

# Rockaway Borough Board of Education

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 16, 2024, 7:30 PM

Thomas Jefferson School Cafeteria, 95 East Main Street, Rockaway, NJ 07866

### ROCKAWAY BOROUGH SCHOOLS' MISSION STATEMENT:

*The mission of the Rockaway Borough School District, a caring and diverse community, is to propel the success of each student by creating an environment that fosters self-confidence and encourages creativity through quality instruction and educational opportunities aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.*

### Executive Session I: 6:35 - 7:35 PM

Be it Resolved, that the Board enters into Executive Session (Private) to discuss exempt matters: 1) Personnel; review and discussions of staff reappointments for 24-25, 2) Negotiations; collective bargaining negotiations with the Rockaway Borough Education Association, and 3) a Student HIB report, the natures of which will be made public only when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

<u>Motion to Enter:</u>	<b>Moved by: Ms. Dahl</b>	<b>Seconded by: Mrs. Walter</b>	<b>Voice Vote: All Ayes</b>
<u>Motion to Adjourn:</u>	<b>Moved by: Mrs. Walter</b>	<b>Seconded by: Ms. Dahl</b>	<b>Voice Vote: All Ayes</b>

## 1. Call to Order: 7:30 PM

*The public portion of this meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m., by Mr. Graf, Board President, by reading the following announcement:*

“In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, The Rockaway Borough Board of Education has provided adequate notice of this meeting to the public by having the time, date, and location advertised in The Citizen Newspaper on January 17, 2024; posted on our website and at town hall. Official action will be taken.”

## 2. Board Member Roll Call:

**Ms. Jennifer Dahl - Present**

*Elected 2023 to 1st term (3-year seat to Dec. 31, 2026)*

**Mr. Brian Riviuccio - Present**

*Elected 2022 to 1st term (3-year seat to Dec. 31, 2025)*

**Mr. Jeffrey Tobias - Present**

*Appointed January 2024 to completed a 3-year unexpired term (to Dec. 31, 2024)*

**Mrs. Karen Walter, VP - Present**

*Elected 2021 to 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive term (3-year seat to Dec. 31, 2024)*

**Mr. Edward Graf, President - Present**

*Elected 2023 to 1st term (3-year seat to Dec. 31, 2026)*

**Mr. Anthony Grieco, Superintendent - Present**

*Appointed July 2021 Chief School Administrator & Non-Voting Board Member (CSA/Supt)*

**Mr. William Stepka, SBA/Board Secretary - Present**

*Appointed Nov 2017 Business Administrator, Secretary of the Board & Non-Voting Board Member (BA)*

*Also present: Approximately 20 members (parents) of the public and 40 staff members, who requested any discussion of their employment for the 24-25 school year, if any, to be held in public, in response to receiving annual “RICE” notices.*

***The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America was then held . . .***

### 3. Reports & Updates:

#### A. Board Committees for 2024: (Chairs in **BOLD**)

1. Policy/Curriculum/Special Education: **Mr. Graf & Ms. Dahl**
2. Safety/Security: **Mr. Riviuccio & Mrs. Walter**
3. Athletic/Activities: **Mr. Riviuccio & Ms. Dahl (Co-Chairs)**
4. Finance/Facilities: **Mr. Graf & Mr. Tobias**
5. Technology: **Mrs. Walter & Mr. Graf**
6. Negotiations (Ad Hoc): **Mrs. Walter & Mr. Tobias (Co-Chairs)**

#### B. Superintendent's Report: Mr. Grieco

1. District Update: HAS Tricky Tray ELC Meeting, Lincoln spring concert.
2. Mr. Grieco made a statement about the loss of \$150,000 in state aid for the 2024-25 budget and the possibility of some small staff reductions.

#### C. Board Secretary's/Business Administrator's Report: Mr. Stepka

1. **Board Correspondence:** *Received (R) or Sent (S) since our last meeting:*
  - A. Rec: NJ School Boards: Annual Workshop/Convention October 21-24 in AC.
2. **Financial Status Updates:**
  - A. 2023-24 Current Budget Year: Proceeding within budgeted parameters.
  - B. 2024-25 New Budget: Public Hearing to take place at our May 7 meeting.

