

BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

Blairstown, New Jersey 07825

www.blairstownelem.net

December 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER The Blairstown Township Board of Education held this meeting in the School Library on Thursday, December 5, 2019.
Mr. Cook, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

FLAG SALUTE Everyone present was requested to rise and repeat the Pledge of Allegiance.

SUNSHINE LAW Mr. Cook read the Notice of Meeting and Mission Statement

MISSION STATEMENT

ROLL CALL The following board members were present: Mr. Cook, Mrs. Gerhardt, Mrs. Inscho, Mr. Karolchyk, Mrs. McElroy, and Mrs. Rolph
Absent: Mrs. Shaffer

Tardy: Mrs. Krauss arrived at 7:10; Mrs. Sikkes arrived at 7:05PM

Also Present: Mr. Saalfield, Superintendent; Mrs. Petty, SBA/Board Secretary; Dr. Elias, Principal; Andrew Brown, Esquire; and approximately forty members of the public.

APPROVE REGULAR MINUTES - A motion was made by Mrs. Inscho and seconded by Mrs. McElroy to approve the minutes as submitted for November 21, 2019. Mrs. Inscho requested some additional details be added to the November minutes, which Mrs. Petty will resubmit for approval at the January meeting, after she makes changes.

NEW BUSINESS

- Superintendent's Report** – Mr. Saalfield reported on the following items:
 - The search for Mrs. Reade's replacement has been extended
 - Policy 8600 (Transportation) discussion of changing to 1 mile from 2 miles for walkers
 - Lobby Guard procedures – he distributed a draft of procedures to use for Lobby Guard
 - Email system is up, and a lot of progress has been made on the technology front this week
 - There will be a full day of school tomorrow, which is a calendar change
 - Request for a School Calendar change so that Parent-Teacher Conferences can be rescheduled to December 18 and 19, with early dismissals on December 18, 19, 20
- Principal's Report** – Dr. Elias reported that \$1,200 had been raised for Operation Chill-Out, and that there had been a few class trips since the last Board meeting. She announced that Mrs. Hine line had a baby girl.
- Recognition of BOE Service for J. Karolchyk and D. Krauss** – Mrs. Petty shared the dedication of the two books purchased for the student Library, honoring Mr. Karolchyk and Mrs. Krauss for their years of service.

4. Recognition of Mr. and Mrs. Schulman for their very generous donation of STEM materials to BES
Mr. Schulman was in attendance, and Mrs. Holyoak thanked him and his wife for all of the boxes already received and that will be forthcoming for the STEM and science programs.

5. Student Recognition – Dr. Elilas announced the winners and participants of the following programs:
 - Peace Poster Contest Winner
 - Clean Communities Poster Contest Winner
 - Battle of the Minds Participants

PUBLIC HEARING & PETITION

On behalf of the BEA Mrs. Pfeiffer acknowledged and expressed appreciation for Mrs. Krauss and Mr. Karolchyk's years of service on the Board of Education.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:35PM a motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Gerhardt, and carried unanimously to convene to Executive Session to discuss matters of Attorney/Client Privilege, the results of which will be released to the public once the reason for confidentiality no longer exists.

The meeting re-opened to the public at 7:48PM and continued as follows:

APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORTS - A motion was made by Mrs. Gerhardt, seconded by Mrs. McElroy, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the October Board Secretary's reports, in agreement with the Treasurer's Reports, in the amount of \$1,184,050.45, in Total Government Funds; and to certify that as of October 31, 2019, after review of the Secretary and Treasurer's monthly financial reports (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been overexpended in violation with N.J.A.C.6A:23A-16.10(c)4 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligation for the fiscal year.

APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS - A motion was made by Mrs. Krauss, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve payment of the December 5th Bills & Claims List for the General Fund in the amount of \$377,507.89 and for the Food Service Fund in the amount of \$150.00. Board members reviewed the list on Mrs. Petty's computer since her printer wasn't working.

MOTION ITEMS

A. PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Rolph, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the following two motions:

1. Substitute – To accept the Superintendent's recommendation to add the name of Susan Martinez to the Substitute list for the 2019-20 School Year.

2. Hire Replacement Teacher – To accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to hire Susan Martinez as a replacement leave teacher for Mrs. Baker’s maternity leave, effective January 21, 2020 through June 18, 2020.

B. FINANCE

1. 2018-19 Financial Audit Presentation – After Mrs. Petty distributed the Audit Synopsis to BOE members and the public, she reviewed the results aloud, and a motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Inscho, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to accept the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2019 and the Report of Administrative Findings, Financial Compliance and Performance with no recommendations, and therefore no Corrective Action Plan is required:

- Administrative Practices and Procedures – No recommendations
- Financial Planning, Accounting, and Reporting – No recommendations
- School Purchasing Programs – No recommendations
- School Food Service – No recommendations
- Student Body Activities – No recommendations
- Application for State School Aid – No recommendations
- Pupil Transportation – No recommendations
- Facilities and Capital Assets – No recommendations
- Miscellaneous – No recommendations
- Status of Prior Year Audit Findings/Recommendations – Not applicable

C. EDUCATIONAL

1. HIB Investigation #19202 - A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Gerhardt, and carried unanimously to approve the Superintendent’s action on HIB Investigation #19202 as reported at the November 21st meeting and affirm that it was not found to be HIB.

