

Sussex-Wantage Regional School District  
August 31, 2023  
Regular Session Meeting

The Regular Session Meeting of the Sussex-Wantage Regional School District Board of Education was called to order by Mr. Nick D'Agostino, Board President, on August 31, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sussex Middle School Media Center.

**Roll Call**

Members Present: Mrs. Alissa Cecchini, Mrs. Kristen Cooper-Trinidad, Mrs. Taylor Dely, Mrs. Brittney Simmons, Mrs. Stephanie Tortorella, Mrs. Dorothy Witte, Mrs. Danielle Zill-Barry and Mr. Nicholas D'Agostino

Members Absent: Ms. Courtney deWaal Malefyt

Also in attendance were: Mr. Michael Gall, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Christina M. Riker, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and Ms. Frances Febres, Board Attorney

**The following statement was read by Mr. D'Agostino**

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, the Sussex Wantage Regional School District Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the school buildings and notice of said meeting sent to the New Jersey Herald and The Star Ledger.

Mrs. Witte read the Sussex Wantage School Mission Statement: The Sussex Wantage Regional School District is a responsive, caring, child-centered community. Our mission is to educate each individual to become a confident, competent, lifelong learner and productive, responsible citizen, by providing challenging opportunities in a safe environment through a partnership of families, schools and communities.

**Superintendent's Report:**

Mr. Gall reported on the following to the Board and Public:

- District is in the "home stretch" now to the start of school. Mr. Gall reported that families have walked through the buildings.
- Reported that at Lawrence, the Do Not Enter sign will be replaced with STOP signs.
- Fence around playground at Lawrence; the District is waiting to hear about PEA funding and will utilize monies within that for this.
- Wantage sidewalk has been poured.

At this time, Mr. Gall introduced Tina Aue, from the Center for Prevention & Counseling. Ms. Aue stated that the Center is a non-profit that has been operating for fifty-one (51) years. She shared the three (3) pillars of the agency: Prevention, Treatment and Recovery. She said she was here to talk about prevention. The prevention team has twenty-two (22) staff members. She said that they are going out and talking to School Boards to let them know

**Roll Call**

**Open Public Meetings Act**

**Mission Statement**

**Superintendent Report**

what they are doing and opening up the lines of communication. Ms. Aue introduced Tanya, who is one of the Center's main program facilitators. She talked about Tanya's work providing the Footprints for Life Program to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students at various school districts. Ms. Aue also talked about the Anti-Bullying Summit that is held annually that our district attends. She also discussed new programs for middle school that would be fully funded.

Ms. Aue ended by telling the Board that if they have any questions, to please reach out.

At this time, Mr. D'Agostino made a statement for the public:

"The Board of Education would like to address a matter that continues to circulate around social media and the community around bus stops. First, it is important to remind the community that the safety of our students is the most important to the Board of Education. We would also like to point out that, despite the misleading photo and petition that is circulating, what is pictured is not the actual bus stop, but rather part of the walk to the bus stop. Our community is not your typical suburban neighborhood with easily accessible sidewalks where most children can walk to school. Our community is wide-spread; large and rural. The landscape of each property and the properties connecting one another is unique. The Board of Education designs bus stops and routes that take all of this into consideration. The Board of Education's responsibility is to design bus routes and bus stops that will allow students to be picked up and dropped off in areas that are less than 2.0 miles from their homes, and which would minimize the amount of time students have to be on the bus. This, in turn, saves families time in the morning and allow students more sleep time. State law requires that the Board of Education provide transportation services so that students are not walking more than 2.0 miles to or from school. Since school districts, such as the Sussex-Wantage Regional School District, are tasked with providing educational services to students, the Board of Education's authority under the law is limited to educational programming and services connected with that. The Board of Education therefore does not have the authority to install or renovate sidewalks, or to change the roadways that are not owned by the Board of Education. So, the Board of Education works within its limited authority, to safeguard students where it can. Parents' responsibility is to ensure their children make it to the bus stop safely. Whether that means driving their children or walking with their children to the bus stop, in a way that will get them there safe. Pulling over on a busy road or walking on the road with their children; even taking pictures of their children on the busy road, are decisions for parents to make, as the parents are responsible for their children during this time.

