

# WASHINGTON BOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – February 12, 2024

Approved March 11, 2024

### I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

#### CALL TO ORDER:

Board President, Dawn Higgins, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and asked everyone to please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT:

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is either discussed or acted upon. The Board has fully complied with the notice requirements by advertising in the Express Times posting publicly and by notifying the Municipal Clerk of the date, time and place of meeting.

### II. ROLL CALL

#### Present

Angela Bridygham

Pattie Covell

Lisa Eller

Dawn Higgins

Joseph Kresefsky

Ya'el Kresefsky

Holly Masenior

Kevin Noone

Melissa Vitalos

### III. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD – None

### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Esposito recognized Maria Stein and Tara Betancourt as Washington Borough's Teachers of the Year. He also commented that the All Star band would be performing at the March meeting.

Mrs. Koeppen presented the Taylor Street School's Students of the Month as follows:

- Kindergarten: Kamdyn Rosario
- 1<sup>st</sup> Grade: Noah Hendrix

Mr. Jenkins presented the Memorial School's Students of the Month as follows:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Alyssa Moody
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Kelsey Settele
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade: Christiaan Ricci
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Madison Castillo
- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Thilleli Naili

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Dawn Higgins thanked the staff who helped with the Student of the Month selections and presentation.

Mr. Esposito reported that the iReady software has begun to be utilized in the district with corresponding professional development with the staff on-going.

Mr. Esposito reviewed the rationale behind various motions on the agenda as follows:

- a request for the use of the Memorial Gym by the Warren Hills Little League will be added as motion 4.2
- the current substitute teacher shortage has lead to some teaching staff foregoing their preps to help cover classes lead to the sidebar agreement with the WEA in motion 1.4
- discussed the proposal from Hunter Technologies for a phone system replacement in motion 2.5
- reviewed motion 2.9 approving Tri-County Behavioral Care to train staff who might need to do mental health screenings.
- Motion 2.11 is to approve a proposal from Parette Somjen Architects for the preschool bathroom installation project. Tracy Boss and Baina-Lyssa Jean from PSA reviewed the project with the Board.
- Motion 2.12 is to approve a contractor for website design
- Motion 3.1 approving security drill and student safety data

Mr. Esposito introduced Joanne Butler from Schenck, Price, Smith & King as the new Board Attorney.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Don Ippolito questioned the wording on motion 2.11 saying that the motion should read “planning and design” rather than “construction” of the PreK restrooms. He also inquired about potential change orders and possible abatement issues.
- Chris Cannavo commented that the Student of the Month presentations were great.
- Jennifer Staples presented samples of items students made in Knitting Club

**VI. ACTION ITEMS: Superintendent’s Recommendations**

CONSENT AGENDA: Matters listed within the consent agenda have been referred to members of the Board of Education for reading and study are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion.

**A. Consent Agenda Motion: BOARD AFFAIRS: SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATION**

Motion made by Melissa Vitalos, seconded by Lisa Eller, to approve the following board affairs agenda items 1.1 through 1.4.

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Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

- 1.1 To approve the minutes of the January 8, 2024 reorganization and regular meeting session.
- 1.2 To approve the minutes of the January 8, 2024 executive meeting session.
- 1.3 To amend the August and September meeting dates on the 2024 annual meeting calendar as presented.
- 1.4 To approve the sidebar to Agreement Between the Board of Education of the Borough of Washington and The Washington Education Association for the remainder of the 2021- 2024 contract, Article IV (A.) Teacher Work Year.

**B. Consent Agenda Motion: BUSINESS AFFAIRS: SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATION**

Motion made by Dawn Higgins, seconded by Angela Bridygham, to rescind motion 2.11 as written.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Motion made by Dawn Higgins, seconded by Angela Bridygham, to approve the following business affairs agenda item **2.1** through **2.13** with motion **2.11** as amended.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

- 2.1 To approve the acceptance of the monthly financial reports of the Board Secretary and the Treasurer for the month of **December 2023** and further that, in compliance with NJAC 6A:23A-16.10c and NJAC 6A:23A-16.10c (3) the Board of Education and School Business Administrator certify that as of **December 31, 2023**, after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials no major account has been over expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10a and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- 2.2 To approve the acceptance of the monthly financial reports of the Board Secretary and the Treasurer for the month of **January 2024** and further that, in compliance with NJAC 6A:23A-16.10c and NJAC 6A:23A-16.10c (3) the Board of Education and School Business Administrator certify that as of **January 31, 2024**, after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials no major account has been over expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10a and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- 2.3 To approve 2/12/24 current expense food service and regular account bill list.

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- 2.4 To approve a joint transportation agreement with the Warren County Special Services School District for the 2024-2025 school year with an Administrative Fee of 4.5%.
- 2.5 To approve the proposal from Hunter Technologies, submitted under state contract number A80802, to install an Avaya IP Office Server Edition phone system at an initial installation cost of \$34,361.56 with a monthly activation and support cost of \$827.22/mo.
- 2.6 To approve a tuition contract with the Elmwood Park School District where the Washington Boro School District will receive two students via the McKinney-Vento Act in which the Elmwood Park School District will pay \$14,283 per student, prorated for time in attendance, for the 2023-24 school year.
- 2.7 To enter into a joint transportation agreement with the Elmwood Park School District for the 2023-2024 school year, beginning on January 29, 2024, at a total annual cost to Elmwood Park of \$25,285.28.
- 2.8 To approve the participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) due to the fact that the district projects an enrollment of more than 40 Medicaid eligible students for the 2024-25 school year.
- 2.9 To approve Tri-County Behavioral Care to provide consultation services within the district at a flat rate of \$2,000 for the 2024-2025 school year.
- 2.10 To approve Oncourse Systems for Education Data Manager as an add on service in the amount of \$5,570 for the 2024-2025 school year.
- 2.11 To approve Parette Somjen Architects, L.L.C. for the planning and design of restrooms and associated improvements in the amount of no greater than \$466,410 to meet the Preschool requirements in classroom 6 and 7.
- 2.12 To approve the proposal from Steven J. Maxwell to provide website content and design consultation services at a price of \$1,200 for website content services and \$40/hr. for website design/consultation services with total services not to exceed \$3,000 for the 2023-24 school year.
- 2.13 To approve the Prekindergarten projected enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year.  
(hand carry)

Joseph Kresefsky had questions about the contract in motion 2.6.

Melissa Vitalos asked about the information relating to the PreK projected enrollment in motion 2.13 and Mr. Esposito clarified.

### **C. Consent Agenda Motion: PERSONNEL AFFAIRS: SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

Motion made by Melissa Vitalos, seconded by Angela Bridygam, to approve the following personnel affairs agenda item **3.1** through **3.6**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

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- 3.1 To approve the comprehensive student and staff attendance data (*with all fire drill reports, if applicable*) for the Month of January, 2024.
- 3.2 To approve Mr. Jonathan Chioffe as our new full-time custodian effective 2/13/24 at a prorated salary of \$41,841 (Step 1 on the 2023-2024 W.E.A. salary guide) plus single benefits.
- 3.3 To approve Ms. Vicki Stamets extension as leave replacement teacher to on or about June 10, 2024.
- 3.4 To extend the leave of absence of Mrs. Rachel Coates with a return date of April 23, 2024.
- 3.5 To approve Ms. Sandra Foss as a substitute teacher for the 2023-2024 school year.
- 3.6 To approve Ms. Camerin Savacool as a substitute teacher for the 2023-2024 school year pending receipt of credentials.

**D. Consent Agenda Motion: SCHOOL AFFAIRS: SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

Motion made by Joseph Kresefsky, seconded by Melissa Vitalos, to approve the following school affairs agenda items **4.1** through **4.2**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

- 4.1 To approve the School Nurse's Report for November and December, 2023
- 4.2 To approve the use of the Memorial School gym by Warren Hills Little League Youth Baseball on March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for Little League Evaluations and Clinic (*hand carry*)

**VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Motion made by Melissa Vitalos, seconded by Angela Bridygham, to adopt the following resolution to enter into executive session at 8:03 p.m.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

This executive session is expected to last about 20 minutes. The general nature of the subject areas to be discussed are: Matters rendered confidential by Federal Law, State Law, or Court Ruling, and Personnel Matters.

It is anticipated that action pursuant to this executive session will not be taken.

**WHEREAS**, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

**WHEREAS**, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

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**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Washington Borough Board of Education, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the specified subject matter.
2. It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matter will be made public upon resolution of all information discussed.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Motion made by Melissa Vitalos, seconded by Joseph Kresefsky, to adopt the following resolution to exit executive session at 9:35 p.m.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made by Holly Masenior, seconded by Lisa Eller, to adjourn at 9:35 p.m.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Respectively submitted,

  
Tim Mantz  
Board Secretary