

The business meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on January 21, 2016, at the New Providence High School/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, by the Board President, Mr. Hasenkopf.

Present on roll call were Bernadette Cuccaro, William Dibble, Robert Dinerman, David Hasenkopf and Ira Krauss. Also present were Dr. David Miceli, Superintendent of Educational Services; Mr. Scott Hough, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services; James E. Testa, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary; Sandra Searing, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Supervision; and 89 members of the public.

Mr. Hasenkopf led in the salute to the flag.

Mr. Hasenkopf read the following statement:

This is a public meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with PL 1975, Chapter 231, in that an annual notice was made in conformance with Section 13 of the Act.

Whenever the business of the Board requires it to convene to Closed Session, the session will begin no later than 10:00 p.m. At the conclusion of the need for Closed Session, the Board will reconvene to the public portion of the meeting. At that time the Board will complete any other business that may be before it and the public will then be given an opportunity to be heard before the meeting is adjourned.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that he was pleased of the large attendance at tonight's meeting. He stated that the Evite that was sent out to community members was not sent by the Board of Education. A community member sent out the Evite, misrepresenting the Board of Education.

Superintendent's Report

1. Dr. Miceli reported on the enrollment: 682 at the high school, 364 at the middle school, 670 at Allen W. Roberts School, 659 at Salt Brook School, with 37 out of district, totaling 2,412 students.
2. Dr. Miceli commented that he reviewed the 2016/2017 School Calendar at the last meeting and reviewed it again for the public:
 - September: Staff starts, Thursday, September 1, before Labor Day; Students return Tuesday after Labor day.
 - October: Two Jewish holidays, one falls in the middle of the week, after the 1st staff development day.
 - November: Conferences, School Boards Convention, as well as Thanksgiving break.
 - December 22- January 2 : Holiday recess
 - January, 2017: Martin Luther King Day - 2nd Staff Development day
 - February: President's weekend/winter break- Friday, Monday and Tuesday off.
 - Spring Recess in April starting Good Friday, school closed the following week after

Easter.

- June 21, Wednesday is an early dismissal day, last day of school and graduation
- There are four snow days built into the calendar for the 2016/2017 school year.

Dr. Miceli commented that he shared the calendar with all the associations and it is on the agenda for approval tonight.

3. Mrs. Searing will be presenting the Annual Curriculum Report at the February 29, 2016 board meeting.
4. The 2nd Professional Development Day was this past Monday. He thanked Mrs. Searing, Administration and Staff for a successful day.

Student Report

Claudia Lucciola, Student Representative:

1. Tonight is the swim team's senior night.
2. Boys basketball team takes on Oratory tonight at the HS Gym.
3. Students from the Character Ed committee had the opportunity to attend the 3rd Annual UC STEP Summit at Kean University with students from 26 other schools. The program focused on leadership, civic engagement, and personal.
4. The New Providence HS Bridge Building teams participated in the 2015 Bridge Design competition at Union County College. Three novice teams and three advanced teams demonstrated their structural design skills winning 1st and 2nd place in the novice level and 2nd place in the advanced level.
5. On February 3 there is the Sweets and Strings concert from the High School Orchestra.
6. Students from the Model UN Club participated in the YMCA's annual conference in Hershey, January 8th-10th. New Providence delegates demonstrated their knowledge and commitment to resolving global issues and honed their diplomatic skills with more than 2000 students from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Our students won four awards: for his excellent preparation and work as part of a Superior Country Delegation, Antoni Dabrowski; for Outstanding Country Research Papers, Emily Bian and Martin Pardo; and finally, for his exemplary attitude, preparation, and knowledge, Outstanding First-Year Delegate, Marc Mekhanik.
7. Seniors are just getting ready for graduation with receiving college decisions back, submitting senior quotes and baby pictures for the year book, signing up for the tricky tray prom fashion show which is March 19 in our auditorium and also getting measured for our caps and gowns.
8. Everyone is getting ready for midterms next Friday.

Public Comments (Related to Specific Agenda Items)

Mr. Hasenkopf opened the meeting to the public at 7:40 p.m. for comments.

There being no comments from the public, Mr. Hasenkopf declared the public portion of the meeting closed at 7:41 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Testa commented that there are not enough Board Members present tonight to approve the December 2, 2015 minutes and it will be tabled and approved at the next board meeting. All Board members agreed to pull approval of the December 2, 2015 minutes from the agenda.

Mr. Dinerman moved to approve the December 17, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes.

