

**HAWORTH BOARD OF EDUCATION
HAWORTH, NEW JERSEY 07641
MINUTES
JANUARY 4, 2017**

I. CALL TO ORDER – 7:30 p.m.

II. FLAG SALUTE

III. SUNSHINE LAW STATEMENT

All requirements of the Open Public Business Meetings Law have been met for this meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of Haworth. On November 21, 2016 advance written notice was emailed to **The Suburbanite and The Record**, filed with the Borough Clerk, posted on the school website and forwarded to the Presidents of the Home and School Association and Teachers Association, and all persons requesting such notice.

IV. MISSION STATEMENT

The Haworth Public School District, a safe and nurturing small school environment, in partnership with our community, is dedicated to providing every student with educational excellence through a comprehensive, innovative and rigorous curriculum that fosters productive and responsible life-long learners in a global society. Adopted—May 28, 2013.

V. ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Mary Anne Doran
Mr. Matthew Gilbert - **ABSENT**
Mrs. Anna Reduce
Mr. Warren Sutnick
Mrs. Stacey Wunsch
Mr. Jeff Ashkenase, Vice President
Mrs. Nicole Brennan, President
Mr. Paul Wolford, Business Administrator
Ms. Jennifer Montesano, Superintendent/Board Secretary

VI. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

The Board is interested in hearing your comments. In order to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak, we are asking that you speak once and limit your comments to three minutes. We further ask that all comments be directed to the Board. We recognize that everyone has the freedom to speak but advise you that anything said in public may have legal ramifications. There is no protection regarding statements made by the public. Please state your name before you begin.

VII. CLOSE THE PUBLIC PORTION - 7:31

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S/BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

- Enrollment Report to date
- HIB/Incident Report to date
- Kids with Character Award Presentation – criteria for the month of January is Responsibility. For January the following children have been chosen:

Kindergarten: Paige Gladstein and Tristyn Buckner
Grade 1: Daniel Scuro and Lauren Szukics
Grade 2: Samantha Wertz and Luca Rosen
Grade 3: Alexander Lewis and Maya Dearing
Grade 4: Gabriela Delosreyes and Kaitlyn Montello
Grade 5: Devin Cohen and Ryan Cohen
Grade 6: Anna Hoyng and Milo Person
Grade 7: Faye Stratton and Yale Fang
Grade 8: Yuna Kwak and Mathieu Monnot

- Cyber Awareness Presentation – Mrs. Carrieann Malanga DeVito
Presentation to parents regarding initiatives the district will be doing to combat cyber bullying and awareness in the district.

A. Reduce Moved, M. Doran Seconded
Roll Call: 6/0

IX. MINUTES

- a. Approval of meeting minutes from the December 15, 2016 regular business meeting.

A. Reduce Moved, M. Doran Seconded
Roll Call: 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Abstention

X. PROGRAM AND PERSONNEL

- a. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves Paul Wolford and Derick Talty to attend the Pearson Regional Training for the PARCC Assessment at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany, NJ on February 9, 2017 at no cost, plus travel expenses.
- b. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves the grades 5 & 6 Gifted & Talented field trip to the Liberty Science Center in Newark, NJ on May 31, 2017, cost to students of a bus fee. Trip Coordinator: Jennifer Eisberg.
- c. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves the NJ SLS-S Evidence Based Explanations & Argumentation at the Liberty Science Center in

Newark, NJ on February 16, 2017 for Lori Scheps, Virginia Newman and Lauren Wolstein at a total cost of \$125.00 each, plus travel expenses.

- d. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves the NJ SLS-S Evidence Based Explanations & Argumentation at the Liberty Science Center in Newark, NJ on March 16, 2017 for Virginia Newman and Lauren Wolstein at a total cost of \$125.00 each, plus travel expenses.
- e. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves the grade 4 Gifted & Talented field trip to the Edward H. Bryan School in Cresskill, NJ on March 30, 2017, cost to students of a bus fee. Trip Coordinator: Jennifer Eisberg.
- f. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves Pasquale Pace as a part-time Classroom Aide for the 2016-17 school year at an annual salary of 20,500, not benefit eligible.

