

RIVER EDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
“Building Bright Futures Together”

**Minutes of the Regular Public Meeting - April 27, 2022**

7:30 PM Public Meeting

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.

Ms. Kang asked for a moment of silence before beginning the meeting to honor Mr. James Gaffney, Oakland Board of Education Trustee and President of Bergen County School Boards Association.

**CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE**

Ms. Kang called the meeting to order at 7:34PM

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Mr. Sim read the Mission Statement.

**ROLL CALL**

Ms. Napolitano took roll call.

Present on call were Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Ms. Juskeliene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Mr. Herbst arrived at 7:45 PM

Absent: Mr. Papiris

Approximately 17 were in attendance and 58 attended virtually.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE**

Ms. Napolitano read the Open Public Meetings Notice.

**CLOSED SESSION**

At the end of meeting, Board will resume in a closed session to discuss contractual and personnel items.

**SPECIAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Public Comment on Agenda Items**

No Public comment on Agenda items.

**Odyssey of the Mind Student Presentation**

The presentation was held in the Old Gym. There was no live streaming or recording for this presentation in order to protect the privacy of our students. Ms. Kang and the Board thanked all who participated in this presentation.

## **REPORTS**

### **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Mrs. Danahy reported on the following:

- Mrs. Danahy thanked Mrs. Hafers and Mr. Luca for the work they did with our Odyssey of the Minds team. They are very passionate about the program and Mrs. Hafers is looking to expand this program to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- On tonight's agenda is a resolution to approve the Superintendent's recommendation for Dr. Evan Jaffe, Director of Special Services. Dr. Jaffe has many years of experience in Special Education and is currently Supervisor of Student Support Services in Chatham. Dr. Jaffe worked as a school psychologist and case manager in Livingston and Paramus. Dr. Jaffe is also an adjunct professor at Rutgers University. Dr. Jaffe's professional experience and his commitment to children and their families is what attracted us to him as a candidate for this position. In the interview process, Dr. Jaffe demonstrated to us that he is a leader who understands the complexity of the student learning experience. Dr. Jaffe was drawn to River Edge in part because of our exceptional programs such as Building Bridges and Building Connections. We are thrilled that he shares our pride in those programs and are confident that Dr. Jaffe will be an outstanding addition to our administrative team.
- Also on the agenda is a resolution to approve Christine Moran as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Christine has proven herself to be a leader who immerses herself in the world of curriculum and they are some deep waters. As a former curriculum person myself, Christine and I definitely speak the same language. Christine completed a certification program for her Chief School Administrator certificate and is eligible for the title of Director. Not only does she have official credentials but she has the capability and expertise to expand her current Supervisor role to that of a Director. I am confident in recommending Christine for Director of Curriculum and Instruction to the Board.
- Our final personnel resolution that I want to highlight is the agreement between the Board of Education and the River Edge Administrators Association ("REAA") to amend their current contract which will allow us to hire Nevin Werner as the Supervisor of STEAM and Assessment. Mr. Werner has a passion for data. Mr. Werner will now oversee science and math, assessment data as well as supervise our Technology Department. Mrs. Danahy thanked Denise Heitman as REAA leadership for being so supportive and helpful in redefining some of the roles of our administrative team and I feel grateful to have the team that I do!
- We held two successful community forums on the topic of inclusivity. It is extraordinarily important to my Administrative team and to me that we create an environment where every child feels valued, every child feels supported and every child feels safe. I thank the community members who made time to come to those sessions immensely. As I said at both of those meetings, this is work we cannot do without our community. I heard from many parents who still have unanswered questions and as we know more we will communicate more. As always, Ms. Danahy promises full transparency and engagement as the journey continues.
- We held a very comprehensive Security Drill this morning with some of our Administrative team and office staff met with the Bergen County Bomb Squad, the New Jersey State Police, our local police and the K-9 Unit. We did a table-top drill for a bomb threat which was a great opportunity to collaborate on what to do if we have a bomb threat but it helps us get on the same page

administratively with the practices for security. The police also used today's training for their staff too. This was an excellent exercise and gave us things to think about.

- The Student Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> and all students chosen to participate will be notified tomorrow.

## **PRINCIPAL REPORT**

Mrs. Heitman reported on the following:

- Mrs. Heitman thanked Mrs. Del Guidice for a wonderful art show that was held on April 4<sup>th</sup> with live artists creating washable tattoos. The art pieces are still hang up throughout the building.
- The Spring Concert was held on April 7<sup>th</sup>. The Beginning and Concert band performed. The students did a tremendous job. Mrs. Heitman thanked Ms. Cuadra for this.
- The Dance Troupe choreographed their own dance and the students did a tremendous job. Mrs. Heitman thanked Mrs. Bohajian. Mrs. Dent followed with the 5<sup>th</sup> Orff and 6<sup>th</sup> Orff Ensembles where students used Orff instruments. The Cherry Hill Chorus was last and performed 3 songs and several soloists performed.
- The grade two students are very proud of their state research projects.
- The PTO held a very successful Book Fair the week of April 18<sup>th</sup>.
- The River Dell Marching Band visited our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and performed on the field for them. The students were attend and worked with the band instructor. Mrs. Heitman thanked Ms. Cuada for help planning this event.
- Mrs. Heitman thank Mrs. Hafers, Mrs. Denn and all of the Odyssey of the Mind teams for their success in Regionals. Congratulations were given to our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Odyssey team who placed third at New Jersey State.
- Parents were invited to the Shark Tank presentations. Students created different items asking for money to sell their products. Students used innovation, creativity, financial literacy and public speaking skills in doing this presentation. Parents asked thoughtful questions and winner were chosen from each class. The next presentation will be before Administrators.
- Student Council and third graders are looking forward to Arbor Day where guests from the Town Council are going to visit. The third graders planted seedlings for the River Edge Tree/Women's Club.
- Today was Administrative Professional Day and Mrs. Heitman thanked all who work hard for our schools.
- Students are selling bracelets and pins in honor of Autism Awareness month.
- NJSLA assessments will being May 9<sup>th</sup> and information was sent to all parents.

## **BOARD SECRETARY REPORT**

Mrs. Napolitano reported on the following:

- Personal Financial Disclosure statements are due on Friday.
- Reminder about the conference in Atlantic City and please let our office know if you would like us to book the hotel so we make sure we can get a block of rooms before they are all gone.
- The formal Budget Presentation will be next week at the Board of Education meeting.

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

- Ms. Kang spoke about the upcoming Student Led Board of Education meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup> and asked that once students reach out to each board member, that they please arrange a time either in person or virtually to help them go through the agenda and format so they know what to expect. Please let the students know that we will be behind them to guide them through the entire night. Ms. Kang also encouraged that students come to the next meeting to get acquainted with the format.
- A comment from Ms. Dansky: Ms. Dansky suggested that once the agenda is set that there be no additions or changes. It is difficult working with students if there are additions or changes so if possible, keep the agenda stable once it is sent out which will be helpful for students.
- Ms. Kang said that no dates were decided upon for the Board Retreat due to the availability of Board members so she is suggesting another poll be sent to hopefully decide on a date.
- Ms. Kang said that there were some great topic suggestions such as team building and different ways of communication to one another and the community.
- Ms. Kang, Mrs. Danahy and Mrs. Napolitano attended REGals Opening Day last Saturday which was a nice day to see girls and families on the field.
- Last week was Administrative Professionals day and Ms. Kang thanked all secretaries, administrative assistants, bookkeepers, board office for the work they do.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **Finance and Facilities**

The Finance and Facilities Committee met on April 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss the following topics:

- Space Concerns
- June 30, 2021 Audit
- Chapter 44
- Region V
- Budget

Conclusions reached:

1. Kindergarten numbers for September 2022 create a situation of inequity concerning class size. Possible solutions discussed were:  
(A) All new registrants at Roosevelt School to go to Cherry Hill School (Kindergarten)  
(B) Move all Kindergarten students back to New Bridge Center
2. RE Audit – no findings  
Region V audit:  
Revenue posting corrected  
Place ads over 44K threshold – corrected
3. Chapter 44 monies have been restored thanks to LuAnne's efforts in challenging the formula. Full amount restored to the budget. Banked Cap is no longer needed. Budget number unchanged after the monies restored.
4. Dawn (bookkeeper) has been going to Region V office one weekly. This seems to be working out well.
5. Budget hearing for the public will be on May 4, 2022. Budget is on agenda for Board approval at that time.

The following recommendations were discussed:

- Explore and consider all Kindergarten students to attend New Bridge enter for September 2022.
- Budget approval May 4, 2022

The date of the next meeting is to be determined and the possible topics to be discussed are (1) Space and (2) Region V.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee met on April 18<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following topics:

- PE/Health Curriculum Updates
- Handwriting (discussion with HS/MS)
- Summer Program Update
- Community Night is being planned to inform families about the upcoming changes for the PE/Health curriculum which may be in collaboration with Oradell.
- Vertical discussion of teachers with administration on when and how to incorporate physical writing vs. use of technology (perhaps through encouraging writing through notebooks);
- Students at Tier III will be invited for the Summer Academy program to continue to provide academic support and reduce "summer slide".

### **Personnel and Management Committee**

The Personnel and Management Committee met on April 21<sup>st</sup> and discussed the following topics:

- Update on custodial staffing
- Summer Academy
- Annual Contract renewals
- Non-tenured staff renewals
- Technology update
- Vacancies

**Ad Hoc Policy Committee**

The Ad Hoc Policy Committee met on April 20<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following topics:

- Face Coverings Policy 5141.10
- Revision of the second paragraph to list health experts the chief school administrator will consult with before making any decision on face coverings.
- Place on agenda for first reading

**MOTIONS TO BE ACTED UPON**

**A. ADMINISTRATION/POLICY**

1. That the Board of Education approve the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of April 6, 2022.

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

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeleiene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

2. That the Board of Education approve the revised River Edge Elementary School Calendar for the 2021-2022 school year. (Addendum)

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

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeleiene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

3. That the Board of Education approve the following class trip:

School	Grade	Destination	Cost to District
Cherry Hill	(6) Safety Patrol	United States Military Academy at West Point West Point, NY	\$300.00

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

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeleiene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

4. That the Board of Education approve the First Reading of the following policy:

Policy #	Title
5141.10	Face Coverings

5. That the Board of Education approve the Second Reading of the following policies:

Policy #	Title
3510	Operation and Maintenance of Plant
3541.33	Transportation Safety
5131	Conduct and Discipline
5141.3	Health Examinations and Immunizations

6. That the Board of Education approve the revised Board of Education Meeting Dates For the 2022-2023 School Year:

*June 1, 2022
June 22, 2022
July 27, 2022
September 7, 2022
September 21, 2022
*October 19, 2022
November 2, 2022
November 16, 2022
December 7, 2022
December 21, 2022
January 4, 2023 (Reorganization Meeting)

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

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeleiene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

**B. CURRICULUM/EDUCATION -None**

**C. BUILDING & GROUNDS - None**

**D. FINANCE/GRANTS/GIFTS**

1. That the Board of Education approve the bills & claims dated April 2022 totaling \$699,206.11 including checks #10693 through #10780 (Addendum). Payrolls dated March 15, 2022 and March 31, 2022, totaling \$1,300,948.98, 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 2021-2022 as of March 31, 2022. (Addendum)
3. That the River Edge Board of Education approve the Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports for the period ending March 31, 2022.

Further, we certify that as of March 31, 2022 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)

**Motion by: Mr. Sim**

**Seconded by: Mr. Herbst**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

## **E. PERSONNEL**

1. BE IT RESOLVED that the River Edge Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") appoints Dr. Evan Jaffe (hereinafter referred to as "Dr. Jaffe"), as the Director of Special Services for the River Edge School District beginning on or about August 1, 2022 and ending on June 30, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves the Employment Agreement with Dr. Jaffe for the position of Director of Special Services 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 Business Administrator/Board Secretary to execute, on behalf of the Board, the Employment Agreement by and between the Board and Dr. Jaffe.

**Motion by: Mr. Herbst**

**Seconded by: Ms. Brown**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

2. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve Kismet Bohajian, as a District Reading Specialist, effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.
3. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve Caitlin Montuori, as a District Academic Interventionist, effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.
4. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve Kate Stehn, as a District Academic Interventionist, effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

**Motion by: Ms. Brown**

**Seconded by: Ms. Juskeliene**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris



5. That the Board of Education accept with regret, the resignation of Jessica Jablin, Teacher, effective June 30, 2022. (Addendum)

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

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeleiene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

6. That the Board of Education accept with regret, the resignation of Christopher Lisi, ABA Instructional Aide, effective May 6, 2022. (Addendum)

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

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Dansky, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeleiene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

7. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a leave of absence without pay and without benefits for employee #012874, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's Office, to commence on or about September 1, 2022 through June 30 2023. (Addendum)
8. That the Board of Education approve the Job Description for the Reading Specialist. (Addendum)
9. That the Board of Education approve the Job Description for the Director of Special Services.(Addendum)
10. That the Board of Education approve the Job Description for the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. (Addendum)
11. That the Board of Education approve the Job Description for the Supervisor of STEAM and Assessment. (Addendum)
12. That the Board of Education approve the following teachers for Cycle IV (SEL) of the Post Dismissal Instructional Academy for the 2021–2022 School Year, as per contract:

Cherry Hill School

Janel Blake  
Leeann Cameron  
Rebecca DelPriore  
Risa Louda  
Gabrielle Sagala  
Noy Sapir

Roosevelt School

Gina Duprey  
Jason Funabashi  
\*Megan Lubin  
\*Lauren Proda

13. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve professional day requests for the following staff members to attend workshops/ conferences as noted and in accordance with appropriate statute: (Addendum)

Name/Position	Workshop/Conference	Date(s)	Cost to District Excluding Mileage at State Rate
Nevin Werner Supervisor	Confratute: A Unique Learning Experience (Virtual)	7/11/2022 to 7/13/2022	\$299.00

14. That the Board of Education approve the transfer of Robert Hall, Teacher, from Cherry Hill School to Roosevelt School effective September 1, 2022.
15. That the Board of Education approve the transfer of Katherine O' Reilly, Teacher, from Cherry Hill School to Roosevelt School effective September 1, 2022.
16. That the Board of Education approve the transfer of Jason Funabashi, Teacher, from Roosevelt School to Cherry Hill School effective September 1, 2022.
17. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, appoint Claritza Rodriguez, as a member of the Cultural Affairs Advisory Committee for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.
18. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Teacher compensation of \$50.00 per class for the 2022 Summer Academy.

**Motion by: Mr. Sim**

**Seconded by: Mr. Herbst**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

- \*19. BE IT RESOLVED that the River Edge Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") appoints Christine Moran (hereinafter referred to as "Ms. Moran"), as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the River Edge School District beginning on July 1, 2022 and ending on June 30, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves the Employment Agreement with Ms. Moran for the position of Director of Curriculum and Instruction 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 Business Administrator/Board Secretary to execute, on behalf of the Board, the Employment Agreement by and between the Board and Ms. Moran.

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

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

- \*20. That the Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent approve the Addendum to the River Edge Administrators' and Supervisors' Association Agreement.

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

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

**F. RIVER EDGE SPECIAL EDUCATION**

1. That the Board of Education approve Speech and Hearing Associates, LLC to conduct Auditory Evaluations for the 2021-2022 school year, not to exceed \$800.00.

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

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

**G. REGION V ADMINISTRATION & TRANSPORTATION**

1. That the Board of Education approve the bills and claims dated April 2022 totaling \$1,289,877.22 including checks #60677 through #60786.
2. That the Board of Education post approve the following Quote Contracts for the 2021-2022 school year.

Route	Transporter	Per Diem	Per Diem Aide (if applicable)
Q047	J&W Financial	\$245.00	\$50.00

3. That the Board of Education post approve the following Addendum Contracts for the 2021-2022 school year.

Route	Transporter	Per Diem
2950	Morgan Educational Services	\$276.43

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

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

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

## **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Mrs. Danksy served on the selection committee for the new Director of the New Jersey School Boards Association. A candidate was selected to replace James Gaffney and that candidate will go before the Board of Directors on May 13<sup>th</sup> for approval. There were 900 applicants for this seat.

## **PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

**Lauren D'Alessandro (292 Woodland Avenue):** I have a comment about kindergarten. I am concerned because I have an incoming kindergartner who expects to be going to school with his sister; we live by Roosevelt School and can't imagine doing two drop offs, two after cares. I'm a teacher and I can't work from home. Please consider this for parents as this would be a huge difficulty. I registered early to secure a spot knowing that there was potential for the schools closing. Also, consider the social/emotional part of this. Kindergarten numbers might grow in the summer. It would be disheartening knowing that I signed him up only to go somewhere else. Please consider all those factors.

Ms. Kang thanked Ms. D'Alessandro for her comment.

**Ms. Christine O'Keefe (Teacher/Roosevelt School):** Ms. O'Keefe commented to consider when moving staff to CHS that the staff is getting larger and parking is not. There will still be struggling to find a place to park so please still consider expanding parking there. The second comment, is tomorrow is "Bring Your Child To Work Day" and unfortunately River Edge is not participating in it this year. It was a disappointment for a lot of staff members and their children to find out they were not going to be able to do it because of a policy issue. We are hoping the policy can be revised and updated because it was something they enjoyed and it was a tradition and we were looking forward to getting back to normal and this was one normal thing that we can do.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

Ms. Kang made a request for a motion to move into closed session.

**Motion by: Ms. Danksy                      Seconded by: Mr. Herbst**

Ayes: Ms. Brown, Ms. Danksy, Mr. Herbst, Ms. Juskeleiene, Mr. Sim and Ms. Kang

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Papiris

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Upcoming Board Meetings**

May 4, 2022 – Public Hearing and Adoption of the 2022-2023 Budget and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Shark Tank Presentation

May 18, 2022 – Student Led Board of Education Meeting