Business Meeting
Closed Session

December 17, 2015
December 17, 2015

Seconded by: Mr. Krauss

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mr. Hasenkopf

Yea Mr. Dibble

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mr. Dinerman

Absent Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Absent Mr. Smith

ACTION ITEMS**FINANCE ACTION**

Mr. Krauss, in the absence of Mr. Smith, moved to approve Items 1 through 9 as listed below:

2015/2016 School Year Transfers Approved

1. Ratify the action of the Superintendent in making the following transfers for the 2015/2016 school year:

December 2015

From:

Account	Description	Amount
11-000-100-562	Tuition, LEA in NJ	\$96,030.00
11-000-100-567	Tuition, LEA Outside NJ	85,600.00
11-000-219-104	Salaries, Child Study Team	1,800.00

11-000-221-105	Salaries, Secretaries	11,800.00
11-130-100-101	Salaries, Grades 6-8	51,750.00
11-204-100-106	Salaries, Teacher Aides	5,000.00
11-230-100-101	Salaries, Basic Skills	20,000.00

Total: \$271,980.00

To:

Account	Description	Amount
11-000-100-563	Tuition, Vocational	\$6,000.00
11-000-100-564	Tuition, Vocational- Special Ed	18,630.00
11-000-213-100	Salaries, Nurses	4,600.00
11-000-216-320	Purchased Professional Services	35,000.00
11-000-219-105	Salaries, Secretaries	1,800.00
11-000-221-104	Salaries, Department Heads	1,200.00
11-000-221-110	Salaries, Other	4,000.00
11-000-222-100	Salaries, Media Specialists	5,500.00
11-000-222-177	Salaries, Tech Ed Coordinator	1,000.00
11-000-223-104	Salaries, Department Heads	100.00
11-000-230-331	Professional Services- Legal	120,000.00
11-000-270-162	Salaries, Transportation	7,000.00
11-105-100-101	Salaries, Preschool	700.00
11-140-100-101	Salaries, Grades 9-12	11,800.00
11-150-100-320	Purchased Professional Services	8,000.00
11-213-100-101	Salaries, Resource Rooms	37,700.00
11-215-100-101	Salaries, Preschool- Special Ed	800.00
11-215-100-106	Salaries, Teacher Aides	7,300.00
11-216-100-106	Salaries, Teacher Aides	300.00

11-240-100-101	Salaries, ESL	550.00
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Total: \$271,980.00

Board Secretary and Treasurer Reports Accepted

2. After review, we hereby accept the Board Secretary and Treasurer reports for December, 2015. There is no major account or fund which has been overexpended in violation of financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

January 2016 Bills List Approved

3. Approve the payment of bills listed for January 2016, in the amount of \$2,580,587.00

2015/2016 Revised Legal Services Maximum Expenditure Approved

4. Approve the revised maximum expenditure for the 2015/2016 school year as follows:

Legal Services \$227,445.00

Walter McCarthy and Lieder Memorial Scholarship Fund Generous Donations Accepted

5. Accept the generous donations to the New Providence High School Class of 1960 Walter McCarthy and Edward Lieder Memorial Scholarship Fund in the total amount of \$905.00.

Lions Club of New Providence Generous Donation to NPHS Accepted

6. Accept the generous donation of \$400.00 to the New Providence High School, from the Lions Club of New Providence, to be used for the National Art Honor Society competition. **(EXHIBIT D)**

AWR PTA Mini-Grants Acceptance Approved

7. Approve the acceptance of the Allen W. Roberts PTA Mini-grants in the amount of \$3,014.63. **(EXHIBIT E)**

Disposal Resolution Approved

8. Approve the following resolution:

Authorizing Disposal of Surplus Property

WHEREAS, the District is the owner of certain surplus property which is no longer needed for public use; and

WHEREAS, the District is desirous of selling said surplus property in an "as is" condition without express or implied warranties.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the New Providence Board of Education as follows:

The sale of the surplus property shall be conducted through GovDeals pursuant to State Contract A-70967/T2581 in accordance with the terms and conditions of the State Contract.

The sale will be conducted online and the address of the auction site is govdeals.com.

The sale is being conducted pursuant to Local Finance Notice 2008-9.

The surplus property to be sold is as follows:

- 2012 Ford Taurus-V6 Sedan 4D SE
Vin#1FAHP2DW7CG103331

The surplus property as identified shall be sold in an "as-is" condition without express or implied warranties with the successful bidder required to execute a Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreement concerning use of said surplus property.

The District reserves the right to accept or reject any bid submitted.

Generous Donation by the District's Four School PTA Accepted

9. Accept the generous total donation of \$1,883.75 made by the district's four school PTA's to provide opening day lunch for staff on 9/3/15.

Seconded by: Mrs. Cuccaro

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mr. Hasenkopf

Yea Mr. Dibble

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mr. Dinerman

Absent Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Absent Mr. Smith

FACILITIES ACTION

Mr. Krauss, in the absence of Mr. Smith, moved to approve Items 1 and 2 as listed below:

Disposal of (1) Gare Kiln from Salt Brook School Approved

1. Approve the disposal of one (1) Gare Kiln from Salt Brook School that is broken, cannot be repaired, and is no longer deemed necessary for school needs.

