

Minutes
April 14, 2021
Swedesboro-Woolwich Board of Education
"A Community dedicated to inspiring life-long learners"
Gov. Charles Stratton School
15 Fredrick Boulevard
Woolwich Township, NJ 08085
6:00 pm Executive Session
6:30 pm Regular Session

1. Opening

A. Call to Order

Open Public Meeting Act. *Adequate notice of this meeting of the board of education of the Swedesboro-Woolwich School District has been provided in accordance with the certification of notice by the secretary of the board, which shall become part of the minutes of this meeting.*

B. Roll Call

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. Gina Azzari, School Board President	All Committees
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. Natalie Baker, School Board Vice President	(Chair) Curriculum, (Chair) Negotiations, Personnel/Finance Committees
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. Jaclyn Dopke	(Chair) Personnel/Finance, Negotiations Committees
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. Deborah Allen	(Chair) Operations Committee
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. Rosella Musumeci	Personnel/Finance, Negotiations Committees
	Mrs. Julie Dickson	Operations Committee
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. Tamara McGovern	Curriculum Committee
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ms. Vivian Lane	Curriculum, Negotiations Committees
	Mrs. Tara Riddell	Operations Committee

Quorum: 7-2/6:01 pm

Other's Present:

Mr. Dennis J. Anderson, Interim Superintendent
Mr. Jack Pfizenmayer, Interim School Business Administrator
Mr. Taylor Ruilova, School Board Solicitor
Mr. Joel Brown, Chief Information Officer
Ms. Christina Panebianco, Assistant School Board Secretary

Swedesboro-Woolwich Board of Education

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION – If Needed

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act authorizes boards of education to meet in closed executive session under certain circumstances, and

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act requires the Swedesboro-Woolwich School District Board of Education (the "Board") to adopt a resolution at a public meeting to go into closed executive session; now therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board that it is necessary to meet in closed executive session to discuss certain items, including the following:

- Matters of personal confidentiality rights, including but not limited to, staff and/or student discipline matters, and specifically: HIB
- Matters in which the release of information would impair the right to receive government funds, and specifically: _____
- Matters which, if publicly disclosed, would constitute an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy, and specifically: _____
- Matters concerning negotiations, and specifically: _____
- Matters involving the purchase of real property and/or the investment of public funds, and specifically: _____
- Matters involving the real tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public, and specifically: _____
- Matters involving anticipated or pending litigation, including matters of attorney-client privilege, and specifically: Advisory Opinions
- Matters involving personnel issues, including but not limited to, the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of performance, promotion or discipline of any public officer or employee, and specifically: Personnel, Superintendent Search
- Matters involving quasi-judicial deliberations, and specifically: _____

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any discussion held by the Board which need not remain confidential will be made public as soon as feasible. The minutes of the executive session will not be disclosed until the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board anticipates the executive session to last approximately 30 minutes. The Board will return to open session to conduct business at the conclusion of the executive session.

- 1) Recommendation: Baker/Musumeci approve to enter into **Executive Session** for the purpose of discussing/reviewing items as noted above.
Board action needed: Yes Time: 6:03 pm
(All yes, motion to carry 7-0)

Mrs. Julie Dickson arrived at 6:04 pm making quorum 8-0

- 2) Recommendation: Baker/Musumeci approve to return to **Regular Session**.
Board action needed: Yes Time: 6:30 pm
(All yes, motion to carry 8-0)

C. Adoption of Agenda

Recommendation: Musumeci/Baker approve the adoption of the agenda, **as presented**.

Board action needed: Yes
(All yes, motion to carry 8-0)

D. Approval of Minutes

Recommendation: McGovern/Allen approve the regular and executive session minutes dated March 10, 2021 and March 17, 2021, **as submitted**.