M. Doran: Program & Personnel met on December 23rd to get a brief update on what was already discussed at the December 15th meeting. We also discussed the Elevate Education program which is a supplementary study skills program for the sixth grade. We also spoke to Mr. O’Keefe regarding how the teachers will help to reform their instruction for the PARCC next year in areas where the kids did not do as well as expected.

J. Ashkenase: When will the PARCC test be administered?

P. Wolford: Mostly in April and the beginning of May. Once the dates are finalized they will be added to the website calendar.

M. Doran Moved, A. Reduce Seconded
Roll Call: 6/0

XI. FINANCE

- a. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves the bills for the period of December 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 which has previously been approved by the various committees and payment made through the Valley National Bank from funds in the appropriate accounts as follows:

Bills Description	Dated	Amount
Payroll – Operating Account	12/15/16	\$152,788.03
State Share – FICA	12/15/16	\$13,497.43
Board Share – FICA	12/15/16	\$4,436.22
	TOTAL:	\$170,721.68

Bills Description	Dated	Amount
Payroll – Operating Accounting	12/31/16	\$140,320.07
State Share – FICA	12/31/16	\$13,283.41
Board Share – FICA	12/31/16	\$3,511.75
	TOTAL:	\$157,115.23

- b. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Haworth Board of Education approves the Report of Board Secretary, Report of the Treasurer, and the Report of Monthly Transfers for the month of July, 2016. (Attachment)

A. Reduce Moved, M Doran Seconded
Roll Call: 6/0

XII. FACILITY

XIII. POLICY

XIV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance
Facilities
Policy
Program/Personnel
BCSBA/NJSB
Joint Boards
Public Relations
Haworth Home & School Association
Northern Valley Regional HS/
NV Educational Foundation
Legislative Chairperson
Senior Citizens Liaison
Town Council Liaison
Negotiations

XV. Open to the Public on any item – 7:47 p.m.

The Board is interested in hearing your comments. In order to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak, we are asking that you speak once and limit your comments to three minutes. We further ask that all comments be directed to the Board. We recognize that everyone has the freedom to speak but advise you that anything said in public may have legal ramifications. There is no protection regarding statements made by the public. Please state your name before you begin.

Aiden Lewis: I would like to ask the Board and Ms. Montesano to get clarification on class size in our district. It has also been brought to my attention that in the last 6-7 years class sections have been brought down from 3 to 2. I would like clarification on why this has been done. I have brought hand-outs with class size comparisons with the neighboring districts. (Attached)

Ms. Montesano: I have had correspondence with many of you today regarding this through an informational email. I realize the biggest concern is in the current 3rd grade. As of this morning there is a total of 49 students in the 3rd grade divided into 2 sections. This is something that is a concern and that I am watching very closely. There are many factors that need to be considered when you are looking at numbers. We have to look at the space we have and we have to look at our budget. A big concern is in the math section for the 3rd grade. There are 25 students in the classroom with three certified teachers and one classroom aide with those 25 children. Therefore the teacher to student ratio is not a concern, it is more of a spacial concern. An immediate fix is that we are going to break that class into small groups as there is an open classroom next door during this math period and this will help to utilize the amount of teachers in the room as well. I do have plans for our future as our school continues to grow, and I am very happy to see that the district is growing. During our re-organization meeting tonight we will be approving a new architect of record with who we will discuss how we can expand this building to meet our growing needs. We are also currently working on our budget for next year.

Mrs. Lewis: The NJDOE website shows Haworth having a 13:1 student to teacher ratio.

J. Montesano: Let me explain what you see when you look at numbers on the NJDOE website regarding student to teacher ratio. Please understand that you are getting your total student number in the district and that is divided by how many staff members you have. It is not really broken down per class.

Mr. Wolford: I just want to touch on the statement that was made regarding certain grade levels having 3 sections in the past. When I began here in 2012 we had a graduating class of 60 students. Since then we have experienced a declining enrollment and now it seems to be increasing somewhat again. This is why we are looking at creating a long range plan for the building to get back to 3 sections per grade if needed.

Mr. Lewis: This community is somewhat soft spoken and now since a few parents sent out emails of concern, everyone has come out together.

Jamie Firestone: The long term plan does not really help our students in the short term.

J. Montesano: Over the break we moved Mrs. Malanga-DeVito to a different office to make room for an additional instructional space. We are trying to make adjustments.

Dawn Plump: Using the 3rd grade as an example, I know we lost one student and we had another student transfer in. Can you tell me how you decide on where to place new students?

J. Montesano: All I can really say on that is that it really depends on the needs of the individual student coming into our district. I cannot get any more specific than that.

Stephanie Vietra: I wanted to follow up with the numbers in the math class. I am pleased to see that there is a classroom aide in the one 3rd grade classroom. Is there an aide in the other 3rd grade classroom?

J. Montesano: No there is not. For confidentiality reasons and the individualized needs of our students, there are reasons why some classes have a classroom aide and some do not.

J. Ashkenase: There is always a balance of our resources here and we have talked a lot about adding additional space to the building. We are in the fortunate situation that in 2019-2020, a lot of the longer term debt that we have had is going to be retired. So we will have the ability, with no new cost to the tax payer, to make those improvements to the school. We have talked a lot about special needs and enhanced needs. Once we make sure that the infrastructure costs of the building are in place, we will start the process to discuss what the possibilities are for our school.

Lewis: Fortunately we have not had any tax assessments in about ten years. Is that coming down the pike?

N. Brennan: That question will have to be answered at the Town & Council meeting.

Virginia Lewis: If we had the space for 3 sections before, why do we not have it now?

J. Montesano: We have many more supplemental classes at this point. We have many more electives being offered. When Mr. Wolford started here in 2012 the district did not offer any electives and the district has since opened the middle school schedule up to provide more options than they used to have. We do have some space that we are in the works of figuring out how to utilize if need be. Our long term goal is to have 3 sections for grades K-5.

Alicia Borek: We are hiring a new aide, why?

C. Malanga: This person is to replace someone else who is leaving.

Alana Davis: I am glad to hear that there is some space if need be. My question is what is the tipping point threshold that this space becomes eligible to be utilized to ease the concerns of the parents in the community?

J. Montesano: Each grade is very different based on the make-up of the students in the particular grade. We have to look at each grade and each student to see what type of needs and services need to be provided specifically to each student. Then we have to look at the need for a split. This is something we are working on for next year.

A. Davis: When will a new plan be communicated to the public for next year?

J. Montesano: We are already working on the budget for next year. A new plan would have to go through our Finance, Facilities and Program & Personnel Committees and then as a whole Board during a public meeting.

A. Lewis: How quickly is the school made aware of the demographics of the families that buy homes in this community so that you can plan for September?

J. Montesano: It really depends on the individual family. We depend on them coming to us directly or a neighbor giving us a heads up.

N. Brennan: This is part of the reason why class lists are not sent out until the end of the summer, as there could be changes at the last minute.

A. Lewis: This question is for Jeff. You mentioned before that there was going to be some money freed up coming down the pike. What are the budgetary restrictions today? I realize that you are in a tough position with budgetary and special restraints, and also wanting to make everybody happy.

J. Ashkenase: Let me clarify when I said there is money being freed up. There are two different types of money we are dealing with that have two different uses. We have long term debt that will be finished in 2019-2020. Everyone is paying a portion of that in their taxes every year. If we do not need to borrow anymore money, everyone's taxes will go down a bit. Our thought process right now looking at the needs that we have both with expanding the physical space and looking at upgrading things like our STEM classes; is to borrow money to replace the money that we no longer have to pay. That would be used for those types of purposes. Then we have our operating budget which is fixed where it is and by law we are allowed to increase it by 2% per year. So every year we have to go through a budgeting process and we decide what our priorities are, what our expenses and increases are. If you think about our expenses they are salaries, benefits, electricity, utilities, amongst other costs; there are very few things that only go up by 2%. So each year we have to prioritize our needs; do we need an additional teacher or an aide or do we need extra computers? These are the things that are confined to the money that is fixed, therefore has to be prioritized. That is why I encourage people to come to the budget presentation to understand where the money is being spent and see how we prioritize as a Board and come up with our decisions.

Close the Public portion: 8:11 p.m.

XVI. OLD BUSINESS

XVII. NEW BUSINESS

XVIII. MOTION TO ADJOURN.

A. Reduce Moved, M. Doran Seconded
All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT 8:11 p.m.

Nicole Brennan, President
President, Haworth Board of Education

Jennifer Montesano
Superintendent/Board Secretary