

**Board of Education
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey
Regular Session
Monday, March 18, 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, Miss Noye Lozada (Student Representative)

REGULAR SESSION

Mr. Quagliani made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Gray 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 spoke about the letter he sent out last week regarding the issues the District experiencing with student behavior and what the district is doing in response to these behaviors.

BOARD SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Mrs. Imbasciani

Mrs. Imbasciani shared the preliminary budget with the Board. Highlights included:

- Budget Timelines
- Revenue Sources
- Key Expenditures
- \$0 Debt Service
- Overall, 1.94% tax levy increase, due to increase in ratables, the tax rate increase is 0.66%.

Mrs. Imbasciani also reported on:

- Bogert Septic
- Bogert Roof
- Donations being approved this evening

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Mrs. Gandara

Mrs. Gandara highlighted some of the amazing things Dr. Siegel did during his tenure in the District. Highlights included:

- Communication and management during Covid
- Focus on mental health
- Build out curriculum enhancements, passion projects
- ACE Program

Dr. Siegel was the driver of:

- Special Education
- Parent Engagement
- Data Gathering

Mrs. Gandara also noted Dr. Siegel's giving students a voice. She thanked him for his leadership and impact and wished him much success in his new position.

COMMENT:

- Dr. Siegel thanked Mrs. Gandara for her kind words and apologized for the disruption.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Committee Chairpersons

Education

Mr. Quagliani

Mr. Quagliani announced the next meeting will be on March 19 and will focus on Information Literacy and K – 8 Math.

Infrastructure:

Mr. Mehegan

Mr. Mehegan reported that the Committee met last week and discussed the Bogert roof, Cavallini boilers, internet speed upgrade and the 5-year Maintenance Plan.

Personnel Committee:

Dr. Verducci

Dr. Verducci reported the Committee will meet in April to review staffing needs.

Policy/Governance

Mrs. Ginsberg

Mrs. Ginsberg reported the Committee is continuing with the cyclical review of policies.

Student Success Committee

Mrs. Gandara

Mrs. Gandara reported there are no new updates.

School Boards Liaison:

Dr. Verducci

Dr. Verducci said he will send a list of upcoming programs the Board may want to participate in.

Student Representative's Report:

Miss Noye Lozada

Miss Noye Lozada reported on the performances of *High School Musical, Jr.* and said the students were phenomenal and the teachers were great.

PTO REPORT:

Mrs. McGovern

Mrs. McGovern reported that all three Bogert grades had an interactive experience with D1 Fitness, during their visit with assemblies about being active. Also noted were:

- Cavallini 8th Grade Science Program
- Lunch changes start on April 8th
- Author Day was March 18 at Bogert
- Family Fun Day – May 9th (rain date May 16), more information to follow

USREF Report:**Mrs. Tedd**

Mrs. Tedd reported the USREF Gala was a huge success. She thanked the teachers and administrators who offered auction items. These items raised \$7,250!

COMMENT:

- Mrs. Gandara thanked Mrs. Tedd and the USREA for all their efforts and said the Board is very appreciative of their work.

PRESENTATION:**Internet Safety/AI****Mr. Cazes**

Mr. Cazes gave a presentation on Internet Safety and Artificial Intelligence. The presentation encompassed an overview of the District's safety measures, including education, software and hardware. Detailed information was provided with regards to the status of AI in the District.

COMMENT:

- Mr. Quagliani asked how the teachers know the information they are getting from Chat GPT is accurate.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mr. Batla asked if we are using any tools to discourage student cheating with AI.
- Mr. Noye asked if AI will change how we will test students.
- Mr. Batla asked if the students use Google Workspace.

ADMINISTRATION:**Dr. Siegel**

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

A. First Reading of the following Policies and Regulations:

Policy 0164	Conduct of Board Meeting (Revised)
Policy 1140	Educational Equity Policies/Affirmative Action (M) (Revised)
Policy 1523	Comprehensive Equity Plan (M) (Revised)
Policy 1530	Equal Employment Opportunities (M) (Revised)
Policy 1550	Equal Employment/Anti-Discrimination Practices (M) (Revised)
Policy 2260	Equity in School and Classroom Practices (M) (Revised)
Policy 2411	Guidance Counseling (M) (Revised)
Policy 2423	Bilingual Education (M) (Revised)
Policy 2431.4	Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries (M) (Revised)
Policy 3211	Code of Ethics (Revised)
Policy 5337	Service Animals (Revised)
Policy 5570	Sportsmanship (Revised)
Policy 5750	Equitable Educational Opportunity (M) (Revised)
Policy 5755	Equity in Educational Programs and Services (M) (Abolished)
Policy 5842	Equal Access of Student Organizations (Revised)
Policy 7610	Vandalism (Revised)
Policy 8461	Reporting Violence, Vandalism, HIB, Alcohol and Other Offenses (M) (Revised)
Policy 9323	Notification of Juvenile Offender Case Disposition (Revised)
Regulation 2431.4	Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries (M) (Revised)

- B. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision that investigation #256527***12112023 is 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 #259146***01302024 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 #259283***01312024 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 #259648***02062024 is 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 Dr. Verducci and seconded by Mrs. Ginsberg to approve Personnel Consent Agenda Items A through H and was approved by all in attendance.

- A. Create/Abolish
1. Create one 1.0 FTE ABA preschool paraprofessional position and ABA stipend position, effective March 19, 2024.
- B. Job Descriptions (not applicable)
- C. Resignations
1. Accept the resignation of Erika Blumenfeld, PE/Health Teacher at Bogert School, effective July 1, 2024.
 2. Accept the resignation of Alexis Garcia, 4th Grade Classroom Teacher, effective July 1, 2024.
 3. Accept the resignation of Shaelynn Guilfoyle, Special Education Teacher at Bogert School, effective July 1, 2024.
 4. Accept the resignation of Brad Siegel, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools, effective July 1, 2024.
- D. Leaves
1. Approve a paid leave and unpaid FLA/NJFLA leave for employee #1606, effective September 1, 2024 through approximately November 25, 2024.
- E. Lateral Guide Moves
1. Approve a lateral guide move for Jill Powers, 1st Grade Classroom Teacher, from MA to MA + 30, effective February 1, 2024.
- F. Appointments
1. The following staff members are recommended for the positions listed below for the 2023/24 school year:

Coaches:		
Baseball	Erik Schlemm	\$3,000.00
Intramurals	Erik Schlemm	\$3,000.00
Track	Julia Shea	\$3,000.00
Assistant Track (Split)	Caitlin Gervasio	\$1,500.00
“ “	Nicole Mascetti	\$1,500.00
“ “	Jessica Berrios	\$1,500.00
“ “	TBD	\$1,500.00

- * 2. Appoint Kilee Swofford to the position of ACE Team Member for the 2023/24 school year. \$20/hour
3. Revise the appointment of Kimberly Szabo to the position of per diem, leave replacement Preschool ABA Paraprofessional, effective February 27, 2024 through March 18, 2024, Step 2, prorated, plus ABA stipend, prorated.
4. Appoint Kimberly Szabo to the position of ABA Preschool Paraprofessional, Step 2, prorated, plus ABA stipend, prorated, effective March 19, 2024.
5. Appoint Gianna Milordo to the position of K-2 ABA Special Education Teacher at Reynolds School, MA, Step 2, effective September 1, 2024, subject to the criminal history records check required by law and receipt of the required NJDOE Teaching Certificates.
- G. Change in Assignment
1. Approve the transfer of Denise Casella from Lunch Aide at Reynolds School to the position of per diem, long term ABA Preschool Paraprofessional leave replacement, effective March 19, 2024 through approximately April 18, 2024, Step 5 per diem, plus ABA stipend prorated.
- H. Substitutes/Consultants/Volunteers
1. Approve Kreshnik Boci as a substitute custodian for the 2023/24 school year, subject to the satisfactory completion of the criminal history records check required by law.
2. Approve Stacey Boyev as a substitute teacher/paraprofessional for the 2023/24 school year. Ms. Boyev holds a NJ Elementary School Teacher K-6 certificate.
3. Approve Jill Bruno as a substitute lunch aide for the 2023/24 school year, subject to the satisfactory completion of the criminal history records check required by law. \$15/hour
4. Approve Ashley Clark as a substitute teacher/paraprofessional for the 2023/24 school year. Ms. Clark holds a NJ Elementary School Teacher K-6 certificate.
5. Approve Isabella Gradzki 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. Gradzki holds a NJ Substitute Teaching certificate.
- * 6. Approve Kilee Swofford 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. Swofford's NJ Substitute Teaching certificate is pending.

FINANCE - BUDGET:

A motion was made by Mrs. Gray and seconded by Mr. Quagliani to approve Finance Budget - Consent Agenda Item A and was approved by all in attendance.

A. RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE TENTATIVE 2024/25 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2024-2025 School Year using the 2024-2025 state aid figures and the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline, as follows:

	Total	General Fund	Special Revenue	Debt Service
2024 - 2025 Total Expenditures	\$30,249,971	\$29,999,983	\$249,988	\$0
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$4,941,784	\$4,691,796	\$249,988	\$0
Taxes to be Raised	\$25,308,187	\$25,308,187	\$0	\$0

and to advertise said tentative budget in The Record in accordance with the form required by the State Department of Education and according to law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held in the Bogert School gymnasium located at 391 West Saddle River Road, Upper Saddle River, NJ at 7:00 pm on May 1, 2024 for the purpose of conducting a public hearing for the 2024-2025 School Year.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the final budget an appropriation of surplus in the amount of \$1,841,368.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Upper Saddle River Board of Education includes in the final budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$210,392. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Business Administrator/Board Secretary is authorized to submit the preliminary budget with the inclusion of health care costs adjustment as noted above.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Upper Saddle River Board of Education includes in the tentative budget a maximum travel expenditure in the amount of \$32,400.00 for the 2024-2025 School Year. The maximum travel expenditure amount for the 2023-2024 School Year is \$35,600.00 of which \$8,745.48 has been spent and \$691.00 has been encumbered as of March 15, 2024.

WHEREAS, the Upper Saddle River Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of those expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the Upper Saddle River Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out-of-District Travel and Reimbursement Forms;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, the Upper Saddle River Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out-of-District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Upper Saddle River Board of Education includes in the tentative budget travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7, to a maximum expenditure of \$32,400.00 for all staff and board members for the 2024-2025 School Year.

The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

BE IT RESOLVED, that included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve - Other Capital Projects in the amount of \$482,000 for Other Capital Project costs of the Cavallini Middle School elevator enclosure repair (\$250,000) and the replacement of one HVAC unit (\$232,000). The total cost of these projects is \$482,000 which represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

FINANCE:

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

A. Approve the Minutes of Board Meeting:

February 7 (Retreat) and February 26, 2024

B. Approve the Bills List for February 2024 as follows:

10	General Current Expense	\$85,858.18
11	General Current Expense	\$2,824,411.40
12	Capital Outlay	\$13,871.63
20	Special Revenue Funds	\$60,864.48
50	Milk	\$214.47
60	Enterprise Fund	\$31,162.15
	Total	\$3,016,382.31

C. Approve the Transfers for February 2024.

D. Approve the Board Secretary and Treasurer’s Reports dated February 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 the proposal for Professional Services for Septic Field Replacement at Bogert School for bidding, award, and contract administration services during construction associated with the Septic Field Replacement at Bogert School, by DiCara Rubino Architects, at a cost of \$9,000.00. (This cost does not include reimbursable expenses which will be billed separately)

