

**REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 12, 2023
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order

Sarah Schultz, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at Chester Borough Courtroom, 50 North Road, Chester, NJ, 07930

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

John Barounis	Yes	Rebekah Forlenza	Yes*
Carolyn Byszewski	Yes	Christopher Lowry	Yes*
Adam Colicchio	Yes	Sarah Schultz	Yes
Matthew Downs	Yes	Adam Sorchini	Yes
Melissa Mauro-Duffy	Yes	Quorum	Yes

**Arrived 7:06 PM*

4. Pledge of Allegiance

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

5. Presentations

None

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

6a. Superintendent's Report

Discussed the opening of school. Thanked the Facilities Director and PTO for making the school look beautiful. Talked about strategic plan, calendar for 2024-2025 school year and back to school night.

6b. Business Administrator's Report

Provide an update on the Water Project.

7. President's Comments

None

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8. Public Commentary

Mike Barrish: Reviewed, field trips for the past 5 years of minutes, has never was tabled before. He stated that he hopes that the reason for it being tabled was not an issue with the Holocaust Museum trip because that would be an anti-Semitic action by the Board. Asked if there was discussion about tabling the trip and the public should know the reasons.

Jessica Porigow: Has been a part of this community for a long time and has not felt any anti-Semitism. She felt that the comments made by Mr. Barrish were divisive.

Peter Pappas: Stressed he was a West Morris High School District Board Member. The high school ranking here has dropped and he feels that students need to be better prepared at the Middle School level from the sending districts.

Michael Barrish: Asked if there was an issue with retraining teachers, as it seemed that there was a ten percent turnover. Asked about employment engagement committees.

Jessica Porigow: Stated that the board may have had other reason for tabling the field trips.

Peter Pappas: Stated that a five to ten percent turnover in teachers is within the average.

9. Approval of Minutes

The Board took the following action:

9a. Approves Meeting Minutes from August 15, 2023

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Regular meeting minutes of the meeting held on August 15, 2023.

9b. Approves Executive Meeting Minutes from August 15, 2023

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Executive meeting minutes of the meeting held on, August 15, 2023.

Motion by Carolyn Byszewski

Seconded by John Barounis

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
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 Superintendent's Recommendation for HIB Case # 15 (2022-2023)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation for HIB Case #15 (2022-2023).

10b. Approves Superintendent's Recommendation for HIB Case #1 (2023-2024)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation for Case#1 (2023-2024).

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Approves to Table Resolution 10a and 10b.

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves to table resolutions 10a and 10b.

Motion by Carolyn Byszewski

Seconded by Adam Sorchini

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- 11. Buildings, Grounds, Transportation/Finance—** Carolyn Byszewski (chair)
Christopher Lowry, Adam Colicchio & Adam Sorchini
Carolyn Byszewski discussed the building walk through that took place the day before.

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/Payroll		Totals
Payroll	08/30/2023	\$149,769.91
Payroll	09/08/2023	\$520,128.02
Bills List	09/12/2023	\$712,197.72

11b. Approves Monthly Transfer Report for July 2023

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 2023; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

11c. Approves Board Secretary Report for July 2023

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 2023; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

11d. Approves Board Treasurer Report for July 2023

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 2023; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

11e. Approves Certification of Secretary and Treasurer Report for July 2023

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

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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 2023 and that no major account or fund has been over-expended.

11f. 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/Workshop	Registration- Tuition	Travel Misc.	Estimated Total Expense
10/23/2023- 10/26/2023	John Barounis NJSBA Fall Conference	Included in Group Registration \$2,200.00	\$650.00.	\$965.00
10/19/2023- 10/20/2023	Melissa Scherzer 41 st Annual Autism Conference Atlantic City, NJ	\$500.00	\$148.01	\$648.01

11g. Approves Music Therapy

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Jammin Jen to provide music therapy for the preschool program at a rate of 4 visits (\$70.00 a session) for a total of \$12,600 for the 2023-2024 school year.

11h. Approves School Trips (Dickerson)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following school trips for the 2023-2024 school year for Dickerson:

Field Trip	Location	Grade/Group
Ort Farm	Long Valley	Kindergarten
Grove Street	Chester	Kindergarten
Chester Library	Chester	Grade 1
Chester Post Office	Chester	Grade 1
Frelinghuysen Arboretum	Morristown	Grade 1
Mayo Performing Arts Center	Morristown	Grade 2
Great Swamp	Sterling	Grade 2

11i. Approves School Trips (Bragg)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following school trips for the 2023-2024 school year for Bragg:

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Field Trip	Location	Grade/Group
Raritan County Community College-Planetarium	Branchburg	Grade 3
Waterloo Village	Byram	Grade 3
Thomas Edison Historical Park	Orange	Grade 3
Liberty Hall Museum	Union	Grade 4
Sterling Mineral Museum	Franklin	Grade 4
Morris County Courthouse	Morristown	Grade 5
BRMS-One School One Book	Chester	Grade 5
BRMS-Concert	Chester	Grade 5 - Band
BRMS-Orientation	Chester	Grade 5
Liberty Science Center	Morristown	Grade 5
Jockey Hollow	Morristown	Grade 5

11j. Approves School Trips (BRMS)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following school trips for the 2023-2024 school year for Black River Middle School:

Field Trip	Location	Grade/Group
Jewish Heritage Museum	New York City	8 th Grade
West Morris Central HS	Chester	District Chorus
Mendham HS	Mendham	Articulation Concert
Morristown Unitarian Fellowship	Morristown	Spelling Bee
Drew University	Madison	Jr. Model UN
Long Valley Middle School	Long Valley	STEM Showcase
Mendham HS	Mendham	District Honors Band Concert
Morristown Unitarian Fellowship	Morristown	Workshop on the Arts
Camp Bernie	Port Murray	PEER Leaders
Mendham HS	Mendham	District Strings
TD Ballpark	Bridgewater	6 th Grade LEAD
Dorney Park	Allentown, PA	Band/Chorus Competition
Bronx Zoo	Bronx, NY	7 th Grade
Washington, DC	Washington, DC	8 th Grade
Dickerson Elementary	Chester	8 th Grade Graduation Practice
Dickerson Elementary	Chester	Band-8th Grade Graduation Practice

11k. Approves Amendment to Lease Agreement with Borough of Chester - Pole Barn

Resolved, that the Chester Board of Education approves the amended lease agreement authorizing the Borough and the Board of Education to perform limited scope of work set forth in the agreement.

11l. Approves Prior Year Voided Check

Resolved, that the Chester Board of Education void and reissue the following prior year check:

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Check Date	Payee	Check #	Amount	Reason for Void
6/30/23	NJSB Construction LLC.	231559	\$119,555	Wrong Address

11m. Approves Nurse for out of district student

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Maaiké Haight to provide nursing services to student # 20496, for up to five hours daily at the rate of \$62.00 an hour for the 2023-2024 school year.

11n. 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
10/16/23- 10/17/23	Ron Fazekas 2023 Shape NJ Lake Conference Johnsonburg, NJ	\$199.00	\$14.28	\$213.28

Motion by Carolyn Byszewski

Seconded by Adam Colicchio

Discussion: Mr. Barounis felt it was disgusting that everyone would make tabling the field trips about anti-Semitism. The idea of going to the 9/11 Memorial was just to teach the kids about the problems with all types of hate in the world, considering they would only be three blocks away.

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8-0-1(11f)	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

12. Curriculum/Governance/Personnel— John Barounis (chair), Matthew Downs, Rebekah Forlenza & Melissa Mauro-Duffy

12a. Approves REVISED BRMS Special Education Teacher (Rittenhouse)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Nicole Rittenhouse as Black River Middle School Special Education Teacher at Step 14 BA+30 with a **revised salary from \$71,945 to \$71,935** effective August 30, 2023 through June 30, 2024 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.

12b. Accepts Resignation (Soden)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education accepts the resignation of Dickerson First Grade Teacher Jillian Soden effective August 25, 2023.

12c. Approves First Grade Teacher (Pepe)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of

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Education approves Samantha Pepe as Dickerson School First Grade Teacher at Step 5 BA with a salary of \$56,600 effective August 30, 2023 through June 30, 2024 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.

12d. Approves Dickerson Music Teacher (Lawrence)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Pierre Lawrence as Dickerson Music Teacher at Step 9 BA+30 with a salary of \$64,060 effective November 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.

12e. 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 42 minutes, totaling seven (7) periods of instructional time per day five days per week; and

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 \$9,428.29
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.

12f. 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, 2023.

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Name	Current Step/Guide	Advance Step/Guide
Evelyn Casperson	Step 7 BA+15	Step 7 BA+30
Taryn Mansolino	Step 19 BA	Step 19 BA+15
Elizabeth McGookin	Step 4 BA+30	Step 4 MA+15
Amanda McGrane	Step 9-10 BA	Step 9-10 BA+15
Michael Stagg	Step 21 BA+15	Step 21 BA+30

12g. 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 2023-2024 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
Catherine McPherson/Sean McQueeney (Split)	6 th Grade
Theresa Meierhofer	7 th Grade
Krista Maico	8 th Grade
Erica Rosamilia/Sarah Warren (Split)	Special Education
Kathleen Vespignani	Related Arts

12h. Approves Team Leaders (Bragg)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following Bragg team leaders for the 2023-2024 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, Lauren Scarfo (Split)	3rd Grade
Brian Seeley, Katherine Strauss (Split)	4th Grade
Nicole Hey, Amanda McGrane (Split)	5th Grade
Maryanne Vindici	Special Education
Debra Androvette	ESL
Christa Bedkowski, Kelly Tompkins (Split)	Related Arts

12i. Designates School Violence Awareness Week

WHEREAS, NJS.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 16-20, 2023

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as a “School Violence Awareness Week.”

