

**REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2022  
MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Kerri Wright, Board President, called the meeting to order on September 13, 2022 at 7:01 p.m. at Chester Borough Courtroom 50 North Road, Chester, NJ

**2. Sunshine Announcement**

Kerri Wright, Board President announced that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 P.L. 1975 (Sunshine Law) and that adequate notice of the date, time and location has been sent to the Daily Record and has been posted and filed with the Chester Township and Chester Borough Clerks. The annual meeting calendar has also been sent to each District school and the Chester Post Office. Additionally, the agenda has been posted on the District website prior to the Board meeting.

**3. Roll Call**

John Barounis	Yes	Christopher Lowry	Yes
Amy Collins	Yes	Heather Ronco	Yes
Matthew Downs	Yes	Sarah Schultz	Yes
Rebekah Forlenza	Yes	Kerri Wright	Yes
Sara Kalashian	Yes	Quorum	Yes

**4. Pledge of Allegiance**

Kerri Wright, President, led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance

**5. Presentations - Andrew White, Ken Piascik and Joe Pizzo will present BRMS Schools to Watch**

**5a. Public Comment on Presentation**

Stacy - thanked both Mr. Piascik and Mr. Pizzo for all they do. She also mentioned how terrific they are along with the rest of the BRMS staff.

Carolyn Kleppe - thanked both Mr. Piascik and Mr. Pizzo and shared that they both taught her children who are now in college.

Carolyn Byszewski - asked if this program is only for middle school.

Melissa Duffy - asked how the children are chosen.

**6. Administration-Dr. Christina VanWoert and Tanya Dawson**

**6a. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Van Woert said the school year is off to a wonderful start.

**6b. Business Administrator's Report**

**1. Buildings and Grounds Update**

- a. Project update
- b. Future Plans – New roofs, fire alarm system at BRMS
- c. Custodian shortage – still working through many challenges.
- d. Safety Traffic Study at Bragg Dickerson
- e. Facility Tour Visit – East Brunswick Public Schools

**2. Finance Update**

- a. Facilities Use Update – Coverage and Fees
- b. Transportation Requests – requests were denied
- c. Annual Audit
- d. Annual Grant Reporting
- e. SRO Update

**7. President's Comments**

none

**8. Public Commentary**

Carolyn Kleppe Collins read the attached statement and referenced the attached flyer.

Kerri Wright – Responded to the handout by stating this is the first time seeing the flyer but assured the public that the Chester Board of Education does not approve of this...

Board attorney, Danielle Paniese, referenced the delicate role of a board member as an elected official and a private citizen. When a board member is speaking as a private citizen a disclaimer is needed and the disclaimer is very specific and she will share it if anyone needs it.

Kerri Wright – asked Mr. Barounis if the flyer could be re-advertised removing Board of Education member title.

Carolyn Kleppe – Asked if an ethics violation is filed against a board member, who pays the legal costs? Is there a policy on this?

Kerri Wright – noted she was not aware of our specific policy but in general, board members, as elected officials, have indemnification which usually goes through the school's insurance

**9. Approval of Minutes**

*The Board took the following action:*

**9a. Approves Meeting Minutes from August 16, 2022**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Regular meeting minutes of the meeting held on August 16, 2022.

**9b. Approves Executive Meeting Minutes from August 16, 2022**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Executive meeting minutes of the meeting held on, August 16, 2022.

Motion by Heather Ronco

Seconded by Rebekah Forlenza

Roll Call Vote	JB	AC	MD	RF	SK	CL	HR	SS	KW
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**10. Committee of The Whole—All.**

*The Board took the following action:*

**10a. Approves Chester Board of Education 2022-2023 Goals**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following Chester Board of Education Goals for 2022-2023.

**Board Goal One: Research, Restore and Reinvent Current and New Educational Programs and Approaches to Teaching and Learning**

**Board Goal Two: Expand Student Opportunities for Growth and Development Beyond the Classroom Through Sports and Extracurricular Activities**

**Board Goal Three: Focus on District Wide Facilities Improvements**

**10b. Accepts QSAC Scores**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education accepts the 2022 QSAC Scores:

NJQSAC Areas	Initial Placement (August 2022)
Instruction and Program	89%
Fiscal Management	100%
Governance	94%
Operations	95%
Personnel	100%

Rebekah Forlenza congratulated Dr. Van Woert and her team.

Motion by Rebekah Forlenza

Seconded by Heather Ronco

Roll Call Vote	JB	AC	MD	RF	SK	CL	HR	SS	KW
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**10c. Approves Revised 2022-2023 School Calendar**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the revised 2022-2023 school calendar to include April 20, 2022 and April 21, 2022 as early dismissal for Bragg Dickerson conferences.

