

**MENDHAM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BROOKSIDE, NEW JERSEY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYMNASIUM
(MEETING IS BEING HELD VIRTUALLY,
NO IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE WILL BE ALLOWED)
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021, 7:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

II. Flag Salute - Mrs. Holquist led the flag salute.

III. Roll Call of the Board of Education

Mrs. Gretchen Holquist	President	Present
Mr. Andrew Christmann	Vice President	Present
Mr. Peter Dumovic		Present
Dr. Rekha Mandel		Present
Mrs. Joan Mody		Present
Mr. Aadithya Thayyar		Present
Mr. Robert Wowk		Present

Also present: Dr. Salvatore Constantino, Superintendent
Mrs. Donna Mosner, School Business Administrator
Dr. Ciccone, MTMS Principal
Ms. Kotcho, MTES Principal
General Public – 35 approximately

IV. Sunshine Law

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law 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 discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, Mendham Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the Mendham Township Board of Education Office, sent to the Clerk of Mendham Township, and the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record. This is an official meeting.

V. Superintendent's Report

➤ District Updates, News, and Events

- States will not be allowed to cancel federally mandated standardized exams this school year - we were informed on Monday.
 - The USDOE said that it will not approve state requests for “blanket waivers of assessments” required by the Every Student Succeeds Act; we received a waiver last spring. However, the department said it would allow states to administer shorter versions of state exams in English/language arts, math, and science, or let states administer exams this summer or even into the next school year.

- Governor Murphy’s budget is reported to include additional funding for school districts. The additional funding appears to be tied to the introduction of new programs in Pre-K, wraparound, SDA, and “learning loss” (which will be relabeled).
- NJSBA's CSA/Superintendent evaluation is now available online.
 - As the Superintendent, I begin the process by entering the district's goals and by assessing your achievement of the goals, along with merit goals.
 - Once I have completed my part in the process, you will receive an email letting you know that it is time for you to go in and complete your section.
- Presentations
 - Dr. Ciccone
 - Ms. Kotcho

Questions after Dr. Ciccone - MTMS presentation:

B. Wowk – There are obviously challenges working remotely – is there anything you have learned or picked up from this situation?

Dr. Ciccone – Great question. We have learned a ton. Overall we are finding out that students are struggling because we have realized that we have given them too much, so it is hard for them to handle this primarily on their own and that there was not enough opportunity for them to do the work on their own. Moving forward we need to make sure we provide more authentic experiences so that they can function on their own. Those that are flexible and have had those experiences have done a great job. Being able to provide extra help off-hours, so an easy, efficient, personalized, wonderful way to maximize time.

Mr. Dumovic – excellent presentation, very thoughtful. Based upon the survey, teacher flexibility is exemplified every single day. Question for support of struggling students – now that parents are getting grades are more reaching out for additional help for their son or daughter. More support to give in the summer. Sal touched on the learning loss from a funding experience, what about this summer.

Dr. Ciccone – the admin team has been discussing this and it is in the works. We are working on it and trying to figure out what we should do over the summer. Put out a survey to see the interest. Something fun to get them interested for some fun – invent the important academic areas to be fun i.e stock market adventure. Parents are having a struggle with keeping children in front of the computer. It is not about the transfer of knowledge it is to motivate them to stay engaged.

G. Holquist – the gap in some of the goals, is there anything you need from a BOE or admin perspective to help decrease that gap.

Dr. Ciccone – getting them back and still be safe would be the best – everything else is just Band-Aid’s. It is difficult, get them back.

A. Christmann – get out from behind the screen or struggling sitting in front of a computer so much is a problem for everyone, adults as well. What is the plan to come together to get these students back up to speed?

Dr. Ciccone – it is hard to know when this is going to end. For us to measure gaps may be very different from what it will look like at the end of this school year. I hope it is not like this at this point next year but no one knows for sure.

Dr. Mandel – thank you for the presentation – excited about the close gap program. Is there any thought to have peer groups or mentoring or pods to help mentor other groups?

Dr. Ciccone – we have not gone down that road, these things ebb and flow. I think now it is difficult for students to lead other students through this, it does lend itself to proper communication.

J. Mody – what kind of stress has our guidance department been under

Dr. Ciccone – you need to remember that there is much less of the normal since there is so little interaction – remember there are 1/3 of the students than during a normal year.

Dr. Costantino – it is not a new issue, I think maybe next year and the long-term effects of what just went on. The next year or two will be challenging. We will be having this same conversation soon again.

A. Thayyar – amazing to see that 30 teachers signed up for the afterschool program. Can we make up this time next year? What are the plans to close that gap once they are back in?

Dr. Ciccone – first we need to determine what it is. Especially since we don't know what September will look like. We need to focus on the students' skills to make them successful. We need to look at that our staff is teaching those skills. More than being reactionary – we have focused that there are no real gaps with future subjects.

Dr. Constantino – thank you, Dr. Ciccone, now I will turn it over to Ms. Kotcho.

Questions after Ms. Kotcho – MTES presentation

G. Holquist – as you look at some of the gaps areas and the areas you want to sure up at year-end do you need anything from the BOE.

Ms. Kotcho – the largest piece for me is keeping the students connected. Ms. Clark is dealing with a lot of the issues with this disconnection between any social or activities together. A way to help them have friends and interact would help.

G. Holquist – a helpful perspective, you have all of these children who are not going to know how to share or negotiated politely in a year.

P. Dumovic – clear comprehensive presentation thank you – when can you share the report of the social and emotional well-being – when can you share that with the BOE. Also, do you feel the assessment will fall behind based upon the information you shared?

Ms. Kotcho – not too far in the future, I want to present to the committee first and digest the information. Good information to build off of and grow. Two weeks as far as the pacing goes is not too far off.

Ms. Kotcho – thank you so much, we appreciate your support

A. Christmann – thank you for a positive message.

Ms. Kotcho – I thank all of our teachers for being who they are.

VI. Board Secretary’s Report

- **Operations & Finance:**
State Budget Address

This afternoon Governor Murphy announced his proposed FY22 State Budget.

Key elements include the following:

- * \$6.4 billion FULL Actuarially Determined Pension Contribution
- * Additional \$578.1 million added to Formula Aid
- * Additional \$50 million for Pre-School Aid; \$26 million of that amount for 30 new districts
- * \$50 million for Stabilization Aid
- * \$25 million additional for Extraordinary Aid
- * \$75 million for SDA's capital maintenance and emergent needs grants program
- * \$120 million of the State's ESSER II set aside funds announced last week for the Learning Acceleration grants and mental health services.

Further details of the FY22 school aid allocation and the budget language provisions that stipulate in detail how the aid will be distributed are pending. The initial release of state aid on February 25th has been moved out to potentially March 3rd.

School Ethics Commission

Due to technical difficulties with the new financial disclosure software the Commission has asked that users only attempt the first phase of the process at this point. Districts should populate their February list of school officials by Friday 26, 2021.

Although board secretaries can obtain and issue PINs via emails to their school officials for their completion of their disclosure statements, since the disclosure upload function is not yet active, you may want to wait on that second step. Updates will be posted as the programming difficulties are resolved.

<https://www.nj.gov/education/ethics/fds/index.shtml>.

VII. Board President’s Report – None.

VIII. Correspondence –

- February 22, 2021 - Thom Keeling & Sabrina De Stefano - Special Services PACSS
- February 22, 2021 - Lauren Trialonas & Meredith Sahi - Diversity Committee of the Mendhams

IX. Consent Items

Approval of Minutes

Regular Session Minutes: January 26, 2021

Approval of Executive Minutes: January 26, 2021

Curriculum and Instruction

1. **Revised Curriculum** (*Attachment*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the adoption of the 2020 - 2021 school year of the revised/renewed curriculum listed below:

Middle School Social Studies Curriculum

2. **Elementary School Fundraiser for the 2020 - 2021 School Year**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following Elementary School activity for the 2020 - 2021 school year:

Date	Activity/Description	Staff
04/01/21 - 04/30/21	St. Jude's Math-A-Thon - Improve math and comprehensive skills - Solve age-appropriate math problems - Understand the importance of helping others	Kevin O'Keefe

Operations and Finance

1. **Certification Reports**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education certify pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:19-4, does certify that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the line item appropriation, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9 and N.J.S.A. 18A:17-36, after review of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's monthly financial reports for the month of January 2021 that no major accounts and fund balances in the 2020/2021 budget have been over expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

2. **Board Secretary's Report**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the January 2021 Board Secretary's Reports.

3. **Treasurer's Report**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the January 2021 Treasurer's Reports.

4. **January 2021 Transfer Reports**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the January 2021 transfer report.

5. **February 2021 Bills List**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the final February 2021 Bills List. This includes payroll checks N0255 through N0260.

Fund 10	\$ 24,865.34
Fund 11	\$1,263,480.02
Fund 20	\$ 12,177.66
Fund 60	\$ 4,990.58

Total: \$1,305,513.60

6. **Use of District Facilities**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following use of facility applications for the 2020 - 2021 school year with the right to cancel based on school events and needs:

Organization	Location	Dates	Times	Responsible Party
Girls Volleyball Clinic & High School Tryouts	<u>MS</u> Gym	03/01/21 - 03/06/21 Monday - Saturday	2:50pm - 5:30pm	Greg Racz
Panetta's High Intensity Training	<u>ES</u> Gym	02/25/21 - 06/03/21 Thursdays	4:00pm - 5:00pm	Briana Panetta
The Mendham Kids Club LLC	<u>ES</u> Gym Classroom Grounds	<i>Previously approved:</i> 06/14/21 - 07/30/21 New Dates 06/14/21 - 08/06/21	9:00am - 3:00pm	Charles Gallo

* Subject to change due to conflicts with Mendham Township School events.

7. **ESS Northeast, LLC Addendum** (*Attachment*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Addendum to the Agreement between the Mendham Township School District and ESS Northeast, LLC for the Substitute Teachers and Staff, effective January 1, 2021.

Policy & Planning

First Reading (*Attachments*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves for first reading the following policies and regulations:

- P 0145 Board Member Resignation and Removal (M) (Revised)
- P 0164.6 Remote Public Board Meetings During A Declared Emergency (M) (New)
- R 1642 Earned Sick Leave Law (M) (Revised)
- P 1643 Family Leave (M) (New)
- P 3431.1 Family Leave (M) (Abolished)
- P 4431.1 Family Leave (M) (Abolished)
- P 3431.3 New Jersey Family Leave Insurance Program (Abolished)
- P 4431.3 New Jersey Family Leave Insurance Program (Abolished)
- P & R 5330.01 Administration of Medical Cannabis (M) (Revised)
- P 7425 Lead Testing of Water in Schools (M) (Revised)
- R 7425 Lead Testing of Water in Schools (M) (New)
- P & R 7430 School Safety (M) (Abolished)
- P 2415 Every Student Succeeds Act (M) (Revised)
- P 2415.01 Academic Standards, Academic Assessments, and Accountability (M) (Abolished)
- P 2415.02 Title I - Fiscal Responsibilities (M) (Revised)

P 2415.03	Highly Qualified Teachers (M) (Abolished)
P 2415.05	Student Surveys, Analysis, and/or Evaluations (M) (Revised)
P & R 2415.20	Every Student Succeeds Act Complaints (M) (Revised)
P 4125	Employment of Support Staff Members (M) (Revised)
P 6360	Political Contributions (M) (Revised)
P 8330	Student Records (M) (Revised)
P 9713	Recruitment by Special Interest Groups (M) (Revised)

Mr. Thayyar moved to approve the Committee Reports and the Consent Items for February 23, 2021; Approval of Regular and Executive Minutes, Curriculum & Instruction items 1-2, Operations & Finance items 1 – 7, Personnel & Human Resources item 0, Policy and Planning item 1, seconded by Mrs. Mody and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mr. Christmann; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, Dr. Mandel; yes, Mrs. Mody; yes, Mr. Thayyar; yes, Mr. Wowk; yes, and Mrs. Holquist, yes – motions carry.

X. ACTION ITEMS

Curriculum and Instruction

1. **Middle School 8th Grade Fundraiser for the 2020 - 2021 School Year** (*Attachment*)
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following Middle School 8th Grade Fundraiser for the 2020 - 2021 school year:

Date	Activity/Description	Staff
Month of March	Kids Vs. Cancer March Madness Basketball Competition - Foul Shooting Competition - Three-Point Competition - Virtual Trick Shot Competition Enter one Competition for \$10.00 or all three for \$25.00. All proceeds will go to the Jim Valvano Foundation for Cancer Research.	Amanda Porter

Personnel and Human Resources

1. **Revised Unpaid Days: Steven Molnar, Transportation Driver**
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Steven Molnar, Transportation Driver to use twenty-one (21) half days without pay starting March 8, 2021, through May 15, 2021. Mr. Molnar was originally approved to use six (6) half days without pay at the February 16, 2021 Board of Education Work Session Meeting.

Mr. Christmann moved to approve the Action Items for February 23, 2021; Curriculum & Instruction item 1, Operations & Finance item 0, Personnel & Human Resources item 1, Policy and Planning item 0, seconded by Mr. Thayyar, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mr. Christmann; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, Dr. Mandel; yes, Mrs. Mody; yes, Mr. Thayyar; yes, Mr. Wowk; yes, and Mrs. Holquist, yes – motions carry.

X. Discussion

P. Dumovic – 2 excellent presentations by the principals – did the data include special education students, regardless, I as a BOE member would like to know their progress during this, it deserves an update and that is my suggestion.

Dr. Constantino – it does include but we can do some data separation and provide that.

B. Wowk – both presentations extremely helpful – in future meetings maybe it can be staggered so it gets the time it deserves.

G. Holquist – agree, it creates a long discussion – we have tried to keep the two schools connected but we need to make sure the topic can be condensed.

Dr. Constantino – the issue is that these are very timely when they occur in the 12-month calendar, we avoid work sessions because of committee meeting review but we will be mindful of that moving forward.

XI. Verbal Communications from the Public

Meredith Sahi - 9:38 PM – 5 cranberry lane - I have a quick comment thanks!

A quick comment on the letter from the diversity committee, 200 signatures is a strong barometer of the support in the community.

Dr. Constantino – Thank you to that group.

C. Michaels M - 9:39 PM - Chris and Ginger Michaels – 8 Yardly road – preschool advantage – a non-profit organization that pays tuition for 3 and 4-year-olds. We help those families that want to send their children to Preschool but are unable to afford it. The goal moving forward is to fund 100 students to go to school each year. Applications are available, we are asking if you can get this out to parents, inform employees about the program. Who is the appropriate person for us to contact, thank you for your time?

Dr. Constantino – thank you, you can reach out to me directly in my office tomorrow and I can help you get your information out.

Salvatore Constantino - 9:46 PM - Thank you very much. Public comment is closed. Take care

XII. Adjournment

Moved by Dr. Mandel second by Mr. Wowk to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Mosner
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary