 26th through October 28th.

COMMITTEES

Ms. Brown stated the Curriculum and Instruction Committee met on September 27^h. They spoke about EDI and reviewed it, an EDI page was created on our District website, an EDI Parent Academy will be held on Thursday, October 14th, and discussed the Math Action Plan and future conversations.

Ms. Dansky stated the Facilities and Finance Committee met on October 1st. They spoke about some options for outdoor lunch, lunch tables that were ordered for both schools, spacing at Roosevelt School, and the Interlocal Agreement with the Municipality.

Ms. Brown attended a Bergen County School Board Association Meeting that was held on September 29th. Mr. Matt Lee gave a field update. Mr. Louis DeLisio discussed the re-org of the Department of Education. He also spoke about Covid-19 and how the positive Covid-19 tests are lessening and transmission rates are down and hospitalization rates are done too. They also spoke about transportation and teachers shortages.

Ms. Dansky attended a New Jersey School Board Association Special Education Committee Meeting on September 29th. They discussed a shortage on school bus drivers and a legislative update about some of the things regarding Special Education.

Ms. Dansky attended a New Jersey Association Board of Directors Meeting on October 1st. They spoke about Rebuilding Opportunities for Students and their Pandemic Related Report. It looks at the schools and what they anticipate some of the challenges for this school year. They spoke about funding in relation to pandemic relief. They spoke about their strategic plan that will be presented to the Board of Directors on November 19th. The staff of New Jersey School Board Association have just went back to the office part time. The 2021 Workshops are virtual and Ms. Dansky will be presenting. There was an extensive legislative update at this meeting. They talked about a lot of good news for school districts when the state budget passed. There was nearly 580 million dollars within the aid formula and this is the largest investment in K-12 education in the state's history. Extraordinary special education aid rose by 125 million dollars. There was a significant increase in support for the school based Youth Services Program and there was a bill that passed to expand the aging out bill. This is for students aging out of Special Education at 21 years of age due to the pandemic. They also spoke about Regionalization.

Mr. Herbst attended the first QSAC Committee Meeting today. It was a very interesting meeting where they discussed the process of the Committee and QSAC.

Ms. Brown attended the Mayor and Council Meeting on September 27th. They spoke about the proclamation of declaring the month of October as Breast Cancer awareness month, the proclamation of declaring October 3rd -October 9th as Fire Prevention week, the proclamation of declaring October 15th – October 19th as National Hispanic Heritage Month, the banner for the pumpkin patch, the use of the building for Girl Scouts, and the message board for fundraising on Kinderkamack Road in town.

MOTIONS TO BE ACTED UPON

A. ADMINISTRATION/POLICY

1. That the Board of Education approve the Minutes of September 22, 2021.

Motion by: Mr. Herbst Seconded by: Ms. Juskeliene

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

2. That the Board of Education approve the staff development and travel as per the schedules for October 2021 including relevant mileage reimbursement. (Addendum)
3. That the Board of Education establish the week of October 4 - October 8, 2021 as a “Week of Respect.”
4. That the Board of Education establish the week of October 11 - October 15, 2021 as a “School Violence Awareness Week.”
5. That the Board of Education approve the completion of the following emergency drills:

School	Dates
Cherry Hill School	September 10, 2021 Fire Drill September 21, 2021 Evacuation Drill September 22, 2021 Shelter in Place
Roosevelt School	September 13, 2021 Fire Drill September 20, 2021 Evacuation Drill

6. That the Board of Education approve the annual subscription renewal with the Schoolboardnet service for the 2021-2022 School Year in the amount of \$1,888.00.