Board action needed: Yes
(All yes, motion to carry 8-0)

2. Presentations

A. Stellar Comet of the Month- **March 2021**

1) **Walter Hill School**

Grade 6

- Cameron Mackey
- Tyler Bowen
- Patrick Civitarese
- Nadia Esan

2) **Charles G. Harker School**

Grade 3

- Tenley Puitz
- Reese Spencer

Grade 4

- Olivia Burak
- Delainey Spiotta

Grade 5

- Allison Perpiglia
- Corrine Leary

3) **Gov. Charles Stratton School**

Grade 1

- Gabriella Cacia
- Neel Nambiar

Grade 2

- Carly Hemple
- Isaac DeOssie

4) **Margaret Clifford School**

Preschool

- Nayra Patel
- Grady Noonan

Kindergarten

- Mae DiBella
- Cruz Taliaferro
- Riley Rasmussen
- Aliyana Caraballo

3. **Communication**

A. Superintendent

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1) Superintendent Updates

Shout-Outs

- Thank you to all district staff for recognizing Abilities Awareness Month.
- Thank you to the maintenance department for getting all of the classrooms ready for the combined cohort opening.
- Thank you to our wonderful nursing staff for continuing to keep everyone safe.
- Administrative Assistants' Day will be April 21. Thank you to all of our Administrative Assistants for everything you do to keep the district running smoothly. We appreciate you every single day!
- Thank you to the LPC Aides who help support us in a myriad of ways!

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- Thank you to Christina Panebianco for assisting with Clifford's Kindergarten registration and DIAL scheduling.
- Shout out to the Clifford Staff for preparing to assess the incoming Kindergarten students, and being flexible with the schedules. We are excited to meet the Class of 2034!!
- Shout out to the entire District Teaching and Support Staff as we approach Teacher Appreciation Week at the start of May. We are proud of your dedication, determination, and perseverance to continue to uphold the standards of excellence during this school year!
- Shout out to Cheryl Mervine and Linsley Shainline for continuing to promote the No Place for Hate program at Harker and Hill.
- Shout out to Lynne Bussott for presenting PD on writing.
- Thank you to all faculty and staff for preparing for a combined cohort model. We look forward to having our students back together again.

2) District Enrollment

a) Report, **as submitted**

[Clifford](#)
[Stratton](#)
[Harker](#)
[Hill](#)

3) Correspondence.

a) [Thank you- The Spicer Family](#)

4) OPRA Log- None to Report

B. District Administration

1) Administrator's Monthly Board Reports, **as submitted**

[Clifford](#)
[Stratton](#)
[Harker](#)
[Hill](#)
[Technology](#)
[Special Services](#)
[Curriculum & Instruction](#)

Board President, Mrs. Azzari, read the following statement:

We have received many emails from parents, both positive and negative, concerning the recent changes that were made with the collapsing of the cohorts in an attempt to offer more in-person instruction from our students. The Board of Education would like everyone to know that we reviewed all of the communications sent to us and take each concern seriously. While we realize no plan can address the varying concerns of our community, we ask that everyone continue to work cooperatively with the District recognizing we are still in the middle of a global pandemic.

As you know, this is a fluid situation and guidance is constantly changing. The Board and the Administration uses the data that is available at the moment to make decisions based on that to maintain an environment that is as safe as it can be.

Unfortunately, there is no current consensus or direction from the State of New Jersey on how to move forward, so each school district is left to look at the available data and develop individual plans. That means each district will probably have a different plan.

We used multiple data points to arrive at the decisions that have been made, including guidance from the CDC, and NJDOH, feedback from medical personnel and from parents, as well as reviewing our resources, and how other schools planned to address the final few months at school. After taking into account all the data collected, we worked together with the Superintendent to create a plan. Our goal was to meet the needs of the students, the educational staff, the parents, and the community. The plan was to increase learning time in the school buildings and do it in the safest way possible.

The Board and the Administration have worked hard to try to accommodate our students and staff, while remaining responsive to concerns of the community. That is reflected in how the District reacted dynamically to this situation as it has developed, including revising the District’s plan for the remainder of the school even from what was just announced at our last Board meeting by increasing in-person instruction time as guidance changed.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time. This has been a year that has been difficult to plan for and we appreciate the feedback from the community. Mr. Anderson will also be providing more information and his perspective on the situation following the conclusion of the public comment period.

Thank you.

Public Comments/Visitors

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, this meeting will now be open to members of the public who wish to speak or make comment on agenda items or a school district issue that may be of concern to the residents of the district. Any person who wishes to speak must wait to speak until they have been recognized by the presiding Board Officer.

Any person who wishes to speak is requested to give their name, address, and group affiliation, if any, at the beginning of their comments. Comments shall be limited to five minutes in total length. It is the intention of the board to listen to public comments, and to respond if possible. If questions cannot be immediately answered the Board asks that you pose the question to the Board Secretary via email.

If questions or comments pertain to litigation, student or personnel matters, the Board asks that you email the Superintendent after the meeting since the Board does not, pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act, discuss or respond to these items in public.

1- Ms. Kathleen Russella- 120 Kenilworth Dr, Woolwich Twp., 08085

Mrs. Russella expressed that on more than one occasion her children had their google meet classroom cancelled due to teacher's in training and asked what the district did to prepare for the opening in September.

Board member, Mrs. McGovern, stated that she has not experienced google meets being cancelled and her recommendation would be to email the Superintendent.

2- No Name or address for fear it would be posted on social media

She asked if there would be any consideration for summer programs with the extra funding that was received.

Board President, Mrs. Azzari stated that the district is looking into summer programs for the students.

Also, she wanted to know what the plan will be if a child comes in contact with COVID

3- Ms. Kelly Miller- 123 Delaware Crossing, Woolwich Twp., NJ 08085

Ms. Miller wanted to let the staff and teachers know that she sees how hard they are working and applaud the district for being in-person since September.

4- Ms. Rebecca Ober- 55 Longleaf Lane, Woolwich Twp., NJ 08085

Ms. Ober is concerned with the lack of planning with the administration.

Board member, Mrs. McGovern, stated that Mr. Anderson's planning has been superb. He started here in March and hit the ground running. If it wasn't for him the students would not be back four half days. The only plan that wasn't moving fast and forward was the initial plan that was made in July.

4. Action Items

Personnel/Finance/Negotiations Committee

Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting Report, as presented

- ***Budget for 2021-2022- 0% Increase***
- ***Harker Security System***
- ***Clifford Repaving Project***
- ***Cooperative Pricing Agreement***

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- **Contract for Chief Academic Officer**
- **Retention of Dana Teague as a consultant**

A. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve Dr. Walter Kappeler as Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024, see contract as approved by County Superintendent, **as submitted.**

B. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve the following Workshops, as listed:

Staff Member	Workshop	Date & Time	Cost	Estimated Travel Cost
1- Mrs. Jamie Flick and Mr. Stanley Coleman	Curriculum Infusion of LGBTQ Content Curriculum by TCNJ- Educator Professional Development	May 12, 2021/3:30-5:30 pm/Virtual	\$53.38/person	\$0
2- Ms. Rachel Ryman, Ms. Kristen Sanders, Ms. Denise Barr, and Ms. Kayla Kushner	HWC Re-Certification- Trainers program	October 7, 2021	\$450/person	\$0

C. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve the [Board Secretary's Report](#) in accordance with 18A: 17-36 and 18A: 17-9 for the month of **February 2021**. The Board Secretary certifies that no line item account has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A: 23A – 16.10 (c) 3 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year, and **(Report to follow)**

Approve the [Reconciliation Report](#) in accordance with 18A:17-36 and 18A:17-9 for the month of **February 2021**. The Reconciliation Report and Board Secretary's Report are in agreement for the month of **February 2021**.

Whereas, the Board Secretary in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c) 2 certifies that there are no changes in revenue amounts or revenue sources, and

Whereas, the Board of Education certifies- pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c) 4 that after review of the secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, that to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C 6A: 23A-16.10 (b) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

D. Regular, Payroll, Cafeteria & Addendum Bills

Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve payment of **April 2021 regular and addendum bills** in the amount of **\$1,149,000.71** and payment of **March 2021 payroll** in the amount of **\$1,334,718.30, as submitted.**

- E. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve the **Line Item Transfers** for **February 2021** in the amount of **101,623.92, as submitted.**
- F. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve Mrs. Dana Teague as a consultant at the rate of \$55/hour not to exceed 30 hours a week beginning on or around April, 2021.
- G. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve [Tortorice Contractors, Inc.](#) to redo the roof and siding on the ECC Building located at the Walter Hill School for the low quote of \$32,792, **as submitted.**
- H. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve the [Cooperative Pricing System Agreement](#) (NJSBA) ACES for the 2021-2022 school year, **as submitted.**
- I. Recommendation: Dopke/McGovern approve the upgrade of the security system at the Harker School to Sonitrol Security in the amount of \$7850.00.

Board action needed: Yes (Roll Call Required)

(Motion to approve: A- 5-3; B & C 7-0-1; D 6-0-2; E & F 7-0-1; G-I 8-0)

Mrs. Natalie Baker-Y Mrs. Tamara McGovern-Y Ms. Vivian Lane-Y
Mrs. Jaclyn Dopke- Y for B-I; No for A
Mrs. Rosella Musumeci- Y for B-I; No for A
Mrs. Deborah Allen- Y for B-I; No for A
Mrs. Julie Dickson- Y for A, G, H & I; Abstain from B, C, D, E & F
Mrs. Gina Azzari- Y for A-C, E-I; Abstain from D

Curriculum, Policy, Community Relations Committee

[Committee Meeting Report](#), as presented

- ***Plan for increasing summer learning opportunities***
- ***Planning for social and emotional learning, and ways to increase teacher-student time***
- ***Purchasing Instructional Materials***
- ***Consultant***

Board member, Mrs. Dopke, requested that moving forward, when a request is made for information from another board committee that there is a response.

Board member, Mrs. Baker, explained that she did not have the information that was requested until today.

A. HIB Reports

Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve HIB, **as submitted.**

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- B. Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve the Clifford and Hill Environmental Club and Student Leaders to participate in the county community clean-up on April 24, 2021.
- C. Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve Chris Lewis to complete CPR/First Aid/AED Recertification Virtual Classes for staff and Nurses on April 21, 2021 and April 28, 2021, as per contract.
- D. Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve Caroline Canora and Daria Roat for CPR/First Aid/AED BLS Virtual Recertification for School Nurses on April 21, 2021 or April 28, 2021.
- E. Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve the following [staff members](#) for Virtual CPR/First Aid/AED Recertification on April 21, 2021 or April 28, 2021, **as submitted**.
- F. Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve the 2020-2021 revised school calendar, **as submitted**.
- G. Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve the 2021-2022 revised school calendar, **as submitted**.
- H. Recommendation: Dopke/Musumeci approve tuition received for (RD) from Upper Pittsgrove for the 2021-2022 school year.

Board action needed: Yes (Roll Call Required)

(Motion to carry Y 8-0 for A-C, E-H; 7-0-1 for D)

Mrs. Rosella Musumeci-Y	Mrs. Deborah Allen-Y	Mrs. Natalie Baker-Y
Mrs. Julie Dickson-Y	Mrs. Tamara McGovern-Y	Ms. Vivian Lane-Y
Mrs. Tara Riddell	Mrs. Gina Azzari-Y	
Mrs. Jaclyn Dopke		

(Y for A-C, E-H; 7-0-1 abstain from D)

Operations

Buildings and Grounds, Long Range Plans, Technology, Transportation

Committee Meeting Report, as presented

- ***Clifford Repaving Project***
- ***ECC Roof***
- ***Harker Retention Pond***
- ***Harker Security System***

- **Monthly Maintenance and Technology Reports**
- **PPE for students**

A. Recommendation: Dopke/Baker approve [Fralinger Engineering](#) to develop plans for the repaving of the Clifford parking lot, **as submitted**.

Board action needed: Yes (Roll Call Required)

Mrs. Jaclyn Dopke-Y

Mrs. Rosella Musumeci-Y

Mrs. Deborah Allen-Y

Mrs. Natalie Baker-Y

Mrs. Julie Dickson-Y

Mrs. Tamara McGovern-Y

Ms. Vivian Lane-Y

Mrs. Tara Riddell

Mrs. Gina Azzari-Y

Interim Superintendent Mr. Dennis Anderson read the following statement:

Thank you to everyone this evening as we appreciate and respect your genuine comments and concerns.

The Covid-19 pandemic has proven to be extremely challenging, stressful and emotionally draining over the past thirteen months. Please know that our continued concern is for the health, well-being and safety of our students and staff in our decision making.

