

Board of Education - Hunterdon County, NJ

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

**Meeting Location - District Administration Office
1445 Route 31, Annandale, NJ 08801**

Click [Aug 13, 2024 BOE Meeting](#) to access the live stream/recording

1. President Glen Farbanish called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and read the Public Meeting notice.

2. **Roll Call**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Municipalities Represented</u>	<u>Weighted Vote</u>
Kristina Cagno - Present	Califon Borough / Tewksbury Township	0.8
Bryan Chapman - arrived at 6:07pm	Clinton Township / Lebanon Borough	0.9
Glen Farbanish - Present	Union Township	1.4
Nicole Gallo - Present	High Bridge Borough / Lebanon Township	1.2
Tara Marie Hintz - Absent	High Bridge Borough / Lebanon Township	1.2
Beth Kotran - Present	Clinton Township / Lebanon Borough	0.9
Brendan Mclsaac - Present	Town of Clinton / Franklin Township / Glen Gardner Borough	0.9
John Melick - Present	Califon Borough / Tewksbury Township	0.8
Cynthia Reyes - Present	Clinton Township / Lebanon Borough	0.9
Kimberly Solino - Present	Bethlehem Township / Hampton Borough	1.2
Daniel Spanton - Present	Clinton Township / Lebanon Borough	0.9
Jessica Viotto - Present	Town of Clinton / Franklin Township / Glen Gardner Borough	0.9

Also Present: R. Bergacs - Assistant Superintendent, K. Blew - School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, G. Vargas-Dellacasa - District Technology Coordinator, M. Squarcia - Director of School Counseling Services, R. Broan, Director of Curriculum, Articulation and Student Achievement, J. Comegno - School Board Attorney, Comegno Law Group P.C.

3. **Flag Salute**
4. **Motion by B. Kotran and second by K. Cagno** to approve agenda item 4.1. **Motion carried on voice vote**, with abstentions from J. Melick, K. Solino and D. Spanton.
 - 4.1. [Minutes - July 23, 2024](#) School Board meeting
5. **Board Goal Setting** for the 2024-2025 school year facilitated by Gwen Thornton, New Jersey School Boards Association Field Representative- [Board Goals](#)
6. **Presentation of [2024 NJGPA Results](#)** by Richard Broan, Director of Curriculum, Articulation and Student Achievement

7. **Chief School Administrator's Report**

7.1. Report on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) - No new incidents

7.2. **Motion by B. Mclsaac and second by J. Viotto** to affirm the determinations on the [HIB Incidents](#) reported at the July 23, 2024 Board meeting. **Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

Assistant Superintendent R. Bergacs provided the Chief School Administrator's Report:

- Bloomsbury has continued its journey to join North Hunterdon-Voorhees District. In June, Phillipsburg and Bloomsbury came to an agreement that is best to move forward without continuing their send/receive relationship. It is now in the hands of the Commissioner of Education. However, there is a 20-day public comment period. More information can be found on our school website.
- STEM Camp hosted at NHHS concluded on August 8th with a bridge-building event. Students spent the week doing events including building catapults, dissecting frogs, and programming robots.
- ESY has concluded for the summer. Students learned about the history of the Olympics and watched a few of the events live. They also participated in two theater workshop sessions to prepare for the upcoming Winter Unified musical.
- Congratulations to North Hunterdon Mathematics Teacher, Meghan Luick, for being selected as the 2024-2025 Teacher of the Year for Hunterdon County! The 21 County Teachers of the Year were recognized on August 6th by the NJ Department of Education. We are so proud of Mrs. Luick and appreciate all she has given to our students at North Hunterdon.

8. **G. Farbanish provided School Board President's Report**

- Condolences to Superintendent J. Bender for the passing of his mother.
- The Board will be discussing approval for Assistant Superintendent R. Bergacs to serve as Acting Superintendent while J. Bender is on temporary leave.
- Thank you to all staff for their continued commitment to our students.

8.1. Regular Board Meeting - September 24, 2024, 7:00 p.m. at the District Administration Office

9. **Opportunity for Public Comment**

(4) individuals spoke during the Public Comment section addressing the following topics: retirement of the NHHS librarian, condolences to the District Superintendent, the Acting Superintendent role and Board goals.