#### D. Administration Monthly Reports:

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
|  | <b>Submitted by:</b>   |
| 1. Lincoln Principal's Report:                     | <i>Mrs. Skomial</i>    |
| 2. Thomas Jefferson Principal's Report:            | <i>Mr. Samuels</i>     |
| 3. Curr., Inst., and Assessment Director's Report: | <i>Mrs. Argenziano</i> |
| 4. Building & Grounds Supervisor's Report:         | <i>Mr. Klein</i>       |
| 5. Technology Supervisor's Report:                 | <i>Mr. Reyes</i>       |

#### E. Any Other Items/Comments for the Good of the Order

1. Mr. Graf, Board President, gave an update regarding the Board's Strategic Plan.

#### F. The Board then reviewed the agenda items recommended for approval

### 4. Public Comment No. 1:

1. Wendy Natale, 151 Mount Pleasant Road, inquired about the mulch used for the Lincoln Playground. Mr. Grieco replied that he would look into it and get back to her.

**5. Enrollment & Staffing Report:**

Grade Level & School	Students June 30, 2023	Students April 12, 2024	Difference from June 23	Sections (Classes)	Avg. Class Size	Certificated Staff - Teachers	Non-Certificated Staff
Preschool - Lincoln AM/PM & Full Day	30	29	-1	2	15	1	8
Kindergarten - Lincoln	58	58	0	3	19	3	3
Grade 1 - Lincoln	67	59	-8	3	20	3	3
Grade 2 - Lincoln	59	67	+8	3	22	3	2
Grade 3 - Lincoln	67	60	-7	3	20	3	2
<b>Other Staff:</b> (Principal 1, Specials 8, Aides 5, PE 1, Guid 1, Nurse 1, Sec 1, Cust 2.5, Caf 7)	-	-	-	-	-	12	15.5
<b><u>Total Lincoln School:</u></b>	<b><u>281</u></b>	<b><u>273</u></b>	<b><u>-8</u></b>	<b><u>14</u></b>	<b><u>20</u></b>	<b><u>25</u></b>	<b><u>33.5</u></b>
Grade 4 - TJ	55	64	+9	3	21	3	-
Grade 5 - TJ	42	56	+14	3	19	3	-
Grade 6 - TJ	61	45	-16	3	15	3	-
Grade 7 - TJ	55	63	+8	3	21	3	-
Grade 8 - TJ	61	58	-3	3	19	3	-
<b>Other Staff:</b> (Principal 1, Specials 16, Aides 9, PE 2, Guid 1, Nurse 1, Sec 2, Cust 2.5, Caf 9)	-	-	-	-	-	21	22.5
<b><u>Total Thomas Jefferson:</u></b>	<b><u>274</u></b>	<b><u>286</u></b>	<b><u>+12</u></b>	<b><u>15</u></b>	<b><u>19</u></b>	<b><u>36</u></b>	<b><u>22.5</u></b>
<b>Shared Staff:</b> (Other Certificated Teachers 4.5, & Part-Time Nurses 2)	-	-	-	-	-	4.5	2
<b>Administrative:</b> (Supt, BA, CIA, CST 1, Sec 4, Maint 2, Bus Drivers 2, Bus Aides 2)	-	-	-	-	-	3	11
Special Ed Out-of-District:	2	5	+3	-	-	-	-
<b><u>Resident Students:</u></b>	<b><u>557</u></b>	<b><u>564</u></b>	<b><u>+7</u></b>	<b><u>29</u></b>	<b><u>18.5</u></b>	-	-
Charter/Choice Schs Out:	2	0	-2	-	-	-	-
Spec. Ed Tuition Incoming:	5	4	-1	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Students (548) Staff (137.5) Ratio: 4/1</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>+4</b>	-	-	<b>68.5</b>	<b>69</b>

**6. Meeting Minutes**

- A. Be it resolved to approve and accept the following meeting **minutes**:
  1. March 19, 2024, Regular & Executive Session.

**7. Finance**

- A. Be it resolved to approve the manifest of **Payrolls and Bills & Claims List**, which is on file in the Business Administrator’s Office:
  1. Bills, Claims, and Payrolls List: March 20 to April 16: \$875,381.28
  
- B. Be it resolved to approve and accept the **Budgetary Transfer** Reports for October, November, and December.
  
- C. Be it resolved to approve and accept the **Board Secretary’s Financial** Reports for October, November, and December.
 

*I hereby certify, pursuant to NJAC 6A:23A2.3(e), that as of December 31, 2023, no budgetary line item has been over-expended in violation of NJAC 6:23-2.11(a). William Stepka, RSBA- Business Administrator/Board Secretary.*
  
- D. Be it resolved to renew the annual contract with **Phoenix Advisors**, of Bordentown, NJ, to continue to serve as our Municipal Advisor and Continuing Disclosure Agent relating to the 2020 School Buildings’ Renovation Bond Issue, in the amount of \$1,350 for the 2024-25 school year.
  
- E. Be it resolved to approve a renewal contract with the **Educational Services Commission of Morris County** to provide the district’s Non-Public Schools (Divine Mercy & American Christian Academy) Professional Support Services (from Federal IDEA funds) and Security Aid (from State funds) for the 2024-25 school year.
  
- F. Be it resolved to renew the district’s membership in the **Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative** (aka “Sussex Co-Op”) (and approve the joint resolution) for the 2024-25 school year, to provide regular public & non-public, choice student, special education and athletic/field trip student transportation services, as and if/when needed, in accordance with the shared ride/cost payment structure to maximize transportation efficiency and reduce costs, in accordance with the joint resolution.

**8. Personnel**

- A. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the attached list of Staff Member **Professional Development Workshops & Travel Expenditure Requests** that have been deemed related to and within the scope of the employee’s current job responsibilities and will enhance the efficient delivery of student instruction and/or furthers the efficient operation of the school district. Reimbursements listed are in accordance with guidelines established by the Dept. of Treasury, BOE Policy, and in accordance with NJAC 6A:23B-1.1., and listed at the end of this agenda.
  
- B. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to confirm & approve the following **Extended medical leave of absence request**:

Staff #	Location	Position	From	To
644	Thomas Jefferson	Paraprofessional	2/21/24	5/28/24

- C. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Christine Cinnamon**, Resource Center Teacher at Jefferson Township, to observe Jennifer Grlica’s PALS classroom.
- D. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Madelyn Rich**, a student at Montclair State University, to complete her practicum experience in the School Counseling Program with district counselors Bryanna Dennison and Brianna Rigas beginning September 4, 2024 through December 20, 2024.
- E. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following UPDATED **Extra Curricular** advisor positions for the 2023-2024 school year:

Club/Sport	Advisor	Stipend
Table Top Games (Connect Four & Checkers Club)	Laura Perniciaro & Nicolas Bova (Split Stipend)	\$420.50 each

**9. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment**

- A. Be it resolved to approve the **Student Field Trip** requests as listed at the end of this agenda.
- B. Be it resolved to approve the **Revised 2023-24 School Calendar**, due to unused snow/emergency days. The last day of school for students and staff will now be Friday, June 14th, instead of Wednesday, June 19th.

**10. Technology and Buildings & Grounds**

- A. There was none at this time.

**11. Policy**

- A. Be it resolved to approve the **Second Reading & Adoption** of the following new and/or updated Board Policies (P) and/or Regulations (R), where applicable:

Policy/Regulation	Number	Title	Reason for Update
P	1140	Educational Equity Policies/Affirmative Action	Revised - Mandated
P	1523	Comprehensive Equity Plan	Revised - Mandated
P	1530	Equal Employment Opportunities	Revised - Mandated
R	1530	Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint Procedure	Revised - Mandated
P	1550	Equal Employment/Anti-Discrimination Practices	Revised - Mandated
R	2200	Curriculum Content	Revised - Mandated
P	2260	Equity in School and Classroom Practices	Revised - Mandated
R	2260	Equity in School and Classroom Practices Complaint Procedure	Revised - Mandated
P	2411	Guidance Counseling	Revised - Mandated
P & R	2423	Bilingual Education	Revised - Mandated

P & R	2431.4	Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries	Revised - Mandated
P	3211	Code of Ethics	Revised
P	5570	Sportsmanship	Revised
P	5750	Equitable Educational Opportunity	Revised - Mandated
P	5755	Equity in Educational Programs and Services	ABOLISHED
P	5841	Secret Societies	Revised
P	5842	Equal Access of Student Organizations	Revised
P & R	7610	Vandalism	Revised
P	9323	Notification of Juvenile Offender Case Disposition	Revised

**12. Consent Agenda**

**A.** Move and Vote on all Agenda Resolutions & Recommendations in One Motion:

<b>Roll Call Vote:</b>	<b>Moved &amp; Seconded By:</b>	<b>Aye</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Not Present</b>
<b>Ms. Dahl:</b>	<b>Moved</b>	<b>Aye</b>	-	-	-
<b>Mr. Rivieccio:</b>	-	<b>Aye</b>	-	-	-
<b>Mr. Tobias:</b>	-	<b>Aye</b>	-	-	-
<b>Mrs. Walter, VP:</b>	<b>Seconded</b>	<b>Aye</b>	-	-	-
<b>Mr. Graf, President:</b>	-	<b>Aye</b>	-	-	-

All resolutions/recommendation unanimously carried:      5                      0                      0                      0

**13. New Business/Any Other Items/Comments for the Good of the Order**

**A.** There was none at this time.

**14. Public Comment No. 2 (Agenda & Non-Agenda Items)**

**A.** Mr. Amir Kahn, district resident and parent, 50 White Meadow Road, respectfully spoke to the Board on behalf of the other Muslim parents present, and requested the Board to adopt a district holiday that celebrates Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan. Mr. Grieco responded.

