

Rockaway Borough Board of Education

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 28, 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: 6:35-7:32pm

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 and a legal matter, the nature of which will be made public only when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

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

1. Call to Order: 7:32 PM

The public portion of this meeting was called to order at 7:32 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 - Present

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

Mrs. Vanessa Dorgilles - Present

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

Mr. Brian Riviuccio – Not Present

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

Ms. Jennifer Dahl, VP – Present

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

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)

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

Two (2) employees were in the audience.

3. Reports & Updates:**A. Board Committees Reports (as needed):**

1. Strategic Planning: *Ms. Dahl & Mr. Riviuccio will sched a meeting.*
2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities: *Mr. Graf & Mrs. Hernandez will sched a meeting.*
3. Curriculum/Special Education: *Ms. Dahl & Mrs. Dorgilles will meet for QSAC.*
4. Negotiations with RBAA: *Mr. Graf & Ms. Dahl next month 1st meeting.*
5. Negotiations with RBEA: *Mrs. Dorgilles & Mrs. Hernandez*
6. Athletic/Activities: *Mr. Riviuccio & Mrs. Dorgilles*
7. Policy, 8. Safety/Security, 9. Technology *All 3 are Ad Hoc*

B. Liaison Reports (as needed):

1. NJ School Boards Assoc. - Mr. Riviuccio
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

Mr. Graf stated he will be attending the next Borough Council & HSA meetings.

C. Superintendent's Report: Mr. Grieco

1. District Update: 25-26 School Calendar & Website discussed.

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

1. **Board Correspondence:** *Received (R) or Sent (S) since our last meeting:*
 - A. There are none at this time.
2. **Financial Status Updates:**
 - A. The 2023-24 Audit was filed on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, in a timely manner and will be presented by the auditors at our February 25th meeting.
 - B. 2024-25 Current Budget Year: Proceeding within budgeted parameters.
 - C. 2025-26 New Budget: Administration is proceeding as per the Budget Calendar.

E. Administration Monthly Reports:**Submitted by:**

1. Lincoln Principal's Report: *Mrs. Skomial*
2. Thomas Jefferson Principal's Report: *Mr. Samuels*
3. Curr., Inst., and Assessment Director's Report: *Mrs. Argenziano*
4. Building & Grounds Supervisor's Report: *Mr. Klein*
5. Technology Supervisor's Report: *Mr. Reyes*

Mr. Graf asked about the replacement schedule for student Chromebooks.

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

1. There was none at this time.

G. Review of Agenda Items Recommended for Approval

H. School Board Recognition Month:

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State Board of Education, which adopts the administrative code to implement state education law, has established rigorous standards through its promulgation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, which set the expectations of academic achievement for nearly 1.4 million public school children; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's locally elected and appointed boards of education play a vital role in ensuring that their local school districts meet state standards and adhere to all code provisions, with the goal of providing outstanding education to prepare all students for college and the workplace and to enable them to compete in a global economy; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's 5,000 non-partisan local board of education members and charter school trustees are public servants who dedicate their time, without pay or benefit, to the oversight of school district operations, sound financial practices, comprehensive policies, curriculum, staffing, and the well-being and academic achievement of all students in the district; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of local boards of education, in conjunction with state education officials and local educators, have built a foundation of success that has led to New Jersey's status as a leader in student achievement, as evidenced by the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores; and

WHEREAS, the National School Boards Association and the New Jersey School Boards Association have declared January to be School Board Recognition Month;

Now, Therefore, Be It RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State Board of Education recognizes the contributions of our state's local boards of education to the academic success of its public school students and expresses its sincere appreciation to local board of education members for their continued focus on the achievement of children throughout New Jersey, and

Be it Further RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State Board of Education encourages qualified New Jersey citizens to consider serving as members on their local school boards.

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 input, moderate, and then close the floor.

Please direct all dialogue to the President. Replies are not required.

