

MORRIS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Minutes of January 4, 2021
[VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM](#)

The reorganizational meeting of the Board of Education of the Morris School District, of Morris County, New Jersey was held virtually via Zoom to the public, on Monday evening, January 4, 2021 at 6:32 p.m.

Anthony Lo Franco, Board Secretary, called the meeting to order and made the following announcement: The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act the Board of Education of the Morris School District in the County of Morris has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted. The notice was mailed to the Daily Record, and to those persons or entities requesting notification, posted on the district website and posted at the Administration Center, 31 Hazel Street, Morristown, New Jersey.

OATH OF OFFICE

Anthony Lo Franco administered the Oath of Office to Mrs. Meredith Davidson of Morristown, Mrs. Elisabeth Wall of Morristown and Mr. Alan Smith of Morris Township.

At the Roll Call, the following Board Members were present in person: Mrs. Nancy Bangiola, Mrs. Meredith Davidson, Ms. Linda K. Murphy, Mr. Vij Pawar, Mrs. Susan Pedalino, Mrs. Ann Rhines, Mr. Alan Smith, Mrs. Melissa Spiotta, and Mrs. Beth Wall.

Also present, were Mr. Mackey Pendergrast, Superintendent and Mr. Anthony Lo Franco, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Ms. Lora Clark, Director of Human Resources, Personnel & Equity, Ms. Deb Engelfried, Director of Data & Analysis Programs, and Mr. Marc Gold, Director of Pupil Services.

The Board moved to go into closed session at 6:40 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion #1 AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, while the Sen. Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.) requires all meetings of the Morris School District Board of Education to be held in public, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) sets forth nine (9) types of matters that may lawfully be discussed in "Executive Session," without the public being permitted to attend, and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that three (3) issues are permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) to be discussed without the public in attendance and shall be discussed during an Executive Session to be held on January 4, 2021 at 6:30 P.M, and

WHEREAS, the nine (9) exceptions to open public meetings set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) are listed below, and next to each exception is a box which will be marked when the issues to be privately discussed fall within that exception, and after each exception is a space where additional information that will disclose as much information about the discussion as possible without undermining the purpose of the exception shall be written:

☒ "(1) Any matter which, by express provision of Federal law, State statute or rule of court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from public discussion." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality are: Student Matters

☐ "(2) Any matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the federal government." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

☐ "(3) Any material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy such as any records, data, reports, recommendations, or other personal material of any educational, training, social service, medical, health, custodial, child protection, rehabilitation, legal defense, welfare, housing, relocation, insurance and similar program or institution operated by a public body pertaining to any specific individual admitted to or served by such institution or program, including but not limited to information relative to the individual's personal and family circumstances, and any material pertaining to admission, discharge, treatment, progress or condition of any individual, unless the individual concerned (or, in the case of a minor or incompetent, his guardian) shall request in writing that the same be disclosed publicly." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

☐ "(4) Any collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions of which are proposed for inclusion in any collective bargaining agreement, including the negotiation of terms and conditions with employees or representatives of employees of the public body." The collective bargaining contract(s) discussed are between (1) the Board and the Morris School District Administrators Association.

☐ "(5) Any matter involving the purchase lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

□ "(6) Any tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public provided that their disclosure could impair such protection. Any investigations of violations or possible violations of the law." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

□ "(7) Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer." The parties to and docket numbers of each item of litigation and/or the parties to each contract discussed are and the nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

☒ "(8) Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting." Subject to the balancing of the public's interest and the employee's privacy rights under South Jersey Publishing Co. v. New Jersey Expressway Authority, 124 N.J. 478 (1991), the employee(s) and nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality are:

□ "(9) Any deliberation of a public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty upon the responding party or the suspension or loss of a license or permit belonging to the responding party as a result of an act of omission for which the responding party bears responsibility." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

WHEREAS, the length of the Executive Session is estimated to be sixty (60) minutes after which the public meeting of the Board shall (select one) □ reconvene and immediately adjourn or ☒ reconvene and proceed with business where formal action will be taken.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Morris School District Board of Education will go into Executive Session for only the above stated reasons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) will be made public at a time when the public's interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Motion #1)

Moved by Mr. Pawar, seconded by Mrs. Spiotta

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino,
Mrs. Rhines, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta, Mrs. Wall

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

At 7:09 pm, Mr. Pawar moved to go into open session and recess. Ms. Murphy seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Also present, remotely at 7:30, Mrs. Jennifer Adkins, Community School Coordinator, Ms. Kiina Dordoni, Director of Bilingual and ELL Programs, K-12, Mrs. Joan Frederick, Assistant Business Administrator, Ms. Kelly Harte, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Erica Hartman, Director of Technology, Instruction, Dr. Jennifer van Frank, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator, and Mr. Brain Young, Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Public Session began at 7:31 pm

There were approximately 74 members of the public, staff and local media virtually in attendance.