F. Approve the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Upper Saddle River Board of Education advertised for bids for the Partial Roof Replacement at Edith A. Bogert Elementary School Project, Di Cara Rubino Project No. 4056, (“Project”);

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2024, the Board received and publicly opened five bids for the Project, as set forth in the attached bid tabulation prepared by the Architect; and

WHEREAS, Laumar Roofing Col submitted the apparent lowest responsible bid in the amount of \$968,000, with Alternate 1 adding \$55,000, for a total bid of \$1,023,000, and that bid was responsive in all material respects; and

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to award the contract for the Project to Laumar Roofing Co.;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby awards the contract for the Project to Laumar Roofing Co. in the amount set forth above. This award is expressly conditioned upon the contractor furnishing the requisite insurance certificate and labor and materials/performance bond as required in the project specifications, together with an AA201-Project Manning Report, and an executed A-101, Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Contractor, and an A-201, General Conditions of the Contract for Construction, as prepared by the Board Attorney and/or Architect, within ten days of the date hereof.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Attorney and/or Architect are hereby directed to draft the agreement with the successful bidder consistent with this Resolution and with the terms contained in the bid documents approved by the Board for the Project. The Board President and the Board Secretary are hereby authorized to execute such agreement and any other documents necessary to effectuate the terms of this Resolution.

- G. Approve D&L Paving to furnish all equipment, labor, and materials necessary to install brick pavers by the Buddy Bench area at Reynolds School at a total cost of \$14,600.00. (Pricing as per Ed-Data Bid #10980)
- H. Accept a preschool student into the Archways full-day program as a tuition student from the Mahwah School District effective March 18, 2024.
- I. Approve the donation from Bogert School of \$500 to Center for Food Action. This money was raised by students who participated in the Kind Coin Challenge which was organized by Bobcat Buddies and the Bogert Student Council.
- J. Approve the donation from Bogert School of \$794 to Valley Hospital. This money was raised by students who participated in the Kind Coin Challenge which was organized by Bobcat Buddies and the Bogert Student Council.
- K. Accept the donation of \$1,500 by Mr. Todd Ullrich do be used for the dedication of the Cavallini Media Center in the name of our recently passed Library Teacher, Elizabeth Ullrich. The donation will be used for signage, library and materials enhancement and an outdoor reading bench/area.
- L. Accept the donation of \$1,032 by the New Jersey Association of School Librarians to be used for the dedication of the Cavallini Media Center in the name of our recently passed Library Teacher, Elizabeth Ullrich. The donation will be used for signage, library and materials enhancement and an outdoor reading bench/area.
- M. Approve the following Travel Expenses:

Program Name	Date	Employee	Registration Fee	Travel Cost
Montclair State University Education Exchange Job Fair Montclair, NJ	April 11, 2024	Rosemarie Malloy	\$125.00	\$24.52

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mr. Cassese commented that recent behavior issues are a by-product of what happened four years ago (COVID). He stated that actions you take today will have impacts. Try not to keep doing the same thing and expecting different results.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**Board Members Only**

Mrs. Gandara then read the following statement:

WHEREAS, the members of the Upper Saddle River Board of Education deem it necessary to discuss legal matters; and

WHEREAS, the topics to be discussed are within the exemptions which are permitted to be discussed and acted upon in confidential session pursuant to PL 1975, Chapter 231;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Upper Saddle River Board of Education deem it necessary to exclude the public from the discussion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting will be made public when the need for privacy no longer exists. Action will not be taken.

Mrs. Gray made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Ginsberg to go into Executive # 2 Session at 9:02 p.m.

Mrs. Gray made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mehegan to return to Regular Session at 9:16 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT**Mrs. Gandara**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Quagliani and seconded by Mrs. Ginsberg at 9:16 p.m.

Dana Imbasciani, Board Secretary