Nicholas Vito Bova, a general music district employee who resides at 6 John Street, Pine Brook, NJ, 07058, commented on the district's website's music section, his views regarding professional development days, his music budget, and the supposed "pause for federal funding." He was advised to discuss these matters with his principal, as they are administrative in nature and should be addressed by following the administrative chain of command.

5. Enrollment & Staffing Report:

Grade Level & School	Students June 30, 2024	Students January 15, 2025	Difference from June 25	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	60	-6	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:	269	277	+8	14	20	25	33.5
Grade 4 - TJ	62	65	+3	3	22	3	-
Grade 5 - TJ	56	63	+7	3	21	3	-
Grade 6 - TJ	45	59	+14	3	20	3	-
Grade 7 - TJ	63	54	-9	3	18	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:	284	307	+23	15	20	36	22.5
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:	558	590	+32	29	20	-	-
Charter/Choice Schs Out:	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Spec. Ed Tuition Incoming:	3	3	0	-	-	-	-
Total Students (548)/ Staff (137.5) Ratio: 4/1	561	593	+32	-	-	66.5	69

6. Meeting Minutes

- A. Be it resolved to approve and accept the following meeting minutes:
 - 1. January 7, 2025, Organizational Meeting & Any Other Business and 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: January 8 to January 28: \$377,458.22

- B. Be it resolved to establish and approve the following incoming student tuition rates for the 2025-26 school year for other districts' students to attend our school programs - rates will increase by 5% from 24-25 (except for parent paid), it is also expressly understood by all parties that transportation and all its associated costs will be borne by the sending district or parent. (ESY= Extended School Year, or Summer School.)

<u>Grade Level/Program</u>	<u>25-26</u>	<u>(24-25)</u>	<u>\$Diff</u>
ESY 5 Week Reg Preschool (4dys/wk 2.5 hrs/day)	\$3,400	(\$3,236)	164
ESY 5 Week RR/LLD Program (5dys/wk 3.5hrs/day)	\$5,904	(\$5,623)	281
ESY 6 Week PALS/MD Program (5dys/wk 3.5hrs/day)	\$10,866	(\$10,348)	518
ESY One to One Aide	\$3,589	(\$3,418)	168
ESY One to One Shared Aide	\$1,796	(\$1,710)	86
10 Mo. Resident Preschool Program (Parent Paid)	\$3,600	(\$3,600)	-0-
10 Mo. Preschool Disabled F/T (PALS) Program	\$51,937	(\$49,464)	2,473
10 Mo. Learn/Lang. Disabled Program	\$37,947	(\$36,140)	1,807
10 Mo. Multiple Disabled Program	\$40,390	(\$38,467)	1,923
10 Mo. One to One Aide	\$22,430	(\$21,361)	1,069
10 Mo. One to One Shared Aide	\$11,167	(\$10,635)	532
10 Mo. Kindergarten Full Day Program	\$16,990	(\$16,180)	810
10 Mo. Regular Grades 1 - 5	\$16,821	(\$16,020)	801
10 Mo. Regular Grades 6 - 8	\$16,856	(\$16,053)	803

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
654	Thomas Jefferson	Aide	1/13/25 Unpaid	3/7/25
142	Lincoln School	Secretary	1/3/25 Sick and Vacation	2/10/25
333	Thomas Jefferson	Teacher	1/17/25 Sick and Unpaid	1/31/25

- C. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Amira Salem and Ava Zeman** as substitute teachers for the 2024/2025 school year. Ms. Salem and Ms. Zeman have already cleared the required background checks.
- D. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Angelica Aguirre**, of Wharton, NJ, as a substitute bus driver, as needed, at an hourly rate of \$28.00 for the 2024-25 school year, pending successful clearance of all required background checks.
- E. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Alyssa McNamara**, currently a student attending Centenary University, observation hours at Lincoln School for her foundation of education class this semester.
- F. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Marcy Rattay** as a substitute bus aide at her hourly rate of \$20.47 for the 2024-25 school year.
- G. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve a 2025-2026 employment contract for **Sara Schneiderman**, Speech & Language Therapist, from August 26, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Ms. Schneiderman will be paid based on the 2024-25 Salary/Guide MA-4 at an annual salary rate of \$62,185 (pending RBEA negotiations).

