



## **LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP/VOTING MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, June 12, 2023

Executive Session - HMS Faculty Room - 7:00 p.m.

Public Session - Hybrid Meeting - HMS Media Center - 7:15 p.m.

A **Workshop/Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date in the Heritage Middle School Media Center and via Zoom and Facebook Live. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vineeta Khanna, Board President, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 3, 2023 and posted at the Board of Education office and communicated to *The Star Ledger*, *West Essex Tribune*, *TAPinto Livingston* and the Livingston Township Clerk.

Members Present: Jenissa Arnette, Pamela Chirls, Seth Cohen, Vineeta Khanna, Parul Khemka and Jeffrey Xu

Also in Attendance: Dr. Matthew Block, Dora Zeno, Lisa Capone-Steiger, Mark Stern, Susan Burman and Joann Goldberg

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

### **Executive Session**

**Whereas**, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits the Board of Education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters; now, therefore be it

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss:

- student matters

Action may be taken upon return to the public session. The full length of the meeting is anticipated to be approximately 15 minutes and be it

**Further Resolved**, the minutes of this closed session be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Ms. Arnette seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khemka, Mrs. Khanna  
Nays - None

At 7:21 p.m., Mrs. Khanna reconvened the public meeting. There were approximately 40 members of the public and staff watching in person and through the webinar and Facebook Live Stream.

## **Retirement Ceremony**

Mrs. Burman honored Jen Larsen, Suzanne Steckert, David Arensburg, Ilze Kancans, Edwin Tomlinson and Tom Douglas for their dedicated years of service to the district during tonight's Retirement Ceremony.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### **1. Seal of Biliteracy**

Mrs. Alexandra Marzulla, K-12 Supervisor of World Languages and English Language Learners, recognized 28 graduating seniors who achieved the 2023 State Seal of Biliteracy in: Chinese, French, Hindi and Spanish. These students demonstrated very high levels of proficiency in reading, speaking, listening, and writing in English and a language(s) other than English. Students recognized for Chinese are: Ruotian Deng, Yu Hsiang Kuo, Ting Yu Lee, Mingyu Liu, Yujia Liu, Chunxiao Lu, Haley Ngai, Bowei Tang, Edith Yuan and Lucas Zhu. Students recognized for French are: Sophia Levitt, Miriam Grodin and Elodie Yecko. Students recognized for Hindi are: Hannah Abbasi and Atiksh Kotikalapudi. Students recognized for Spanish are: Julianie Franco Ayala, Benjamin Gantman, Joshua Goykhman, Cori Holtzman, Noah Kates, Tyler Katz, Morgan Korn, Benjamin Lerner, Paula Vega Ortiz, Justin Wayne and David Zoller.

Two students are recognized for earning Seals of Biliteracy in two languages: Heinz Manoj was recognized for Chinese and Spanish and Edward Lopez was recognized for French and Spanish.

### **2. Equity Audit**

Dr. Shelley Zion, Dr. Janelle Alexander and Dr. Scott Oswald from a2z equity coaching provided an overview of what the equity audit will include. They will be looking at existing data, participating in onsite visits to classrooms, making building level observations and conducting a mixed methods inquiry that includes collecting stakeholder perceptions of the district's climate and culture. These collections will be done through surveys as well as through focus group interviews. Their findings will be used to assist district leadership as they continue to pursue their equity goals. A preliminary report will be shared in the middle of August.

To date, the doctors have spent a total of six full days in schools observing hallways and classrooms, speaking with student groups and staff and observing security procedures, student arrivals and dismissals, recess and classrooms. They have held focus group interviews with selected stakeholders.

The doctors will continue holding additional focus group meetings with parents and staff affinity groups as well as interviews with a multitude of staff members. They encourage participation and are providing everyone with access to the survey.

It was suggested that an email address be shared on the district's equity page so people can be directed there if they wish to be involved in the process. For those members of the community that the board wishes to be offered an opportunity to participate, Dr. Zion requested they share the names and email address so she can reach out to them.