Mr. Lo Franco announced that the Board had been meeting in closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel and student matters. Mr. Lo Franco added prior to closed session, he administered the oath of office to the re-elected Board members, Mrs. Davidson and Mr. Smith, as well as the newly elected Board member, Mrs. Elisabeth Wall.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Lo Franco led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Mr. Lo Franco opened the floor to nominations for President.

Motion to nominate Mrs. Spiotta for President

Moved by Mrs. Davidson, seconded by Mrs. Pedalino

There were no other nominations.

Roll call vote for Mrs. Spiotta for President

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino, Mrs. Rhines,

Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta, Mrs. Wall

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Mrs. Spiotta was elected President

ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Spiotta opened the floor to nominations for Vice President

Motion to nominate Ms. Murphy for Vice President

Moved by Mrs. Bangiola, seconded by Mr. Pawar

There were no other nominations.

Roll call vote for Ms. Murphy for Vice President

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino, Mrs. Rhines,

Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta, Mrs. Wall

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Ms. Murphy was elected Vice President

ORGANIZATIONAL

4. **Appointment and Delegates**

Appointment, by the President, of alternate delegate to the New Jersey School Boards Association and the Morris County School Boards Association.

Delegate	<u>Board President</u>
State Alternate	Ms. Murphy
County Alternate	Ms. Murphy

Appointment, by the President, of a Member to the Morris County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors.

Member: **Ms. Murphy**

Appointment, by the President, of a Member to the Morris Educational Foundation.

Member: **Mrs. Rhines**

5. **Code of Ethics**

Motion, that the Board of Education adopt the “Code of Ethics for School Board Members” as per the [attached](#).

6. **Parliamentary Procedures**

Motion that the Board of Education approve Robert’s Rules of Order as the official Guide for Parliamentary Procedure for the Morris School District.

7. **Policy**

Motion, that all policies, rules, regulations, handbooks and other legislative or regulatory action of this Board, in force immediately prior to this reorganization meeting, are hereby continued in force, as if the Board Year had not changed.

8. **Authorizations**

Motion, that the Assistant Board Secretary or in his/her absence, the President, or the Vice

President, act as Board Secretary in the absence of the Board Secretary.

9. **Business Administrator Authorization**

Motion that the Board of Education approve the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to approve bids, approve account transfers, pay bills, approve construction change orders and approve travel in accordance with policies #0147, 0147A, 3440 and 4440, Board Member Travel Expenses; Staff Travel Expenses and N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, in between board meetings on an emergency basis with list of such bids, transfers, payments, construction change orders and travel subject to presentation and ratification at the next business meeting of the board.

10. **Superintendent's Authorization**

Motion that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent of Schools or his designee to employ school personnel to fill vacancies in existing job classifications as they may occur in between board meetings on an emergency basis with a list of those employed subject to presentation and ratification at the next business meeting of the board.

11. **Charges for Reproducing Public Documents**

Motion, that the Board of Education approves the following rates for photocopying of public documents in compliance with NJSA 47:1A-1

Letter size or smaller	\$0.05/page
Legal size or larger	\$0.07/page

12. **Meeting Dates Designation**

Motion, that the meetings of the Board of Education shall be held on Monday evenings (as per [attached](#) schedule of meeting dates). The meetings will open at 6:30 p.m. and immediately adjourn to closed session until 7:30 when the regular business meeting will begin. In the event that said schedule is hereafter revised, the Board Secretary is hereby directed to post and direct notice to [The Daily Record](#) at least 48 hours before the revised meeting date.

13. **Official Newspaper**

Motion, that the Daily Record be designated as the official newspaper of the Morris School District. Other notices, which require a broader circulation, shall also be published in The Star Ledger.

14. **Board Committees**

Motion, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve the members of Board Committees as per below:

2021 Board Committees

Committee:	<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Finance</u>	<u>Human Resources</u>	<u>Policy</u>
Meetings:	Wednesdays @ 4:00 pm	Tuesdays @ 4:30 pm	Tuesdays @ 6:00 pm	Fridays @ 12:00 pm
School Contact:	<i>Brian Young</i>	<i>Anthony Lo Franco</i>	<i>Lora Clark</i>	<i>Kelly Harte</i>
Chair:	Ann Rhines	Linda Murphy	Alan Smith	Melissa Spiotta
Committee:	Nancy Bangiola	Meredith Davidson	Vij Pawar	Nancy Bangiola
	Meredith Davidson	Alan Smith	Susan Pedalino	Linda Murphy
	Linda Murphy	Melissa Spiotta	Ann Rhines	Vij Pawar
	Susan Pedalino	Beth Wall	Melissa Spiotta	Beth Wall
Alternate:	<i>Beth Wall</i>	<i>Nancy Bangiola</i>	<i>Meredith Davidson</i>	<i>Ann Rhines</i>

Committee:	<u>Negotiations</u>	<u>Governance</u>
Meetings:	TBD	TBD
School Contact:		
Chair:	Nancy Bangiola	Nancy Bangiola
Committee:	Linda Murphy	Meredith Davidson
	Alan Smith	Linda Murphy
	Melissa Spiotta	Melissa Spiotta
		Ann Rhines
Alternate:		

REORGANIZATIONAL (Motions #4-14)

Moved by Mrs. Spiotta, seconded by Mrs. Bangiola

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino,
 Mrs. Rhines, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Wall

ABSENT: None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Pendergrast began with a clip of the MHS Choir from the MHS Winter Showcase and spoke about the FMS Choir, Chorus, Orchestra and Band virtual concert. Mr. Pendergrast thanked the students, staff and MEF for their creativity and inspiration.

Mr. Pendergrast continued with a district update on Coronavirus.

Mr. Pendergrast finished his report by recognizing Mr. George E. Kelley, who was an original Board Member of the school district who recently passed away. Mr. Pendergrast honored Mr. Kelley's

involvement in merging the Town and Township school districts to help attain racial balance, as well as his many other important achievements.

Questions and comments were taken from the Board.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Spiotta thanked the Board for their support to serve as Board President. Additionally, Mrs. Spiotta praised the students and staff involved in the virtual Winter Showcases. Furthermore, thanked the MEF for donating the hand bells to the FMS students.

Mrs. Spiotta also shared her praise regarding Mr. Kelley and his legacy in the district.

Mrs. Pedalino thanked TEAM for their Pride Grant that went towards the MHS Winter Showcase.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public came forward to comment on the following topics:

- *Superintendent/Administration attending K-5 virtual classes/meets*
- *Addressing mental health of students due to COVID*
- *Advocating teachers receiving vaccination*
- *Fear based decisions*
- *Thanking Board for recognition of Mr. George Kelley*
- *Length of quarantine differing between CDC/NJ DOH guidelines and district requirements*
- *Absence of instrumental music in the 3rd/4th grade levels*
- *First day of school falling on second day of Rosh Hashanah*
- *Staying open as long as possible for sake of students well being*
- *Factors in decision of opening/closing schools*
- *Digital civics in school curriculum*
- *Status of pandemic teams*
- *Specific benchmark to end school closures*
- *Lack of K-5 music and/or virtual concert*
- *Plan of specials returning to K-5 school days*
- *Importance of reporting to school in person*
- *Inaccuracy of student info between Canvas and PowerSchool*
- *Communication to parents regarding incomplete work and/or poor grades*
- *Trouble with school issued Chromebook*

Mr. Pendergrast addressed the comments and questions from the public.

Committee Reports

Student Representatives

Ms. Franco and Ms. Dummett reported on the following:

- *Seniors finishing up their college applications*
- *SGO focused on continuing dialogue with MHS administration and student body during virtual learning*
- *SGO created a survey and focus group for students to gain feedback*

BUSINESS PORTION OF THE MEETING

MINUTES

Motion #1 that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education, approve executive session minutes from the regular business meeting of:

December 14, 2020

Motion #2 that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education, approve minutes from the regular business meeting of:

December 14, 2020

MINUTES (Motions #1-2)

Moved by Ms. Murphy, seconded by Mr. Pawar

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino,
Mrs. Rhines, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Wall

ABSENT: None

EDUCATIONAL MATTERS

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING REPORT

Motion #1 that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education accept the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying report for the period ending, December 14, 2020.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL GREAT HORIZONS & ADULT SCHOOL 2020-2021

Motion #2 that, on the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve the following additional courses and instructors for the spring semester of the [Community School Great Horizons and Adult School](#) programming, to be offered between February and June, 2021. (See attached Educational folder)

EDUCATIONAL MATTERS (Motions #1-2)

Moved by Ms. Murphy, seconded by Mrs. Bangiola

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino,
Mrs. Rhines, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Wall

ABSENT: None

HUMAN RESOURCES

RESIGNATION(S)/TERMINATION(S)/RETIREMENT(S) 2020-2021

Motion #1 that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve the resignation(s), termination(s) and/or retirement(s) of the following staff according to the effective date and reason shown:

Cardoza, Melissa	January 1, 2021
1.0 Bus Driver, Transportation	Resignation

Catanzaro, Danielle	February 15, 2021
0.5 Speech Therapist, PS	Resignation

APPOINTMENT(S) 2020-2021

Motion #2 that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve the appointment of the following to the position/s stated at the annual salary rates and effective date/s shown, and further that the Board of Education approve the submission to the County Superintendent applications for emergency hiring, pending approval of all Human Resource documents and/or requirements and each applicant's attestation that s/he has not been convicted of any disqualifying crime pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18a6-7.1 et seq.; 18:39-17 et seq.; 18A:6-4.13 et seq.:

Hanc, Morgan	\$58,877	01/04/21-06/30/21	<u>In place of:</u> Est. 11/09/20
1.0 Speech Therapist, PS	MA, Step 2		

LEAVE(S) OF ABSENCE 2020-2021*/**

Motion #3 that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve a leave of absence to the following staff members under the conditions stated and effective dates shown:

Lipari, Erin	12/21/20-02/12/21 * - Maternity
1.0 Grade 1, HC	02/15/21-05/17/21 ** FMLA/NJFLA ** (revised dates)

* Accumulated sick leave may be used up to a period of eight weeks (four weeks before and four weeks after the birth of the baby) – with pay/with benefits.

** Without pay/with benefits

EXTRA PAY 2020-2021

Motion #4 that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve the following extra-pay positions for the 2020-2021 school year:

MORRISTOWN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS					
POSITION	STAFF MEMBER	YR EXP.	SALARY	INC	TOTAL SALARY
ATHLETICS – MHS					
Athletic Site Manager (Winter)	Piccolo, Rose	3	\$2,333		\$2,333
Ice Hockey					
Assistant Coach – Boys	Iannone, Anthony	1	\$5,037		\$5,037

ESTABLISH POSITION(S) 2020-2021

Motion #5 that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education establish the following position(s) for the 2020-2021 school year:

- (1) 1.0 ABS, PS

HUMAN RESOURCES (Motions #1-5)

Moved by Ms. Murphy, seconded by Mrs. Bangiola

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino,
 Mrs. Rhines, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Wall

ABSENT: None

BUSINESS MATTERS

BILLS LIST 2020-2021

Motion #1 that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approve the attached 2020-2021 bills list for the period ending:

**December 15 & 31, 2020 (payroll)
January 4, 2021**

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES 2020-2021

Motion #2 WHEREAS, there exists a need for professional services for 2020-2021 and funds are available for these purposes.

WHEREAS, the Public School Contracts Law (Chapter 114, Laws of 1977) requires that the Resolution authorizing the award of contracts for professional services without competitive bids be publicly adopted,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Morris School District Board of Education that the following be engaged for professional services as described and in the amount not to exceed as follows:

The Bilingual Child Study Team - Dr. Andre J. Francois, PH.D	Bilingual School Psychological/ Bilingual Educational/ Bilingual Speech/Bilingual Social and Battelle(BDI) Evaluations Translations of reports	\$1,100/evaluation \$80/page
Therapy Travelers	Social Worker	\$72-\$82/hour

BUSINESS MATTERS (Motions #1-2)

Moved by Ms. Murphy, seconded by Mrs. Pedalino

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino, Mrs. Rhines, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Wall

ABSENT: None

NEW BUSINESS BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

Mrs. Spiotta mentioned the MHS HSA is hosting Dr. John Duffy, Wednesday, January 13th in a virtual forum on Parenting through COVID.

Additionally, Mrs. Spiotta reported the Board Governance Committee will convene to discuss how the Board can proceed to the next level and how to recognize and acknowledge former Board Members.

ADJOURNMENT (9:07 PM)

Moved by Mr. Pawar, seconded by Mrs. Davidson

AYES: Mrs. Bangiola, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pawar, Mrs. Pedalino,
Mrs. Rhines, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Spiotta, Mrs. Wall

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Respectfully Submitted,

Anthony Lo Franco
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary