

Rockaway Borough Board of Education

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 7:30 PM

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

Visit us on the Web: rockboro.org

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: 6:30-7:30 pm (Closed to the Public)

Be it Resolved, that the Board enters into an Executive Session (Private) to discuss exempt matters pertaining to negotiation matters with the RBAA & RBEA collective bargaining units, the nature of which will be made public only when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

<u>Motion to Enter:</u>	Moved by: Ms. Dahl	Seconded by: Mr. Riviuccio	Voice Vote: All Ayes
<u>Motion to Adjourn:</u>	Moved by: Ms. Dahl	Seconded by: Mr. Riviuccio	Voice Vote: All Ayes

1. Call to Order: 7:30 PM

The public portion of this meeting will be called to order at approximately 7:30 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 15, 2025, posted on our website and at town hall. Official action will be taken."

2. Board Member Roll Call:

Mrs. Faride Hernandez

Elected 2024 to 1st term (3-year seat to Dec. 31, 2027)

Mrs. Vanessa Dorgilles

Elected 2024 to 1st term (3-year seat to Dec. 31, 2027)

Mr. Brian Riviuccio

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

Ms. Jennifer Dahl, VP

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

Mr. Edward Graf, President

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

Mr. Anthony Grieco, Superintendent of Schools

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

Mr. William Stepka, SBA/Board Secretary

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

"Now, please join us for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America. . ."

Board Secretary Pro-Tempore

Be it resolved to appoint Mr. Anthony Grieco as the temporary Board Secretary due to Mr. Stepka's absence.

Moved: *Ms. Dahl* Seconded: *Ms. Hernandez* Voice Vote: *All Ayes*

3. Reports & Updates:

A. Board Committees Reports (as needed):

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <u>Strategic Planning:</u> | <i>Ms. Dahl & Mr. Riveccio</i> |
| 2. <u>Finance/Personnel/Facilities:</u> | <i>Mr. Graf & Mrs. Hernandez</i> |
| 3. <u>Curriculum/Special Education:</u> | <i>Ms. Dahl & Mrs. Dorgilles</i> |
| 4. <u>Negotiations with RBAA:</u> | <i>Mr. Graf & Ms. Dahl</i> |
| 5. <u>Negotiations with RBEA: 3/27</u> | <i>Mrs. Dorgilles</i> |
| 6. <u>Athletic/Activities:</u> | <i>Mr. Riveccio & Mrs. Dorgilles</i> |
| 7. <u>Policy</u> | <i>Ad Hoc</i> |
| 8. <u>Safety/Security</u> | <i>Ad Hoc</i> |
| 9. <u>Technology</u> | <i>Ad Hoc</i> |

B. Liaison Reports (as needed):

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. NJ School Boards Assoc. - Mr. Riveccio | 2. Morris County School Boards Assoc. - Ms. Dahl |
| 3. Rockaway Borough Council - Mr. Graf | 4. Morris County ESC - Ms. Dahl |
| 5. Rockaway Borough HSA - Mr. Graf | 6. Rockaway Borough Ed. Found. - Mrs. Hernandez |
| 7. Rockaway Borough Recreation Committee - Mrs. Dorgilles | |

C. Superintendent's Report: Mr. Grieco

1. District Update-
 - The Musical was a success.
 - State Testing coming in the spring.
 - Budget Hearing/Presentation- May 6th.

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

1. **Board Correspondence:** *Received (R) or Sent (S) since our last meeting:*
 - A. R: Morris County Unsung Hero's Event
 - An 8th grade student is being honored on 4/2/25, at the
 - B. S: Fully Fund Extraordinary Aid to Senator Bucco, Assemblyman Barranco, & Assemblywoman Dunn.

E. Administration Monthly Reports:

Submitted by:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 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> |

F. Any Other Items/Comments for the Good of the Order

G. Board Review of Agenda Items**4. Public Hearing:**

Agenda items only: limited to 3 minutes each. Please state your name & address.

