

The business meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on March 16, 2017, at the High/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, by the Board President, Mr. Smith.

Present on roll call were Bernadette Cuccaro, William Dibble, Ira Krauss, Mary Misiukiewicz, Adam Smith and Joseph Walsh. 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; Ann Marie Inzano, Interim Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Supervision; and 5 members of the public.

Mr. Smith led in the salute to the flag.

Mr. Smith 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.

Mr. Smith commented because of the storm, we are now down to zero snow days. He thanked the custodians and maintenance department for getting the schools ready to open. He thanked Dr. Miceli for the time he spends looking at the weather reports deciding whether to close or not in order to keep our kids safe. He commented that Dr. Miceli was in District early Wednesday morning driving around town to determine if we were going to close the schools. He commended his effort to ensure that everyone stays safe.

Mr. Smith commented on the high school musical "The Sound of Music" was excellent.

**ACTION ITEMS**  
**FINANCE ACTION**

Mr. Krauss, Committee Chairperson, moved to approve Items 1 through 4 as listed below:

**Tentative Budget for 2017/2018 School Year Approved**

1. Approve the tentative budget for 2017/2018 School Year using the 2017/2018 state aid figures and the Secretary to the Board of Education be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Revenues</u>	<u>Debt Service</u>	<u>Total</u>
2017/18 Total Expenditures	\$37,605,367	\$579,049	\$2,078,031	\$40,262,447
Less: Anticipated Revenues	<u>2,156,523</u>	<u>579,049</u>	<u>579,827</u>	<u>3,315,399</u>
Taxes to be Raised	<u>\$35,448,844</u>	<u>\$ - 0 -</u>	<u>\$1,498,204</u>	<u>\$36,947,048</u>

After approval by the Executive County Superintendent of Schools, advertise said tentative budget in the Courier News in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law. A public hearing will be held at the New Providence High School Media Center, New Providence, New Jersey, on April 27, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2017/2018 School Year.

**2017/2018 Submission of the Annual School Budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for Review Approved**

2. Approve that the New Providence Board of Education includes the following adjustments in the tentative 2017/2018 annual school budget that will be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for technical review:
  - Adjustment for enrollment: \$0  
The District would utilize this adjustment, if received, for supplies and materials necessary for our additional students.
  - Adjustment for health care costs: \$0  
The additional funds, if received, are included in the tentative budget and will be utilized to cover the additional increase in health benefit premium costs.
  - Adjustment for deferred PERS pension contribution: \$0  
The District would utilize the adjustment, if received, for the purpose of paying any deferral PERS pension costs and/or the additional interest charges.
  - Adjustment for responsibility transferred: \$0  
The District would utilize this adjustment, if received, for an increase or decrease of costs associated with the transfer of responsibilities.
  - Adjustment for banked cap: \$112,268  
The District has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority and must increase the tentative budget in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-10.3(b). The adjustment to the base budget will be utilized to fund special education needs, curriculum and additional STEM related courses. The District intends to complete said purposes by June 2018.

**Travel Expenses Resolution Approved**

3. Approve the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the New Providence Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy #6471, School District Travel: Board of Education Employees and Members, covers the reimbursement process for travel expenses in accordance with New Jersey Statutes;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with Policy #6471.

**Authorize the Board Secretary to Publish Tentative 2017/2018 School Budget Approved**

4. After Board approval of the tentative 2017/2018 school budget, authorize the Board Secretary to publish said budget as approved by the Executive County Superintendent of Schools.

Seconded by: Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Mr. Krauss commented on the proposed budget. He commented that in November, the process started at the schools with the principals focusing on the student's needs and not with a wish list, which he thanked them for. There are 4.7 FTEs of new staff proposed in the budget, which most are related to STEM. We are adding STEM rooms, renovations and other facility upgrades, based on the approved bond referendum. As a result, the tax levy is going up \$82 per house assessed at \$270,000, a 1.05% increase in taxes for the current calendar year. This is because of the increase in ratables of \$38 million, mainly from Lantern Hill and other improvements in town. There is a 2% cap on increasing the tax levy. We are using \$160,000.00 of banked cap that is expiring, so the overall tax levy increase is 2.3%.

Mr. Testa commented that the 1.05% increase includes the increase in debt service due to the new bond issue that was approved last year. The actual increase is .33% or \$27.00 per household if you take out the increase in debt service that was previously approved.

Mr. Krauss commented that once the budget is approved tonight, the tentative budget goes to the county superintendent for review. Once approved by the County, it has to be advertised in the newspaper. We will have the public hearing on April 27, 2017.



- a. Mary Amato, Assistant to the School Business Administrator, \$15,500 (base \$62,000), effective 4/3/17
- b. Brittany Heaslip, long-term substitute teacher, effective 3/16/17, to be paid on a per diem basis of \$272.85 (prorated Step 1, Column I, base of \$54,569) (subject to criminal history review procedures)
- c. Christina Archetti, home instructor
- d. Alicia Gregorio, girls spring track head coach, \$8,787
- e. Byron Tracey, girls spring track first assistant, \$6,151
- f. Gina Bellitti, Title I math teacher, 10 hours @ \$54.87/hr
- g. Rebecca Madden, Title I math teacher, 10 hours @ \$54.87/hr
- h. Kim Chrisostomides, Title I study skills teacher, 10 hours @ \$54.87/hr
- i. Susan McGeechan, Title I language arts coordinator, 10 hours @ \$54.87/hr
- j. Holly Pizzonia, Title I math coordinator, 10 hours @ \$54.87/hr
- k. Natasha Clerihue, substitute teacher/teacher aide
- l. Sally Ebedo, substitute teacher/teacher aide
- m. Suzanne Kruep, substitute nurse/teacher
- n. Richard Williams, substitute teacher

**Resignation Accepted**

2. Accept the resignation of the following employee:

- a. Kaitlin Manning, Assistant to the School Business Administrator, effective 3/31/17

**2016/2017 School Year Revision Approved**

3. Approve the following revision for the 2016/2017 school year:

- a. Enrica Funari, long term substitute teacher, from \$42,751 to \$64,127 (base \$71,252), due to change in effective date from 10/3/16 thru 3/31/17 to 10/3/16 thru 6/30/17

Seconded by: Mrs. Cuccaro

Dr. Miceli congratulated Mary Amato. Mary has worked for us in a payroll position for ten years. She oversaw the transition to an in-house payroll system and handled it very well. Her new role will allow her continue to grow in the District.

Mr. Testa commented that Mary has been in his department for a long time and has done a great job. This will be a good transition adding support to payroll. She will train the new person once we find a replacement.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mr. Dibble

Yea Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Absent Mr. Dinerman

Yea Mrs. Smith

Yea Mr. Walsh

**OLD BUSINESS**

**RICE Notice**

Mr. Smith commented on RICE notices. It used to be that we send a RICE notice to employees when we have to talk about them in an adverse or disciplinary way. The Appellate Division decision now says that we have to RICE individuals whenever it involves employment, appointments, terminations, terms and conditions, evaluations, promotions, and discipline of any employee, prospective or otherwise. Completely impractical, we do not think this will last, but we have to comply.

Dr. Miceli commented that once this came out, he met with the associations on how to handle the process. He sent out a memo as well to explain the process to all employees. An electronic copy will be received from Mr. Testa’s office unless a disciplinary action is being taken against the employee, in which a hard copy will be delivered to that employee.

**Transgender Policy**

Mr. Smith commented on the first reading of the Transgender Policy and opened the meeting for discussion by the Board. He commented that this is not mandated, but there are legal requirements regarding transgender students. He commented that it is important to have a policy that assists our administration to deal with students who are dealing with these types of issues in a compassionate and an empathetic manner. Our goal is to ensure these students that we have a safe and compassionate environment.

Mr. Hough commented that he provided the board a memo advising in where we are in the process. In New Jersey, in 2014, model policies were beginning to be released regarding accommodations for transgender students. There is no statutory or administrative code guidance on this issue. Policies started coming out and immediately there was discussion from the transgender communities and advocates on what language should be in the policies. There are two policies that many districts are adopting, one from the School Boards and the other Strauss Esmay. After research, the School Board’s model is what we used to draft our model policy with the recommendation from Athina, our Board attorney. The policy does not indicate what is right or wrong on how to provide accommodations. One of the biggest issues regarding schools and transgender is that every situation is different, so the policy provides a guidance on how you can arrive at specific requests from students or parents regarding transgender students. It covers all the various aspects as far as privacy, facility usage, participation in athletics, and anything that can be construed as an issue that transgender students and not being treated fairly. We are required by New Jersey’s Law Against Discrimination(NJLAD) to prevent discrimination or harassment on the basis of transgender

status, gender identity, or gender expression.

Mr. Hough commented that the policy includes Athina's recommendation on parent notification. He asked for board comments on this notification. He commented that some districts do have provisions on mandatory notification, but some don't.

Mr. Smith commented that a student could come to us who has gender expression and would like to use the bathroom with his gender expression. By law, can we require the consent of the parent?

Mr. Hough commented that we cannot require consent. The parent notification is where districts are split. The one currently written is at the discretion of the administration. The recommendation is to go case by case, work with the student through counseling, appropriate staff, and have the parent be part of the process.

Mr. Smith commented that it is not only important to have a policy to guide the staff and administration, but also to have the proper training of our staff.

Mr. Smith commented on parental notification and how we can be flexible. The issue is when do we notify the parents. He went on to comment that New Providence is a district where we have the parents involved in decisions regarding their children.

Mr. Dibble commented that these students are minors. These are not other personal issues. We do a good job in communicating to parents about their child, so that parent will want to know.

Mrs. Cuccaro commented that she has an issue with parent notification because of the safety of the student. In some cases, this might be an issue.

Mr. Krauss commented that it should be noted on a case by case basis, having confidence in the administration that they will do the right thing.

Mr. Smith commented that if the student is coming to the administration asking for certain accommodations, the best place that student can get help is at home. We have a lot of resources to help the parent and child understand and learn together.

Mr. Dibble commented that in this town, a parent will want to know because they will find out through the community so it's best we notify them.

Mr. Smith commented that it is not only important to have a policy to guide the staff and administration, but also to have the proper training.

Mr. Walsh commented that the policy is case by case. The draft says not to notify the parent. Can the policy say that we notify the parent unless there is some extenuating circumstances?

The Board discussed the parent notification issue in detail and most agreed it should be on a case by case decision. They all voiced their concerns for the parent and the student and agreed that the draft policy needs some revisions and the language should be crafted carefully to avoid more issues. The policy will be presented again at the next meeting and if approved, can be

place on the following agenda for first reading.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Smith commented that we need to keep a close eye on school enrollment. Look at factors in affecting enrollment and to form an AD HOC committee on enrollment. The committee will look at the issues of residence and live birth rate and report to the full board in June with their findings.

Mr. Krauss commented that he will share the live birth rate with the committee and feels that June will be too soon for a report. September will be more ideal.

Committee members will be Mr. Dinerman, Mr. Hough, Mrs. Misiukiewicz and Mr. Walsh.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Smith opened the meeting to the public for comments at 8:42 p.m.

There being no other comments from the public, Mr. Smith declared the meeting closed at 8:42 p.m.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Smith moved to adopt the following resolution:

This body shall on March 16, 2017 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:

- Litigation
- Personnel
- 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 9:59 p.m. Mr. Smith called the Board to order.

Members present were Mrs. Cuccaro, Mr. Dibble, Mr. Krauss, Mrs. Misiukiewicz, Mr. Smith and Mr. Walsh.

**Adjournment**

There being no other business before the Board, on a motion by Mr. Dibble, seconded by Mrs. Misiukiewicz, and carried unanimously, Mr. Hasenkopf declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.



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James E. Testa, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