10. **Curriculum, Instruction and Technology - Committee Report**

- Curriculum, Instruction & Technology agenda items reviewed.
- Disparity in number of suspensions reported in the Monthly Reports between NHHS and VHS was due to an error in reporting. Corrected reporting shows that the schools have a comparable number of suspension incidents.
- Consideration is being taken regarding implementation of a student survey following the Mind of the Athlete program.

Motion by J. Melick and second by B. Kotran to approve agenda items 10.1 through 10.3. **Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

10.1. [Professional Consultants-Student Services](#)

10.2. [Out of District Placements](#)

10.3. 2024-2025 Agreements with Mind of the Athlete, LLC of Bethlehem, PA for Athletic Leadership Academy presentations at [North Hunterdon High School](#) and [Voorhees High School](#)

11. **Policy and School Security - Committee Report**

- NJSBA Policy Manual conversation is expected to be complete by October. NJSBA will replace multiple policies from the previous vendor, making the manual more direct.
- Policy 0143.2-Student School Board representatives, was discussed regarding potential need for language addressing student representative comments during a motion for meeting action items, and clarification for attendance of alternate representatives.
- Notification of upcoming school assemblies was emailed to parents earlier this month.
- Mind of the Athlete program cost was discussed among the committee.
- Policy 2415.05-Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) was discussed and it has been determined that current student surveys are in compliance with the Federal DOE.

B. Kotran asked for clarification regarding the discussion for a language change in policy 0143.2. Discussion ensued regarding when it is appropriate for student board representatives to add their input, as well as the selection process for the student representatives, and presence of the alternate student at Board meetings. The committee will continue to discuss and make the policy clear.

B. Chapman noted that with the NJSBA policy manual, where there is a statute, a related policy will not be included in the manual, alleviating the need to revise related policies when the legislature may have an update .

12. **Finance, Facilities and Transportation - Committee Report**

- Finance, Facilities and Transportation agenda items reviewed.
- Building tours can be arranged for Board members interested in seeing completed projects at the schools.
- Securing a vendor for exterior lighting replacement and repairs at VHS is underway.

B. Kotran asked for a purpose/summary of work completed by Honeywell through the NJ Clean Energy grant. K. Blew provided that the purpose of the grant was to improve ventilation at the schools, and the grant has allowed funding to put new rooftop units on the buildings. The overall impact included provision of new AC units, ductwork and improved energy efficiency.

B. Mclsaac asked for clarification on staff involvement related to the teaching STEM classes at nonpublic schools, and R. Bergacs added that this work is completed outside of the teachers' work hours at NHV.

N. Gallo expressed concern in regards to the MOU for A Tri-County Vicinage 13 initiative. A discussion ensued with respect to what this initiative provides and how the District may recommend this to families.

Motion by K. Solino and second by B. Kotran to approve agenda items 12.1 through 12.16. **Motion carried on voice vote**, with a vote of "no" for item 12.3 from N. Gallo, an abstention from item 12.3 from C. Reyes, and abstention from items 12.14-12.16 from B. Chapman.

