

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MIDLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY
DECEMBER 15, 2020**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Formicola at 8:00 p.m. and Ms. Garvey read the following statement:

“Both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting were provided as specified in the Open Meeting Act. Notices of this Meeting were sent to The RECORD, RIDGEWOOD NEWS, and to the Midland Park Borough Clerk for the 2020 elective year. A notice was also posted inside the office of the Midland Park Board of Education in a place reserved for such announcements. The Board announces that under its long-standing policy, it will not discuss in public any comments made by members of the public concerning individual staff members or students.”

ROLL CALL

Present:	James Canellas	Sandra Criscenzo
	Christine Dell’Aglia	Nabil Eliya
	Patricia Fantulin	Brian McCourt
	Maryalice Thomas	Peter Triolo

Richard Formicola

OTHERS PRESENT

Staff:	Marie Cirasella, Superintendent of Schools
	Stacy Garvey, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Mission Statement

The Midland Park School District as part of a strong, dedicated community, provides its students with a comprehensive, adaptive education aligned to 21st century knowledge and skills needed for success in college and career. The district maximizes all resources to empower students to realize their individual worth and responsibility, with the expectation they achieve the New Jersey state standards at all grade levels.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT Dr. Marie Cirasella

- I want to provide an update on the district's instructional plan for the upcoming winter storm. Since our district is currently providing fully-remote instruction, we will not use emergency closing days for the impending storm. One of the major considerations in determining this is the safety aspect, meaning can we get students and staff to our schools in safe travel conditions. Since students are already learning remotely, this variable has been satisfied. We continue to closely monitor weather forecasts and should something change, we will advise district families and staff immediately.
- The administrative team planned for the continuance of instruction and here is a brief overview of Thursday's schedule:
 - December 17 will be an Asynchronous Instruction Day, which means all students may work in the day's activities at their own pace.
 - Grades K-6 students will need to sign in for homeroom to receive their instructional activities for the day, which they will engage at their own pace. The activities will include optional fun, motivational social-emotional learning activities to be completed outside in the snow. Take pictures and send them to your principal for posting on social media.
 - Grades 7-12 students will need to sign in for homeroom/first period for attendance. Students should visit each teacher's google classroom for instructional activities for the day, which they will work at their own pace.
 - In the event of power outages, students will be excused from all activities.
 - Teachers and district staff will work from home on Thursday, Dec. 17.
 - We are aware the weather outlook indicates the storm may cause power outages and students will be unable to complete the day's activities, but for those who can, important learning opportunities will be made available.
 - It is my hope everyone understands such important determinations are taken seriously and made following a thoughtful analysis of the variables which impact them. While it is impossible that every family will be pleased with every decision, the best we can do is work tirelessly to analyze all determinations and embark on what we believe to be the most beneficial course of action for our students, staff and district.
- It is important to note that with only three emergency days built into the calendar and with the onset of the winter season, we believe it is best to use identified days wisely and continue to provide remote instruction to students whenever possible.

Motion – Ms. Criscenzo, seconded – Ms. Dell'Aglia...

+1. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation No. 10302003155 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board and directs the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator to transmit a copy of the Board's decision to the affected students' parents forthwith.

Roll Call: 8 Yes, 1 Abstain

Open to the Public: **COMMENTS** only for action items on the agenda.

There were no comments from the public.

BOARD MOTIONS

Motion – Dr. Thomas, seconded – Mr. McCourt...

1. Approve the minutes of the following regularly scheduled public meeting held on November 17, 2020.

Roll Call: All Yes

A. Personnel – (M. Cirasella)

Board resolutions related to hiring for the 2020-2021 school year will be on an emergency basis, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1, N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 and/or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13, as applicable.

Motion – Mr. Triolo, seconded – Ms. Dell’Aglia...

- +1. **Approve a paid maternity leave for Employee No. 1882, effective approximately February 15, 2021 through February 20, 2021; a paid child care leave, effective approximately February 22, 2021 through March 19, 2021; an unpaid child care leave as per the NJ Family Leave Act, effective approximately March 22, 2021 through June 11, 2021 and an unpaid leave of absence, effective June 12, 2021 through June 24, 2021.**
- +2. **Approve a paid maternity leave for Employee No. 1954, effective approximately March 15, 2021 through March 19, 2021; a paid child care leave, effective approximately March 22, 2021 through April 16, 2021 and an unpaid child care leave as per the NJ Family Leave Act, effective approximately April 19, 2021 through June 30, 2021.**

Roll Call: All Yes

B. Finance Committee – (B. McCourt, Chairperson)

APPENDIX

Motion – Mr. McCourt, seconded – Mr. Canellas...

1. Approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13(e), we certify that as of November 30, 2020, after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section), and upon consultation with the appropriate District officials, to the best of our knowledge, no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13 (b), and that sufficient funds are available to meet the District’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year, subject to the conditions of P.L. 1701.

Roll Call: All Yes

- Motion – Mr. McCourt, seconded – Ms. Dell’Aglione...
2. Approve the following block motion:
- a. November 2020 direct pays in the amount of \$417,761.82.
 - b. November 2020 Continuing Education claims in the amount of \$21,505.36.
 - c. November 2020 Cafeteria claims in the amount of \$13,860.87.
 - d. Second November 2020 payroll in the amount of \$627,198.66.
 - e. December 2020 claims in the amount of \$401,327.12.

Roll Call: All Yes

- Motion – Mr. McCourt, seconded – Ms. Dell’Aglione...
3. Approve the cash reports and the Board Secretary’s report for the period November 1 – 30, 2020, as per the attached appendix. B-3

4. Approve the transfers between accounts for the period November 1 – 30, 2020, as per the attached appendix. B-4

Roll Call: All Yes

- Motion – Mr. McCourt, seconded – Ms. Dell’Aglione...
- +5. **Approve the IDEA Grant Carry Over funds for the 2020-2021 school year as follows:**

Non Public	\$11,951
Pre school	\$ 1,000
Instructional supplies	\$ 751

Roll Call: All Yes

- Motion – Mr. McCourt, seconded – Ms. Dell’Aglione...
- +6. **Approve the use and rental of the High School parking lot to the North Jersey Mineralogical Society, sponsored by Midland Park Continuing Education for the annual North Jersey Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show on the following dates:**

Saturday, May 1, 2021 – 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Rain Date: Sunday, May 2, 2021 – 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

(There will be no inside access to the high school.)

Roll Call: All Yes

- C. Curriculum Committee – (S. Criscenzo, Chairperson)

Motion – Ms. Criscenzo, seconded – Dr. Thomas...

- +1. **Approve the following new courses at the high school:**

- a. Cybersecurity (semester class)**
- b. Baking 1 (semester class)**

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Ms. Criscenzo, seconded – Dr. Thomas...

- +2. **Approve the recommendation for the placement of a non-classified middle school student on virtual home instruction for a maximum of 10 hours per week, effective retroactive from December 14, 2020 through approximately January 18, 2021.**

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Ms. Criscenzo, seconded – Dr. Thomas...

- +3. **Approve the virtual assembly, “Think Kindness” provided by Top Youth Speakers on December 23, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. for K – 2nd grade students, at a cost of \$1,500, which will be paid through ESSA Grant Title IV funds.**

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Ms. Criscenzo, seconded – Mr. Canellas...

- +4. **Approve all courses, workshops and instructors included in the Spring 2021 Midland Park Continuing Education program. All classes will be virtual or held outdoors.**

Roll Call: All Yes

D. Policy Committee – (M. Thomas, Chairperson)

Motion – Dr. Thomas, seconded – Ms. Criscenzo...

- +1. **Approve the second reading of the following revised Policies:**

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. Religion in Schools | Policy Section 2270 |
| b. Immunization | Policy Section 5320 |

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Dr. Thomas, seconded – Ms. Criscenzo...

- +2. **Approve the new/revised Mandated Policies as per the attached appendices:**

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| a. Notice of Board Meetings | Bylaws Section 0162 | <u>D-2a</u> |
| b. Conduct of Board Meeting | Bylaws Section 0164 | <u>D-2b</u> |
| c. Cooperative Purchasing | Policy Section 6440 | <u>D-2c</u> |
| d. Electronic Funds Transfer and Claimant Certification | Policy Section 6470.01 | <u>D-2d</u> |
| e. School District Security | Policy Section 7440 | <u>D-2e</u> |
| f. Property Inventory | Policy Section 7450 | <u>D-2f</u> |
| g. Emergency and Crisis Situations | Policy Section 8420 | <u>D-2g</u> |
| h. Procurement Procedures for School Nutrition Programs | Policy Section 8561 | <u>D-2h</u> |