- 11. Buildings, Grounds, Transportation/Finance—** *Amy Collins (chair) Matthew Downs, Sara Kalashian and Chris Lowry*

**11a. Approves Bills List**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, the Chester Board of Education approves payment of the bills list as approved by the Finance Committee.

Bills List		Totals
Payroll	08/30/2022	\$128,279.83
Payroll	09/09/2022	\$511,253.56
Payroll	09/15/2022	\$126,885.45
Bills List	09/13/2022	\$882,430.14

**11b. Approves Monthly Appropriation Transfers for July 2022**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following transfers within the 2021-2022 budget for the month of July 2022 in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A: 23A-16.10 (c) 1.; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

**11c. Approves Monthly Transfer Report for July 2022**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.3, the Chester Board of Education approves the Monthly Report of Transfers for July 2022; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

**11d. Approves Board Secretary Report for July 2022**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9 and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(h), the Chester Board of Education approves the Report of the Board Secretary for July 2022; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

**11e. Approves Board Treasurer Report for July 2022**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-36, the Chester Board of Education approves the Report of the Treasurer of School Monies for July 2022; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

**11f. Approves Certification of Secretary and Treasurer Report for July 2022**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-16.10 (c) 3, the Board Secretary does certify that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the line item appropriation; and

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c) 4, the Chester Board of Education has reviewed for the minutes of this meeting the Board Secretary and Treasurer's monthly financial report for July 2022 and that no major account or fund has been over-expended

**11g. Approves Travel Requests**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 and N.J.A.C.6A:23A and Board Policy 9250 and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following travel requests:

Date	Employee Conference/Workshop	Registration- Tuition	Travel Misc.	Estimated Total Expense
10/24/2022- 10/26/2022	Sarah Schultz NJSBA Fall Conference	\$550.	\$560.	\$1,110.
10/24/2022- 10/26/2022	Dr. VanWoert NJSBA Fall Conference	\$550.	\$560.	\$1,110.
10/24/2022- 10/26/2022	Tanya Dawson NJSBA Fall Conference	\$550.	\$560.	\$1,110.
10/24/2022- 10/26/2022	Kerri Wright NJSBA Fall Conference	\$550.	-	\$550.
10/19/2022	Sarah Warren Reading, Writing and the Brain	\$219.	virtual	\$219.

**11h. Approves SEB Speech and Feeding Therapy, LLC**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves SEB Speech and Feeding Therapy, LLC to provide therapy to student #20754 for the 2022-2023 school year at an hourly rate of \$215. up to a total cost of \$7,740.

Motion by Heather Ronco

Seconded by Rebekah Forlenza

Roll Call Vote	JB	AC	MD	RF	SK	CL	HR	SS	KW
9-0 Except 11g.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
11g.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	abstain	abstain

**12. Curriculum/Governance/Personnel—Heather Ronco (chair) John Barounis, Rebekah Forlenza and Sarah Schultz**

**12a. Approves Sidebar Agreement between the CEA and the Chester BOE**

WHEREAS, the Chester Board of Education (“Board”) and the Chester Education Association (“Union”) are parties to a collectively negotiated agreement in effect from 2022 to 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Board has a need for a member of the middle school teaching staff to teach an extra class period of 37 minutes, totaling seven (7) periods of instructional time per day five days per week; and

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

WHEREAS, Kathleen Vespignani, has expressed an interest in teaching an additional period; and

WHEREAS, the Board and the Union are desirous of entering into this Sidebar Agreement to permit Kathleen Vespignani, or other individual as assigned by the district, to teach an additional period.

NOW, THEREFORE the parties agree as follows:

1. Kathleen Vespignani, or other individual assigned by the District, shall be permitted to teach an additional period five days per week. For the extra period of instructional time, the employee so assigned shall receive a stipend of \$8,364.36
2. The Parties recognize that this Agreement is temporary in nature and shall expire when the Board provides notice to the Union that it no longer desires to have Kathleen Vespignani teach an additional class period.
3. This agreement is subject to ratification by the Board of Education and the Union.
4. This agreement shall not be precedent setting in any way nor shall it be used in any other matter, grievance, or proceeding of any kind. This agreement is intended to apply only to the factual circumstances from which it arose and shall not have any precedential value.

**12b. Approves Horizontal Advancement on Guide**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves advancement on the salary guide for the following staff members effective October 1, 2022.

Name	Current Step/Guide	Advance Step/Guide
Linda Blazier	Step 15 MA + 15	Step 16 MA+30
Evelyn Casperson	Step 5 BA	Step 6 BA +15
Nicole Hey	Step 16 MA	Step 17 MA+30
Christopher Jala	Step 4 BA	Step 5 BA+30
Krista Maico	Step 14 MA	Step 15 MA+15
Catherine McPherson	Step 5 BA	Step 6 BA+15
Sean McQueeney	Step 12-13 BA	Step 13-14 BA+15
Erika Rosamila	Step 17 BA+15	Step 18 MA
Amy Schwartz	Step 18A MA+15	Step 19A MA+30

\*Tanya Dawson clarified advancement on Step Guide for Krista Maico and Amy Schwartz

**12c. Approves Team Leaders (BRMS)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following BRMS team leaders for the 2022-2023 school year with stipends as determined by Schedule "B" of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Team Leaders	Grade
Patricia Fisher	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Theresa Meierhofer	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Krista Maico and Christine Sarlo (Split)	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Kathleen Vespignani	Related Arts
Sarah Warren	Special Education

**12d. Approves Team Leaders (Bragg)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following Bragg School team leaders for the 2022-2023 school year with stipends as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association:

Team Leaders	Grade
Kelli Dolan and Lauren Scarfo (Split)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
Gretchen Jacot	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Nicole Hey and Lauren Allen (Split)	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Christa Bedkowski and Kelly Tompkins (Split)	Related Arts
Maryanne Vindici and Robin Kaufer	Special Education
Debra Androvette	ESL

**12e. Approves Team Leaders (Dickerson)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following Dickerson School team leaders for the 2022-2023 school year with stipends as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association:

Team Leaders	Grade
Dorianne Taquinto	Kindergarten
Rebecca Gambuti	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade
Kerri Mottola	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
John Christie	Special Education
Francesca Ragonese	Related Arts

**12f. Approves Staff for Sports (BRMS)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following staff for the following coaching positions for the 2022-2023 school year with stipends as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association:

Fall Sport	Head Coach/Assistant Coach
Athletic Director	Kevin Cullen & Andy Gray (split)
Cross Country	James Yankowicz, (Head), Krista Maico (Assistant)
Field Hockey	Kathy Vespignani (Head), Laura Garrison (Assistant)
Soccer-Girls	Terri Meierhofer (Head), Melissa D’Auria (Assistant)
Soccer-Boys	Kevin Cullen (Head), Taryn Mansolino (Assistant)

Unified Soccer	Chris Duffy (Head)
----------------	--------------------

**12g. Designates School Violence Awareness Week**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1 establishes the third Monday in October to be School+ Violence Awareness Week; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has provided certified specialists to develop age appropriate opportunities for student discussion on conflict resolution, issues of student diversity, and tolerance; and

WHEREAS, the law identifies this week as a Week of School Violence Awareness.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Chester Board of Education designates October 17-21, 2022 as a "School Violence Awareness Week."

**12h. Designates Week of Respect**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:37-29 establishes the first Monday in October to be Week of Respect; and

WHEREAS, the Chester Board of Education recognizes the importance of character education, shall observe the week by developing age appropriate instruction focusing on preventing harassment, intimidation or bullying as defined in section 2 of P.L.2002, c.83; and

WHEREAS, the law also directs throughout the school year that a school district shall provide ongoing age appropriate instruction on preventing harassment, intimidation, bullying in accordance with core curriculum content standards.

RESOLVED that the Chester Board of Education designates October 3-7, 2022 as "Week of Respect."

**12i. Designates School Red Ribbon Week**

WHEREAS, alcohol and drug abuse affect individuals, families and communities across the nation; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that visible, unified prevention education efforts by community members be launched to prevent drug abuse; and

WHEREAS, Red Ribbon Week offers citizens the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to drug-free lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, Red Ribbon Week will be celebrated in communities across the nation on October 23-31; and

WHEREAS, business, government, law enforcement, media, health care providers, religious institutions, schools, and other community-based organizations will demonstrate their commitment to healthy, drug-free lifestyles by wearing red ribbons and participating in drug prevention activities; and



CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

WHEREAS, the community of the Chester School District further commits its resources to ensure the success of the Red Ribbon Campaign;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Chester Board of Education does hereby proclaim October 23-31, 2022, as RED RIBBON WEEK, and encourages all to participate in drug prevention education activities, not only during Red Ribbon Week, but all year long, making a visible statement that we are strongly committed to a drug-free community.

\*John Barounis asked if these designations were all NJDOE required.  
Dr. VanWoert replied yes they are.

**12j. Approves Leave of Absence (Emp. #1121)**

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education approves the following maternity leave of absence for employee # 1121:

Leave (Start Date)	09/13/2022
Accumulated Sick Days (Applied)	25
FMLA/NJFLA Start Date (unpaid with benefits)	10/20/2022
Date of Return (Anticipated)	10/26/2022

**12k. Approves Leave of Absence (Emp. #1029)**

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education approves the following maternity leave of absence for employee # 1029:

Leave (Start Date)	10/07/2022
Accumulated Sick Days (Applied)	29
FMLA/NJFLA Start Date (unpaid with benefits)	11/21/2022
Date of Return (Anticipated)	02/22/2023

**12l. Approves Revised Leave of Absence (Emp. #1095)**

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education approves the following maternity leave of absence for employee # 1029:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Leave (Start Date)	01/09/2023
Accumulated Sick Days (Applied)	0
FMLA/NJFLA Start Date (unpaid with benefits)	01/09/2023
Date of Return (Anticipated)	02/06/2023

**12m. Accepts Resignation (Robinson)**

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Mary Robinson, Special Education Paraprofessional at Dickerson school effective September 12, 2022.

**12n. Approves Leave of Absence Substitute (Pela)**

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education approves long term substitute, Lisa Pela effective August 22, 2022 through anticipated date of February 22, 2023 at a prorated salary of \$53,870, Step 1 BA.

**12o. Approves Camp Achieve Substitute (Matthews)**

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education approves 2022 Camp Achieve substitute Cathleen Matthews from July 6, 2022 through August 9, 2022 at her contracted hourly rate.

**12p. Approves 2022-2023 School Trips (BRMS)**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following BRMS field trips for the 2022-2023 school year:

Field Trip	Location	Grade/Group
02/03/2023	Drew University	8 <sup>th</sup> grade GIST
03/13/2023 – 03/14/2023	Morristown Unitarian Fellowship	8 <sup>th</sup> grade students

**12q. Approves Translator (Capan)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Gretchen Capan to translate documents from English to Spanish for up to 10 hours per month for the 2022-2023 school year at the professional hourly rate of \$62 for a total cost of up to \$6,200.

**12r. Approves Teachers as Substitute Bus Paraprofessionals**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves teachers as substitute bus paraprofessionals for the 2022-2023 school year at the contracted rate.

**12s. Approves District-Wide Curriculum**

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following curriculum for the 2022-2023 school year:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Technology	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2022
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Life and Careers	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2022
World Languages	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2022
Visual and Performing Arts: Dance, Music, Theatre and Visual	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2022

**12t. Approves Chester School District Virtual and Remote Instruction Plan**

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the Chester School District Virtual and Remote Instruction plan for the 2022-2023 school year.

**12u. Approves Updated HIB Policy**

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the Chester School District updated HIB policy.

**12v. Approves Custodian ( Ramirez)**

RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Luz Ramirez as a Custodian at a salary of \$37,000 prorated effective September 14, 2022 through June 30, 2023 pending the approval of the criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c 5. Account #11-000-262-100-001-000

**12w. Approves Custodian (Ronkowitz)**

RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Thomas Ronkowitz as a Custodian at a salary of \$42,000 prorated effective September 14, 2022 through June 30, 2023 pending the approval of the criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c 5. Account #11-000-262-100-001-000

**12x. Approves Leave of Absence (Employee #1500)**

RESOLVED: that the Board of Education approves the following leave of absence for employee # 1500:

Leave (start date)	12/22/22
Accumulated Sick Days (Applied)	10
FMLA Start Date (unpaid with benefits)	01/02/23
FMLA/NJFLA Start Date (unpaid with benefits)	02/06/23
Date of Return (Anticipated)	05/08/23

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Motion by Rebekah Forlenza

Seconded by Amy Collins

Roll Call Vote	JB	AC	MD	RF	SK	CL	HR	SS	KW
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**13. Executive Session**

None

**14. Unfinished Business**

None

**15. New Business**

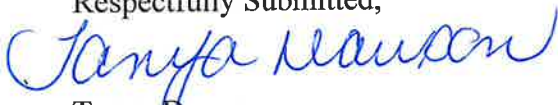
None

**16. Adjournment**

*There being no further business to discuss, upon the motion of Rebekah Forlenza and seconded by Sara Kalashian the Board considered a motion to adjourn at 8:41 p.m.*

Roll Call Vote	JB	AC	MD	RF	SK	CL	HR	SS	KW
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Respectfully Submitted,



Tanya Dawson  
Board Secretary