

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY
MINUTES INDEX
JUNE 8, 2015
REGULAR SESSION 5:30 P.M.
EXECUTIVE SESSION 5:31 P.M.
BOARD OF EDUCATION CONFERENCE ROOM
REGULAR SESSION 7:12 P.M.
CEDAR HILL SCHOOL**

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**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 8, 2015
REGULAR SESSION 5:30 P.M.
EXECUTIVE SESSION 5:31 P.M.
BOARD OF EDUCATION CONFERENCE ROOM
REGULAR SESSION 7:12 P.M.
CEDAR HILL SCHOOL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. by Vice President Kusel.

- I. **Regular Session – Call to Order – 5:30 p.m. – Board of Education Conference Room**
- II. **Salute to the Flag**
- III. **Roll Call**

PRESENT: Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Kusel, Ms. Richman, Ms. Wooldridge, Mr. Markarian, Mr. Siet, Mr. McLaughlin, Board Counsel John Croot

ABSENT: Ms. McKeon, Ms. Shah

- IV. **Executive Session – 5:31 p.m. – Board of Education Conference Room**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Bernards Township Board of Education met in closed session to discuss: contract negotiations; confidential personnel items; confidential student matters; and further

BE IT RESOLVED that the matters discussed in closed session will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public interest or without violation of the confidentiality of personnel.

On motion by Ms. Richman, seconded by Ms. Wooldridge, and approved by all present, the Board recessed into closed executive session at 5:31 p.m.

On motion by Mr. Fry, seconded by Ms. Wooldridge, and approved by all present, the Board returned to public session at 7:02 p.m.

The Board reconvened the regular meeting in the William Annin Middle School Auditorium at 7:12 p.m.

V. Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:12 p.m. – Cedar Hill School Multipurpose Room

VI. Statement of Public Notice

This was a regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Bernards Township. Notice of the time and place of this meeting was provided and copies of that resolution were forwarded to the official newspapers as designated by the Board of Education and to the Township Clerk and a copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Board of Education Offices in accordance with P.L. 1975 Chapter 231A.

We very much welcome input from the public. There are two times during regular meetings that the public is invited to speak. One time is early in the meeting before the Board votes, and you may speak about any item that is listed on tonight's agenda. Towards the end of the meeting, there is another public forum to address any topic whatsoever.

When you approach the microphone, please state your name and address. In order to run efficient meetings and to allow maximum opportunity for members of the public to speak, the Board reserves the right to set a time limit for individual comments and/or public comment portions of the agenda. Please understand that our public forums are not structured as question and answer sessions, but rather they are offered as opportunities to share your thoughts with the Board. Any Board responses to public comment will be addressed during Board Forum, or during committee reports.

There are times when a member of the public makes a comment or asks a question about an employee. New Jersey statute does not permit us to discuss personnel issues in public. Also as a matter of law, a Board of Education may only vote for or against the hiring of an employee upon the recommendation of the superintendent. If the superintendent does not recommend a person, that person's name is not listed on the agenda and there is no vote on that action. If it is necessary for the Board to go into executive session at the end of the meeting, we will provide an estimated length of time for the session and whether any action is anticipated to be taken upon returning to public session.

VII. Student Recognition

1) New Jersey Junior Classical League State Convention

Mr. Joshua Gebhardt/Mr. John Rathgeb

Shawn Kant	Joyce Hyojin Lee
Jeremy Mazumder	Thomas Mazumder
Rachel Richards	Kaitlyn Van Baalen
Andrea Zhang	

Mr. Gebhardt highlighted the team's accomplishments during the 2014-15 school year.

2) Ridge High School Forensics

Mr. David Yastremski

Anudeep Akenapalli	Vaikunth Balaji
Naiti Bhatt	A.J. D'Ambrosio
Aria Dandawate	Xusong Du
Daanyal Farooqi	Davis George
Jennifer Huang	Shawn Kant
Raina Karia	Katie Kleinle
Shankar Krishnan	Yana Kropotova
Katie Lemke	Lena Li
Amanda Luthy	Nidhi Mahagaokar
Cameron Montag	Tim O'Shea
Asli Pekcan	Daniel Perez
Matthew Perez	Rishabh Puri
Alison Shim	Saloni Singhvi
Chandni Singhvi	Oliver Tang
Timothy Tang	Sejal Waghray
Eric Wan	Ashley Yang
Mary Zhang	

Mr. Yastremski spoke on the successes of this year's team. He introduced Danielle Presuto as a new assistant advisor to the program. Mr. Yastremski acknowledged the support of Ridge High School Principal Frank Howlett and presented him with the "Public Speaker Debate Principal of the Year" award.

VIII. Board Presentation

1) Cedar Hill School – Where Learning is Bringing Quality to Young Lives

Cedar Hill School Principal Joe Mollica began his introduction by describing Cedar Hill School's quality of life theme including its mission to enable children to learn through knowledge, skills, attitude and life experiences. Cedar Hill School's areas of learning, personalization and the overall goals of personal fulfillment, independence and giving back to family and community were highlighted.

Mr. Mollica's introduction was followed by various student presentations.

For complete presentation click [here](#).

IX. Superintendent's Report

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- 1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby affirm receipt of the **HIB Report** dated June 8, 2015.

On motion by Ms. Cwerner, seconded by Ms. Gray, Item #1 was approved by the following roll call vote:

"Ayes" - Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Richman,
Ms. Wooldridge, Ms. Kusel
"Noes" - None
"Abstain" - None

Superintendent Nick Markarian noted at the Ridge High School student awards night, the Ridge Sports Foundation made its initial donation of \$10,000 toward the high school Wellness Center.

X. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Comments were made regarding Common Core and changes that had been made to meet its initial requirements.

XI. Committee Reports

FINANCE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- 1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve a list of disbursements dated June 8, 2015 consisting of warrants in the amount of \$4,209,854.44.

2) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby accept a donation from the **William Annin PTO** in the amount of \$2,100 to purchase automated valves in the restroom facilities.

3) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve professional development expenses in accordance with P.L. 2007 An Act Concerning School District Accountability and annual Board resolution for the 2015-16 school year:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Name of Conference:</u>	<u>Cost:</u>	<u>Date(s):</u>
C. Barone	ISTE Conference	\$670.00	6/29/2015 – 7/1/2015

On motion by Ms. Richman, seconded by Ms. Wooldridge, Items #1 through #3 were approved by the following roll call vote:

- “Ayes” - Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Richman, Ms. Wooldridge, Ms. Kusel
- “Noes” - None
- “Abstain” - None

Chairperson Elaine Kusel noted the donation made by the William Annin PTO and thanked them for their continued support and generosity.

Ms. Kusel reported on the May 14 Finance Committee meeting highlighting the following areas of discussion: proposed improvements to the softball field, an update on health benefits and the current dental plan, current and long-term planning in regard to health care costs, and an update on debt service.

PERSONNEL

Chairperson Bev Cwerner will report out at the June 15 Board meeting.

CURRICULUM

Chairperson Linda Wooldridge reported on the May 8 Curriculum Committee meeting highlighting the implementation of the Botvin Life Skills Program as a pilot program in grades 6 and 9. Director of Athletics Richard Shello spoke on feedback from staff in regard to this program and the secondary health curriculum. The math discussion focused on 8th grade placement, summer assignments, the TenMarks program and Algebra I summer school. Also discussed was the Ridge summer reading list and the options offered to students, the Gifted & Talented cluster grouping, the telescoped math curriculum, AP Biology summer assignment and an update on PARCC.

POLICY

Ms. Gray will report out at the June 15 Board meeting.

ADVOCACY

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby adopt the following resolution in regard to the PARCC assessments:

WHEREAS the Bernards Township Board of Education fully supports educational policies and practices designed to provide results that promote and improve student achievement, college and career readiness, and best teaching practices; and

WHEREAS though we believe in some form of standardized testing, we believe there is a value in our own district-chosen formative and benchmark assessments that yield data driven educational decision-making; and

WHEREAS the rush to implement PARCC in an unreasonable timeframe has created organizational stresses including budgetary impacts, technological constraints, and reallocation of staff and other resources; and

WHEREAS PARCC preparation and administration has disrupted the school calendar and resulted in reduced instructional time in the classroom; and

WHEREAS the testing window dates as determined by PARCC and the NJDOE are too early in our school calendar, which goes until mid/late June; and

WHEREAS PARCC testing in its current form should not be used to evaluate teachers or students;

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved that the Bernards Township Board of Education encourages the Governor, State Legislature, State Department of Education and Study Commission on the Use of Student Assessments in New Jersey to reconsider the speed of implementation and the amount of testing; and that the Board Secretary is instructed to distribute a copy of this resolution to the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the State Board of Education, the Study Commission, and the Senate and Assembly Education Committees.

On motion by Ms. Cwerner, seconded by Ms. Gray, Item #1 was approved by the following roll call vote:

“Ayes” - Ms. Cwerner, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Richman, Ms. Wooldridge,
Ms. Kusel
“Noes” - Mr. Byrne
“Abstain” - None

Ms. Richman read a statement from Ms. Shah in regard to the PARCC resolution.

Ms. Richman updated the Board on the June 1 meeting with the PTO Advisory Board. Items discussed included a PARCC update and the 15-Minute Child Break Program. Mr. Markarian reviewed 2015-16 professional development plans, the Gifted & Talented cluster grouping and an upcoming benefit for a high school student.

LIAISON REPORTS

Linda Wooldridge reported on the Somerset County Educational Services Commission ribbon cutting ceremony on May 20, the Municipal Alliance's meeting on June 2 and the success of the Twilight Challenge.

XII. Public Comment

Comments were made on the Cedar Hill presentation, school security at elementary schools, the resolution on the agenda in regard to PARCC testing and the impact of Common Core on the students.

XIII. Board Forum

- 1) PARCC Letter
- 2) Common Core

Comments were made regarding the safety of students in school, the voluntary random drug testing program and the STEM and Gifted & Talented programs.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Cwerner, seconded by Mr. Fry, and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rod McLaughlin
Board Secretary