

MINUTES OF THE BOARD RETREAT MEETING  
OF THE TENAFLY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONDAY EVENING, MARCH 29, 2021

TENAFLY HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER  
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

The Board Retreat meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Board President Schwarz who reminded everyone that this was a special meeting and action would be taken and then proceed immediately into the matter of Board Goal setting. President Schwarz introduced resolution B-1. Each Board member participated in the reading of this resolution.

The following Board members were present:

<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Mark Aronson	X	
Inbal Israeli Miller	X	
Michelle Merchant	X	
Yelena Meytes	X	
Paula Newman	X	
Edward J. Salaski	X	
Michael Wilderman	X	
Jane Juhng, Vice President	X	
Jocelyn Schwarz, President	X	

Also present:

Ms. Shauna DeMarco, Superintendent

Dr. Evelyn Mamman, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Ms. Danielle Diaz, Human Resources Manager

**BOARD**

**RESOLUTION B-1: RESOLUTION CONDEMNING RACISM AND AFFIRMING THE DISTRICT'S COMMITMENT TO AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL**

WHEREAS, members of the Tenafly Board of Education, are saddened and outraged by the recent surge of harassment, racial discrimination and violent attacks targeting Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities across the country. We condemn these actions targeting students, staff and families of AAPI communities in Tenafly and beyond. We remain committed to equity, to safety for all of our students and district employees, and to the development of strong, diverse, safe, and respectful schools and communities;

WHEREAS, racism and hate have no place in our schools or our society, and we must protect the Constitutional rights of every person who lives, works and learns in our community;

WHEREAS, we must listen. Those who have endured discrimination and intolerance deserve to be heard as they share the stories and truth about their experiences and feelings, and we must seek with great empathy to understand their challenges and their pain;

WHEREAS, we must learn. It is time to engage our community in meaningful and honest conversation about racial inequality, to build alliances with those committed to justice for all, and to work together to support our shared conviction that racism must end;

WHEREAS, we must lead. We are responsible for creating and nurturing an anti-racist learning environment where all students and district employees are respected and valued for who they are, regardless of their skin color. We must actively acknowledge, address and prevent racial bias that occurs as a result of district policies, practices and actions;

WHEREAS, we must educate. Our children are our future leaders. We must teach them to become the decision-makers that will end practices and policies that continue to destroy this country; and

WHEREAS, we must do better. Our district can be and will be a sanctuary of safety in our community and a beacon of light for the world, as we build and strengthen trust with those we serve, and we model the acceptance of all people.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, members of the Tenafly Board of Education, stand steadfast in our commitment to foster an inclusive educational environment where every student, district employee, parent and community member is treated with dignity and respect, as well as our commitment to continue fighting for racial justice and human and civil rights for all.

*At the conclusion of the reading of the resolution, Edward Salaski informed President Schwarz that although this was a Board Retreat, she would still need to formally open the meeting. Board President Jocelyn Schwarz read the following statement:*

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et. seq., adequate notification of this meeting has been provided by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Board of Education Hegelein Building, the Borough office, Tenafly Public Library, the local press and on the district’s web site.

<i>Resolution B-1</i>				
<i>Moved: Mr. Salaski</i>		<i>Second: Ms. Juhng</i>		
	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Nays</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Mark Aronson	X			
Inbal Israeli Miller	X			
Michelle Merchant	X			
Yelena Meytes	X			
Paula Newman	X			
Edward J. Salaski	X			
Michael Wilderman	X			
Jane Juhng, Vice President	X			
Jocelyn Schwarz, President	X			

**Board Comments** – None.

**PERSONNEL**

**RESOLUTION P-1: SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR RESIGNATION**

WHEREAS, Cheryl A. Nardino, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary has submitted a letter of resignation from all employment with the Tenafly Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") effective at the close of business June 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent has recommended that the Board accept the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary's resignation and that the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary not be required to continue to perform her duties during the period between the giving of notice and the date of resignation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the Superintendent's recommendation, the Board hereby accepts the resignation of the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary in accordance with the notice provision contained in the employment agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall not be required to continue to perform her duties during the period between the giving of notice and the date of resignation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent shall provide the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary with notice of the Board's action as set forth in this Resolution forthwith.

**RESOLUTION P-2: APPOINTMENT OF ACTING BOARD SECRETARY**

WHEREAS, the Business Administrator/Board Secretary submitted a letter of resignation on March 25, 2021, effective June 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to appoint the Superintendent, Shauna DeMarco (hereinafter referred to as "DeMarco"), as the Acting Board Secretary retroactive to March 25, 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby appoints DeMarco as the Acting Board Secretary retroactive to March 25, 2021.

**Board Comments**

- Mr. Aronson commented about limitations of services of Summit Management, LLC., and also concerns that there is not enough separation between operations of CEO and CFO.

