

BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

Blairstown, New Jersey 07825

www.blairstownelem.net

April 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER The Blairstown Township Board of Education held this meeting in the School Library on Thursday, April 28, 2020.
Mr. Cook, President, called the virtual meeting to order at 7:08PM.

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, Ms. Klein, Mrs. McElroy, Mrs. Rolph, Mrs. Shaffer, and Mrs. Sikkes
Absent: None
Tardy: None

Also Present: Mr. Saalfield, Superintendent; Mrs. Petty, SBA/Board Secretary;
John Croot, Esquire; Matt Herzer, and one member of the staff.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 103 – A motion was made by Mr. Shaffer, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Blairstown Township Board of Education hereby approves the suspension of its normal meeting procedures pursuant to By-Law 131, and authorized this meeting to be conducted as a virtual meeting, as described in the Statement of Public Notice, due to the public health emergency declared in Executive Order 103.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – A motion was made by Mrs. Sikkes, seconded by Mrs. Shaffer, and carried unanimously to convene to Executive Session at 7:09PM to interview applicants for the BOE vacancy, the results of which will be released to the public once the reason for confidentiality no longer exists.

The Executive Session ended at 8:21PM and continued with the following public portion of the meeting.

APPOINT BOARD MEMBER – A motion was made by Mrs. Shaffer, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to appoint John Karolchyk to fill the Board vacancy created by Mr. Palmieri's resignation. This position runs until the next Reorganization meeting, and the unexpired term of the vacancy (two years) will be on the November ballot.

At 8:30PM Mrs. Petty swore Mr. Karolchyk into office, and he was in attendance for the remainder of the meeting.

APPROVE REGULAR MINUTES - A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Gerhardt, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes as submitted for March 19 and 26, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Superintendent's Report** – Mr. Saalfield discussed status of home instruction during this pandemic, and noted that he will be forming a re-opening committee as well as participating in a County meeting for superintendents to discuss the re-opening of school. He noted that he is still waiting to hear from the Department of Education regarding graduation ceremonies. Mr. Saalfield remarked that there have been no Negotiations Committee meetings held since the shut-down started. Mr. Saalfield advised the Board that the administration met with a representative from Tremco last Friday to review the line items of the roof proposal for the 1929 wing, a project which would be through the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission's bid program. Depending on the information about possible state aid cuts, the subject may be on the May 14th BOE agenda for discussion, and a representative from the roofing company would attend to answer BOE questions.

2. **Principal's Report** – Dr. Elias discussed the challenges of student instruction taking place at this time. She presented the State science test results and noted the need for changes to the standardized science test and that standardized testing requirements for this spring have been eliminated.

PUBLIC HEARING & PETITION – None.

APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORTS – A motion was made by Mrs. Shaffer, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (Mr. Karolchuk abstained) to approve the list of February Transfers in the amount of \$200 and the February Board Secretary's Reports, in agreement with the Treasurer's Reports, in the amount of \$754,375.53 in Total Government Funds; and to certify that as of February 29, 2020, 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 Ms. Klein, seconded by Mrs. Rolph, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (Mr. Karolchuk abstained) to approve payment of the March 19th Bills & Claims List for the General Fund in the amount of \$868,518.65 and for the Food Service Fund in the amount of \$5,336.45 (Maschio's) and \$277 (Willco).

MOTION ITEMS

A. PERSONNEL – A motion was made by Mrs. Shaffer, seconded by Mrs. Sikkes, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the first two Personnel items:

1. **Fund Commissioner for SHIF** – To adopt a resolution to appoint Matthew Herzer, School Business Administrator, as Fund Commissioner to the School Health Insurance Fund, effective May 1, 2020 to represent the Blairstown Township Board of Education.

2. Approve SBA 2020-21 Contract – To approve Matthew Herzer’s contract as the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary for the 2020-21 School Year, as approved by the County Superintendent.
3. 2020-21 Staff Renewals – A motion was made by Mrs. Shaffer, seconded by Mrs. McElroy, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to accept Mr. Saalfield’s recommendation to renew the attached lists of administrators, teachers, aides, secretaries, bus drivers and custodians for the 2020-21 School Year, with salaries to be determined upon finalization of Negotiations with the BEA. A short discussion ensued regarding possible staff reductions if state aid were to be cut in August.

2020-21 BUDGET HEARING

Mr. Saalfield and Mrs. Petty reviewed financial and instructional highlights of the proposed 2020-21 budget, noting that there will be no increase in the tax levy.

The proposed budget includes sufficient funds to provide curriculum and instruction which will enable all students to achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards, and is in compliance with N.J.S.A. and N.J.A.C. Title 6 and 6A.