12j. 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 all peer to peer conflicts between any and all students, as well as preventing anyone from experiencing 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 2-6, 2023 as “Week of Respect.”

12k. 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

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, 2023, 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.

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12l. 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 2023-2024 school year at the contracted rate.

12m. 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 2023-2024 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	Melissa D’Auria (Head), Millie Roskie (Assistant)
Soccer-Girls	Terri Meierhofer (Head), TBD (Assistant)
Soccer-Boys	Kevin Cullen (Head), Taryn Mansolino (Assistant)
Unified Soccer	Chris Duffy (Head)
Winter Sport	Head Coach/Assistant Coach
Athletic Director	Kevin Cullen & Andy Gray (split)
Wrestling	Sean McQueeney (Head), Brett Leister (Assistant)
Cheerleading	Sarah Warren (Head), TBD (Assistant)
Basketball-Girls	Catherine McPherson (Head), Melissa D’Auria (Assistant)
Basketball-Boys	Jim Yankowicz (Head), Andy Gray (Assistant)
Unified Basketball	Chris Duffy (Head)

12n. Approves District-Wide Curriculum

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following curriculum for the 2023-2024 school year:

Technology	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2023
21 st Century Life and Careers	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2023
World Languages	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2023
Visual and Performing Arts: Dance, Music, Theatre and Visual	NJ Student Learning Standards	August 2023

12o. Approves Policy 4151.2

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Policy 4151.2 -Sick Leave Bank for Illness or Accident.

12p. Approves Policy 6171.3

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Policy

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- 6171.3-Title One Policy and Regulations.
- 12q. Approves Policy 5131.1**
RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Policy 5131.1-HIB Policy and Regulations
- 12r. Approves Dickerson Preschool Teacher (Desouza)**
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Mariz Desouza as Dickerson Preschool teacher at Step 4 BA with a salary of \$56,200 effective September 13, 2023 through June 30, 2024.
- 12s. Approves Termination of Employee #1149**
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves termination of employee #1149 effective September 7, 2023.
- 12t. Approves Termination of Employee #1560**
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves termination of employee #1560 effective September 7, 2023.
- 12u. Approves Bragg Special Education Teacher (Velez)**
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Desiree Velez as Bragg School Special Education teacher at Step 8 MA with a salary of \$64,205 prorated effective October 13, 2023 through June 30, 2024 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.0907
- 12v. Approves Dickerson Paraprofessional (Jasinkiewicz)**
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Linda Jasinkiewicz as Dickerson Paraprofessional with a salary of \$26,460 prorated with benefits effective September 13, 2023 through June 30, 2024 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.

Motion by Carolyn Byszewski

Seconded by Adam Sorchini

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- 13. 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 September 12, 2023 at 7:36 p.m. to discuss HIB, personnel, student matters, 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 Carolyn Byszewski

Seconded by Adam Sorchini

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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14. Return to Public Session

Upon the motion of Adam Sorchini and seconded by Carolyn Byszewski, the Board returned to Public Session at 8:30 pm.

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

10a. Approves Superintendent's Recommendation for HIB Case # 15 (2022-2023)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation for HIB Case #15 (2022-2023).

Motion by Melissa Mauro Duffy Seconded by Adam Colicchio

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

10b. Approves Superintendent's Recommendation for HIB Case #1 (2023-2024)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation for Case#1 (2023-2024).

Motion by Melissa Mauro Duffy Seconded by Adam Colicchio

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
8-1	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

15. Unfinished Business

15a. Approves the Ratification of Contract - Custodians Joining CEA

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education ratifies the Chester Custodial Bargaining Unit joining the Chester Education Association.

Motion by Rebekah Forlenza Seconded by John Barounis

Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

16. New Business

Carolyn Byszewski thanked Jessica Porigow for her comment. Stated the tabling of the field trips was not meant to be interpreted as anti-Semantic.

Sarah Schultz thanked all the board members for their tireless efforts in a sometimes-thankless position.

17. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, upon the motion of Carolyn Byszewski and seconded by Adam Sorchini, the Board considered a motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

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Roll Call Vote	JB	CB	AC	MD	MMD	RF	CL	SS	AS
9-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Respectfully Submitted,



Peter Frascella
Board Secretary