### **3. Modular Units/Livingston High School Renovations**

Mr. Allen Barnett from DiCara Rubino Architects provided drawings to show the layout for the modular units at Burnet Hill and Hillside Schools. The modular unit at Burnet Hill will include a child study team office, an OT/PT room, three small group instruction rooms, two toilet rooms and a storage area. The modular unit at Hillside will include two classrooms, four small group instruction rooms and two toilet rooms.

Mr. Barnett also reviewed the project schedule and cost estimate. The modular units are due to arrive in late July, have an on-site construction duration of six weeks and substantial completion anticipated for early September. The total cost for both schools is \$1,832,926.

Mr. Jamie Perrette, our Manager of Buildings and Grounds reviewed drawings of the interior renovations at Burnet Hill, Hillside and Livingston High School. At Burnet Hill and Hillside, additional interior classroom space will be created from those spaces that are being moved out to the modular units.

At Livingston High School, the expanded cafeteria will become the faculty room and the existing faculty room will be reconfigured into three classrooms.

The anticipated timeline to complete the interior renovations is the middle of August.

Both of the presentations are available on our website.

#### 4. Miscellaneous

Dr. Block reviewed the land disposal resolution on tonight's agenda for approval. The district has been going through the legal process to make this piece of land saleable and the approval by the board is the next step in that process. Afterwards, an advertisement will be placed in the newspaper for the land to go out to bid.

The board discussed having some type of barrier placed between the school and the property to keep students from wandering onto private property.

Dr. Block announced the beginning of the end of the year celebrations starting with the Class of 2023 Scholarship Night and Senior Prom held last week.

Dr. Block congratulated Mrs. Chirls for being a Board of Education member for ten years. Dr. Block presented Mrs. Chirls with a Milestone Award Certificate from the New Jersey School Boards Association and thanked her for her commitment and service to the district.

### **Board Reports**

Mrs. Chirls and Mrs. Khemka attended the Strauss Esmay policy conference and thanked Mrs. Burman for inviting them to attend as part of the policy committee.

Mrs. Khemka and Mrs. Khanna attended TREP\$ at Riker Hill.

Mrs. Khemka also attended a multicultural night at Harrison.

Ms. Arnette and Mrs. Chirls attended the superintendent's forum and expressed it was nice to see the large number of parents come out to share their concerns and get involved in conversations.

Mrs. Chirls recognized Livingston High School's science symposium, adding it is a pleasure to see the development of our students through that program.

Mrs. Chirls added it is important for parents to get involved in the schools, whether through committee work at the school level or by attending the forums.

Mrs. Khanna attended the science symposium and thanked the Chinese School for inviting her to their 40th year celebration.

## **Student Representative's Report**

Mr. Xu announced the high school held its science symposium and a pep rally. Mr. Xu congratulated all of the scholarship winners and thanked the donors for their generous support.

Mr. Xu added that tonight is his last board meeting, that he learned a lot and commended the district for promoting equity, excellence and community involvement. Mr. Xu thanked the board members and encouraged all to carry on this legacy of excellence.

On behalf of the board, Mrs. Khanna thanked Mr. Xu for his insight and commitment while serving as our student representative this past year. The board presented Mr. Xu with a few parting gifts and wished him well at Princeton.

## **Public Input on Agenda Items ~ up to 15 minutes**

Libby Barak, 51 Elmwood Drive, thanked Mrs. Chirls for her many years of service. Mrs. Barak asked how the equity team will know if they are missing a representative group of students from participating if they have not yet analyzed the data and also expressed concern about special education children with mobility issues having access to and from the modular units, especially in inclement weather.

Dr. Block responded that the equity team will be providing us with a preliminary analysis in August but their work will continue into the fall offering other opportunities to capture any student groups that may not have participated earlier.

Dr. Block responded the modular units will be close to the buildings with a clear pathway from the school as part of the design plan. All pathways will be cleared during inclement weather.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL**

### **BUSINESS**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

#### **3.1 RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LIVINGSTON IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE SOLICITATION OF BIDS FOR A TAX-EXEMPT LEASE PURCHASE FINANCING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF EQUIPMENT AND DELEGATING THE AWARD AND EXECUTION OF THE LEASE PURCHASE FINANCING**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the resolution as shown on **Attachment A**.

#### **3.2 Land Disposal**

WHEREAS, New Jersey Statute 18A:20-5 authorizes a board of education to sell real property owned by a board of education;

WHEREAS, the Livingston Board of Education is the owner of certain real property which is part of Block 401, Lot 45 on the Tax Map of Livingston, New Jersey;

WHEREAS, the Livingston Board of Education has subdivided a 2,712 square foot portion of Block 401, Lot 45 on the Tax Map of Livingston (hereinafter referred to as the "Premises")

WHEREAS, the Livingston Board of Education has determined there is no condition that the Premises must be used only for school purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Livingston Board of Education has determined the Premises are no longer necessary for school purposes.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED, the Livingston Board of Education hereby authorizes the sale of the Premises more particularly described below:

BEGINNING at a point in the dividing line between lands now or formerly of the Livingston Board of Education and that of Rainbow Ridge Homes, LLC, said point being distant northerly on a course of N 64 degrees 32 minutes 20 seconds W 32.49 feet from the westerly side of Blackstone Drive, said last mentioned point being distant northerly 610.63 feet from the intersection of the same with the northerly side of Hearthstone Drive if the same were produced to meet at an intersection.

thence (1) along said dividing line Drive N 76 degrees. 40 minutes. 55 seconds. 162.10 feet;

thence (2) N 24 degrees 27 minutes 50 seconds E 34.10 feet;

thence (3) S 64 degrees 32 minutes 20 seconds E 159.07 feet to the point or place of BEGINNING.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Livingston Board of Education hereby expressly finds there is no condition that the Premises must be used only for school purposes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Livingston Board of Education hereby expressly finds that the Premises herein described is no longer necessary for school purposes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if approved by the Division, the Livingston Board of Education hereby authorizes the sale of the Premises pursuant to the public sale requirements of

N.J.S.A. 18A:20-1 et seq. to the highest bidder, after advertisement of the sale.

### **3.3 State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the submission of an application for the State of New Jersey, State and Local Cybersecurity grant for the Federal Fiscal Year 2022.

Ms. Arnette seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khemka, Mrs. Khanna  
Nays - None

### **PERSONNEL**

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

### **4.1 Resignations & Retirements**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the resignations of:

Name	Position	Reason	Location	Last Day of Employment
<i>Dina Lawrence</i>	Teacher of Math	Resignation	LHS	June 30, 2023
<i>Sophie Wolf</i>	Instructional Aide	Resignation	Hillside	June 30, 2023
<i>Donna Patterson</i>	Instructional Aide	Resignation	Hillside	June 30, 2023

*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

#### 4.2 Rescissions

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education rescinds the resignation of *Andre Starnes* (25-Hr Bus Driver), previously approved on the May 15, 2023, agenda, with an effective date of May 25, 2023. After a brief leave of absence, Mr. Starnes' employment will continue without interruption at his previously approved salary and step.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education rescinds the appointment of *Gary Schwerzler* as previously approved by the LBOE on the May 15, 2023, agenda.

#### 4.3 Leaves of Absences

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the leaves of absences of:

Name	Location	Position	LOA w/pay and benefits	LOA w/o pay, but with benefits (if applicable)	Extended LOA w/o pay or benefits	Return Date
<i>Andre Starnes</i>	Transportation	25-Hr Bus Driver	NA	NA	6/1/2023-6/30/2023	8/30/2023
<i>Marjorie Duffy</i>	LHS	School Counselor	10/16/2023-12/1/2023 and 12/4/2023-12/15/2023**	12/18/2023-1/15/2024**	NA	1/16/2024
<i>Brynn Minghenelli</i>	Collins	Elementary School Teacher	10/6/2023-12/15/2023	12/18/2023-3/22/2024**	3/25/2024-6/30/2024	8/29/2024
<i>Vincent Belcastro</i>	HMS	Teacher of Italian	NA	9/5/2023-11/27/2023**	NA	11/28/2023
<i>Bethany Weissman*</i>	BHE	Speech Language Specialist	4/24/2023-5/15/2024	5/16/2023-6/30/2023 & 8/30/2023-11/24/2023**	11/27/2023-2/2/2024	2/5/2024

*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

*\*\*Designates time counted toward NJFLA/FMLA*

#### 4.4 Transfers

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following transfers as listed on **Attachment B**.

#### 4.5 Appointments

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the applications indicated below (\*) for emergent hiring for the following appointments under the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1 et.

seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39.17 et. seq.; N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. All appointments are contingent upon reference checks in accordance with P.L. 2018, c.5.

Name	Location	Title	Tenure Track/LOA or LT Replacement	Replacing	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Date
<i>Parsad Gandhi</i>	MPM	School Psychologist	First Year Tenure Track	J. Weiss	MA	7	\$66,825	8/30/2023
<i>Laura Larrazabal</i>	HMS	Teacher of Math	First Year Tenure Track	new	MA	10	\$77,525	8/30/2023
<i>Michelle Wolstromer</i>	Collins	Elementary School Teacher	Leave Replacement	B. Minghenelli	2x MA	1	\$68,675	8/30/2023
<i>Kathryn Destro</i>	Hillside	Elementary School Teacher	First Year Tenure Track	new	MA	10	\$77,525	8/30/2023
<i>Brian Bigelow</i>	LHS	Teacher of Biology	First Year Tenure Track	R. Rosenman	BA	14	\$85,675	8/30/2023
<i>Sean Pauls</i>	LHS	Teacher of Health & PE	First Year Tenure Track	new	BA	8	\$61,625	8/30/2023
<i>Dr. Heather Yaros-Ramos</i>	LHS	Teacher of Chemistry	First Year Tenure Track	E. Weis	D	15	\$108,475	8/30/2023
<i>Jill McLaughlin</i>	RHE	Kindergarten Teacher	First Year Tenure Track	A. Backer	BA	10	\$69,525	8/30/2023
<i>Thomas Mantone</i>	LHS	Teacher of Health & PE	First Year Tenure Track	T. Rosenberg	MA	6	\$65,925	8/30/2023
<i>Michael Buonomo</i>	LHS	School Counselor	First Year Tenure Track	new	MA	7	\$66,825, plus up to 10 summer 2023 days at per diem rate	8/30/2023
<i>Brynn Smith</i>	LHS	Teacher of Social Studies	First Year Tenure Track	N. Cicchino	BA	2	\$55,775	8/30/2023
<i>Daniel Kapuscinski**</i>	LHS	District Audiovisual & IT Support Specialist	NA	P. Gutheil	NA	NA	\$57,000, plus \$1,200 for BA, plus \$500 CompTIAA +	6/13/2023
<i>Julian Barbour</i>	Harrison	Custodian (Nights)	NA	I Sahatqiu (transfer)	C	1	\$42,914 plus \$975 for nights	7/1/2023
<i>Onofre Esperon, Jr.</i>	LHS	Custodian (Night/Weekend)	NA	R. Setalsingh (transfer)	C	1	\$42,914 plus \$975 for nights & \$975 for weekends	7/1/2023
<i>MariaTeresa Agnello</i>	MPE	Playground Aide	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$18.00/hr	5/31/2023

\*as amended from a previous agenda

\*\*salary will remain the same for the 2023-2024 school year

#### 4.6 Substitutes

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the individuals listed below to serve as substitutes on an as-needed basis for the 2022-2023 school year:

#### Teachers

*Kenneth Schwartz (Retired)*



### **Custodian**

*Dritan Strikchani (\$18.50/hr)*

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals listed on **Attachment C** as certified substitutes. These individuals are currently employed by the District. In the event these individuals are called upon to serve as a substitute, they will be compensated an additional \$50/day (\$10/period) for that assignment.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the individual(s) listed below to serve as long-term substitutes as reflected below:

Name	Location	Title	Leave Replacement or Long Term Sub	Replacing	Salary	Effective Date
<i>Cara Dock</i>	RHE	Reading Interventionist	Long Term Sub	K. Ambrose	\$315/day	8/30/2023-12/22/2023

#### **4.7 Contract Adjustments**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the contract adjustments as listed on **Attachment D**.

#### **4.8 Longevity**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individual(s) on **Attachment E** for longevity on September 1, 2023.

#### **4.9 Summer Work**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education amends the individuals listed on **Attachment F** to work over the summer of 2023 at the Summer Intervention Program at the approved rate of \$63.35/hr.

#### **4.10 Mentor Fees**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment G** listed as assigned mentors to receive payment in accordance with the schedule listed.

Ms. Arnette seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khemka, Mrs. Khanna  
Nays - None

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Mrs. Khemka moved the following:

#### **5.1 HIB Report**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the findings of HIB cases.

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khemka, Mrs. Khanna  
Nays - None



## **PREVIEW OF JUNE 20, 2023 VOTING MEETING AGENDA**

### **Student Representative to the Board**

Jake Ferrans

### **Superintendent's Report**

1. Educational Services Professionals
2. SEPAC
3. Great Schools Partnership

### **Approval of Minutes**

1. Voting Meeting Minutes of May 23, 2023
2. Public Portion of Executive Session Meeting Minutes of May 31, 2023
3. Executive Session Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2023; April 18, 2023; May 10, 2023; May 11, 2023; May 23, 2023; May 31, 2023

### **PROGRAM/CURRICULUM**

- 1.1 Student Teachers**
- 1.2 Field Trips**

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

- 2.1 Out of District Placements (2022-2023)**
- 2.2 Out of District Placements (2023-2024)**
- 2.3 Related Services/Medical Consultants**
- 2.4 Contract for Supervisory Services for L.I.N.K.S.**

### **BUSINESS**

- 3.1 Open Campus – Livingston High School Juniors and Seniors**
- 3.2 Payment of Bills**
- 3.3 Board Secretary Report – April 2023**
- 3.4 Transfers**
- 3.5 Update to Financial Depositories and Signatures**
- 3.6 Conferences and Overnight Trips**
- 3.7 West Essex YMCA**
- 3.8 Transfer of Current Year Surplus to Capital Reserve**
- 3.9 CJPRIDE Shared Services Agreement**
- 3.10 Collection, Removal and Disposal of Solid Waste/Recycled Trash Removal**
- 3.11 Settlement Agreement**
- 3.12 2022/23 Anticipated Contracts to be Renewed, Awarded or to Expire During the School Year - PL 2015 - Chapter 47**
- 3.13 Bylaws, Policies & Regulations (forthcoming)**

Mrs. Chirls confirmed the changes to the attendance policy and regulation are also reflected in the student handbook.

Mr. Cohen asked why we decided to open the campus to Juniors beginning in September and not during the second half of the year as we had done in the past.

Ms. Rosenzweig responded it is due to space constraints, especially now that they are eliminating a student lunch space by moving the faculty room.

### **Public Comment ~ up to 15 minutes**

There was no public comment.

June 12, 2023

### **Old Business**

Mrs. Khemka asked if we have spoken to the supervisors about the parent forum discussion about the financial literacy program and Dr. Block responded he will be looking into it.

### **New Business**

Mrs. Khemka asked if we can survey the students about what foods they would like to see on the menu while we are in the process of obtaining quotes from new food service vendors. Dr. Block explained we are already working with some feedback that we have received from the schools, parents and staff.

Ms. Zeno added we anticipate putting forth a recommendation at the June 20 voting meeting.

Mrs. Khanna announced that due to personal and professional commitments, she does not plan on running for reelection this year. Mrs. Khanna encouraged anyone in the community with an interest in serving, to get involved.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:20 p.m., Mr. Cohen made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor.

**Respectfully submitted,**



**Dora E. Zeno**  
**Interim Board Secretary**

June 12, 2023