12.1. Accept the FY 2023-2024 Extraordinary Aid award in the amount of \$746,214

- 12.2. Accept the FY 2025 Teach STEM classes in Nonpublic Schools Grant award in the amount of \$48,981.15. The final grant award will be calculated based on the teachers' hourly rate from their 2024-2025 employment contract and the actual hours taught at the nonpublic school, not to exceed 755 hours
- 12.3. [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between Center for Family Services and NHVRHSD - A Tri-County Vicinage 13 initiative
- 12.4. [Amendment #3](#) to the Honeywell Agreement for the Repair Phase of the NJ Clean Energy Grant
- 12.5. Apoint Dr. Timothy Fredriks as a professional consultant for the 2024/2025 school year in the amount of \$750 per diem as per the [Contract](#)
- 12.6. [Tuition Contract](#) with Hunterdon County Vocational School District for full time, on-site Academy Programs for the 2024-2025 school year
- 12.7. [Tuition Contract](#) with Hunterdon County Vocational School District for shared time Polytech Programs for the 2024-2025 school year
- 12.8. [Student Transportation Management Agreement](#) with Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission for the 2024-2025 school year
- 12.9. [Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission Joint Transportation Routes](#) for the 2024-2025 school year
- 12.10. [Banners for NHHS Booster Club's Corporate Sponsorship Program](#) to hang on Singley Field fence throughout 2024-2025 school year
- 12.11. [Training and Travel Requests](#)
- 12.12. [Monthly Bills List](#) for August 2024
- 12.13. [Resolution 081324-1](#) Monthly Financial Reports Certification for June and July 2024
- 12.14. Board Secretary Reports for months ending [June](#) and [July](#) 2024
- 12.15. Treasurer Reports for months ending [June](#) and [July](#) 2024
- 12.16. Transfer of Funds within the 2024-2025 school year budget - [June](#) and [July](#) 2024
13. **Community Relations and Student Affairs** - Committee Report
 - New Communications Coordinator - Juliana Scricco.
 - The District plans to hire a Director of Special Services. This role will facilitate our district's participation and hosting of Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG) meetings.
 - Quarterly updates on diversity, equity and inclusion activities to be shared with the Board from the schools.
 - Back to School letters from the Principals of NHHS & VHS included information allowing parents to opt-out their students out of specific library books. Schools will continue to provide an opt-out procedure for materials or presentations that may need parental guidance.

C. Reyes asked whether there had previously been a procedure in place that allowed parents to opt their student out from library books. R. Bergacs provided that an informal procedure was in place for parents to email the librarian with this request. Opt-out procedure has now been communicated to parents advising of the procedure.

K. Solino shared that the District had participated in the past with SEPAG meetings. R. Bergacs added that once the Director of Special Services role is filled, SEPAG will have a more formalized schedule.

Motion by J. Melick and second by J. Viotto to approve agenda items 13.1 through 13.2. **Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

- 13.1. Renewal of membership to the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) for North Hunterdon High School and Voorhees High School for the 2024-2025 school year
- 13.2. Pursuant to Policy and Regulation 9210 approve [Booster Clubs and Parent Organizations](#) for the 2024-2025 school year
14. **Delegates' Reports** - No Report
15. **Personnel** - Committee Report
 - The Personnel Committee met and reviewed the Personnel Agenda.
16. **Motion by J. Viotto and second by B. Kotran** to adopt [Resolution 081324-2](#) for executive session to discuss matters falling under categories 4 and 8 as reflected in the attached resolution. **Motion carried unanimously on voice vote** and the Board adjourned to executive session at 7:59 p.m.
17. **Motion by N. Gallo and second by B. Chapman** to reconvene public session. **Motion carried unanimously on voice vote** and the Board reconvened public session at 9:05 p.m.
18. **Motion by J. Viotto and second by B. Kotran** to approve agenda item 18.1 and 18.2, and hand carried item 18.3 as read aloud and indicated below by G. Farbanish. **Motion carried on roll call vote**, with votes of “no” for Personnel Agenda Item 8.2.3 of item 18.1 from B. Chapman, B. Kotran, J. Melick and J. Viotto; abstention from item 18.2 from K. Solino; and abstentions from item 18.3 from B. Mclsaac and G. Farbanish.
 - 18.1. [Item P081324](#) - Personnel Agenda August 13, 2024
 - 18.2. Executive Session Minutes July 23, 2024
 - 18.3. Resolved to adopt and approve the MOA with the NHVEA for the period 2024-2028
19. **Old and New Business**
 - B. Kotran suggested that the District implement a requirement that parents of special education students seeking enrollment in an out of district placement, attend an information session to promote awareness of the special education programs offered at NHHS & VHS. Discussion followed noting that continued professional development and articulation with the sending districts addresses this topic as well.
20. **Motion by J. Viotto and second by B. Kotran** to adjourn. **Motion carried unanimously on voice vote**, and the meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Submitted by:

Kathryn Blew

Kathryn Blew, CPA

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary