

CLOSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Closter, New Jersey

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

July 16, 2020

7:30 PM

The Board meeting was called to order by Mr. Lambert at 7:30 PM

The following Board members were present:

Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

The following Board members were absent:

Ms. Cross

Also present:

Mr. McHale and Mr. Villanueva

NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT - Read by the President:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Secretary to the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by having the date, time, and place thereof, posted at each school building within the district, the Board of Education office, the Office of the Borough Clerk, and transmitted to *The Record* and *Northern Valley Suburbanite* newspapers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board went immediately to Closed Session.

CLOSED SESSION MOTION

Moved by Mr. Linn, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve the following Closed Session Motion.

Motion was approved by a voice vote of the Board:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education will adjourn to a Closed Session to discuss the following:

Personnel Matter

The matters so discussed will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public.

The Board went into Closed Session at 7:34 PM.
The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 8:20 PM.

Walk-in Resolution, Personnel, added as Item G.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. McHale shared with the Board and community his report:

The School Building Reopening Committee released another parent survey on Thursday, July 9, 2020, to determine how many students may not return to in-person instruction when schools open. The parent survey was available in English, Hebrew, Korean and Spanish. As of today, there are 754 parent responses, accounting for 1,184 students. In the survey feedback, 812 students will potentially return to the hybrid learning model and 372 students will potentially choose to remain in a fully virtual model. This information will be helpful as we finalize the school restart plan.

The School Building Reopening Committee met on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, to review the Closter Restart and Recovery Plan. Our plan is focused on bringing staff and students safely back to school. Our Closter Restart and Recovery Plan must be sent to the Interim County Executive Superintendent next week for review. We will provide parents with information about the schedule by August 7, 2020. He will provide now some information about what our plan may include:

- The New Jersey Department of Education guidance document, called The Road Back– Restart and Recovery Plan for Education, requires that we must allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent, with a recommendation of six feet of distance between students. In order for us to do this, we cannot have full classes attending every day. We do not have enough classroom space or staff to accomplish this. He realizes this is challenging for working parents, but he encourages them to begin to plan for childcare for some days during the week.
- Our plan will use a phase-in approach so that there will be set times, one in October and one in November, at which we will reassess our capacity. So how we start in September will be for about a five week period and then we will determine if we can increase classroom occupancy or the length of the instructional day.
- For Phase I, students will return for a single-session day (four hours) on a A/B day schedule. This will allow teachers time to collaboratively plan instruction for both in-person and at-home learning so that there is consistency across the grade level. When students are at-home on the alternating day, the school day will be for four hours also, with some live, synchronous instruction and some work to complete that is assigned and explained by the teachers on the days students are in the classroom.

- We will ensure that children in the same family will attend in-person learning on the same day, whether at Hillside Elementary School or Tenakill Middle School. We have purchased cloth masks and face shields for all students and staff.
- More information will be provided by August 7, 2020, when we communicate the approved plan.

As summer continues, He encourages students to read, practice math facts, and read some more! Enjoy the warm days.

Mr. McHale read a letter of retirement from Tenakill Middle School Physical Education Teacher, Ms. Paula Cummings, and a letter of resignation from Hillside Elementary School Kindergarten Teacher, Ms. Lauren Barbieri. Both Ms. Cummings and Ms. Barbieri were very grateful for their years working for Closter Public Schools.

Mr. Lambert stated Ms. Cummings and Ms. Barbieri will be a loss to the district, but was happy for them and wished them both the best.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Mr. Linn to open the meeting to the public.

Statements made by individual participants are limited to a duration of three (3) minutes unless otherwise announced at the beginning of the discussion. The Board urges large groups to select one person to represent them. The Board reminds those individuals who take the opportunity to speak to please step up, identify themselves by name and address, and to limit their comments to items listed on the agenda.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Finkelstein to resume the regular order of business.

BOARD OPERATIONS

Moved by Ms. Kothari, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motion A.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Minutes**

Motion to approve the June 24, 2020 minutes.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Bhagat, Mr. Linn, Ms. Cross

Moved by Ms. Bhagat, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A-B. Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Staff Coursework**

Motion to approve the following courses for 2020-2021 school year as recommended to the Superintendent by the Principals:

Staff Member: Min Jeong Kim

Course No./Title: MAT 901A Math Activities: Intermediate Grades
Institution: Fresno Pacific University
Credits: 3

Staff Member: Min Jeong Kim

Course No./Title: MAT 912 Great Mathematicians Before 1700
Institution: Fresno Pacific University
Credits: 3

Staff Member: Kate Maher

Course No./Title: EDUC 712Z Understanding Autism
Institution: University of LaVerne
Credits: 3

Staff Member: Andrea Watkins

Course No./Title: EDUC 6616-91 Language Acquisitions / Language Disorders
Institution: Fairleigh Dickinson University
Credits: 3

B. **APPROVAL - Staff Conferences**

Motion to approve the following staff conferences:

Staff Member/s: Mary Auriti, Erica Cho and Jennifer Levy
Conference: Distance Learning: Strengthening Online ELA Instruction
Location: Virtual
Date: 8/6/20
Cost to Board: \$777.00

Staff Member/s: Vincent Salvati
Conference: NJ Sys Admin Meeting / NJASTO Meetings
Location: Virtual
Date: 10/2, 11/6, 12/4/20; 1/8, 2/5, 3/5, 4/2, 5/7, 6/4/21
Cost to Board: \$0

FINANCE AND PHYSICAL PLANT COMMITTEE
Chairperson Ms. Kwon, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Finkelstein

Mr. Lambert requested clarification for motion F. Mr. McHale explained the preschool program will now be a four(4) hour session. Students will come every day. The district will have four(4) day sessions with no extended school day and because of this, the tuition will be reduced to \$7,000.00 The district will still offer aftercare if parents need to utilize it. The aftercare rate will remain the same at \$950.00.

Ms. Lee asked if the option for all virtual learning for the four (4) hours was an option. Mr. McHale stated few parents requested all virtual learning; however, the goal for preschool was socialization and school preparation. At this time only in-person instruction will be offered. Mr. McHale also advised all virtual learning could be implemented by a signed executive order from the governor or by the board of health if there is an increase in Covid-19 cases.

Ms. Kwon questioned Motion C. Mr. McMale stated this was only for the extended school year program for the 2020-2021 school year.

Ms. Kwon asked if the rate in Motion E was in line with the rest of the district. Mr. Villanueva stated the rate is in line with the other districts. Mr. McHale advised the board we will not be renting the facilities however will be allowing the School-Aged ChildCare(SACC) after school program to use the facilities in order for parents to use the program if needed.

Moved by Ms. Kwon, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A-F.

Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

A. APPROVAL - Monthly Bills

Motion to approve payment of bills from June 23, 2020 to June 30, 2020 in the amount of:

General Fund (Fund 10)	\$356,161.78
Special Revenue (Fund 20)	\$ 718.96
TOTAL	\$356,880.74

B. APPROVAL - Staff Remuneration

Motion to approve remuneration to staff members as follows:

Staff Member: Kate Maher

Course: Seminar in Clinical Application to Learning Disabilities

Remuneration: \$1,000.00

C. **APPROVAL – Special Education Placements for ESY**

Motion to approve the following 2020-2021 ESY Special Education placements for Closter students:

NJSMART#	Tuition	Grade	Placement
7046976899	\$7,095.00	K	NVRHS-Valley
8096612745	\$7,095.00	PreK	NVRHS-Valley
1690925754	\$7,095.00	K	NVRHS-Valley

D. **APPROVAL - Merit Goal Payment for 2019-2020**

RESOLVED, that the Closter Board of Education certifies the payment in the amount of \$25,435.78 to Vincent McHale, Superintendent of Schools, for the 2019-2020 merit goal completion.

E. **APPROVAL - Use of Facilities Fees**

Motion to establish the fees for the Use of Facilities for the 2020-2021 school year:

\$85.00 per room/day

\$49.00 per hour for custodians (\$64.00 per hour on Sunday or Holidays)

F. **APPROVAL - Preschool Program Rates**

Motion to approve the following program rates for the 2020-2021 school year:

Preschool Program	\$ 7,000.00
After Care Program fee	\$ 950.00

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Lee, Mr. Lambert

Mr. McHale spoke about the need for substitutes for the upcoming school year. Substitutes will be needed if any of our staff members become ill or need to be quarantined. The district has substitutes who are returning but is still searching for additional substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians and nurses. Mr. McHale invited anyone who is interested or knows of someone who would like to be a substitute to please visit the website.

Ms. Lee asked about summer nurses in motion D. Mr. McHale advised that summer nurses are needed to prepare for the return to school. We are also transitioning from Genesis to Realtime which has a health component, which the nurses will need to enter into Realtime. Also due to the pandemic students who are coming in for the child study team for testing, we are now required to have a nurse on-site in case of a health issue.

Moved by Ms. Lee, seconded by Micera to approve Motions A-G. Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Paula Cummings Retirement**

Motion to approve, with regrets, the retirement of Paula Cummings as Physical Education Teacher as of October 1, 2020.

B. **APPROVAL - Elementary Teacher Tenure-Track Position**

Motion to approve Jennifer Barbato as an elementary teacher for the 2020-2021 school year, pending a criminal history background check. Salary is \$61,086.00, plus benefits (BA+30, Step 4).

C. **APPROVAL - Substitute Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Nurses & Custodians**

Motion to approve the following substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, nurses & custodians for the 2020-2021 school year:

Substitute Teachers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Certification</u>
Elyse Asch	NJ Substitute Certificate
Corrine Corcoran	NJ Substitute Certificate
Leo DeBartolo	Teacher Certification
Darren Fial	NJ Substitute Certificate
Lauren Finan	NJ Substitute Certificate
Alice Hodgskin	NJ Substitute Certificate
Lauren Kessler	Teacher Certification
Alissa Latner	Teacher Cert. Elementary
Linda Nasissi	Teacher Cert. Elementary
Frank Noviello	NJ Substitute Certificate
Maria del Pilar Orta Romero	Teacher Certification
Helen Papapetrou	NJ Substitute Certificate
Christina Paspalas	NJ Substitute Certificate
Jay Ringelstein	NJ Substitute Certificate
Paula Ann Schweitzer	Teacher Certification.
Robert Scozzafava	NJ Substitute Certificate
Rhonda Starer	Teacher Certification
Howard Stone	NJ Substitute Certificate
Kathleen Wellenkamp-Keller	Teacher Certification

Nurse

Melisa Skific	NJ Board Nursing License
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Paraprofessionals

Barbara Ferguson	Paraprofessional Substitute ONLY
Virginia Mangano	Paraprofessional Substitute ONLY
Penelope Michelis	Paraprofessional Substitute ONLY

Custodians

William Angresano
Nelson Amaya

Custodian Substitute
Custodian Substitute

D. **APPROVAL – Summer Nurses**

Motion to approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Kristen Haenelt and Jaime Caruso, up to 40 summer work hours at a rate of \$50.00/hour.

E. **APPROVAL – Hillside ES Pre-K Summer Program Staff (Paraprofessionals)**

Motion to approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the revision of hours for the following paraprofessionals for Hillside Elementary School Pre-K Summer Program, July 6 - July 31, 2020, from 21 hours per week to a maximum of 17.5 hours per week per para at a rate as scheduled below:

- Dawn Lazzari - \$20.21/hour
- Vickie Aponte-Solomon - 20.21/hour

F. **APPROVAL - Resignation of Lauren Barbieri**

Motion to approve, with regrets, the resignation of Lauren Barbieri, Elementary School Teacher, as of 7/1/20.

G. **APPROVAL - Personnel Resolution**

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Schools (“School”) has recommended that the Closter Board of Education (“Board”) withhold the employment and adjustment increments of a Teacher whose name is on file in the Superintendent’s office (“Teacher”) for the 2020-2021 school year based on unprofessional conduct and lack of professional judgment, which the Teacher was informed of by the Superintendent during the 2019-2020 school year; and

WHEREAS, on July 16, 2020, the Board provided the Teacher with an informal appearance before the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Teacher was represented at the informal appearance by a representative who presented arguments and evidence on behalf of the Teacher; and

WHEREAS, the Board has considered the Superintendent’s recommendation together with the entire record including the reasons provided to the Teacher by the Superintendent through the Evaluative Memorandum and Notice of Increment Withholding, dated June 26, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that the Superintendent’s recommendation to the Board that the Teacher’s employment and adjustment increments be withheld for the 2020-2021 school year is amply supported by the record as a whole;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby adopts and affirms the Superintendent's recommendation to withhold the Teacher's employment and adjustment increments for the 2020-2021 school year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby requests that the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary provide the Teacher with written notice that her employment and adjustment increments for the 2020-2021 school year are being withheld, together with the reasons therefore, within ten (10) days of the date of this Resolution, all pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:29-14.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Micera. Ms. Kothari

Mr. McHale gave an overview of the policies, stating they are being updated for the reopening of schools.

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Mr. Linn to approve Motion A.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

A. APPROVAL - FIRST READING - Policy & Regulation

Motion to approve the first reading of the following as per Appendix A-E.

- Policy #1250 Visitors
- Policy #3510 Operation and Maintenance of Plant
- Policy #3541.33 Transportation Safety
- Policy #5141.2 Illness
- Policy #5141.3 Health Examinations and Immunizations

BOARD COMMITTEES

The Policy Committee met to discuss updated policies.

Negotiations committee to schedule a meeting.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

New Business - Mr. McMale alerted the board for the August meeting to be moved to an in-person meeting, with the recommendation to move the meeting from the Tenakill Middle School library to the auditorium or gym where social distancing is possible.

The board discussed the possibility of the meeting being changed from August 20, 2020, to August 27, 2020.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Bhagat to open the meeting to public discussion.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Bhagat to close the meeting to public discussion.

CLOSED SESSION MOTION

Moved by Mr. Linn, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve the following Closed Session Motion.
Motion was approved by a voice vote of the Board:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education will adjourn to a Closed Session to discuss the following:

Negotiations

The matters so discussed will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public.

The Board went into Closed Session at 8:55 PM.
The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 9:05 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Lee, seconded by Ms. Micera to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Flojo M. Villanueva
Business Administrator/Board Secretary