The President will open the floor for the Board to hear the public and then close the floor.

Please direct all dialogue to the President. Board replies are not required.

- A. Ms. Katie Clark (66 W Flagge Street, Rockaway, NJ) asked some questions about the preliminary budget resolution listed for recommendation under the **Finance** section (Letter B.).

5. Enrollment & Staffing Report:

Grade Level & School	Students June 30, 2024	Students March 14, 2025	Difference from June 30, 2025	Sections (Classes)	Avg. Class Size	Certificated Staff - Teachers	Non-Certificated Staff
Preschool - Lincoln AM/PM & Full Day	29	26	-3	2	13	1	8
Kindergarten - Lincoln	56	68	+12	3	23	3	3
Grade 1 - Lincoln	59	59	0	3	20	3	3
Grade 2 - Lincoln	66	61	-5	3	20	3	2
Grade 3 - Lincoln	59	66	+7	3	22	3	2
Other Staff: (Principal 1, Specials 8, Aides 5, PE 1, Guid 1, Nurse 1, Sec 1, Cust 2.5, Caf 7)	-	-	-	-	-	12	15.5
<u>Total Lincoln School:</u>	<u>269</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>+11</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>33.5</u>
Grade 4 - TJ	62	65	+3	3	22	3	-
Grade 5 - TJ	56	63	+7	3	21	3	-
Grade 6 - TJ	45	63	+18	3	21	3	-
Grade 7 - TJ	63	52	-11	3	17	3	-
Grade 8 - TJ	58	66	+8	3	22	3	-
Other Staff: (Principal 1, Specials 16, Aides 9, PE 2, Guid 1, Nurse 1, Sec 2, Cust 2.5, Caf 9)	-	-	-	-	-	21	22.5
<u>Total Thomas Jefferson:</u>	<u>284</u>	<u>309</u>	<u>+25</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>22.5</u>
Shared Staff: (Other Certificated Teachers 4.5, & Part-Time Nurses 2)	-	-	-	-	-	4.5	2

Administrative: (Supt, BA, CIA, CST 1, Sec 4, Maint 2, Bus Drivers 2, Bus Aides 2)	-	-	-	-	-	3	11
Special/Reg Ed Out-of-District:	5	9	+4	-	-	-	-
<u>Resident Students:</u>	<u>558</u>	<u>598</u>	<u>+40</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>20</u>	-	-
Charter/Choice Schs Out:	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Spec. Ed Tuition Incoming:	3	3	0	-	-	-	-
Total Students (593)/ Staff (140) Ratio: 4.25/1	561	601	+40	-	-	66.5	69

6. Meeting Minutes

A. Be it resolved to approve and accept the following meeting **Minutes**:

- February 25, 2025, Regular Meeting, and Executive Sessions One & Two.

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:

- Bills, Claims, and Payrolls List: February 26 to March 18: \$1,120,990.37

B. Be it resolved to approve and adopt the **Tentative 2025-26 School District Budget** and to authorize the CSA & SBA/Bd Sec'y to submit it to the Executive County Superintendent for review and approval in the following amounts:

	General Fund	Special Revenues	Debt Service	Totals
2025-26 Total Appropriations:	\$13,475,295	\$491,624	\$756,425	\$14,723,344
Less: Anticipated Revenues:	\$2,685,550	\$491,624	\$619,034	\$3,796,208
Local Taxes To Be Levied:	\$10,789,745	-0-	\$137,391	\$10,927,136 and

Be it resolved that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for enrollment in the amount of \$168,350, the district intends to use these funds to provide goods and services necessary to teach students, and

Be it resolved that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$206,894, as the additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefits premiums, and

Be it resolved to utilize \$863,932 from the district's Banked Cap spending authority to fund out-of-district special education student placements and transportation, a need that must be completed by the end of the school year and cannot be deferred or incrementally completed over a longer period of time, and

Be it also resolved that the Board of Education include in the budget a Capital Reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$47,500 for the following project:

- Lincoln Elementary Stairwells: Replace stair treads for \$47,500 (plus SDA grant use of \$31,468)

The capital reserve account will fund \$47,500 of the total cost of \$78,968, 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, and

To advertise said tentative budget in The Citizen Newspaper in accordance with the form promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Education and according to law; and

To advertise for a public hearing on the 2025-26 school year budget at the Thomas Jefferson Cafeteria on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, beginning at approximately 7:30 pm.

- C. Whereas, pursuant to NJAC 6A:23A:5.2(a), a board of education must establish a **Maximum Dollar Limit for Professional Services** and public relations (if applicable), as defined in NJAC 6A:23A:9.3-14, Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Rockaway Borough Board of Education hereby establishes the following maximums for the 2025-26 school year as follows: Architecture: \$20,000 (does not include projects funded through the Capital Reserve Account), Physician: \$10,000, Legal: \$90,000, Auditor: \$28,000, and be it further resolved that the School Business Administrator track these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.
- D. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the BA, to adopt the following resolution pertaining to the **Maximum Travel Dollar Limit**: (Pursuant to NJAC 6A:23A-7.3, a board of education must establish a maximum dollar limit for travel expenditure, as defined in NJAC 6A-7.1 et seq.): Be it resolved that the Rockaway Borough Board of Education includes in the tentative budget a maximum travel expenditure in the amount of \$25,000 for the 2025-26 school year. The maximum travel expenditure for the current school year is \$25,000, of which \$2,939 has been spent, and \$2,395 is encumbered to date.
- E. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the BA, to adopt the following resolution pertaining to the **Travel & Related Expense Reimbursement**:
- The Board of Education recognizes school staff & 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
- NJAC 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 these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and
- A Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year, and
- Travel & related expenses not in compliance with NJAC 6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement forms; therefore
- Be it resolved that the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with NJAC 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 Board of Education includes in the tentative budget travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with NJAC 6A:23A: Subchapter 7, up to a maximum expenditure of \$25,000 for all staff and board members for the 2025-26 school year.
- The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall track and record these costs to ensure the maximum amount is not exceeded.

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 a leave of absence for the following personnel:

Staff #	Location	Position	From	To
605	Lincoln	Paraprofessional	3/7/25 (utilizing sick, personal, and unpaid days)	3/17/25 Returning 3/18/25
532	Lincoln	Teacher	8/26/25 NJFLA. Will claim NJFLI	11/2/25 Returning: 11/3/25

- C. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept and approve the resignation of **Kimberly McGreevy**, paraprofessional at Thomas Jefferson School, effective April 9, 2025. Mrs. McGreevy's last day in the district will be April 8, 2025.
- D. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve 50 hour clinical experience for **Rosely Caliendo** (Alternate Route Program), through Rutgers University, for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years.

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 a student tuition contract with the Wharton Board of Education in the amount of \$18,432 to provide regular educational services to student 14476387 for the 2024-25 school year, as per the "McKinney-Vento" law and regulations.
- C. Be it resolved to approve a special education student tuition contract with the Stanhope Board of Education in the amount of \$9,178.48 plus related services of shared aid for \$3,232.31 and counseling services for \$396.50 (grand total: \$12,807.29) plus transportation costs to be determined, effective March 12 to June 30, 2025.

10. Technology and Buildings & Grounds

- A. There are none at this time.

11. Policy

- A. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept and approve the following Superintendent's HIB decision(s) in the following instances as numbered: 1. Tracking Number 400000_TJM_14509394- Conclusion: Unfounded.
- B. Be it resolved to take from the table (tabled at the last meeting) and approve the **1st Reading** of the following new and/or updated Board Policies(P) and/or Regulations (R), where applicable:

Policy/Reg	Number	Title	Reason for Update
Policy	5111	Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students (M)	Revised
Policy	5512	Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (M)	Revised

Policy	5533	Student Smoking (M)	Revised
Regulation	5533	Student Smoking	Revised
Policy	5701	Academic Integrity	Revised
Policy	5710	Student Grievance	Revised
Policy	8500	Food Services (M)	Revised
Policy	9163	Spectator Code of Conduct for Interscholastic Events (M)	New
Policy	9320	Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies (M)	Revised
Regulation	9320	Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies (M)	Revised

Motion to table Policy 9163, until this can be discussed with administration and brought back to the board of education.

Motion: *Ms. Dahl* Seconded: *Mrs. Hernandez*

C. Be it resolved to approve and adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE DOCTRINE OF NECESSITY

BE IT RESOLVED, all members of the **Rockaway Borough Board of Education** ("Board") are subject to the School Ethics Act as codified at N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the School Ethics Act requires Board members to alert the Board in the event they feel they have a conflict that would prohibit them from participating in discussions regarding a certain matter; and

WHEREAS, the Doctrine of Necessity may be invoked by a Board of Education under certain circumstances which, when properly invoked, permits conflicted Board members to participate in specific items; and

WHEREAS, the Board is currently engaged in collective bargaining and negotiations with the Rockaway Borough Education Association ("Association"); and

WHEREAS, four (4) of five (5) Board members are conflicted under the School Ethics Act and thereby prohibited from participating in negotiations; and

WHEREAS, the four (4) Board Members are either employed as teachers in other districts or whose immediate family member is employed as a teacher in another district. None are employed or have immediate family members employed in this District; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b) and Advisory Opinion A19-15, the four (4) conflicted members cannot participate in collective bargaining and negotiations because they are members of or their immediate family member is a member of the same state-wide union as the representative of the Association; and

WHEREAS, due to the conflicts identified herein, the Board cannot form a committee for collective bargaining and negotiations; and

WHEREAS, the Board seeks to invoke the Doctrine of Necessity to establish a committee for collective bargaining and negotiations with the Association; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board hereby invokes the Doctrine of Necessity to form a committee for collective bargaining and negotiations with the Association, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board shall post the above resolution on the District website and in the areas commonly used to post notice of the Board's regularly scheduled meeting for a period of thirty (30) days.

12. Consent Agenda

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

<u>Roll Call Vote:</u>	<u>Moved & Seconded By:</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Recuse</u>	<u>Not Present</u>
Mrs. Hernandez	Seconded	Aye				
Mrs. Dorgilles		Aye				
Mr. Rivieccio		Aye				
Ms. Dahl, VP	Moved	Aye				
Mr. Graf, President		Aye				
		5	0	0	0	0

All resolutions passed unanimously.

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

- A. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to make Friday May 23, 2025 an early dismissal for students. Staff will remain for the full day for professional development.

14. Public Hearing

Limited to 3 minutes each. Please state your name & address.

The President will open the floor for the Board to hear the public and then close the floor.

Please direct all dialogue to the President. Board replies are not required.

- A. Ms. Katie Clark (66 W Flagge Street, Rockaway, NJ) brought up some concerns about the grounds outside including asphalt she has seen near the trails outside, at the back of the parking lot. Mr. Grieco responded that the maintenance staff will address these issues in the near future.
- B. Ms. Joycelyn Francis (25 Arbor Avenue, Rockaway, NJ) brought up some concerns about the school climate at Thomas Jefferson School. These concerns included, but were not limited to: consistency in addressing student misconduct, social/emotional learning, and using evidence based research to inform school/district practices. Mr. Grieco responded that he would get back to her.

15. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting:

A. Tuesday, April 8, 2025

The public portion of the Meeting will begin at 7:30 pm in the Cafeteria of Thomas Jefferson Middle School.