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 tuition contract with an approved out-of-district private school for students with disabilities: the Mount Carmel Guild Academy of West Orange, NJ, for student number 17180321, effective Monday, January 27 to June 30, 2025, at a daily tentative tuition rate of \$310.00 per day and another \$246 per day for a one-to-one aide, for approximately 93 school days (\$51,708) plus transportation to be bid-out through the Morris County ESC (estimated at another \$25,000).

10. Technology and Buildings & Grounds

- A. Be it resolved to engage the services of Parette Somjen Architects of Rockaway, NJ, and the architect of record for the district, to update the district's "Long Range Facilities Plan" (last updated in 2018) for \$6,000 as per their quote dated January 24, 2025.

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 ®, 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

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. Riveccio						Not Present
Ms. Dahl, VP	Moved	Aye				
Mr. Graf, President		Aye				

All motions were approved: 4 0 0 0 1

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

A. Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to confirm/approve the QSAC Equivalency Submission for the area of Instruction and Program (Indicators 1-7), for school year 2024-2025.

(Please note that the district plans on not having to rely on the QSAC Equivalency).

Moved by: Ms. Dahl, Seconded by: Mrs. Hernandez, Roll Call Vote: All Ayes

14. Public Hearing

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

The President will open the floor for the Board to hear input, moderate, and then close the floor.

Please direct all dialogue to the President. Replies are not required.

Nicholas Vito Bova, a district employee who resides at 6 John Street, Pine Brook, NJ, 07058, gave a special presentation to the Board titled "A Thomas Jefferson Middle School Alma Mater." Mr. Bova attended this school as a student when he was younger and is now a general music teacher. He sang the song a cappella and then played a four-part harmony recording, which he sang along to. The Board was very impressed. As such, ***Ms. Dahl moved, seconded by Mrs. Hernandez, and carried by voice vote, to make this the official Alma Mater of Thomas Jefferson Middle School.***

15. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting:**A. Tuesday, February 25, 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: 9:00 pm – 9:33 pm

Be it Resolved, that the Board enter into Executive Session (Private) for the purpose of discussing a student HIB and legal matters, 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. Hernandez Voice Vote: All Ayes*
Motion to Adjourn: *Moved by: Ms. Dahl Seconded by: Mrs. Dorgilles Voice Vote: All Ayes*

17. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting: 9:33 pm

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 pm.

Moved by: Ms. Dahl Seconded by: Mrs. Hernandez Voice Vote: All Ayes

Respectfully submitted,



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

District Events List:

School Activity	Loc./School	Date/Time	Participants	Adm./ Teacher/ Coach/ Advisor
TJ Musical	Thomas Jefferson School	3/14/25 - 7:00 pm, 3/15/25 - 7:00 pm 3/16/25 - 3:00 pm	TJ Players Cast & Crew	Helen Love & Jennifer Barbosa
Literacy Night	Lincoln School	2/6/25	Kindergarten Parents	Conway, Schwarz, Alyssa Lawton, and Marsh

Professional Development/Travel Expenditure Requests:

Staff Member	Workshop Title/Dest.	Dates	Reg & Fees	Justification for the Trip
Jamie Argenziano Shaun Reyes	Techspo/ Atlantic City	1/29-31/25	Reg: \$590 Hotel: \$208 Mileage: \$132.54 Tolls/Parking \$25 (ESEA Grant- PD)	To learn about the latest teaching platforms that infuse curriculum into digital instruction. UPDATED: PREVIOUSLY APPROVED 1/7/25
Michael Klein	NJSBGA 2025 Expo / Atlantic City	3/23-26/25	Reg: \$350 Hotel: \$339.63 Travel: \$168 (ESEA Grant- PD)	CEUs for CEFM Vendor Introduction and code compliance updates.
Linda Savercool	School Nurses Best Strategies for Helping Students with Autism, Allergies & Anaphylaxis/ Virtual	4/23/25	\$295 (ESEA Grant- PD)	Will expand my knowledge of updated practices and current resources for achieving positive outcomes for students who have Asthma, Allergies and possible Anaphylaxis.
Jennifer Skomial	I&RS to MTSS- Implementing MTSS to Meet NJ Intervention and Referral Services / Online	3/26/25	\$75 (ESEA Grant- PD)	This session will provide strategies and tools for implementing MTSS to meet the NJ I&RS requirements for interventions.
Denise Jacobus	Best Practices for Addressing Mental Health Issues in Your Schools/ Virtual	4/28/25	\$295 (ESEA Grant- PD)	This workshop will help me to support students with mental and behavioral concerns by applying evidence-based strategies.

Student Field Trip Requests:

GRADE	TEACHERS	DATE	TIME: DEPART/ RETURN	DESTINATION	# of Pupils	# OF ADULTS	COST PP	JUSTIFICATION FOR TRIP
8	Laura Pemiciaro	2/13/25	9:00 am/2:00 pm	iFly- Paramus	61	6	\$52	The STEM program at iFly is designed to give kids hands-on experience with science, technology, engineering, and math principles and get them thinking about how these principles apply to the real world.* We applied for a grant to offset the cost.
PALS MD- Lincoln & TJ	Antonia Zangara Jennifer Grlica Hailey Ralli	6/10/25	9:15 am / 2:00 pm	Turtle Back Zoo	20	16	\$27	Our goal is to enhance our social skills curriculums with real-world connections and interdisciplinary math skills and foster growth in college and career readiness.
3	James Kadus Aileen Schumacher Allyn Thompson	3/19/25	11:00 am / 2:00 pm	MPAC/ Morristown	70	19	\$18	The trip to see a play is intended to enhance the third-grade language arts curriculum fiction unit in the school-wide program we are currently implementing.
1	Katrina Jacinto Heather Doering Dodi Yobs	5/16/25	9:00 am / 2:00 pm	Liberty Science Center/ Jersey City	60	36	\$31	Students will be able to relate NJ Science standards to real-life exhibits and deepen their learning at Liberty Science Center.

ROCKAWAY BOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

JANUARY 28, 2025

MD	Antonia Zangara	3/13/25	9:30 am / 12:30 pm	Life Town/ Livingston, NJ	7	7	N/A	Our goal is to enhance our social skills curriculums with real-world connections and interdisciplinary math skills and foster growth in college and career readiness.
7	Laura Pemiciaro	2/12/25	9:00 am / 1:00 pm	Pyramid Mountain/Boonton, NJ	49	9	N/A	Pyramid Mountain offers a hands-on opportunity to explore real-world geological features and processes. The area is home to fascinating rock formations, such as the famous Tripod Rock, a glacial erratic left behind by ancient glaciers during the Ice Age.

TUE
1/28/25

Thomas Jefferson Alma Mater
Nicolas Bova, 2024

Can you hear the sound of your river?
Do you hear your children play?
Have you felt the frost of your winters?
And the warmth of your summer days?

We've adorned your halls in colors,
Shaded in maroon and white.
Picked for strength and kindness plenty,
And for all our futures' bright.

Through all your years,
You've seen so many faces come and go.
But our dearest Thomas Jefferson,
We'll always call you home.

We are the **R**ams, we'll never give up
Like the stream of your Rockaway waters.
We give our praise and thanks to thee,
Our glorious Alma Mater.

Alma Mater, Alma Mater, Alma Mater.
No matter where we're bound to roam,
We will always call you home.

) repeat