

Rockaway Borough Board of Education

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 7:30 PM

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

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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: 6:45-7:31 pm

Be it Resolved, that the Board enters into an Executive Session (Private) to discuss exempt matters: student HIB matter, negotiations and legal, the nature of which will be made public only when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Motion to Enter: **Moved by: Mrs. Walter Seconded by: Mr. Riviuccio Voice Vote: All Ayes**

Motion to Adjourn: **Moved by: Mrs. Walter Seconded by: Mr. Riviuccio Voice Vote: All Ayes**

1. Call to Order: 7:31 PM

The public portion of this meeting was called to order at 7:31 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 – Not 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 complete a 3-year unexpired term (to Dec. 31, 2024)

Mrs. Karen Walter, VP - Present

Elected 2021 to 2nd 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)
Along with the TJ Student Government, Parents, and employees.*

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

3. Reports & Updates:

A. Board Member Retirement Recognition

Mr. Graf, Board President, presented a special plaque and words of thanks and praise to retiring Board members Mrs. Karen Walter and Mr. Jeff Tobias, who contributed over 14 combined years of service to the district, students, and the community as a whole, we wished them well!

B. TJ Student Congress – Mr. Bova

Mr. Stepka, Board Secretary, swore in the TJ Student Government Organization's President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, who in turn swore in the class representatives. They were then presented with a certificate and paused for pictures.

C. Governor's Educator of the Year & ESP of the Year: TJ

Mr. Samuels, TJ Principal, announced Ms. Janet Dobbs & Ms. Yanfen Zhong as this year's recipients and spoke about their contributions to win the award. Lincoln school's winners, Ms. Courtney Conway and Ms. Selina Burgos will be recognized at the Board's January 7, 2025 meeting.

D. 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)**

E. Superintendent's Report: Mr. Grieco

1. Update/Welcome – he wished everyone Happy Holidays and thanked the TJ's SGO.
2. Strategic Planning – he then gave a brief update of the status.

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

1. Board Correspondence: *Received (R) or Sent (S) since our last meeting:*
 - A. ® Morris County Clerk: Official 2024 Election Results
2. Financial Status Updates:
 - A. The 2023-24 Audit is finishing up, and the 2025-26 Budget Draft is being compiled.

G. Administration Monthly Reports:

- | | <u>Submitted by:</u> |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. Lincoln Principal's Report: | <i>Mrs. Skomial</i> |
| Board member Riviuccio congratulated Mrs. Skomial for a great Mattress Fundraiser! | |
| 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> |

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

1. Board of Education Candidates Election Official Results:
Vanessa Dorgilles: 1,705 Faride Hernandez: 1,511 Others 38.

I. Review of Agenda Items Recommended for Approval

4. Public Comment No. 1: Agenda Items Only

There was none at this time.

5. Enrollment & Staffing Report:

Grade Level & School	Students June 30, 2024	Students December 6, 2024	Difference from June 24	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	67	+11	3	22	3	3
Grade 1 - Lincoln	59	58	-1	3	19	3	3
Grade 2 - Lincoln	66	59	-7	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
Total Lincoln School:	<u>269</u>	<u>276</u>	<u>+7</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>33.5</u>
Grade 4 - TJ	62	64	+2	3	21	3	-
Grade 5 - TJ	56	61	+5	3	20	3	-
Grade 6 - TJ	45	59	+14	3	20	3	-
Grade 7 - TJ	63	51	-12	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
Total Thomas Jefferson:	<u>284</u>	<u>301</u>	<u>+17</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>20</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 Ed Out-of-District:	5	6	+1	-	-	-	-
Resident Students:	<u>558</u>	<u>583</u>	<u>+25</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>18.5</u>	-	-
Charter/Choice Schs Out:	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Spec. Ed Tuition Incoming:	3	3	0	-	-	-	-
Total Students (575) Staff (135.5) Ratio: 4.2/1	561	586	+25	-	-	66.5	69

6. Meeting Minutes

- A. Be it resolved to approve and accept the following meeting minutes:
1. November 12, 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: November 13 to December 10, 2024: \$378,979.64
- B. Be it resolved to approve the Budgetary Transfer Report for the month of October.
- C. Be it resolved to approve and accept the Board Secretary's Financial Report for the month of October.
I hereby certify, pursuant to NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(c)3, that as of October 31st, 2024, no budgetary line item has been over-expended. William Stepka, RSBA- Business Administrator/Board Secretary.
- D. Be it resolved to approve and accept the Treasurer of School Monies Financial Report for the month of October.
- E. Be it resolved to approve and adopt the increased New Jersey Minimum Wage rate of \$15.49 per hour and to authorize the administration to adjust any employee's employment contract and payroll for anyone who is affected, effective January 1, 2025; an increase of 36 cents or 2.4% from the 2024 rate of \$15.13.
- F. Be it resolved to approve and adopt the following resolution:
Whereas, the Rockaway Borough Board of Education had previously established an Emergency Reserve Account in accordance with NJSA 18A:7F-41 in the maximum amount of \$250,000, and
Whereas, the district has recently incurred several unanticipated general fund current expenditures directly related to newly enrolled students and their educational obligations (which are out of the control of the district) since September regarding both incoming and out-of-district placements required to deliver a thorough and efficient (T&E) education to them and the rest of the district's student population,
Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Rockaway Borough Board of Education hereby authorizes a withdrawal of \$250,000 from the Emergency Reserve Account to be appropriated into the General Fund Operating Budget for the 2024-25 school year and
That It Be Further Resolved, that the Board approve the Superintendent of Schools to submit a request to utilize said Emergency Funds to the Commissioner of Education through the Morris County Superintendent of Schools.

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 approve and accept the resignation of **Morgan Abrams**, Language and Learning Disabilities Teacher at Thomas Jefferson School, effective January 6, 2025.
- C. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve an AMENDED Leave Replacement 2nd Grade Teacher employment contract for **Donna Hawkes**. Mrs. Hawkes' leave of absence contract will now conclude on December 20, 2024. (Previously board approved to February 28, 2025).
- D. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Donna Hawkes** as a 4th grade English Language Arts (ELA) teacher from January 2, 2025, through June 30, 2025. Mrs. Hawkes will be paid based on the Salary Guide/Step BA-1 at the rate of \$57,135. Mrs. Hawkes has completed all background checks.
- E. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve an AMENDED Leave Replacement 5th Grade LAL Teacher employment contract for **Shawn Robertson**. Mr. Robertson's leave of absence contract will now conclude on December 3, 2024. (Previously board approved to December 2, 2024).
- F. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Shawn Robertson** as a Leave Replacement 2nd Grade Teacher from January 2, 2025, to January 31, 2025. Mr. Robertson will be paid based on Salary Guide/Step BA-1 at the rate of \$57,135. Mr. Robertson has completed all background checks.
- G. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Shawn Robertson** as a Leave Replacement Physical Education Teacher from February 3, 2025, to May 2, 2025. Mr. Robertson will be paid based on Salary Guide/Step BA-1 at the rate of \$57,135. Mr. Robertson has completed all background checks.
- H. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve a Leave of Absence for the following staff members:

Staff #	Location	Position	From	To/Return Date
396	Lincoln	Teacher	8/28/24	2/3/25 AMENDED- RETURNING EARLY (previously board approved on 5/7/24)
481	Lincoln	Teacher	2/3/25 (Utilize sick days-2/3/25-3/14/25) (FMLA-3/17/25-5/2/25) Will claim benefits under NJFLA	5/5/25
268	Lincoln	Aide	12/10/24 (utilizing sick days)	12/20/24

- I. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve a change of assignment for **Chelsea Dougherty**, currently a lunch aide at Lincoln School. Mrs. Dougherty shall be approved as a Paraprofessional at Lincoln School beginning December 2, 2024, through June 30, 2025, and will be paid based on Salary/Aide Guide Step-1 at the hourly rate of \$17.49. Mrs. Dougherty has successfully completed all background checks.
- J. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept and approve the AMENDED resignation of **Maryam Saadah**, Paraprofessional at Thomas Jefferson School, effective November 21, 2024. (effective date changed from 11/22, as previously approved on 11/12/24.)
- K. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following **Extracurricular advisors** for the 2024-2025 school year and adjusted Stipend rates previously approved:

<u>Club / Sport</u>	<u>Advisor</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Girls Softball - Assistant Coach	William Rzucidlo	\$937
Boys Soccer- Assistant Coach	Lauren Bogart	\$1,004 - experienced rate
Newspaper	Samantha Mannello	\$527- split at experience rate
Robotics/Solar Cars	Samantha Selikoff	\$1,004 - experienced rate
Yoga Club	Aileen Schumacher/ & Brianna Rigas	\$502 each - experienced rate

- L. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve volunteer hours at Lincoln School for **seniors** at Morris Hills High School as part of their Service Learning class. Volunteer hours will be 2 days a week, for 1 hour each day, beginning January 2025 through May 2025. (Names are on file in the Superintendent’s office.)
- M. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Michael Scholtz** as a Floating Substitute Teacher for the 2024-2025 school year beginning December 11, 2024, through April 1, 2025, Mr. Scholtz will be paid at the per diem rate of \$125. Mr. Scholtz has successfully completed all background checks.
- N. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Kathleen New** as a part-time (2.5 hrs./day) Lunchroom/Recess Aide at Lincoln School for the 2024-2025 school year, beginning December 16, 2024, through June 30, 2025, and will be paid \$15.67 per hour. Ms. New has successfully completed all background checks.
- O. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Natalia Grajales** as a Paraprofessional at Lincoln School beginning January 13, 2025, through June 30, 2025, and will be paid based on Salary/Aide Guide Step-1 at the hourly rate of \$17.49, for 5.75 hours per school day, pending the Office of Student Protection background check required by P.L. 1986 c.116 and Sexual Misconduct/Child Abuse Disclosure required by P.L. 2018 c.5.

- P. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve and accept the resignation of **Ana Mendez-Avaroma**, district part-time nurse effective January 1, 2025.

9. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

- A. Be it resolved to approve the list of **Student Field Trip Requests** as listed at the end of this agenda.
- B. Be it resolved to confirm and approve the **District Events List** for all extra activities, events, fundraisers, etc. as listed at the end of this agenda.

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 approve the **First Reading** of the following new and/or revised Board Policy and/or Regulation where applicable:

Policy/Reg	Number	Title	Reason for Update
Policy	0141	Board Member Number and Term	Revised
Policy	0164.6	Remote Public Board Meetings During a Declared Emergency	ABOLISHED
Policy	2200	Curriculum Content	Revised
Policy & Reg	3160	Physical Examination	Revised
Policy & Reg	4160	Physical Examination	Revised
Regulation	5200	Attendance	Revised
Policy	5337	Service Animals	Revised
Policy	5350	Student Suicide Prevention	Revised
Policy	8420	Emergency and Crisis Situations	Revised
Policy & Reg	8467	Firearms and Weapons	Revised
Policy	9181	Volunteer Athletic Coaches and Co-Curricular Activity Advisors/Assistants	Revised

- B. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials (2023) Revisions* - Approved by the New Jersey Department of Law & Public Safety and the New Jersey Department of Education for the 2024-2025 school year.
- C. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve and accept the 2023-2024 Lincoln School & Thomas Jefferson School Self-Assessments for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, as submitted: Thomas Jefferson- 74 out of 78- 95% / Lincoln- 74 out of 78- 95%

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>Recused</u>	<u>Not Present</u>
Ms. Dahl:	-	-	-	-	-	Not Present
Mr. Riviuccio:	-	Aye	Techspo PD	-	-	-
Mr. Tobias:	Seconded	Aye	Techspo PD	-	-	-
Mrs. Walter, VP:	Moved	Aye		-	-	-
Mr. Graf, President:	-	Aye		-	-	-
		4	2 – Techspo PD not approved		1	

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

A. Board member Riviuccio asked when the basketball uniforms be updated, Mr. Grieco replied.

14. Public Comment No. 2: Agenda & Non-Agenda Items

Staff member Bova about his inquiry into the TJ Alma Matter issue, he’s looking into it.

15. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting:

A. **Annual Organizational Meeting: Tuesday, January 7, 2025**

The Meeting will begin at 6:30 pm in the Cafeteria of Thomas Jefferson Middle School.

16. Executive Session II: 8:23p-8:50p

Be it Resolved, that the Board enter into Executive Session (Private) for the purpose of discussing: a legal 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 30 MINUTES.

BOARD ACTION WILL NOT BE TAKEN AFTER THIS SESSION CONCLUDES.

Moved by Mrs. Walter, seconded by Mr. Riviuccio, all ayes.

17. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting: 8:50 p

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

Moved by: Mrs. Walter Seconded by: Mr. Tobias Voice Vote: All Ayes

Respectfully submitted,

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

Student Field Trip Requests:

Grade	Teachers	Date	Time: Depart/ Return	Destination	# Of Students	# Of Adults	Cost	Justification for Trip
MD	Antonia Zangara	12/11/24	10:00/11:30	Walmart Rockaway (for winter party)	7	6	Free	To enhance our curriculum with real world connections and interdisciplinary math skills as well as foster growth in college and career readiness

District Events List:

School Activity	Loc./School	Date/Time	Participants	Adm./ Teacher/ Coach/ Advisor
MHRD visit for 25/26 course selection	Thomas Jefferson	12/12/24	8th Grade Students	Bryanna Dennison / Leon Samuels
RBEF JAM Theater Workshops	Lincoln Cafe. & TJ Stage	Workshop Various Tuesdays & Thurs. in 2025 Show Date: 5/3/24	Grades 1-5	Jennifer Turner
Sweetheart Dance	TJ Gymnasium	2/7/25 / 5:45-10:00 pm Snow Date: 2/21/25	Pre-K - 3rd Grade	Rockaway Borough Home & School Association

Staff Professional Development/Travel Expenditure Requests:

Staff Member	Workshop Title/Dest.	Dates	Reg & Fees	Justification for the Trip
Christine Matriciano	American O.T. Association Conference/ Philadelphia, PA	4/3-5/25	\$480	To update and improve my knowledge of current best practices.
Wendy Chandler	2024 USDA Foods Conference/ Edison, NJ	12/5/24	Free Mileage: \$41.41	This conference highlights key aspects and upcoming changes within the child nutrition program. It is very informative and insightful.
Linda Savercool	Best Practices for Managing School Medical Emergencies/ Virtual	2/4/25	\$295	Will expand nurses' knowledge of updated best practices and current resources for achieving positive outcomes in responding to emergencies.
Denise Jacobus	Best Practices for Managing School Medical Emergencies/ Virtual	2/13/25	\$295	Will expand knowledge of updated best practices and current resources for achieving positive outcomes in responding to school medical emergencies.
Kellianne Fowler	Catch Up Your Students Who Have Fallen Behind in Math/ Virtual	2/7/25	\$295	To learn innovative instructional strategies to catch up with students who have fallen behind. Gain knowledge of rich tasks.
Shaun Reyes NOT APPROVED	Techspo/ Atlantic City, NJ	1/29-31/25	\$590 Mileage: 284 miles- \$132.07 Tolls/Parking: \$25	Training on new and current technology.
Jamie Argenziano NOT APPROVED	Techspo/ Atlantic City, NJ	1/29-31/25	\$590 Mileage: Tolls/Parking:	To learn about the latest teaching platforms that infuse curriculum with technology.