EXPENDITURES:

Fund 10: General Fund	\$ 8,789,000
Fund 20: Special Revenue Fund	<u>\$ 164,000</u>
Total Expenditures:	<u>\$ 8,953,000</u>

REVENUE:

General Fund

Local Tax Levy	\$ 6,900,000
State Aid	\$ 1,513,913
Budgeted Fund Balance	\$ 290,044
Federal Impact Aid	\$ 35,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 20,043
Tuition Revenue for Preschool	<u>\$ 30,000</u>
Total for General Fund	<u>\$ 8,789,000</u>

Special Revenue Fund

Grants	<u>\$ 164,000</u>
Total for Special Revenue Fund	<u>\$ 164,000</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 8,953,000</u>

A motion was made by Mrs. Sikkes, seconded by Mrs. Rolph, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to adopt the 2020-21 Budget in the above amounts, with a tax levy of \$6,900,000, with accompanying limits outlined below for professional services and mileage reimbursement, and to submit the budget to the County office for review and approval:

School Attorney	\$35,000
School Auditor	\$18,000
School Physician	\$ 3,000
Independent Student Evaluations	\$ 2,500
Maximum Mileage Reimbursement per employee	\$ 1,000
Maximum District Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 6,000

B. FINANCE

1. Preschool Tuition During Shut-down – Mrs. Petty asked how the BOE wants to handle preschool tuition received for the full month of March, when school was not in session for the second half of the month, and noted that June tuition has also been paid. The preschool parents were emailed at the end of March to tell them not to send their April tuition and that a decision would be made on the second half of March once school resumed. The Board postponed this discussion until the May 14th meeting, when it is expected to have official news from the Department of Education on whether school will re-open at all before September.
2. 2020-21 WCSSSD Coordinated Transportation Contract – A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Ms. Klein, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the resolution for participation in the Warren County Special Services Coordinated Transportation program for the 2020-21 School Year, with a 4% fee.
3. 2020-21 Occupational Therapy Services – After a brief review of the estimated costs, a motion as made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Gerhardt, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to accept the attached list of proposals for Occupational Therapy services and approve Karen Desmet as the provider at \$80/hour for the 2020-21 School Year.

C. FACILITIES

1. February 3rd Fire Inspection Report – Informational: Mr. Saalfield noted that the meeting scheduled for April 24th with architectural firms to discuss a RFP for the stairwell door project needed as a result of the Fire Inspection Report was cancelled due to the pandemic and will be rescheduled.

D. EDUCATION

1. Approve Virtual Instruction – A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Shaffer, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (Mr. Karolchyk abstained) to approve the Superintendent’s plan for virtual instruction for submission to the New Jersey Commissioner of Education.
2. HIB Case Reports (Case #s 19203, 19204, 19205) – A motion was made by Mrs. Sikkes, seconded by Mrs. McElroy, and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the Superintendent’s actions in these three cases. Mr. Saalfield reviewed the cases for Mr. Karolchyk’s benefit, which were all found to be Code of Conduct violations.

3. 2019-20 School Calendar – A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Rolph, and carried unanimously (Mr. Karolchyk abstained) to approve a change in the last day of school in the 2019-20 School Calendar to Wednesday, June 17th, with June 15, 16, and 17 as early dismissals.
4. 2020-21 School Calendar – A motion was made by Mrs. Sikkes, seconded by Mrs. Shaffer, and carried unanimously (Mr. Karolchyk abstained) to approve the 2020-21 School Calendar as submitted.

CORRESPONDENCE – None.

OLD BUSINESS - REMINDER: FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED BY APRIL 30

1. NJSBA Mental Health Report- Mr. Cook will email the full report all BOE members and apologized for his tardiness in doing so
2. PEA Grant for Preschool Funding – Will be posted in late May
3. Teacher Empowerment Training – To be reviewed for possible inclusion in 2020-21 District Professional Development
4. Policy 8600 to be reviewed in August
5. Ad hoc Survey Committee Report – Survey to begin after Negotiations is completed
6. Lunch distribution during State of Emergency

PUBLIC HEARING & PETITION – Mr. Herzer noted that he is excited about his new position and is looking forward to working with the Board.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – Bills A3904/S2337 passed, requiring school districts to continue to pay all staff and contractors. Mr. Karolchyk would like to volunteer to attend the Delegate Assemblies and has been keeping up-to-date on changes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Before entering into Executive Session, it was decided that the Board will discuss the Superintendent’s Evaluation at the next BOE meeting. A motion was made by Mrs. McElroy, seconded by Mrs. Gerhardt, and carried unanimously to convene to Executive Session at 10:00PM to discuss hourly rates for paraprofessionals, the results of which will be released to the public once the reason for confidentiality no longer exists.

The Executive Session ended at 10:23PM, and continued with the following discussion and action on hourly rates:

A motion was made by Mrs. Shaffer, seconded by Mrs. McElroy, and carried by roll call vote (Mr. Karolchyk opposed) to amend the 2019-20 employment contracts for Kelly Moore-Finely (\$13.25/hour), Anna Van Wettering (\$12.75/hour), and Ann Gnull (\$14.00/hour), retroactive to September 1, 2019, and to issue retroactive salary checks accordingly with the May 15 payroll.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Sikkes, seconded by Mrs. Rolph, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:43PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Petty

School Business Administrator