Ideally, the board would like to have in-person meetings. Currently there are two factors that affect our ability to do so. First, there are no after school activities being permitted in any of the buildings. Until that is lifted, no one is permitted in the buildings after school, including Board members.

Second, there are physical distancing and capacity issues that make it difficult to host an in-person meeting at this time that would limit the number of community members who might want to attend. Hosting the meetings virtually, provides everyone with the opportunity to participate.

As you are aware, we will be collapsing Cohorts A/B April 19 to have all students in attendance M-T-R-F, continuing with Wednesdays remaining virtual. The days that students are in attendance will be early dismissal days. The Preschool and Kindergarten will continue on the exact same schedule in place since September. We are grateful to our parents and guardians who have been a partner and assisted in adapting to all the challenges while managing change in your own personal lives and still providing the much needed personal and emotional support to your children and families.

I want to thank our entire staff for being so caring, flexible, professional and for working so diligently to provide a quality program of education for our students given the many challenges, changes and circumstances you have dealt with this year. You have truly gone above and beyond.

As a district, we must do everything we can to ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of every student and staff member. This is the basis and core for the decisions that have

been made throughout this school year. We realize that not every decision we make will address every parent's desire or concern.

We also are consistently communicating with and are aware of how other districts are operating, but remain mindful that we must continue to make decisions that are best fitting for Swedesboro-Woolwich.

We continue to be in communication with the Department of Education and the County Health Department. Both have been extremely helpful. They both indicate that although there are signs that conditions are getting better, we are still in a serious pandemic. Currently, the Transmission Risk Level is high.

We recognize and respect that there are those who believe that students should be back in school now for five full in-person days a week. However, we believe that we can not ensure the health, well-being and safety of the students and staff at this time if we were to resume full day instruction.

Additionally, transportation would also be an issue. We contract with outside vendors for student transportation. According to our Transportation Department, if we were to resume five full day in-person learning, the buses would not be able to pick up the students after school until up to 50 minutes after the school day would end.

Shifting to 5 early dismissal days would bring about some challenges. Increasing to 4 early dismissal days and maintaining the remote learning day on Wednesday provides for additional time for extensive and thorough cleaning routines within the buildings. These additional cleaning practices would be compromised if buildings were open on Wednesdays.

The combined cohort model allows for increased face to face instructional time and consistency while also maintaining, to the extent possible, required safety practices. Wednesdays will still afford students the opportunity to complete their Special Areas assignments and the Content Area teachers will continue to provide time for small groups and personalized instructional meetings every afternoon.

If Wednesday was no longer a remote learning day, it would eliminate time each afternoon of the week for the small group and individual support sessions in the core academic areas as they would be replaced by Specials instruction. These individualized instructional times are critical to address all of our students' needs including those with IEPs, 504 plans, and ESL considerations.

Wednesdays will allow teachers to continue having purposeful common planning time. This has been very beneficial in maintaining instructional pacing and consistency towards meeting the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

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The staff has worked to provide additional procedures and protocols in advance to assure a smooth transition from Cohorts A/B to the collapsed cohort. Also, student shields have been installed in all the school buildings.

It is important for you to know that we are anticipating for the schools to be open five full days a week for in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year unless the Governor determines otherwise. Also, the principals are planning to provide summer opportunities for both academics and socialization.

As you can imagine, we are looking forward to having all the students back while doubling the amount of in-person instructional learning times beginning April 19 in safe and effective manners.

We will continue to provide you with updates throughout the next few weeks as we transition to the updated learning model.

The Swedesboro-Woolwich School District thanks you for your continued understanding, support and involvement.

Delegates:

- a. NJSBA – Mrs. Gina Azzari
- b. GCSBA – Mrs. Natalie Baker

6. Adjournment

Recommendation: Allen/Baker approve the adjournment of meeting.

Board action needed: Yes

Time: 7:23 pm

(All yes, motion to carry 8-0)

Respectfully submitted,



**Mr. Jack J. Pfizenmayer
Interim Board Secretary/SBA**

Next Meeting(s).

April 28, 2021

Board/Committee Meetings as scheduled