

The Reorganization meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on January 3, 2019, at the New Providence High School/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, by the Board Secretary, Mr. Testa.

Present on roll call were Rebecca Coniglio, Bernadette Cuccaro, Robert Dinerman, Ira Krauss, Mary Misiukiewicz, Adam Smith and Joseph Walsh. Also present were Dr. David Miceli, Superintendent of Schools; Scott D. Hough, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services; James E. Testa, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary; John M. Richter, Jr., Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Supervision, and seventy-four members of the public.

Mr. Testa 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. Testa welcomed everyone and explained that tonight's meeting is the Board of Education Reorganization Meeting. As Board Secretary, he will run the meeting until a Board President is elected by the Board.

Mr. Testa led in the salute to the flag.

Board Secretary Administers Oath of Office to Newly Elected Board Members

Rebecca Coniglio
Robert Dinerman
Adam Smith

Mr. Testa swore in Mrs. Coniglio, Mr. Dinerman and Mr. Smith.

Roll Call:

<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Coniglio	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Krauss
<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Cuccaro	<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Misiukiewicz
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Dinerman	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Smith
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Walsh	

Official School Election Results

Mr. Testa reported on the official School Election results as follows:

Official Election Results—November 6, 2018
Three Members Elected for Three Year Terms

Rebecca Coniglio	<u>2,713</u>
Robert Dinerman	<u>2,318</u>
Adam Smith	<u>2,539</u>

Total Votes Cast: 6,027

Total Number of Registered Voters: 9,206

Board Secretary Opens Nominations for Office of President of the Board of Education

Mr. Testa opened the nominations for the office of President of the Board of Education:

1. Mr. Dinerman nominated Adam Smith for the office of President of the Board of Education.

Seconded by: Mr. Krauss

There being no other nominations for the office of the President of the Board of Education, Mr. Testa declared the nominations closed.

Roll Call Vote:

<u>Abstain</u> Mrs. Coniglio	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Krauss
<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Cuccaro	<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Misiukiewicz
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Dinerman	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Smith
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Walsh	

Mr. Testa congratulated Mr. Smith for being nominated and approved as Board President.

Mr. Smith accepted the position and thanked Mr. Dinerman for the nomination. He was honored to accept the position of Board President.

Mr. Smith took his place as Board President.

Board President Opens Nominations for Office of Vice-President of the Board of Education

Mr. Smith opened the nominations for the office of Vice-President of the Board of Education:

1. Mr. Krauss nominated Robert Dinerman for the office of Vice-President of the Board of Education.

Seconded by: Mrs. Misiukiewicz

There being no other nominations for the office of the Vice-President of the Board of Education, Mr. Smith declared the nominations closed.

Roll Call Vote:

<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Coniglio	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Krauss
<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Cuccaro	<u>Yea</u> Mrs. Misiukiewicz
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Dinerman	<u>Yea</u> Mr. Smith
<u>Yea</u> Mr. Walsh	

Mr. Smith congratulated Mr. Dinerman.

Mr. Dinerman accepted the position and thanked Mr. Krauss for the nomination.

Mr. Smith commented he would like to share with everyone something that was published last month from the New Jersey School Boards Association’s *School Leader Magazine* titled “13 Things School Board Members Wish People Knew about Them”:

1. *We are the best trained elected officials in the state: no other elected officials are required to go to training on school finance, student achievement, law etc.* no other elected officials are required to do this.
2. *We have to go through a criminal background check before taking office:* no other elected official go through this.
3. *We have to adhere to a code of ethics.*
4. *We are legally required to go into executive session when we discuss certain matters.*
5. *We can’t tell the public the “real reason” that teacher was non-renewed... or that student got suspended.* The negotiations go under this rule.
6. *We are not the people to talk to if you have a problem with your child’s teacher:* complaints such as these are required to go through the chain of command, starting with the teacher.
7. *At school board meetings, public comment period is for members of public to comment, not engage in discussion with board members:* although will at times; we try to provide answers and ensure there is no confusion on an issue, it is no cross examination or a time for a dialogue.
8. *We do not have keys to the buildings –* we do not run the District, only monitor that it is properly run.
9. *We do not get paid a salary:* in some states they do, not in NJ; other elected officials in NJ do, we do not – nor do we get other benefits.

10. *We only oversee one employee: the Superintendent*; this is the only position for which we have complete hiring authority.
11. *One or two board member can't enact new policies*: we can only act upon the majority of the board's vote on any issue.
12. *We do not decide when to close for a snow day.*
13. *We take great pride in the most satisfying part of our job: having a lasting impact on the education of the children in our community, and helping every child reach his or her full potential.*

Mr. Smith reflected on the year 2018. He commented that this was a great year for us, as a District, in terms of student achievement:

- More than 93% of our students go on to college
 - Many accepted to top universities in the country
- Our students standardized assessments have been excellent
 - ACT and SAT scores as high as they have been since 2005
- In 2018, our students participated in trips to Spain and Japan
- Drama and arts program remains vibrant
 - Numerous students at elementary, MS and HS levels participating and achieving in art competitions
- NPHS STEM team won a State championship competition for the 2nd year in a row
- Our school district was recognized as one of the best communities in the country for music education
 - Number of elementary students accepted in the NK elementary honors choir
 - Many more accepted into the MUJC music festival
- Our athletic teams continue to excel – currently ranked number one for all Group 1 schools in NJ
 - Numerous team conference and state sectional champions
 - Some outstanding individual achievements
 - A number of students who have been able to use these activities either help them get into their college of choice or help pay for it
- NJ monthly ranked NPHS #9 among public HS in NJ
- HS marching band was State champs!

Mr. Smith commented that these are the reasons that we, the board members, volunteer our time and do what we do. We want to ensure that this District maintains the excellence it has achieved year after year. We want to make sure that the students coming up have the same opportunities that those who have already gone through this great school district.

That is the only reason we serve on this Board and is and should be our sole focus.

2019 Committee Assignments

Mr. Smith, Board President, announced the following Committee and Board Representative assignments:

Curriculum, Instruction and Technology Committee:

Mary Misiukiewicz, Chairperson
Robert Dinerman
Rebecca Coniglio

Finance, Facilities, and Safety/Security Committee:

Ira Krauss, Chairperson
Robert Dinerman
Joseph Walsh

Personnel, Management and Communication Committee:

Bernadette Cuccaro, Chairperson
Mary Misiukiewicz
Joseph Walsh

Board Representatives:

Union County School Boards Association:	Robert Dinerman
Union County Educational Services Commission:	Mary Misiukiewicz
New Jersey School Boards Association:	Adam Smith
Municipal Alliance Representative:	Mary Misiukiewicz
Morris-Union Jointure Commission:	Dr. David Miceli
Liaison for New Providence Education Foundation:	Bernadette Cuccaro
Liaison for Tri-County Boards:	Adam Smith
Government Relations:	Ira Krauss Adam Smith
Board Policy:	Ira Krauss

Mr. Smith thanked everyone for their assistance in assigning duties. He thanked Mrs. Misiukiewicz for taking on an additional role. It is important to work cooperatively together as a board. It benefits both our students and community.

ACTION ITEMS
EDUCATION ACTION

Mrs. Misiukiewicz, Committee Chairperson, moved to approve Item 1 as listed below:

Superintendent’s HIB Recommendations Approved

1. Per the 2011 Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, approve the recommendations of the Superintendent regarding the following 2018/2019 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying investigations:

<u>School</u>	<u>Incident Report Number(s)</u>
Middle School:	7, 8, and 9
Allen W. Roberts:	6
Salt Brook:	1 and 2

Seconded by: Mr. Dinerman

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Coniglio

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Yea Mr. Dinerman

Yea Mr. Smith

Yea Mr. Walsh

PERSONNEL ACTION

Mrs. Cuccaro, Committee Chairperson, moved to approve Items 1 and 2 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 2018/2019 school year:
 - a. Alessandra Finis, game worker
 - b. Konstantine Leontarakis, lacross coach (boys), second assistant \$4,982* (subject to criminal history review procedures)
 - c. Vadim Rud, occupational therapist, \$27,781* (bas \$69,453*), effective 3/4/19 (subject to criminal review procedures)

(*) subject to completion of negotiations for 2018/2019

2018/2019 School Year Revision Approved

2. Approve the following revision for the 2018/2019 school year.
 - a. Amy Nagle, from co-advisor, HS National Honor Society, \$983*, to advisor, \$1,966*

(*) subject to completion of negotiations for 2018/2019

Seconded by: Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Dr. Miceli welcomed Mr. Vadim Rud. Due to a retirement, Vadim is our new Occupational Therapist. He has his masters in OT with five years of public school experience. He will start as soon as he is released from his current district. We look forward to his contribution. Congratulations!

Roll Call Vote:

Yea Mrs. Coniglio

Yea Mr. Krauss

Yea Mrs. Cuccaro

Yea Mrs. Misiukiewicz

Yea Mr. Dinerman

Yea Mr. Smith

Yea Mr. Walsh

Mr. Smith read the guidelines for public comments, which is the New Providence Board of Education Policy No. 0167, Public Participation in Board Meeting. This is available on the District's website. Before going into public comments, Mr. Smith asked that those who wish to speak, speak respectfully. He also added that anyone is welcome to submit a written statement to the board secretary if they want their statement added to the board minutes, for public record.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Smith opened the meeting to the Public at 7:47 p.m.

James Vopal, Salt Brook School Teacher

Mr. Vopal commented he would like to propose to the board how the meetings are conducted. He commented that he would suggest to moving the closed session portion before the public meeting, so the public can be heard in their entirety rather than shorten what they are trying to say. There will probably be a lot more people speaking at the board meetings. He commented that quite a few boards of education have the closed or executive sessions prior to the public meeting.

Elizabeth Ertman, Resident

Mrs. Ertman commented that her children John and Katherine, now graduated, attended the District from kindergarten through high school. She comes late in commenting on the negotiation process between the teachers and the District. She commented that the teachers for both of her children were amazing. They had gone far and beyond her expectation through the our school district. She urges all parties to have some reason, end this process, and realize that everything is negotiable, everything is on the table. No one should refuse the opportunity to be heard or to have another person feel powerless in this process. She commented that it has been hard for her to look at the teachers that her children have had. She is wondering if they are thinking whether she is on their side or is she thinking of her tax dollars. She asked if it possible to have a public dialogue on what they want and why they want it. Her concern is that there is a proposal to hire a special counsel to help solve this. Her husband is an attorney and knows how the dollars quickly add up. She would like to know what the process is to find a special counsel.

Mr. Smith commented that there is no special counsel. Unfortunately, the negotiations cannot be discussed in public and is not allowed by law. This might change in the future, but for now, we cannot discuss it in public.

Mrs. Ertman thanked everyone for everything they have done.

Jennifer Limone, AWR Teacher

Mrs. Limone welcomed Mrs. Coniglio as a new board member. She commented that they appreciate all the board members. Teachers and secretaries needs chapter 78 relief. It is not fair that when they were hired, their benefits were included, now they are paying close to \$1,100 per month for their health insurance with a \$50 co-pay on most of the doctors visits. That is a lot of money and has impacted a lot of people. Trenton is looking to revise this legislation because many do feel this was not fair. Chapter 78 effected your staff. You thanked your staff for giving their hard earned money years ago and said that you wouldn't forget the amazing gesture. It is time to show that you were sincere in your words. We are here to remind you not to forget. We need to get this contract negotiations finished. Your teachers need to recover and need to feel good about their jobs and about the Board. While we continue to provide the excellent teaching practices that our students benefited from, please put your heads together and get this done. Thank you.

Peter Springer, Resident

Mr. Springer commented he graduated from NPHS and moved back into town a few years ago to allow his children the benefit he received from the New Providence School District. He loves the teachers and staff in the District. He commented on negotiations. Since the last fifteen plus years he has worked in human resources and focused on developing compensation programs. He commented that one of the things he learned from the fifteen years experience in the field is that organizations that failed to align their pay levels ultimately failed to attract quality staff. He commented that Mr. Smith mentioned numbers of accomplishments the District had last year and we would like them to continue. In order to continue with that success, we need to align our pay and benefit levels to the quality we expect in New Providence. He urged the board to consider this. He commented that he knows they have a challenging job and he appreciates that. He urges a quick resolution. He thanked everyone.

Bruna Silvestre, NPHS Alumni

Ms. Silvestre commented on negotiations. She commented that it is embarrassing. It is embarrassing to see how the teachers are being treated, that the people directly responsible for children's education and that have helped them to get into college are being treated this way. This is discouraging for people going into the teaching profession. It raises the question that if teachers are being treated this way, why would anyone want to work in a school district. It is embarrassing to the District.

Mr. Smith commented this is not an issue of respect. Negotiations are private and cannot be discussed in public. We all agree that teachers should be paid fairly. We all agree that teachers should get the benefits they are entitled to. This board supports that. We cannot comment on negotiations, but nothing or anyone is disrespectful.

Denise Moser, NPHS Teacher

Mrs. Moser commented that she is very proud of being a part of this team. She commented, we are a team. We all have the same objectives, which is the education of our children. When talking about the things we had achieved here, she thought, there are things that are missing this year. She commented on how she used to take the kids to competitions on Saturdays and didn't think twice about being paid. She commented that she is on this team. In 2008, she was one of those people that said "Yes" because we were a team. When Mr. John Wolak, president of the board at that time, came to us in good faith, we sacrificed. She commented, that's what you do when you are part of a team. We were the reason we were a #1 school district in the state. Some districts had to cut programs. We were the only district that opened up our contracts and took a salary cut. She commented that she is ashamed now. What has happened to our team? She commented that she knows the board has the power. She suggested that we can go to the town and ask if the town is willing to go more than 2%. When she thinks of her children, she is grateful for what they have received in this town.

Mrs. Moser commented that in second grade, when her daughter was diagnosed with dyslexia, it was amazing how the teachers of AWR came together and helped her. She got the help of amazing professionals in this town. She commented that she and husband are very lucky to have this entire institution here in their town. This entire team, the teachers, the superintendent and the board of education, if she were to be a teacher, she thought to herself, this is where she would be.

Mrs. Moser commented that she spent her summer writing letters of recommendations for students and thought, this is what she signed up for. She is encouraging the Board to show up on the other side of the table, and be there for the teachers. She commented that there is an outside mediator coming in, commenting on what Mrs. Ertman had asked.

Mr. Smith commented that this was public knowledge.

Mrs. Moser commented that her daughter is in her twenties, has a great job, and is making more than most of the teachers are in the district. She commented that the \$20K in property taxes she pays annually are worth it because of the professionals we have in this town. She thanked the Board for listening to her.

Mr. Smith commented that he had two kids that had Mrs. Moser and loved her class. He commented that this has nothing to do with the lack of respect. The achievements we've had in the District is largely part of the teachers that we have. This community supports the school district. We had a partnership between the Board and the Association. We worked through what happened in 2008 and worked together to get through a financial crisis. It was give and take both ways. A lot of districts did not do this. A lot of districts had tremendous layoffs and salary freezes. Because of the way we worked together and the fiscal management of this Board, we never had to freeze salaries and teachers were able to get raises. We are going to work through this as a team. We were there until midnight last time at the last meeting trying to work through issues. Both sides are working and are trying to get a resolution done. It is not pleasant right now, but we will get there. Thank you for your comments.

Mr. Smith declared the public comments closed at 8:11 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Krauss moved to adopt the following resolution:

1. This body shall on January 3, 2019 in the New Providence High/Middle School Media Center, discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, specific matters which may generally be described as follows:
 - Negotiations
2. 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.

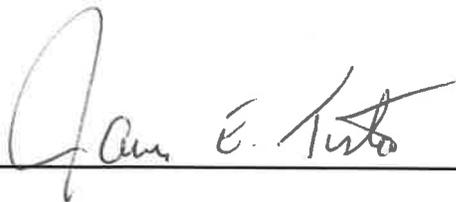
Mrs. Misiukiewicz seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Return to Public Session

The Board reconvened to public session at 9:10 p.m. Mr. Smith called the Board to order.

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

There being no other business before the Board, on a motion by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Krauss, and carried unanimously, Mr. Smith declared the meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.



James E. Testa, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
1/3/19 Board Reorganization Meeting