Mrs. Sikkes asked about the parent meeting that would have been held with Mr. Saalfield, as was discussed at the November BOE meeting, which Mr. Saalfield reported went well. He read the definition of bullying from Title 18A:37-14. It was discussed that a HIB violation becomes part of a student’s record. Mrs. Sikkes discussed an ongoing situation involving her son. She and others expressed frustration with the Code of Conduct violations versus the definition of a HIB action. Mrs. Kovacs noted that all 5th and 6th graders are spoken to by Mrs. Andrews and Mrs. Brady every year, reviewing the definitions and explain the HIB law. It was noted that a Code of Conduct violation can have more severe punishment than a HIB violation.

2. Informational: Mr. Saalfield briefly reviewed the Superintendent’s Evaluation Calendar, which had been included in the November and December BOE agenda packets.

3. Strategic Plan – Mr. Saalfield referred to the color-highlighted District/Superintendent’s Goals update that had been included in the agenda packet.
4. School Calendar Change – A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Gerhardt, and carried by voice vote, with Mrs. Inscho opposing, to amend the School Calendar for half days on December 18, 19, and 20, due to the rescheduling of Parent-Teacher Conferences. Mrs. Inscho had asked about possibly delaying the conferences until after the holidays, which the BOE discussed. Mrs. Pfeiffer indicated that some of the staff had asked about that as well, but it was decided that it would be best to hold conferences before January.

D. FACILITIES

1. Vail School Property Sale – A motion was made by Mrs. Krauss, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to adopt the following resolution for the sale of the Vail School property:

WHEREAS, at its meeting held on October 17, 2019, the Blairstown Township Board of Education passed a resolution indicating that the Vail School property, located at 35 Vail Road, Blairstown, NJ was no longer desirable or necessary for school purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator has notified the Division of Finance in the Department of Education and the Executive County Superintendent of this decision; and

WHEREAS, the Board has received permission from the Department of Education to dispose of the Vail School property;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:20-7 the Blairstown Township Board of Education authorizes the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator to advertise for bids on the public sale of the Vail School property at a minimum bid of \$169,000, with the reservation of the right to accept or reject the highest bid made, with bids to be due on Friday, January 31, 2020.

2. Lambert Road Property Sale – A motion was made by Mrs. Gerhardt, seconded by Mr. Cook, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to adopt the following resolution for the sale of the Lambert Road property:

WHEREAS, at its meeting held on October 17, 2019, the Blairstown Township Board of Education passed a resolution indicating that the Lambert Road property, located at 6 Lambert Road, Blairstown, NJ was no longer desirable or necessary for school purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator has notified the Division of Finance in the Department of Education and the Executive County Superintendent of this decision; and

WHEREAS, the Board has received permission from the Department of Education to dispose of the Lambert Road property;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:20-7 the Blairstown Township Board of Education authorizes the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator to advertise for bids on the public sale of the Lambert Road property at a minimum bid of \$319,000, with the reservation of the right to accept or reject the highest bid made, with bids to be due on Friday, January 31, 2020.

3. PTG Book Fair – Mrs. Petty reported that the PTG would like to extend their request for use of the Library for its Book Fair to this Saturday, December 7th, as well as Monday, December 9th.

E. POLICY

1. Second Reading and Adoption – A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously to approve the second reading and adoption of the following policies:

4219 – Commercial Driver’s License Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing

8670 – Transportation of Special Needs Students

3159 – Teaching Staff Member/School District Reporting Responsibilities

6112 – Reimbursement of Federal and Other Grant Expenditures

8630 – Bus Driver/Bus Aide Responsibility

3218 & 4218 – Use, Possession, or Distribution of Substances

1642 – Earned Sick Leave Law

Policy #8600 – Transportation - A motion was made by Mrs. Inscho and seconded by Mrs. Sikkes to amend Policy 8600 to require transportation for students residing greater than one mile (instead of two miles), which the Board discussed. The motion was tabled until Mr. Saalfield can get a cost to do this.

Mrs. Rolph asked if there is a minimum age for a bus driver.

CORRESPONDENCE – None.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Mental Health Report – Mrs. McElroy asked about the Board’s recommendations on the recent Mental Health report, which she handed in to Mr. Cook, as did other Board members.
2. Posse – Mr. Cook asked if we still have POSSE. Dr. Elias noted that the PTG is in the process of setting it up.
3. Responsive Classroom Presentation – Mr. Cook requested that the Board see a presentation on the Responsive Classroom program.
4. Lobby Guard – Mrs. Inscho asked when Lobby Guard will be installed and asked about the lengthy process of getting it up and running. She would like to see it in action ASAP.

5. Teacher Empowerment Training – Mrs. Rolph asked if Teacher Empowerment Training will be held this year, and believes it is important to do so.

6. HIB Presentation – Mrs. Inscho requested a presentation on HIB. Mr. Karolchyk suggested that a representative from the Warren County Prosecutors Office provide this information.

PUBLIC HEARING & PETITION – Mrs. O’Connell wished everyone a Happy Holiday and thanked the Board for their service.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – J. Karolchyk had nothing to report. Mr. Saalfield noted that Senate President Sweeney has proposed to raise the property tax cap of 2% for districts who are losing State Aid but are under “Adequacy”.

ADJOURNMENT- A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:57PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Petty
School Business Administrator