



LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP/VOTING MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Public Session - Hybrid Meeting at Administration Building – 7:00 p.m.

A **Workshop/Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date in the large conference room in the Administration Building and via Zoom and Facebook Live. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Board President, Seth Cohen, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 4, 2022 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 and Vineeta Khanna

Members Absent: Samantha Messer and Jeffrey Xu

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

There were approximately 37 members of the public and staff watching in person and remotely through the webinar and a Facebook Live Stream.

Superintendent's Report

1. District Goals

Dr. Block highlighted the district goals for the 2022-2023 school year. The goals are aligned with our strategic plan. The five district goals are:

- Safety and Wellness - Ensure the emotional well-being and mental health of all our students through a strong feeling of connectedness, a sense of belonging to their school community, an awareness of the resources and support available to students and families in an effort to thwart the negative impacts of stress and mental illness.
- Teaching and Learning - Investigate, identify and envision the elements of a new district-wide instructional framework with emphasis on common language of instruction, authentic assessment and a real world context to foster student growth.
- Leadership and Governance - Foster a supportive and desirable work environment for all district staff by providing opportunities to grow as leaders, contribute to district initiatives, access mentoring and participate in training and professional development in order to maximize recruitment efforts, retain excellent teachers and promote longevity.
- Community and Culture - Engaging all stakeholders including students and their families in educational programs processes is essential to creating a community of equity in our school district. Ensure just outcomes for each student, raise marginalized voices and challenge imbalances of power and privilege.

- **Finance and Facilities** - Take inventory of the district's facilities to determine current strengths, deficiencies and needs. Use the Demographic Study and conversations with town officials and management to gain understanding of future needs. Determine the gaps between what currently exists and what the district will need in the future. From that investigation, devise a multi-year plan to create flexible, innovative educational spaces that meet the needs of a growing and changing student population who have a range of learning needs and interests.

The full presentation, including actions steps for each goal, is available on our website.

Mrs. Khanna asked who will qualify to be on the panel of professionals for mental health and Dr. Block responded it would be people who know adolescents, work with them and are in the mental health field. Mrs. Khanna then asked if residents in the community can reach out if they want to volunteer and Dr. Block responded they can reach out to him; however, they have not yet formalized a process.

Mrs. Khanna asked how community conversations would work and Dr. Block responded they would invite everyone to come out to have a conversation and answer questions about a specific topic of our choosing.

Mrs. Khanna asked how we define a trusting adult and Dr. Block responded that a trusting adult is any staff member working with students that they feel they can go to with an issue.

Dr. Block congratulated the Lancer Marching Band for performing at the Jets game last Sunday and announced that the LHS Robotics Team participated in their first competition this week.

Board Reports

Mr. Cohen announced he has arranged a 5:5 Meeting between the LBOE and Township on November 30 at 7:00 p.m. and plans to post the agenda long before the meeting so the public knows what topics will be discussed. Some items that will be on the agenda include future developments and how they impact the future enrollment numbers in our schools, land and buildings within the Township that might be of potential use to the district and how to partner more collaboratively on the Welcome to Livingston event.

Mr. Cohen continued that the board members all visited the elementary schools over the past few weeks to better understand our space challenges.

Mrs. Chirls explained some of the board members were in Atlantic City last week for the New Jersey School Boards annual conference where they were able to participate in a number of programs on a variety of topics affecting schools.

Board Budget Goals

The board members expressed what they would like to see as board budget goals for the upcoming budget.

Mrs. Chirls would like expanded access to and resources and services to support LHS students in high school planning, post-graduation planning and with the college application process; provide resources that drive greater involvement in extracurricular activities and athletics; provide resources to conduct an equity audit that includes special education; and provide resources to perform an architectural space/constraint analysis for each building across the district.

Mrs. Khanna added after the space analysis is performed, prioritize the needs and plan expenses accordingly for our facilities.

Ms. Arnette agreed that space is a priority, especially with our growing enrollment. Ms. Arnette would also like resources dedicated to an equity audit and toward the college application process by ensuring we have enough counselors to get the students the services they need.

Mr. Cohen suggested maintaining class sizes at or below guidelines now and in the future, increasing the use of flexible learning environments and mitigating the rising health care costs for our district and staff.

Mrs. Chirls added if we are thinking about building projects, the board should look to reduce our class size guidelines. Mr. Cohen agreed.

There was a brief discussion about changing our educational observation model and the cost associated with doing so but Mr. Stern responded there is more work to do on this and that it wouldn't be for this upcoming budget year.