Motion by: Ms. Juskeliene Seconded by: Ms. Brown

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

7. That the Board of Education approve the Second Reading of the following policy:

Policy #	Title
5141.10	Face Coverings
5141.11	Vaccines and Testing

Motion by: Ms. Brown Seconded by: Ms. Doyle

That the Board of Education approve to amend the Second Reading of the following policy:

Policy #	Title
5141.10	Face Coverings

Motion by: Ms. Brown Seconded by: Mr. Herbst

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

That the Board of Education approve the Second Reading of the following policy:

Policy #	Title
5141.11	Vaccines and Testing

Motion by: Ms. Doyle Seconded by: Ms. Dansky

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

That the Board of Education approve the Second Reading of the following policy as it was approved in the First Reading:

Policy #	Title
5141.10	Face Coverings

Motion by: Ms. Dansky Seconded by: Mr. Herbst

That the Board of Education approve Ms. Dansky to call the question

Motion by: Ms. Dansky Seconded by: Mr. Herbst

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

That the Board of Education approve the Second Reading of the original policy:

Policy #	Title
5141.10	Face Coverings

Motion by: Ms. Dansky Seconded by: Mr. Herbst

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

8. That the Board of Education approve the Local Educational Agency Guidance for Chapter 27 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan for the 2021-2022 school year.

Motion by: Mr. Sim Seconded by: Mr. Herbst

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

B. CURRICULUM/EDUCATION - None

C. BUILDINGS & GROUNDS - None

D. FINANCE/GRANTS/GIFTS

2. That the Board of Education approve to recycle 361 Chromebooks to CFES USA in the amount totaling \$674.00.
3. That the Board of Education approve ARP IDEA Grant as follows:

Basic ARP IDEA - Public	\$54,797
Basic ARP IDEA - Non-public	\$47,809
Preschool ARP IDEA-Public	\$8,763

E. PERSONNEL

1. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve Anthony Altamore, School Custodian, Night ,Step 1, effective on or about October 25, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
2. That the Board of Education accept, with regret, the resignation of Eugenia Tavarez, ABA Aide, effective October 22, 2021.
3. That the Board of Education rescind Sandy Gerbino for Cycle I, ELA, of the Post Dismissal Instructional Academy for the 2021-2022 School Year.
4. That the Board of Education approve Tiffany Petzinger for Cycle I, ELA, of the Post Dismissal Instructional Academy for the 2021-2022 School Year.
5. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent approve Jelam Meehan as a Substitute Teacher for the 2021-2022 School Year.

Motion by: Mr. Herbst Seconded by: Ms. Juskeliene

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

F. RIVER EDGE SPECIAL EDUCATION - None

G. REGION V ADMINISTRATION & TRANSPORTATION - None

OLD/NEW BUSINESS - None

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Deidra Legreca (346 Continental Avenue): there is a lack of Special Education services in the District. It has gotten worse since the last board meeting when it was spoken about. Ms. Kang thanked her for her comments.

Dana Hosey (219 Voorhis Avenue): I'm not comfortable having people making decisions for my children that are in their early 20's. Board members do not want to move forward or to give the parents the right to have their children take their masks off. We have to move forward and we can do it safely. Ms. Kang responded regardless of the policy we are still under the executive order.

Sebastian Muscarella (781 5th Avenue): we talk about minutes, emergency plans, policies, etc. and none of this information is provided to us before the meetings. Can you include a link to a policy so it can be shared with the parents? He would like to come to the meetings informed. Ms. Kang thanked him for his comments and stated we can bring this up at our next meeting for New Business.

Francois Michel (136 Continental Avenue): is the district looking into having a full day Pre-k program? Is there after school support? Ms. Dansky responded we have significant space issues in our schools and we have an After School Program for before and after care.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion made by Mr. Sim, seconded by Mr. Herbst to convene into closed session at 8:47 PM.

Motion by: Mr. Sim Seconded by: Mr. Herbst

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

RECONVENE

Motion made by Mr. Sim, seconded by Mr. Herbst to reconvene and adjourn the regular public meeting at 10:37 PM.

Motion by: Mr. Sim Seconded by: Mr. Herbst

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

Louise Napolitano
Board Secretary/Business Administrator