16. Executive Session II (if necessary)

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

Be it resolved that the Board enter into Executive Session (Private) for the purpose of discussing a HIB and a contractual matter, 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 60 MINUTES. BOARD ACTION WILL NOT BE TAKEN AFTER THIS SESSION CONCLUDES. Moved by: Ms. Dahl Seconded by: Mrs. Hernandez Voice Vote: All Ayes Moved by: Mrs. Hernandez Seconded by: Mrs. Dorgilles Voice Vote: All Ayes

THE BOARD ANTICIPATES BEING IN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR APPROXIMATELY 20 MINUTES.

BOARD ACTION WILL NOT BE TAKEN AFTER THIS SESSION CONCLUDES.

17. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting:

With no further business before the Board, the meeting is hereby adjourned at **9:25 pm.**

Moved by: Ms. Dahl

Seconded by: Ms. Hernandez

Voice Vote: All Ayes

District Events List / Miscellaneous :

School Activity	Loc./School	Date/Time	Participants	Cost to District	Adm./ Teacher/ Coach/ Advisor
Arbor Day Presentation	Lincoln School	April 25, 2025 / TBD	2nd Grade	None	Robin Kline from the Shade Tree Commission. Mrs. Medore, Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Tuluca
Monster Trucks Builder Bash	Thomas Jefferson Cafeteria	March 27, 2025 / 6:30-7:30 pm	Open to 20 families with children in 4th- 6th grades	None	Samantha Selikoff
Family Math Night	Thomas Jefferson Gymnasium	April 10, 2025 / 5:30 - 7:30 pm	Open to families with learners in 1st - 5th grades..	Fully funded by a grant, providing all materials, food/drink	Alyssa Bellafonte, Jamie Argenzian, and Jennifer Skomial

Professional Development/Travel Expenditure Requests:

Staff Member	Workshop Title/Dest.	Dates	Reg & Fees	Cost to District	Justification for the Trip
Samantha Selikoff Julie McBride Jean Swanick Christine Matrisciano Jen Glica Antonia Zangara Beth Blake Jennifer Skomial Laura Perniciaro	Temple Grandin MPAC, Morristown, NJ	4/9/25 7:30pm -9:30pm	\$351 HSA funded	None/ESEA Grant	There was an interest survey sent out to staff for attending this event. Many of us have the book, The Girl Who Thought in Pictures, which is about Temple Grandin.
Rebecca Vlachich	IMSE Asynchronous Course: Intervention & Support for Struggling Readers/ Online	3/25 and 3/27	\$200	None/ESEA Grant	This course is designed to provide knowledge and strategies for intensifying instruction in reading and spelling and supplements the Comprehensive Orton-Gillingham Plus course.

Jennifer Skomial	Honored Educator' Forum: Ignite, Inspire, and Innovate. 12 Centre Dr. Monroe, NJ	4/2/25	\$0 Mileage: \$55.27	None/ESEA Grant	Hosted by the NJ Principal and Supervisors Association with the NJDOE as a though partner, and planned by a committee of NJ honored educators, this FREE unique event aims to bring together esteemed educators like you to explore the evolving role of artificial intelligence in education, foster professional connections, and inspire leadership.
Sara Schneiderman	Unlocking Voices with Keys to AAC/ PG Chambers School, Cedar Knolls, NJ	4/1/25	\$208.33 Mileage: \$7.61	None/ESEA Grant	The course covers the implementation and coaching strategies for AAC. This information would enhance speech services provided for students with complex communication needs.

Student Field Trip Requests:

GRADE	TEACHERS	DATE	TIME: DEPART/RETURN	DESTINATION	# of Pupils	# of Staff	Cost Per Pupil	Cost to District	JUSTIFICATION FOR TRIP
2nd	Medore Tuluca Jones	5/30/25	8:45 / 2:00 pm	Red Mill Museum, Clinton, NJ	60	18	\$27	TBD \$432 agency nurse or \$250.00 sub	The community and industry tour will be taken to enhance the 2nd grade Social Studies and Science curriculums. Students will explore working conditions and advancements and how simple machines operate and become integral to daily operations.