**B.** Michael Onischuk, district teacher and president of the teachers’ association, expressed disappointment at the Board for not raising the local property tax levy as much as possible over the last six years and not using additional “banked-cap” levy increase authority to raise local property taxes even further to stave off the possibility of laying off even one teachers’ association member.

(Secretary’s note: The context of this comment is in response to Superintendent’s Grieco’s statement earlier in the meeting about losing \$150,000 of state aid funding for the 2024-25 budget year and a possibility of some small staff reductions.)

**15. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting:**

**A. Tuesday, May 7, 2024:** The public portion of the Meeting will begin at 7:30 pm in the Cafeteria of Thomas Jefferson Middle School.

**16. Executive Session II: 8:20 – 8:50 pm**

Be it Resolved, that the Board enter into Executive Session (Private) for the purpose of discussing a Student HIB incident, the nature of which will be made public only when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

**THE BOARD ANTICIPATES BEING IN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES.**

**BOARD ACTION WILL NOT BE TAKEN AFTER THIS SESSION CONCLUDES.**

Motion to Enter:      *Moved by: Ms. Dahl*      *Seconded by: Mrs. Walter*      *Voice Vote: All Ayes*  
Motion to Adjourn:      *Moved by: Mrs. Walter*      *Seconded by: Ms. Dahl*      *Voice Vote: All Ayes*

**17. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting: 8:50 PM**

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

*Moved by: Mrs. Walter*      *Seconded by: Mrs. Dahl*      *Voice Vote: All Ayes*

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. William Stepka, RSBA  
 Secretary of the Board of Education/Business Administrator

***Professional Development/Travel Expenditure Requests:***

<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Workshop Title/Dest.</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Reg &amp; Fees</b>	<b>Justification for the Trip</b>
Mike Klein Timothy Yobs	ESCNJ 2024 Expo/ Edison, NJ	5/21/24	Free	CEFM CEU's & ESCNJ vendor introductions
Timothy Yobs	1 Day Asbestos Designated Person Training, Tinton Falls, NJ	3/27/24	Mileage: \$55.93	Professional Day was originally approved on 2/27/24. Resubmitting for mileage only, as the district vehicle was being repaired.
Jennifer Skomial	Systemic change and creating inclusive early childhood public school programs/ Virtual	5/14/24	\$75	This workshop will focus on the major areas of implementation when creating a truly inclusive early childhood system which includes; systemic change, assessable classrooms, multi-tiered systems of support, integrating related services, family and community partnerships, and consideration for sustainability and continuous improvement.
Jennifer Skomial	Supporting the Behavioral Needs of Diverse Learners in General Education/ Virtual	5/17/24	\$75	This workshop will focus on and discuss both individual and class-wide strategies for supporting the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of children and adolescents in general education classrooms.
Jennifer Skomial	Special Education Law: Year and Review/ Monroe Twp., NJ	6/25/24	\$150 Mileage: \$54.43	This workshop will address lessons to be learned from recent case law, key considerations related to disparities in identification and discipline rates for students in various racial and ethnic groups, and the latest legislation and guidance from the US and NJDOE.

***Student Field Trips/Activity/Events/Fundraisers/etc. Requests:***

<i>GRADE</i>	<i>TEACHERS</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>TIME: DEPART/ RETURN</i>	<i>DESTINATION</i>	<i># of Pupils</i>	<i># OF ADULTS</i>	<i>COST PP</i>	<i>Bus/Van Included in cost? Y or N</i>	<i>JUSTIFICATION FOR TRIP</i>
1	Yobs Tajiddin Doering	6/7/24	8:45-11:00	Rockaway Borough Police Dept. and Heady Memorial Park	59	8	Free	N/A (will walk)	To provide students with an opportunity to understand and observe what our local police department does while being part of our community and community workers and to work on social skills by playing together at the community park.
1	Yobs Tajiddin Doering	5/17/24	9:00-2:00	Liberty Science Center, Jersey City, NJ	59	36	\$30	Yes	Students will be able to relate NJ Science Standards to real-life exhibits and deepen their learning at Liberty Science Center.