<i>Resolution P-1 and P-2</i>				
<i>Moved: Ms. Newman</i>		<i>Second: Ms. Merchant</i>		
	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Nays</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Mark Aronson		X		
Inbal Israeli Miller	X			
Michelle Merchant	X			
Yelena Meytes	X			
Paula Newman	X			
Edward J. Salaski	X			
Michael Wilderman	X			
Jane Juhng, Vice President	X			
Jocelyn Schwarz, President	X			

**FINANCE**

**RESOLUTION F-1: CONTRACT WITH SUMMIT MANAGEMENT SERVICES, LLC FOR SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION SERVICES**

WHEREAS, the Tenafly Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”) desires to retain the professional services of Summit Management Solutions, LLC effective April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the parties have agreed to the terms set forth in Summit Management Solutions, LLC’s Agreement which is attached hereto and made a part of this Resolution.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby agrees to enter into the Agreement between Summit Management Solutions, LLC and the Board, and agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions thereof.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby authorizes the Board President and Acting Board Secretary to execute the Agreement and any other documents necessary to effectuate same.

**Board Comments**

- Ms. Meytes asked if there was the ability to predict/estimate the cost for the remainder of the year?
- Dr. Wilderman commented that we need a person in order to get the work done.

<i>Resolution F-1</i>				
<i>Moved: Dr. Wilderman</i>			<i>Second: Ms. Meytes</i>	
	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Nays</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Mark Aronson		X		
Inbal Israeli Miller	X			
Michelle Merchant	X			
Yelena Meytes	X			
Paula Newman	X			
Edward J. Salaski	X			
Michael Wilderman	X			
Jane Juhng, Vice President	X			
Jocelyn Schwarz, President	X			

**Board Goal Setting:**

- Ms. Meytes would have liked to see more of a team-building process included in the development of Board goals.
- Ms. Israeli-Miller wants facilities to be a priority as well as the rebuilding post-pandemic

- Mr. Aronson is pleased with goals board proposed in November 2020 and will support however this goes.
- Ms. Newman expressed that we need goals to keep this Board focused - can't take on too much at one time - three well defined goals that are concrete words that can be put into action.
  - Improve building infrastructure.
  - Fund programming enhancement.
  - Create programs that address emotional wellness and diversity programming for our students and staff.
  - Provide programs to ensure no student is left behind because of the Pandemic.
  - Continue working on communications with the community.
- Mr. Salaski - less - not more goals - no more than 4 - communication should be a priority.
- Ms. Schwarz - facilities: prioritize needs over the next 3 years; promoting inclusivity, collaboration and communication. Pointed out that everyone focused on similar themes: academic, social emotional wellness, inclusive environment, facilities, and technology.
- Ms. Juhng- identifying overlap areas between Board goals and district goals - make goals show that Board has true influence and control over: Goal 2: Communication, Goal 3: Facilities, and identifying needs of students in a post-pandemic world. Curriculum feels less direct from a Board level.
- Ms. Schwarz identified areas of importance to Board have been included in 21-22 budget.
- Ms. Newman pointed out that the fact that it is in the budget is a starting point to then gauge how the Board is doing.
- Ms. Schwarz suggested these should be simple, clear and direct language.
- Ms. Juhng recommended to keep wording "action-oriented," clear and concise - easy to measure progress and success.
- Ms. Schwarz pointed out that specific areas of attention and detailed action can be part of committee work.
- Dr. Wilderman agreed that if areas are "big" things then beneath each can be a list - checkable boxes - that can be addressed through committee and Board work.
- Ms. Juhng continued to modify the Board's shared document and the modifications were discussed.
- Ms. Meytes again expressed discomfort with the process of goal setting without team building and other actions taking precedence prior to setting them. After goals are set, what is the next step in the process? We are going to be held accountable so how will we hold ourselves accountable?

- Ms. Newman addressed the work of the Communications Committee as supporting the goals of the Board as an example of the way that committees will continue to support the Board goals.
- Ms. Meytes was in favor of supporting accessible information in a structured way.
- Ms. Schwarz pointed out that Ms. Meytes raised a good question. Where do we start? It will go to the committee level and then be at Board level. This will enable the Board to self-check to be sure committee reports are sharing information relevant to goals. Work belongs not only to obvious committee, but to all relevant committees.
- Ms. Merchant focus on each goal and then set number of expectations for each goal with some measurement attached to goal. Examples were offered for some goals areas. By identifying the overarching goals the Board could then determine how they will meet the goal and measure achievement. Advised staying away from a wordy exercise and being aspirational with goals and specific with expectations for each goal

The Board proceeded to discussing the language of the goals as per the shared document of drafted goals. There was discussion about:

- the matter of transparency and different trustees' interpretation of it.
- a focus on supporting social-emotional wellness for all stakeholders and how to best articulate this.
- varying ways to promote individuality as well as academic potential.
- discussion about communication and the meaning of improving it.

Trustees arrived at an agreement that goals were in a good place and will be shared among themselves for final feedback and approved at the April meeting.

*Motion to adjourn Public Meeting at 8:04 p.m. and enter Closed Session  
 Moved: Dr. Wilderman Second: Ms. Meytes  
 All in favor*

Respectfully submitted,

*Shauna DeMarco*

Shauna DeMarco  
 Acting Board Secretary