

**REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 19, 2024  
MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Sunshine Announcement**

Sarah Schultz, 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**

Erick Arostegui	Yes	Suzanne Dundon	Yes
John Barounis	Yes	Melissa Mauro-Duffy	Yes
Carolyn Byszewski	Yes	Sarah Schultz	Yes
Adam Colicchio	Yes	Adam Sorchini	Yes
Matthew Downs	Yes	<b>Quorum</b>	Yes

**4. Pledge of Allegiance**

Sara Schultz, Board President, led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**5. Presentations:**

- Pandemic Recovery: Grade 3-8 Mathematics- Stanford University presented by Mr. Brad Currie, Director of Planning, Research, and Evaluation
- 2024-2025 Chester School Budget Presentation by Mr. Peter Frascella, School Business Administrator

**6. Administration-**Dr. Christina VanWoert and Peter Frascella Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**6a. Superintendent's Report**

*Chris VanWoert thanked the students, staff and community for their involvement in the Science Fair.*

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

*None*

**7. President's Comments**

*Sarah Schultz thanked the principals for presenting in the Science Fair Awards. She also reported on a County Meeting of Board Presidents.*

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**8. Public Commentary**

*None*

**9. Approval of Minutes**

**9a. Approves Meeting Minutes from February 13, 2024**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Regular meeting minutes of the Reorganization meeting held on February 13, 2024

**9b. Approves Executive Meeting Minutes from February 13, 2024**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Executive meeting minutes of the meeting held on February 13, 2024.

Motion by John Barounis

Seconded by Carolyn Byszewski

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**10. Committee of The Whole—*All*.**

**10a. Approves Revised 2023-2024 School Calendar (Application of Unused Snow Day)**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves revising the 2023-2024 school calendar to have schools closed on **May 28, 2024** due to the application of one unused snow day.

Motion by Adam Sorchini

Seconded by Melissa Mauro-Duffy

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**11. Buildings, Grounds, Transportation/Finance—** Carolyn Byszewski (Chair), Adam Sorchini, Adam Colicchio and John Barounis

*Carolyn Byszewski discussed Basketball season ending, Solar contract, ROD Grants and budget.*

**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	02/15/2024	\$700,208.27
Payroll	02/29/2024	\$683,675.94
Payroll	03/15/2024	\$683,250.92
Bills List	03/19/2024	\$1,450,205.30

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**11b. Approves Monthly Appropriation Transfers for December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following transfers within the 2023-2024 budget for the month of December 2023, January 2023 and February 2024 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 December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.3, the Chester Board of Education approves the Monthly Report of Transfers for December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

**11d. Approves Board Secretary Report for December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024**

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 December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

**11e. Approves Board Treasurer Report for December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024**

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 December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024; 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 December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024**

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 December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024 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	<u>Employee</u> Conference/Work-shop	Registration-	Travel Misc.	Estimated Total Expense
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04/17/24	Danielle Guli Shifting the Balance Rutgers University, NJ	\$180.00	\$25.38	\$205.38
04/17/2024	Julie Flores Shifting the Balance Rutgers University, NJ	\$180.00	\$25.38	\$205.38
6/5 – 6/7 2024	Peter Frascella NJASBO Atlantic City, NJ	\$500.00	\$494.98	\$994.98
6/19-6/22 2024	Dr. Kenneth Piascik National School to Watch Conference Alexandria, VA	\$499.00	\$1696.35	\$2195.35
6/19-6/22 2024	Joseph Pizzo National School to Watch Conference Alexandria, VA	\$499.00	\$1174.51	\$1673.51

**11h. Approves School Trip (Dickerson)**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approve the following school trip for the Dickerson School:

Field Trip	Location	Grade/Group
Mayo Performing Arts Center	Morristown	Grade K

**11i Approves the Professional Services Agreement-Special Council**

RESOLVED, the Chester Board of Education approves a Professional Services Agreement between the Chester Board of Education and Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs LLC as the Special Council for the 2024 calendar year.

**11j. Approves 2024 Camp Achieve Field Trips**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following social skills trips chaperoned by Brandon Kornbluh, school social worker, Denielle Saucedo, Gretchen Capan, Kathleen Werner.

July 18th - Buttermilk Falls, Mendham Township, NJ  
 July 25th - Great Swamp Wildlife Refuge, Harding, NJ  
 August 1st - Hacklebarney Park/Chester Diner

**11k. Approves Camp Achieve/Camp Success to attend Chester Pool**

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Camp Achieve/Camp Success to attend Chester Pool on Mondays and Wednesdays from July 8, 2024 through August 8, 2024.

**11l. Approves a Joint Transportation Sports Agreement (Byram Bus Company)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, the Chester Board of Education approves a Joint Transportation Sports Agreement with Byram Bus Company effective March 2024 to June 30, 2024.

**11m. Approves Adoption of Tentative 2024-2025 School Budget**

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2024-2025 School Year using the state aid figures and the Secretary to the Board of Education be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent for approval in accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:7F-5 and 18.A:7F-6:

	GENERAL FUND	CAPITAL RESERVE	MAINT RESERVE	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL
<b>2024-25 Total Expenditures</b>	\$25,328,969	\$4,448,180	\$300,000	\$358,829	\$1,139,230	\$31,575,208
<b>Less: Anticipated Revenues</b>	\$3,116,139	\$4,338,487	\$300,000	\$358,829	\$109,693	\$8,223,148
<b>Taxes to be Raised</b>	\$22,212,830				\$1,029,537	\$23,242,367

AND, to advertise said tentative budget in the Daily Record in accordance with the form suggested by the New Jersey Department of Education and according to law;

AND, public hearing on the budget for the 2024-25 school year will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the Chester Borough Courtroom.

**11n. Approves Maximum Travel**

WHEREAS, Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, a board of education must establish a maximum dollar limit for travel expenditure, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq.,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education includes in the tentative budget a maximum travel expenditure in the amount of \$95,000 for the 2024-25 school year.

**11o. Approves Travel Expense Threshold**

WHEREAS, the Chester 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, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

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WHEREAS, a Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7. as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget travel and related expense reimbursement in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7, to a maximum expenditure of \$95,000, for all staff and board members for the 2024-25 school year. The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

**11p. Establishes the 2024-2025 Maximum Level for Professional Services**

WHEREAS, the tentative budget includes the following appropriations:

Legal Services	\$28,000
Auditing Services	\$28,000
Architectural Services	\$36,000
Medical	\$ 8,000

WHEREAS, the administration needs to notice the board if there arises a need to exceed said maximums; upon which the board may adopt a dollar increase in the maximum amount through formal board action; and

WHEREAS, the Board and Administration wishes to minimize the amount of paperwork involved in this area;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education establishes maximums for professional services in the area listed above for the 2024-2025 school year.

**11q. Adjustment for Enrollment: \$248,952**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for enrollment in the amount of \$0. The district intends to utilize this adjustment for supplies and materials necessary for the additional students.

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**11r. CAPITAL RESERVE Capital Reserve Account Withdrawal: \$4,448,180**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the budget a capital reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$4,448,180 for:

- ☐ BRMS HVAC Upgrades - \$581,000
- ☐ BRMS HVAC Upgrades (Building Wide) - \$453,850
- ☐ BRMS Roof - \$1,109,525
- ☐ Bragg E.S. HVAC Upgrade - \$548,750
- ☐ Bragg E.S. Roof – 607,587
- ☐ Dickerson E.S. Roof - \$708,775
- ☐ District Wide PA System - \$329,000
- ☐ Transfer to Debt Service - \$109,693

**11s. MAINTENANCE RESERVE Maintenance Reserve Account Withdrawal: \$300,000**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the budget a maintenance reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$300,000 for the purpose of providing facilities maintenance projects in accordance with the M-1 and CMP for 24-25 school year.

**11t. Approves the Professional Services Agreement-Board Attorney**

RESOLVED, the Chester Board of Education approves a Professional Services Agreement between the Chester Board of Education and The Machado Law Group as Board Attorney, effective March 1, 2024 as the Board Attorney for the 2024 calendar year.

Motion by Carolyn Byszewski

Seconded by Adam Colicchio

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**12. Curriculum/Governance/Personnel—** Melissa Mauro Duffy (Chair), Erick Arostegui, Suzanne Dundon and Matthew Downs

**12a. Approves Camp Achieve/Camp Success Bus Drivers**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following bus drivers for Camp Achieve and Camp Success programs for the 2024-2025 ESY from July 8, 2024 through August 8, 2024 (20 days) at their contracted hourly rate:

Driver	Hourly Rate
Tracy Kometani	\$28.96
Holly Law	\$32.35
Yoslin Lopez	\$29.44
Emily Perez	\$29.44
Pamela Roberts	\$31.86

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

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves advancement on the salary guide for the following staff member effective March 1, 2024.

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Name	Current Step/Guide	Advance Step/Guide
Elizabeth Madinabeitia	Step 16 MA \$75,510	Step 16 MA +15 \$76,260

**12c. Approves Guidance Practicum/Internship Student (Yamashita)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves The College of New Jersey Graduate School of Counseling student, Maggie Yamashita, to complete her practicum/internship under the supervision of Chester School District Guidance Counselors effective August 28, 2024 through June 13, 2025 pending the approval of the criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with P.L. 2018, c5.

**12d. Approves Professional Work (2024 Science Fair Judge-Hey)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves Nicole Hey to be a 2024 Science Judge to be paid the professional hourly rate of \$62 per hour for up to 4 hours each as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association.

**12e. Approves Professional Work (2024 Science Fair Chaperones)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following staff members to be 2024 Science Fair Chaperones to be paid \$86 for the first two hours and \$43 per each additional hour for up to four hours total as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association.

Liz Madinabeitia	Grace Cooper
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**12f. Approves 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher (O’Melia)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Cheryl O’Melia as Bragg School 5th Grade Teacher at Step 17 MA+30 with benefits and a salary of \$82,560 effective March 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.

**12g. Approves Professional Work (Ragonese)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves Francesca Ragonese for professional work to write STEM lesson plans to be paid the professional hourly rate of \$62 for up to 10 hours as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association.

**12h. Approves Substitute Assistant to the Superintendent (Beaudin)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Sophia Beaudin as substitute assistant to the Superintendent for effective April 1, 2024 to be paid \$25.00 per hour.



**12i. Awards Compensation (Van Woert)**

WHEREAS, the employment contract for Dr. Christina Van Woert, Superintendent of Schools, provides for merit goals pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-3.1 € (10); and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christina Van Woert, Superintendent of Schools, successfully attained the following Qualitative Goals as outlined below.

<p>The Superintendent will lead the district in the production of the Science Fair PART 2 which for more than 30 years has been organized, chaired and administered by a Chester municipal organization from outside the schools. Over the past few years, that committee has disbanded due to a number of factors including the pandemic.</p> <p>After accepting the following responsibilities for the successful production of the Science Fair last year, the Superintendent will set the following goals to build upon and expand on the success of our 2023 Science Fair including securing additional funding for the Fair, increasing the number of volunteers working on the Fair; recruiting additional out of district science professionals to serve as judges for the Fair; encouraging additional teachers and students through the process of preparing to compete in the Fair and offering a larger number of workshops for their projects.</p> <p>The Fair will be held this year on Saturday, March 16, 2024.</p>	<p>2.5% of salary</p>
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**12j. Approves Professional Work (2024 Science Fair Judge-Jacot)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves Gretchen Jacot to be 2024 Science Judge to be paid the professional hourly rate of \$62 per hour for up to 4 hours each as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association.

**12k. Approves Professional Work (Gray)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves BRMS teacher Andrew Gray for professional work for the Chester Science Fair to be paid the professional hourly rate of \$62 per hour for up to 8 hours total as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association.

**12l. Approves Professional Work (Dougherty)**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves an additional 20 hours of professional work for Director of Technology, Michael Dougherty for the 2024 Chester Science Fair to be paid \$75 per hour.

Motion by Erick Arostegui

Seconded by Melissa Mauro-Duffy

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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13. **Policy**-Adam Sorchini (Chair), Adam Colicchio, John Barounis and Melissa Mauro Duffy

- 13a. **Approves First Reading of Policy 2121 Line of Responsibility**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the first reading of Policy 2121-Line of Responsibility.

- 13b. **Approves First Reading of Policy 3280 Gifts, Grants and Requests**

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the first reading of Policy 3280-Gifts, Grants and Requests.

Motioned by Carolyn Byszewski      Seconded by Adam Sorchini

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

14. **Executive Session**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to NJS.A. 10:4-12 and 10:4-13 the Chester Board of Education holds a closed session on March 19, 2024 at 8:20 p.m. to discuss HIB, personnel, negotiations and items falling under attorney client privilege. It is expected that the minutes will be made public as soon as official action is taken.

Motion by John Barounis      Seconded by Carolyn Byszewski

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

15. **Return to Public Session**

*Upon the motion of Carolyn Byszewski and seconded by Adam Colicchio, the Board returned to Public Session at 8:55 pm.*

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

16. **Committee of The Whole—All.**

*None*

17. **Unfinished Business**

*Melissa Mauro-Duffy discussed the lights in the back of Black River Middle School.*

18. **New Business**

*Melissa Mauro-Duffy discussed having a Volleyball as a club or sport next year.*

*Sarah Schultz asked about the drama program putting on a show.*

*Carolyn Byszewski wanted the curriculum committee to look into assemblies about the Stock Market, Home/Personal Finance, etc..*

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**19. Adjournment**

*There being no further business to discuss, upon the motion of Carolyn Byszewski and seconded by Adam Colicchio the Board considered a motion to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.*

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Respectfully Submitted,



Peter Frascella  
Board Secretary