(EXHIBIT A)

Disposal of (1) Bass Drum from Allen W. Roberts School Approved

2. Approve the disposal of one (1) Bass Drum from Allen W. Roberts School that is in severe disrepair, no longer serviceable, and repairs exceed the value.

(EXHIBIT C)

Seconded by: Mr. Dinerman

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mr. Hasenkopf

Yea Mr. Dibble

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mr. Dinerman

Absent Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Absent Mr. Smith

EDUCATION ACTION

Mrs. Cuccaro, Committee Chairperson, moved to approve Items 1 through 5 as listed below:

2015/2016 HIB Investigations Approved

1. Per the 2011 Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, approve the recommendations of the Superintendent regarding the following 2015/2016 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying investigations:

<u>School</u>	<u>Incident Report Number(s)</u>
High School:	#5
Allen W. Roberts:	#1
Salt Brook:	#1

2016/2017 School Calendar Approved

2. Approve the 2016/2017 school calendar.

(EXHIBIT F)

2015/2016 School Year Silvergate Prep Cost for Homebound Instruction Approved

3. Approve Silvergate Prep at a cost of \$55/hr for homebound instruction for the 2015/2016 school year.

Confidential Settlement Approved

4. Approve Confidential Settlement (OAL Docket No. EDS 13169-15), copies in the hands of each Board member.

2015/2016 School Year Additional Field Trip Destinations Approved

5. Approve the attached list of additional field trip destinations for the 2015/2016 school year in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8.

(EXHIBIT B)

Seconded by: Mr. Dinerman

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mr. Hasenkopf

Yea Mr. Dibble

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mr. Dinerman

Absent Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Absent Mr. Smith

PERSONNEL ACTION

Mr. Dibble Committee Chairperson, moved to approve Item 1 as listed below:

Appointments Approved

1. Approve the appointment of the following people with the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools subject to the requirements of Chapter 116 of P.L. 1986 for the 2015/2016 school year:

- a. Karl Roth, custodian (night/flex), \$17,011 (base \$42,021 + \$508 night differential), effective 2/8/16 (subject to criminal history review procedures)
- b. Cheryl Campbell, home instructor
- c. Lori Eiland, substitute teacher/teacher aide
- d. Kara Wilson, substitute teacher/teacher aide
- e. Sara Khalil, substitute teacher/teacher aide
- f. Lacie Wolfe, substitute teacher
- g. Devon Jones, HS musical costumes/make-up, \$1,026
- h. John Giunta, baseball first assistant, \$5,544
- i. James Siracusa, boys lacrosse first assistant, \$5,544

Seconded by: Mrs. Cuccaro

Roll Call Vote:

<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Cuccaro	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Hasenkopf
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Dibble	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Krauss
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Dinerman	<u>Absent</u> Mrs. Misiukiewicz
	<u>Absent</u> Mr. Smith

BOARD POLICY

Mr. Krauss, Committee Chairperson, moved to approve Items 1 and 2 as listed below:

Approve Items 1 and 2 as listed below:

1. Approve the following Bylaws, Policies, and Regulations on second reading:

Bylaws and Policies:

Policy No. 3221
(Mandated)

Evaluation of Teachers (Revised)
(Mr. Krauss)

Policy No. 3222
(Mandated)

Evaluation of Teaching Staff Members (Revised)
Excluding Teacher and Administrators
(Mr. Krauss)

Policy No. 3223
(Mandated)

Evaluation of Administrators, Excluding Principals
Vice Principals, and Assistant Principals (Revised)
(Mr. Krauss)

Policy No. 3224

Evaluation of Principals, Vice Principals and

(Mandated)	Assistant Principals (Revised) (Mr. Krauss)
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Administrative Regulations:

Regulation No. 3221 (Mandated)	Evaluation of Teachers (Revised) (Mr. Krauss)
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Regulation No. 3222 (Mandated)	Evaluation of Teaching Staff Members (Revised) Excluding Teacher and Administrators (Mr. Krauss)
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Regulation No. 3223 (Mandated)	Evaluation of Administrators, Excluding Principals Vice Principals, and Assistant Principals (Revised) (Mr. Krauss)
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Regulation No. 3224 (Mandated)	Evaluation of Principals, Vice Principals and Assistant Principals (Revised) (Mr. Krauss)
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2. Approve the following Bylaws, Policies, and Regulations on first reading:

Bylaws and Policies:

Policy No. 6510 (Mandated)	Payroll Authorization (Mr. Krauss)	(Revised)
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Policy No. 3431.1 (Mandated)	Family Leave (Teaching Staff) (Mr. Krauss)	(Revised)
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Policy No. 4431.1 (Mandated)	Family Leave (Support Staff) (Mr. Krauss)	(Revised)
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Policy No. 5516 (Mandated)	Use of Electronic Communications (Mr. Krauss)	(Revised)
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Administrative Regulations:

Regulation No. 6510.3 (Mandated)	Absence Deductions, Overtime and Partial Contracts (Mr. Krauss)	(Revised)
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Seconded by: Mr. Dinerman

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mr. Hasenkopf

Yea Mr. Dibble

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mr. Dinerman

Absent Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Absent Mr. Smith

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Curriculum, Instruction and Technology

Mrs. Cuccaro, Committee Chairperson, had nothing to report. She is looking forward to Mrs. Searing's presentation of the Annual Curriculum Report next month.

Finance, Facilities and Safety/Security

Mr. Krauss reported that the committee had a meeting and will meet again next week to talk about the improvements needed in our buildings due to increase in enrollment.

Personnel, Management and Communication

Mr. Dibble, Committee Chairperson, commented that he provided a report last meeting and is scheduled to meet later in January or February with Dr. Miceli.

OLD BUSINESS

There is no old business to report.

NEW BUSINESS

2016/2017 Proposed School Budget

Mr. Testa commented that a tentative schedule was sent out for the Board's review with the time line and dates related to the submission of the 2016/2017 School Budget.

Mr. Testa commented that the proposed budget is due to the county by the middle of March. He is meeting with Dr. Miceli next week, and meetings have taken place with the principals, school staff and the finance committee on a couple of occasions. He commented that the proposed budget will be submitted to the full Board in February, the Board will approve before the March due date and then sent to the County for approval. Once the County approves the budget, the Finance Committee will do a presentation in April and approve the 2016/2017 School Budget.

Mr. Testa commented that the schedule could change depending on when the Governor's speech takes place.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Hasenkopf opened the meeting to the public at 7:45 p.m. for comments.

Mr. Mark Peterson, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Peterson gave a prepared statement to the board, which Mr. Peterson read, it said:

Dr. Miceli and Esteemed members of the Board of Education:

We come before you tonight as proud New Providence Pioneers. What are Pioneers? Pioneers are people that blaze a trail even when it is challenging and difficult.

We have come here to open a dialogue about change which will benefit ALL students. We are here tonight because we are concerned about the climate of fear in the schools and this district's administration of the New Jersey HIB law. We are concerned that student conflicts are turning into litigation, wasting school funds. The parents who are here tonight do not want our tax dollars spent on lawyer's fees.

We want to make our school district better. We are here to blaze a new trail. To make the HIB investigations more open, fair and effective; and to change the climate of fear and intimidation.

I have met other parents who have also recently experienced the HIB process in New Providence. All of these parents want more parental involvement and clear and timely notification of allegations. This is counter to the District's own policy which clearly states that parents should be involved in the process. And I quote:

NPSP Policy C "Standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents, school employees, administrators, etc. producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline."

NPSP Policy G.3 states a school safety team is required for each school

Does this team exist? Who is on this team? When have they met? Who is the parent representative? why only one parent required by the Policy?

In my own experience and again, with others who have had similar experiences, there are many areas where the district is not following its own HIB Policy.

This district parcels and chooses the parts of their own policy to administer when and only when it benefits their case.

NPSP Policy F (quote) "The Principal will inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents." (close quote) in many cases, this did not happen.

NPSP Policy H.1 (quote) "The Board requires a thorough and complete investigation to be conducted for each report..."(close quote) in many cases, this did not happen.

NPSD Policy H.5 "Parents shall be provided with information about the investigation... in many cases, This did not happen. This information should be complete, not redacted, and should be reviewed with parents, the accused and principal before consequences are imposed.

NPSD Policy D - Discusses code of conduct and review of factors for determining consequences. And in many cases, this did not happen.

Unfortunately the administration has lost the ability to conduct a just and accurate investigation in a GENUINE HIB case, one that is harassing, hurtful, intentional and emotional. The student voices have been self muted as a result of fear of the reckless actions of the administration. My hope is that there is never any genuine bullying case in this district. Because the outcome could be TRAGIC.

Mrs. Jamie Peterson, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Peterson continued to read the other side of the handout:

What we're asking for:

1. Parents should be required to give permission to their minor children to speak to administration during an investigation.
2. Students should be told in advance they have the right to remain silent and that they may ask for a parent to be in attendance during an investigation. Students should NOT be told that they have "nothing to worry about". Students should know in advance of questioning, that they have the right not to implicate themselves or others during the interrogation process.
3. Parents should be a required part of disciplinary procedures.
 - investigation should not begin until parents have been personally notified about the nature of the proceeding.
 - parents should be required to attend any investigation interview and be allowed to advocate for their child.
 - those who are accused should be informed of who their accuser is.
4. During an investigation, students should NOT be pulled out of any academic classes.
5. All investigations should be recorded, and a transcript or notes should be required to be sent to parents.
6. For serious cases or for those involving multiple students; at least two adults should be involved in the investigation.
7. Per the law, parents should be present with the student when a decision is made, PRIOR to the school board meeting. Parents should receive an unredacted report of the action at that time.
8. Consequences of HIB Investigation should match the action.
9. During BOE appeal hearings, parents should be allowed to hear the administrations and principals arguments against the accused and have the opportunity for rebuttal.
10. BOE and Safety team should review all cases of students who are labeled a violator of the HIB Law from the past year. Decisions from improperly conducted investigations should be overturned and HIB label should be expunged from student's records.

Finally, we want the administration to focus more on conflict/resolution rather than litigation and

punishment. These are necessary actions to provide the students with the best learning environment.

These are the years that the students are learning to navigate their world and we have entrusted our administration with this task. We do not want our students to fear those same people who are there to guide and protect them through this learning process.

The district has the ability to do what is best for its students and we hope that this will be the constant focus of the administrations.

It takes great courage to shift your paradigm, but this is what the true pioneer spirit is: the ability to change paths when you see that the direction is not effective. This journey belongs to all of us, we are Pioneers.

Mr. Hasenkopf thanked the Petersons for the comments.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented by reading a statement:

I understand an Evite has been sent out to many people regarding tonight's Board of Education meeting. To be clear, this invite emanates from a community member, not the New Providence Board of Education. The issues raised in that Evite relate to New Jersey's Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying laws and the Board of Education's enforcement of those laws.

In 2007, the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that a school district can be sued for damages for not responding reasonably to student-on-student bullying and harassment that creates a hostile educational environment. In 2010, in the wake of national media coverage surrounding multiple student suicides, including the Tyler Clementi tragedy at Rutgers, the New Jersey Legislature passed the "Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act". Although New Providence never tolerated such conduct, to comply with the law, in the 2011-2012 school year, New Providence - along with all New Jersey school districts - was required to strengthen its standards and procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating and responding to incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) of students, both in school and off school premises. NJ's law is considered to be the strongest in the country.

Bullying can take many forms. It may be physical (such as hitting or punching), verbal (including name-calling or teasing), emotional (intimidation through gestures or social exclusion), or through the sending of insults or threats using electronic communication known as "cyberbullying." Harassment, intimidation and bullying create a climate of fear and disrespect in our schools which adversely impacts student learning. Even more troubling is how this behavior affects the individuals involved. Victims are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, and thoughts of suicide.

The NP BOE takes allegations of HIB very seriously and has directed the NP school administrative team to follow the law, investigate any such allegations and pursue disciplinary actions where appropriate. Each case is handled on an individual basis. There are numerous times where allegations of HIB are not substantiated. There are also cases in which the

administration believes the investigation has substantiated a HIB incident. Regardless of the outcome, the NP BOE reviews all investigations. The BOE, made up of community members, reviews each matter impartially to determine that the proper procedures were followed and that the substantive decisions made by the administration and recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools are appropriate.

Since 2011, the BOE has reviewed allegations of HIB in accordance with the law. We are very comfortable with the decisions that we have made in those matters. None of those decisions were easy, nor were they made in an arbitrary or capricious manner. We appreciate the concern of parents of students accused of such behavior, but that concern will not influence us to turn a blind eye to the victims of HIB. Any parent who does not agree with a decision made concerning HIB has a number of avenues by which it can appeal that decision. Any specific case can be addressed in those forums.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that from 2011 through December 31, 2015 the District had a total of 171 HIB investigations, 38.6% confirmed (66 of 171) and 3 investigations have been appealed.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that he appreciates the comments and in order to give everyone a chance to speak, he would ask that each person to speak no more than two (2) minutes. He commented that these are public comments and are not be meant to be dialogues.

Mrs. Misiukiewicz entered the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Jean-Paul Gerard, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Gerard commented that he fully understands the importance of the investigations, but also that if an investigation is done improperly, we have to raise our concerns. He is a concerned parent and his concern is not only for his own child, but for all the children in the District including the ones here to show their support. The atmosphere in the High School has become one of fear and intimidation. Fear that if these kids go to the principal, teacher or counselor with an issue that it will start an investigation and snowball. Sometimes the kids just need someone to listen and give advice on the issues and of teen life. They fear that a member of the Administration will call them into the office and anything they say will be used against them or someone else. They fear that being a witness will lead to lifelong administrative charges. The unintended consequences of this culture of fear is a school community who is not willing to come forward and talk. It is a community of parents and students who are having conversations about not talking to the School Administrators when called to the office. Fear the exact people who are supposed to be their advocates, their guidance and leaders. This community feels intimidated by a system, which allows our children to be interrogated without parents' consents; without records of anything that happened in the meeting that we or you can listen to. The system does not allow the parents to be notified and present before students are questioned. The intimidation is about misleading questions that may incriminate students before any parent even knows the process has begun. Only through the action of the Board and School Administration can we regain this fragile relationship and trust.

Mr. Gerard commented that he invites the Board to talk to the kids and find out how they feel the culture of the school is right now. It is not healthy for them right now.

Mr. Ken Hubert, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Hubert commented that he grew up in New Providence and has lived here for the past four years with four children. They currently attend the high school, middle school and Allen W. Roberts Elementary School. He loves this town and school system and often bragged about New Providence. Increasingly, he is concerned about how the Administration and Board has conducted their HIB investigations. The more he learned about them, the more upset and angry he becomes. Last Spring, his son was called in as a witness and he was not informed that he was the witness. He felt scared, intimidated and uncomfortable as if he were on the hot seat. The questions were misleading, confusing and difficult to answer and felt that he was being lured to incriminating another young man. He had to carefully craft his responses to counteract this blatant bias. That's not an investigation, it was a witch hunt.

Mr. Hubert commented that he and his wife were not informed that their son was brought in for questioning until after the fact. He had not been accused of bullying anyone, but was interrogated with his knowledge and was intimidated by the Administration. His children have informed him that this is not an isolated incident, literally dozens of their friends had been called into the office for questioning and have experienced the same kind of treatment and even those who were the victims of bullying. Parents have been harassed by the Administration in their efforts to investigate supposed bullying incidents.

Mr. Hubert commented that : STOPBULLYING.GOV has 3 components, unwanted aggressive behavior; an in-balance of power; repetition. This Administration has repeatedly abused its position and authority to intimidate and aggressively interrogate our children who have done nothing wrong and with no regard for the welfare of those being questioned. That by definition is bullying. Genuine bullying is extremely hurtful and can cause long term damages to our young people. We expect this Administration to take this seriously and to defend our students from genuine bullying. For such efforts you have my support, however, in such efforts you have become the bully to our children. Rather than teaching our students that bullying is wrong, you have taught our children that people with power can bully who ever they want. Tonight, we are here to ask you to stop, make amends to those you have harmed, correct the past mistakes and make changes.

Mrs. Gale Libertucci, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Libertucci commented that despite the disclaimer read by Mr. Hasenkopf, she is concerned about the District's management and interpretation of the current HIB law, due to ineffective screening done by the District in which our children were harassed, denied due process and labeled using a flawed interpretation of the HIB law.

Cathy Cirrotti, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Cirrotti commented that she is so thankful to hear that the Board did not sent out the Evite. She is a teacher and asks that they consider the issues. The law requires a 24 hour time frame for all investigations to begin, according to the law. She comments that the fear issue is of students not talking to their teachers and that is a concern. She wants everyone to take all the issues into consideration and see the big picture. She is not saying that the right process cannot

occur, but there's a lot to consider. She commented that we just have to be careful that we are not blowing this out of proportion. We all need to work through this together.

Eric Thomas, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Thomas commented that he is a 26 year resident of New Providence. He has six children. He appreciates the opening comments, but the fear of being held accountable is cause to react. He agrees a lot of what Mr. Peterson said and if we only follow the code, we can be more reasonable. There needs to be accountability and we need to have a dialogue.

Alexander Pererra, NPHS Student:

Mr. Pererra commented that he is in 9th grade at NPHS. He sympathises with the students. He was able to confide in his teacher and got through his issue. He commented that he researched Policy 5512, HIB,- based on the original 2011 Bill of Rights and found that this was defunded and declared unconstitutional. Why is such a bill still used to govern our students and regulate on how our school system works?

Joe Machiaverna, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Machiaverna commented that it is not the bullying law, but the way it is being administered; that's the problem. Reasonableness and appropriateness in investigations are not occurring. There is tremendous fear in the high school.

Judy Drone, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Drone commented that she was a former teacher in a private school, and a residence of New Providence for 25 years. She is saddened to hear the comments here tonight. Seems like a prison and terrible language is being said tonight.

Beth Wahlig, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Wahlig commented that communication is horrible in the high school between parents and School Administration. This case is being talked about non stop and she is highly concerned. The Board needs to come out and talk to the students because no one is trusting them nor the High School Administration. She would like the Board to address this issue, be fair and take the comments seriously. She came out tonight not because of the Evite, but about the school and concern of the education of her children.

Michael Cordone, New Providence Student:

Mr. Cordone commented that in 8th grade, he was falsely accused and when interrogated by the Administration, they told him that he better speak of the incident because they will find out. Under the fear of it, he commented that his story had slipped up and his parents were not notified. He was told by the Administration that his story had mistakes and he was lying and they didn't believe him. He commented that he did not know what the questioning was all about until his peers told him about it.

Debbie Ibrahim, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Ibrahim commented that she was the one that sent out the Evite, but did not purposely do it to portray that it was from the Board of Education. It is important that we know what is going on in our town and what is going on with our children and will not apologize for getting it out there. If it took this Evite to get everyone out here, then thank you for coming.

Donna Zane, New Providence Resident:

When HIB paperwork first started coming out years ago, my kids and I would read it and we would discuss them. In elementary school, I did not say or see anything. I found that in an elementary setting the Administration were very helpful, especially Dr. Harvey. To my knowledge, my kids have not been involved in any investigation, at that time we were instructed fully. That has changed when they got to the older grades, that trust has been lost. Where they used to go to the vice-principal and say, hey I'm having trouble, now that trust has been lost. She feels that the atmosphere is there are people there that are not looking out for them anymore. Even if they have not been involved, they are feeling the effect. The intimidation now is that it is coming from the adults, and there is fear.

Andrew Hui, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Hui commented that school is an institution where the kids are taught value to become good citizens. He believes in second chances and kids makes mistakes like anyone of us. The question is how do we teach them to learn from their mistakes, do we punish them so that they cannot get into college and make things worse and not better?

Jean Paul Gerard, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Gerard commented that he had one more comment about the legal culpability. He commented that their fear is the direction the culture is taking, leading to something happening without anyone reporting it, and that's a danger. The laws and the framework is there to make it work properly, it is just not being applied properly and if we can work together to make sure it works. He doesn't think it's difficult.

Mr. Lee, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Lee commented about student data privacy. How is the student data being handled in our school? He read the email that was sent out by the high school. This privacy violation was raised at the December 17th board meeting. Dr. Miceli commented that it was caused by a system's error and addressed by the vendor. However, the school messenger link in the email remained active for over a month. The school needs to acknowledge an act when a privacy violation occurs. He commented that he is familiar with computer technology and pointed out that this is caused by a series of human errors that contributed to this privacy violations; systems do not act by itself. The Administration must recognize the issue with transparency, so it could be properly addressed in a timely fashion. The school must own this, not the vendor. To support his statement, he commented that the pdf was generated in the school by a PowerSchool administrator. In the pdf properties, it contains the name and the school IP address.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that a letter was sent out Tuesday on this matter.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that when they were going through the issue, in the new communication system, there is a feature called the SDD (secure data delivery) and our IT staff misunderstood that feature. They thought that when activating that feature it was going out to the individual student/parent, so they can see their particular student record. Misunderstanding of what that feature was based on the labeling of it, SDD, so as you know it was broadcast through email with all the students attendance records. We communicated with the vendor as to what we were attempting to do, and they gave us the correct steps as to what to do. We did tell them that the naming of it caused a bit of confusion. The vendor acknowledged that and we moved forward. Through the investigation, a mistake was made, misunderstanding was made, and we are comfortable that the right steps were made. We are clear moving forward and reinforced that by sending out attendance record updates to the parents and have been working correctly with the guidance from the vendor. The Board has investigated this and met with the Administration following the investigation of the issue. We are satisfied that the right steps were taken in addressing it and there will not be a recurrence of it.

Mr. Lee commented that this was a mistake, a human error and if there is a plan or additional training, anything adjusted that so in the future such things will not happen and people within the administration is cognizant of student data privacy.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that we are now much more familiar with the application and the use of the software.

Dr. Miceli commented that this year School Messenger was purchased instead of Code Red in order to create more efficiencies. PowerSchool is able to speak to School Messenger where Code Red wasn't. Much more efficient system, guidance was provided to our tech staff, there was a misinterpretation as Mr. Hasenkopf indicated, and back and forth with the vendor got that corrected.

Mrs. Ibrahim commented that has a reprimand been done? She commented that her daughter had a medical issue and this got out to her peers. Was anything done to correct this with the children? As you sit there and say it was a human mistake, it was investigated and rectified, and it was a misunderstanding, but when you investigate with our children, they get an automatic punishment. She commented that she finds that interesting.

Mrs. Lubertucci commented that initially this was the vendor's fault solely and now we are hearing it was was school personnel's fault along with the vendor issue, can you please clarify.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that our IT staff misunderstood the feature in the software package, secure data delivery thought it was delivering to one individual sending their child's attendance record. By working with the vendor, we rectified the issue and have taken the appropriate steps necessary with the software to insure that the steps we want to take are taken properly.

Tara Murphy, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Murphy commented that the reprimand should be for everybody involved, vendor, staff and not just our kids.

Mr. Ray Ibrahim, New Providence Resident:

Mr. Ibrahim commented that his wife sending the Evite was a misunderstanding just like your IT person misunderstood. He commented that he feels like it seems ok when a mistake is made by a board member or an administrator, but if it were a student or community member who misunderstood, it's not acceptable.

Mr. Hasenkopf commented that his opening comment was just to make it clear that it was not the Board of Education that sent the Evite. It was no judgement associated with that, it was a point of fact. As he commented before, it was a misunderstanding with the feature in the software.

Trace Machiaverna, New Providence Resident:

Mrs. Machiaverna commented that she is a concerned parent. She wanted to invite parents with similar situations to meet, but the response from the parents were fear. They fear from a small community, that they will be talked about and they were fearful for their children and the whole family.

Mr. Mark Peterson, 800 Old Springfield Avenue:

Mr. Peterson commented that he has two boys in high school and two graduates. He commented that when he heard about the incident; the traits did not line up with the boys. How did this happen? He commented that in his daughter's class years back, the teacher commented that he is teaching his students critical thinking. He commented on the HIB law. He commented that given the chance, a courageous chance, is to take on the spirit of the law, which is to protect our kids and prevent bullying. But on the other hand, we have inadvertently made the situation worst.

Mr. Robert Dinerman, Board Member:

Mr. Dinerman stated that he wanted to comment on the things that were said tonight. He would like to see this many people when there are good things to say, awards to give, teacher's recognition as well as student's; sometimes only three people show up. This is an incredible District. He commented that he has known Mr. and Mrs. Peterson for a long time and appreciates the effort they have put in.

Mr. Dinerman commented that the Board will look at some of these items discussed tonight. There's a pretty narrow interpretation of the HIB law, what is and what isn't. It is not the Board's job to declare something HIB. It takes a tremendous amount of time and training and Dr. Miceli's staff, is the best in the state. We are flawed human beings and we try to do the right things, but unfortunately we are governed by the State of New Jersey who created this law.

Mr. Dinerman commented this law was in effect for one year when he got a call saying his son was under HIB investigation. He brushed it off and said oh, ok. There's a criteria we have to go by. When you hear a rumor and somebody says something the District has to investigate, maybe we have room, maybe we don't.

Mr. Dinerman commented that some of the things said tonight disturbed him. He has lived in this community for 28 years and his children sat in detention much like this on occasions. Words like retribution, he commented is not what our District is all about. The District had 66 confirmed incidents, but we have heard a lot more than that and we have to do the same painstaking investigation at each one. The Administration have to do their investigation and if they don't, or even a hint of not investigating goes out there, in a culture of litigation, you know what happens. The Board and Administration have to do things by policy and we do the best we can as flawed individuals. He understands the fear of investigation, or a "witch hunt", but that's not what our District is all about. We are not looking for HIB cases, nor do we want them, but we have no choice to investigate all reports of HIB, according to the law.

Mr. Dinerman thanked everyone concerned for coming out and commented that if the Board and Administration can make it better, it will be done. Lastly, he commented that will look further into the things that were said tonight.

Claudia Lucciola, Student Representative:

Claudia commented that she is just a high school student but wanted to comment. She said, just as mistakes were made with the Evite, technology and allegations with kids in the investigations with HIB; everyone makes mistakes. Sometimes we don't even know we've made one. Everyone has said a lot tonight, knowing our District, and everything that our school stands for, she doesn't think this will go unheard.

Mr. Hasenkopf thanked everyone.

There being no other comments from the public, Mr. Hasenkopf declared the public portion of the meeting closed at 8:58 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Dibble moved to adopt the following resolution:

This body shall on January 21, 2016 at 8:59 p.m. in the New Providence High/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, specific matters which may generally be described as follows:

- Student matters related to HIB

The minutes of the discussion in closed session of the aforementioned matters may be disclosed to the public after final determination of action has been reached.

Mrs. Cuccaro seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Return to Public Session

The Board reconvened to public session at 9:44 p.m. Mr. Hasenkopf called the Board to order.

Members present were Mrs. Cuccaro, Mr. Dibble, Mr. Dinerman, Mr. Hasenkopf, Mr. Krauss, and Mrs. Misiukiewicz.

Adjournment

There being no other business before the Board, on a motion by Mrs. Cuccaro, seconded by Mr. Krauss and carried unanimously, Mr. Hasenkopf declared the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.



James E. Testa, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
1/21/16 Board Meeting