Roll Call: All Yes

E. Legislative Committee – (Administration)

- The NJ state assembly has advanced legislation regarding QSAC, which is the periodic review of district operations, personnel, finance, governance, and curriculum and instruction. If approved, the bill – A-4975, would provide relief to districts during the current health emergency allowing school leaders to focus attention on COVID-19 issues. NJSBA supports the bill, with the executive director, Dr. Lawrence Feinsod noting, “This regulatory relief is a common sense measure that will help districts allocate resources to save lives and safeguard the health of children.”
- Several education measures have recently been approved by the Senate and Assembly and are on the Governor’s desk, these include:
 - A school audit delay extends the deadline for completion of the annual audit process for school districts.
 - Budget flexibility due to COVID-19 provides for an undesignated fund balance for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years of 4%.
 - A bill which addresses the school nursing shortage, which would permit retired school nurses to return to employment during the COVID-19 health crisis.

F. Buildings & Grounds Committee – (P. Fantulin, Chairperson)

- The lintel project is moving along. They are halfway through installing the steel lintels, when that is complete they will begin replacing the brick.

G. Negotiations Committee - (P. Triolo, Chairperson)

No Report

H. Technology & Public Relations Committee – (C. Dell’Aglia, Chairperson)

- Video went out as eblast and on social media
- Proactive approach to COVID – was well received

I. Town Council – (R. Formicola, P. Triolo)

No Report

J. Liaison Committee

High School PTA - (J. Canellas)

- Meal trains
- National PTA Art Reflection Program – “I Matter Because”

Elementary School PTA- (C. Dell’Aglia)

- Annual Read-A-Thon
- Next meeting will be in January

Booster Club – (N. Eliya)

No Report

Performing Arts Parents – (P. Fantulin)

- Hit hard by the pandemic, lost a lot of fundraising, trying to make up for the loss
- Many fundraisers are listed on the website
- Madrigals performance is on 12/21
- Thank you to PAPS for singing masks
- Drama broadcasted on MPTV

Special Education – (P. Triolo)

No Report

Education Foundation – (S. Criscenzo)

No Report

Board of Recreation – (B. McCourt)

No Report

Continuing Education Program – (M. Thomas)

- The Spring schedule is out, the classes are mostly virtual or outside

Student Representative to the Board – (Samantha Padovano)

No Report

K. Old Business

No Report

L. New Business

Motion – Ms. Criscenzo, seconded – Ms. Dell’Aglia...

Motion to go into closed session before the meeting of January 5, 2021, for the purpose of reviewing the hiring of personnel, legal updates and confidential student HIB case reviews.

Roll Call: All Yes

Open to the Public - general **COMMENTS** only at this time are to be directed to the Board President.

Ms. Sansone submitted four questions for the Board and Superintendent.

1. *While school has been closed have there been any additional safety measures implemented to make sure school can be reopened come January?* Mr. Formicola responded that many safety measures we have in place would ensure we could return on January 4th. However, returning

to the hybrid schedule on that date involves analysis of many other valuables. One of the most important considerations is the county and region Covid threat level. As this moment, we are at the orange level, but inching closer to red. Should the level go to red, mandated school closings would go into effect, a decision beyond local control.

2. *Why is the decision to be closed based on the total town cases, and not on the total cases in the school? What is the percentage of cases that need to be within the school itself to warrant closing?* Mr. Formicola answered that it is not based on total town cases, that is only one piece of data that is considered during discussions with our local Board of Health.
3. *If the advisement is from the BOH office as to closing out of caution, do the parents have the ability to be on meetings involved in this decision?* Mr. Formicola responded no, as these discussions involve the sharing of data that is confidential in nature.
4. *If there are not cases that are requiring the schools to close, how come the parents don't have the same choice to keep their kids in school like the parents that have the option to keep their kids home virtual?* Mr. Formicola responded that your question appears to indicate that no matter what the data is, what science supports and whatever the health and safety concerns are, a district would need to keep schools open despite such serious concerns to provide this choice to parents. I must reject this premise and there is no way to answer this question.

Mr. Formicola wished the Board Happy Holidays and stated it has been a heck of a year.

Motion – Ms. Dell’Aglia, seconded – Ms. Criscenzo...

To adjourn the meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Stacy Garvey
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary