

**Board of Education
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey
Regular Session
Monday, February 26, 2024, 8:00 p.m.**

Minutes

This Regular Session of the Upper Saddle River Board of Education was held in the Gymnasium of the Bogert School of the Upper Saddle River Schools beginning at 8:00 p.m. Mrs. Gandara opened the meeting and stated that the meeting was being held in compliance with PL 1975, Chapter 232 and appropriate notice had been provided to the designated newspapers, the Borough Clerk and all interested parties requesting such notification.

Members present: Mrs. Gandara, Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Ginsberg, Mr. Mehegan, Mr. Quagliani, Dr. Verducci, Mrs. Wenberg

Members absent: None

Also present: Dr. Siegel, Mrs. Imbasciani

REGULAR SESSION

Mrs. Gray made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Wenberg to convene into Regular Session at 8:00 p.m.

OPENING STATEMENT:

Mrs. Gandara

Mrs. Gandara welcomed the public.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Siegel

Dr. Siegel reported:

- Violence and Vandalism Report for the period September 1 – December 31, 2023:
 - Reynolds: 0 Incidents of Violence & Vandalism, HIB, Other Incidents Leading to Removal
2 incidents Leading to Restraint/Seclusion
 - Bogert: 2 Incidents of Violence & Vandalism
10 HIB (Alleged and/or Confirmed)
1 Incident Leading to Removal
1 Incident Leading to Restraint/Seclusion
 - Cavallini: 3 Incidents of Violence & Vandalism
14 HIB (Alleged and/or Confirmed)
9 Incidents Leading to Removal
2 Incidents Leading to Restraint/Seclusion
- New SLEO III Officer approved by the Borough and working full time in District. This is a collaboration between the Town and the Board of Education.
- Preparing for the Tri-State Consortium Evaluation in April
- Reynolds – the *Better Than Broadway* program, sponsored by the USR PTO, was very successful.
- Belonging Blueprint parent program, which fosters a sense of belonging.
- Cavallini 6th Grade – as part of the expansion of the Holocaust and Genocide Studies program, students went to the Jewish Heritage Museum in New York City and heard from a local speaker.

- March 4th – A guest speaker hosted by the Board of Education, in collaboration with the SRJWC and USRA Coalition will present a program regarding Challenging Behaviors.

BOARD SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Mrs. Imbasciani

Mrs. Imbasciani reported on:

- Status of the 2024/25 Budget
 - Noted that the Preliminary Budget will be presented at the March 18, 2024 Board meeting
 - The Public Hearing on the Budget will be at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 1, 2024.
- Bogert Roof
 - Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting with the contractors was on February 22.
 - 10 contractors attended
 - The Bid Opening will be on March 12.

BOARD PRESIDENT’S REPORT: None

Mrs. Gandara

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Committee Chairpersons

Infrastructure:

Mr. Mehegan

Mr. Mehegan reported that no meeting took place this month. He is happy to announce that the District now has one security person on each side of the street when school is in session.

Personnel Committee:

Dr. Verducci

Dr. Verducci reported the Committee met again this week. They are well into planning for September. There are teacher shortages in certain areas and the Board is taking an aggressive approach with regards to attracting qualified candidates. The next meeting will be on February 29.

Policy/Governance

Mrs. Ginsberg

Mrs. Ginsberg announced the Committee will be meeting later this week to complete the cyclical review of policies.

Student Success Committee

Mrs. Gandara

Mrs. Gandara reported that the Committee met with student government focus groups and are currently reviewing feedback from those groups.

School Boards Liaison:

Dr. Verducci

Dr. Verducci reported that the next Bergen County School Boards meeting will be Tuesday, March 5. See Dana if interested in attending.

PTO REPORT:

Mrs. McGovern

Mrs. McGovern reported on:

- Valentines Day giveaways
- Author Day at Reynolds
- PTO sponsored Holocaust trip
- Notes to Mr. Kaplan – the PTO will put together an album
- Final changes for lunch, open now through March 8
- Bogert – Finalizing a new assembly
- Family Fun Day – May 9th (rain date May 16), more information to follow

USREF Report:**Mrs. Tedd**

Mrs. Imbasciani reported the following on behalf of Mrs. Tedd:

- The USREF Gala is sold out.
- The Silent Auction will launch on March 4th
- 50/50 tickets are currently available on the USREF website

PRESENTATION:**Mrs. Malloy****Student Activities**

The Student Activities presentation covered two components: clubs and field trips. The presentation reviewed the various clubs offered at Reynolds, Bogert and Cavallini. These included new clubs that are being offered this year. In addition, data on student participation was shared for all grade levels. The presentation also focused on how several new clubs at Cavallini were based on student input. Student leadership opportunities in all three buildings were also highlighted. The second part of the presentation focused on a snapshot of field trips that are offered in the district at each grade level. A more formal review of the curricular connections with field trips will be explored in the future.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None**ADMINISTRATION:****Dr. Siegel**

A motion was made by Dr. Verducci and seconded by Mrs. Ginsberg to approve Administration Consent Agenda Items A through F and was approved by all in attendance.

- A. Approve the submission of the NJ Department of Education School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades Under the Anti-Bullying Act (ABR) for Report Period 1, covering all HIB incidents occurring from 9/1/2023 through 12/31/2023 and HIB trainings & programs from 7/1/2023 through 12/31/2023 for the 2023/24 school year.
- B. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision that investigation #257501***01022024 is not an incident as defined under HIB Policy #5512. The Superintendent shall notify the parents and/or guardians of the Board's decision in writing in accordance with Board Policy and N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(e).
- C. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision that investigation #257844***01082024 is not an incident as defined under HIB Policy #5512. The Superintendent shall notify the parents and/or guardians of the Board's decision in writing in accordance with Board Policy and N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(e).
- D. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision that investigation #257845***01082024 is not an incident as defined under HIB Policy #5512. The Superintendent shall notify the parents and/or guardians of the Board's decision in writing in accordance with Board Policy and N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(e).
- E. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision that investigation #257913***01092024 is not an incident as defined under HIB Policy #5512. The Superintendent shall notify the parents and/or guardians of the Board's decision in writing in accordance with Board Policy and N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(e).
- F. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision that investigation #258015***01112024 is not an incident as defined under HIB Policy #5512. The Superintendent shall notify the parents and/or guardians of the Board's decision in writing in accordance with Board Policy and N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(e).

PERSONNEL:**Dr. Siegel**

A motion was made by Mrs. Wenberg and seconded by Mrs. Gray to approve Personnel Consent Agenda Items A through G and was approved by all in attendance.

- A. Create/Abolish (not applicable)
- B. Resignations
1. Approve the resignation of Melissa DeBoer, Special Education Teacher at Bogert School, effective July 1, 2024.
- C. Leaves
1. Approve a paid medical leave for Employee #0439 beginning February 26, 2024 through approximately March 27, 2024.
- D. Lateral Guide Moves
1. Approve a lateral guide move for Elizabeth Decker, 3rd grade classroom teacher, from BA to MA, effective February 1, 2024, payable in the 2024/25 school year.
- E. Appointments
1. The following staff members are recommended for the positions listed below for the 2023/24 school year:

Advisor:		
Cavallini Assistant Musical Director	Lauren Larco	\$1,500.00
Coaches:		
Girls' Basketball	Erik Schlemm	\$3,000.00
Boys' Basketball	Jason Dates	\$3,000.00

2. Approve the following staff for the FY24 Title I After School Program Grant:

Winter Session: \$1,440.00		
Madelyn Barrow	Meghan Ennis	Shaelynn Guilfoyle
Linda Ho	Jennifer Kruter	Kristin Martin
Nicole Mascetti	Anamarie Massaro	Jaclyn Passanante
Catherine Teehan	Brian Walis	

3. Rescind the appointment of Katherine Baker as the Attendance Officer for the 2023/24 school year.
4. Appoint Averie Katz to the position of ACE Team Member for the 2023/24 school year. \$16/hour
5. Appoint Maya Lee to the position of 3rd grade classroom per diem leave replacement teacher at Bogert School, (MA, Step 2), effective on or about March 4, 2024 through approximately March 27, 2024, subject to the satisfactory completion of the criminal history records check required by law.
6. Appoint Maya Lee to the position of 3rd grade classroom per diem leave replacement teacher at Bogert School, (MA, Step 2), effective on or about April 22, 2024 through June 21, 2024, subject to the satisfactory completion of the criminal history records check required by law.

7. Appoint Adrianna Ramtahal to the position of ACE Team Member for the 2023/24 school year. \$16/hour
 8. Appoint Kimberly Szabo to the position of per diem, leave replacement Preschool ABA Paraprofessional, effective February 27, 2024 through approximately April 18, 2024, Step 2, prorated, plus ABA stipend, prorated.
 9. Appoint Lorelai Wiederholz to the position of ACE Team Member for the 2023/24 school year. \$16/hour
 10. Appoint Alexis Yotka as the Attendance Officer for the 2023/24 school year.
- F. Change in Assignment (not applicable)
- G. Substitutes/Consultants/Volunteers
1. Approve Eric Fink as a substitute teacher/paraprofessional for the 2023/24 school year, subject to the satisfactory completion of the criminal history records check required by law. Mr. Fink's NJ Substitute Teaching certificate is pending.
 2. Approve Wendy Rosenzweig as a substitute teacher/paraprofessional for the 2023/24 school year, subject to the satisfactory completion of the criminal history records check required by law. Ms. Rosenzweig holds a NJ Elementary School Teacher's certificate.
 3. Approve Maya Lee as a substitute teacher/paraprofessional for the 2023/24 school year. Ms. Lee holds a NJ Elementary School Teacher's certificate.

FINANCE:

A motion was made by Mr. Quagliani and seconded by Mrs. Gray to approve Finance Consent Agenda Items A through I and was approved by all in attendance.

- A. Approve the Minutes of Board Meetings:

January 8 (Reorganization), January 12 (Retreat), and January 22, 2024

- B. Approve the Bills List for January 2024 as follows:

10	General Current Expense	\$85,167.10
11	General Current Expense	\$2,397,557.27
20	Special Revenue Funds	\$39,670.21
50	Milk	\$196.14
60	Enterprise Fund	\$28,810.34
	Total	\$2,551,401.06

- C. Approve the Transfers for January 2024.
- D. Approve the Board Secretary and Treasurer's Reports dated January 2024 and to certify that after review of these reports and upon consultation with appropriate district officials, as to the best of our knowledge, no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23-2.11 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligation for the remainder of the year.
- E. Approve submission of the SEMI Waiver for the 2024/25 school year to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools.
- F. Approve the following Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Upper Saddle River Board of Education does hereby approve an agreement with the Region 1/Mahwah Board of Education, a Coordinated Transportation Services Agency, for the purpose

of transporting students in accordance with Chapter 53, P.L. 1997 for the **2024/2025** school year. The services to be provided include, but are not limited to, the coordinated transportation of public, nonpublic and special education students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Upper Saddle River Board of Education agrees to abide by the Transportation Services Agreement as published by the Region 1/Mahwah Board of Education and attached to this Resolution.

G. Approve the amended FY24 IDEA Grant expenditures as follows:

		% of Salary	Amount
1.	Preschool Handicapped Carucci	82%	\$7,468 (Prorated. Effective March 1, 2024)
2.	Part B Basic Zumbano	65%	\$6,237 (Prorated. Effective March 1, 2024)

H. Approve J. Stuart Ablon, Ph.D. to provide the following staff program, *Managing Challenging Behaviors*, on March 4, 2024, at the rate of \$4,000.00, plus travel expenses not to exceed \$750.00.

I. Approve the following Travel Expenses:

Program Name	Date	Employee	Registration Fee	Travel Cost
Physical Edge Northern NJ PE & Health State Conference Morristown, NJ	February 27, 2024	Erika Blumenfeld Samantha Liggio	\$149.00 \$149.00	\$34.12 \$32.52
IPM Training Sayreville, NJ	March 1, 2024	Nijazi Leka	\$0.00	\$0.00
Maintaining Clean and Safe Facilities Seminar Kenilworth, NJ	April 26, 2024	Nijazi Leka	\$0.00	\$0.00
NJASBO Annual Conference Atlantic City, NJ	June 5-6, 2024	Dana Imbasciani	\$500.00	\$469.80

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mr. Garbar shared the concerns he has heard involving members of the Jewish community about anti-semitism in our schools.
- Mrs. Gandara thanked Mr. Garbar for sharing his views which are extremely important. The Board is working with Dr. Siegel and the Administrators to focus on anti-semitic and other bad behaviors. Much more work still needs to be done.
- Dr. Siegel thanked Mr. Garbar and said there are things that we need to do better. We do train our staff and have high expectations. There are consequences when staff and students exhibit anti-semitic and other unacceptable behaviors. The Board and the District will be more transparent with information, will continue to listen and learn and will take every action necessary to make sure every child feels safer.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Gandara

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Quagliani and seconded by Mrs. Mehegan at 9:02 p.m.

Dana Imbasciani, Board Secretary