Mr. Davison explained health care costs would be looked at through negotiations.

Mr. Cohen concluded that they have come to a consensus on four clear goals, will work on the language and bring them back for review at the November 22 meeting.

Public Input on Agenda Items ~ up to 15 minutes

Mark Konstandt, 41 Filmore Avenue, asked the board to table the vote to reject the turf field bids until after next week's election. Mr. Konstandt advocated to go ahead with the turf field as funds for the project were already allocated and it would greatly benefit our entire community since we are limited on fields and the sports population has exploded in Livingston.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL

PROGRAM/CURRICULUM

Mrs. Khanna moved the following:

1.1 Approval of District Goals

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the district goals for the 2022-2023 school year as shown on **Attachment A**.

1.2 Field Trips

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the field trips as shown on **Attachment B**.

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna
Nayes - None

BUSINESS

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

3.1 Rejection of Bids - Synthetic Turf Field at Livingston High School

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education rejects all of the three bids received on October 7, 2022, for the synthetic turf field at Livingston High School. The bids are being rejected pursuant to NJSA 18A:18A-22 (c). The Board may revisit a turf field in conjunction with future facility needs.

3.2 Conferences and Overnight Trips

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the conferences and overnight trips as shown on **Attachment C**.

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

Mr. Cohen responded to Mr. Konstandt’s comment about the turf field by stating he completely agrees with the current state of our fields and the need for this additional turf field in Livingston; however, he has to be a good steward of the community’s tax dollars. Mr. Cohen added that with with the challenges we have uncovered with our facilities, it is critical we put together an overarching plan for the district’s future facilities needs inclusive of its fields.

In response to Mrs. Chirls suggestion to do something in the interim to keep up and improve the field Mr. Davison explained he has spoken to the athletic director and the field is not currently being utilized due to the condition. Mr. Davison has suggestions on what could be done to improve the area but recommended waiting until the 5:5 meeting to get a better idea of what our plans may be going forward.

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

PERSONNEL

Ms. Arnette moved the following:

4.1 Resignations

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

Name	Position	Reason	Location	Last Day of Employment
<i>Suzanne Steckert</i>	Grade 6 English Teacher	Retirement	MPMS	December 31, 2022
<i>Shea Williams</i>	Library Media Specialist	Resignation	BHE	December 19, 2022
<i>Filona Leechow</i>	Support Staff	Resignation	BHE	December 16, 2022
<i>Michelle Polo</i>	TOSD	Resignation	MPE	December 21, 2022

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna
Nayes - None

MISCELLANEOUS

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

5.1 HIB Report

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

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Khanna
Nayes - None

PREVIEW OF NOVEMBER 22, 2022 VOTING AGENDA

The board reviewed the upcoming items for the November 22 meeting.

Superintendent's Report

1. Assessment Update

Approval of Minutes

1. Workshop/Voting Meeting Minutes of October 11, 2022
2. Voting Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2022

PROGRAM/CURRICULUM

- 1.1 TextBooks and DVDs**
- 1.2 Student Teacher**

STUDENT SERVICES

- 2.1 Out of District Placements (forthcoming)**
- 2.2 Related Services/Medical Consultants (forthcoming)**

BUSINESS

- 3.1 Payment of Bills (forthcoming)**
- 3.2 Preliminary Board Secretary Report – September 2022**
- 3.3 Transfers**
- 3.4 Joint Transportation Agreement with Morris-Union Jointure Commission**
- 3.5 Acceptance of Additional Funds for NonPublic Auxiliary and Handicapped Aid (Chapter 192/193)**
- 3.6 Policies & Regulations**

PERSONNEL

- 4.1 Resignations (forthcoming)**
- 4.2 Leaves of Absences (forthcoming)**
- 4.3 Appointments**
- 4.4 Substitutes**
- 4.5 Extra Work Pay (forthcoming)**
- 4.6 Stipends**
- 4.7 Mentor Fees**
- 4.8 Contract Adjustments**
- 4.9 Extra Period Assignments**

MISCELLANEOUS

5.1 HIB Report

5.2 Suspension Report

Public Comment ~ up to 15 minutes

Parul Khemka, 70 Elwood Drive, asked if the equity audit would be inclusive of all students and ensure IEPs are rendered equitably. Mrs. Khemka also asked if this will be a working committee and if the community would have input.

Dr. Block responded it is our goal to make sure everyone of our students feels included and although we aren't quite there yet in terms of the process, we hope to find someone to lead us in this initiative.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:30 p.m., Mrs. Chirls made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Arentte seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



**Michael Davison
Board Secretary**