But, that does not mean that the Board of Education is not willing to help, where it can. For those parents who are concerned over whether a bus stop may be unsafe for their children, the Board of Education will offer alternatives. We have done this for parents who have complained. But what the Board of Education cannot do is change bus stops to convenience one family over another. All parents work hard to get their children to school, whether that is driving or walking them to the designated bus stop, or driving them directly to school. All parents have busy schedules as well. It would be unfair to those

parents who wake up earlier to get their children to school or the bus stop because the bus stop may be more than a mile away, for another parent to have his or her

child's bus stop changed to the front of their house for convenience. Truly, if that were a viable option, the district would happily do door-side pickup and drop off for everyone, understanding the limitations of time and demands each day brings. Unfortunately, to provide such convenience would significantly increase the amount of time children ride school buses, requiring families and students to be awake and ready for school much earlier. In other cases, it is virtually impossible for our buses to access private residences. Those children living furthest from the school would be impacted the most.

As you can see, in providing a convenience to one family, the Board would be unnecessarily inconveniencing other families. Routes must be changed; the amount of time for students on buses would increase and the Board of Education would be spending more time assessing which family should be more deserving of convenience than focusing on important issues such as the educational program; raising student achievement; and ensuring school safety. The Board of Education finds that it is important to treat each family and student fairly, and not provide favors to certain families that would adversely impact others, especially where alternative bus stops have been provided to the families who have raised concern over safety. The Board of Education cannot compel families to take the alternative bus stops and in the end, a family's decision to stick with a bus stop that they feel is unsafe is a personal decision that the family makes. At the request of the family, to particularly address the bus stop change that has been raised by the public at several meetings, the Sussex County Executive Business Administrator, on behalf of the Department of Education, and the individual who oversees school transportation concerns within the County, has toured the bus stop at issue. He also reviewed the alternative bus stops that the Board of Education presented to the family, and had also toured the bus stop that would require a school bus to enter New York State in order to turn around. According to the County BA, the current bus stop and the alternative bus stops presented by the Board of Education are safe and appropriate. The family's desired bus stop, which is the end of their driveway, is not safe, as it would require the school bus to traverse on a dirt road. The County BA notified our school district that he had communicated this to the family as well.

Finally, the Board of Education would like to remind the members of the public that, while it welcomes community feedback, it asks that everyone share their comments in a respectful and civil manner. Harassment towards Board members or members of its staff will not be tolerated. There is a misconception being perpetuated that the district will not offer a bus stop change. That is not accurate. Our district already offered 3 alternate bus stops, and the family declined- citing a need for door-side pickup and drop off. To the family taking issue with their bus stop, the Board and Administration would like to make you an unprecedented offer. In addition to the bus stops that we have previously offered you, we would now like to offer you any of our district's 1,000+ existing bus stops, and dozens existing along your route. We would be honored to work alongside your family to identify one that meets your needs. However, we are not authorizing door to door service. One family will not get special treatment over other families who admirably find a way to get their children safely to the bus stop, 180 days a year, without a complaint."

**Audience Remarks:**

Audience  
Remarks

- Lisa, community member, wanted to discuss the Gunther Bus stop. She acknowledged that it is a parent or caregiver responsibility to get children to their bus stop, but says she is disappointed that the family was told that there would be a resolution and there has not been. She asked the Board to open lines of communication and not on social media.
- Joe Retz, Wantage, said that there was a bus stop at that location before, so what is the problem now? He said there are many families in the district that have bus stops at their house. Mr. Gall added that he has spoken with the family and the bus stop issue has been reviewed multiple times and the County Business Administrator has stated that the current bus stop is safe.
- Mr. Nuss, Wantage, said he used to be on Township Committee and they put money into school district to handle bussing issues. He said that there roads are dangerous and that it is our job to fight the state. He says he wants his taxes put to good use.
- Mrs. Witte made the following statement:

"First of all this has nothing to do with money at all. It is true that our school district has many parents that make sure their children are driven to their bus stops these days, by a parent, a babysitter, other relative or a neighbor but no; most do not feel it is their choice. The ones I've talked to do it so they can feel as though they have ensured the safety of their children until their bus has taken them to their school for the day. What we all have chosen, is to raise our children in the country.

Whether parents feel their children's bus stop is unsafe for their children to walk to because maybe it's too far from an adults sight, or the roadway has no sidewalks or even shoulders or maybe there's unclear vision around overgrown corners, or electric fences along the way, or knowing that a lot of drivers always seem to be in a rush or on their cell phones while driving or maybe simply because we chose to live in the country where there have been more bear and wildlife sightings that ever before. The point is, these parents do it so they can feel secure in knowing that they, as their children's guardians, protectors, defenders, have taken the extra step in caring for their children to arrive safely at their bus stop before their bus has arrived, at which time the expectation of a safe trip to a safe environment begins. When their school day is over, we have expectations that they will be transported back to their bus stops safely. Where, I may add that we, the Board have insisted on an adult being at the bus stops of any child below grade 3.

Many, if not all of our board members have traveled Greenville Rd and have been at the Greenville/Mt. Salem bus stop. As a matter of fact, I, specifically have gone to all the bus stops regarding Greenville Rd. on at least 8 different days over the last year. I went in the beginning after the first meeting when I heard this child, Lea Gunther was here and I drove up there the very next day. Since then, I went up there the end of May, I believe it was. Everyone sitting on this board tonight has seen all the pictures that adults have had children positioned in, out of their reach, along Greenville Rd. None of us would want to walk down that section of Greenville Rd if we didn't have to, nor would we allow our children, so I agree. I have with me tonight clear pictures of the actual bus stop from different angle if anyone would like to see them please let me know. I also personally travel Greenville Rd on my way to Middletown, I think about this bus situation often, not

only when I'm on Greenville Rd. No one employed by our school nor anyone on this board have suggested anyone walk to the Greenville/Mt Salem bus stop.

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure their children arrive at their bus stops safely, and the hopes of this board that they do! I'm sure I speak for everyone by saying not only do we care about the Gunther children we care about all children in general. If we didn't we have no business sitting here. Is there anyone else sitting on the board where they may be in a situation where they drive their children to the bus stop?"

- Mrs. Cecchini said that the traffic on her road is 50 mph and so she drives her children to school each day.
- Mrs. Zill-Barry said that she lives on Route 23 and does not let her children walk to the bus stop, but drives them each day.
- Mrs. Witte added: "Mrs. Zill-Barry and Mrs. Cecchini or even I have been sick or whatever, we've made other arrangements for our kids to get to school or their bus stop. I have pictures with me if anyone would like to see them because I think there were misconceptions about where the actual bus stop was with the pictures that have been circulating around the community. I have pictures of the actual bus stop if anyone would like to see them later. The bus stop is safe." Mrs. Witte also said: Some have come and asked if we believe in our mission statement, I reiterated that I read the mission statement, and yes, I can look myself in the mirror. She added: "Not only do we provide educationally challenging opportunities for our children. Our Board, our Administrators, our teachers and all of our staff incur many challenges. This has been a challenge of heartbreak, but you need to drive Lea to the bus stop."
- Debbie Vandergoot, Wantage, said she has a special needs son and that she lives on Route 23 with a long driveway and bad bend. The bus could not stop there safely, so she was assigned a bus stop at the Municipal Building and it has worked fine.
- Lisa, community member, said that offering the family a thousand stops is not productive. She asked that the Board tell the family what can be done with reason. She asks for re-discussion of the matter and point to what can be done.
- Mr. D'Agostino stated that the Board did offer close bus stops and said that he does not want to get anyone's hopes up. He added that the social media "war" was not levied by the Board, but by the family and their supporters.
- Mrs. Sparta, Wantage, said that her bus stop is right before the Gunthers. She said that she mentioned issues on this route five (5) years ago. She would like the bus stop reversed for her children. She thinks that the district should conduct an audit of transportation to be sure that we are utilizing bus drivers and busses correctly. Mr. Gall said that we can look into that process if possible.
- Mrs. Gunther, Wantage, thanked everyone for discussion. She said that this is the most discussion that anyone has done on this topic. She said that there is no place to park at the bus stop.
- Joe Retz, Wantage, asked if we have talked to anyone at the County Engineering group and if not, we should have reached out.

**Board Secretary Certification** – read by Mrs. Riker

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(a), I certify that as of July 31, 2023 no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures, which in total exceed the line item appropriation in

Board  
Secretary

violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(a).

Certification

**Approval of Board Minutes:**

Approval of  
Board  
Minutes

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve following minutes:

July 27, 2023 Regular Session  
August 3, 2023 Special Session

Carried; Yes 6, No 0, Absent 1, Abstain 2 (Dely, Simmons)

Executive  
Session

**Executive Session:**

WHEREAS, this Board is authorized, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 to exclude the public from that portion of this meeting for purposes of discussing specific matters as permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12; and,

WHEREAS, this Board intends to discuss certain matters which are deemed confidential pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, in Executive Session,

WHEREAS, at this time the Board cannot determine the time when the discussion to be held in Executive Session will be made public, but will disclose the minutes of the Executive Session when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Sussex Wantage Regional Board of Education that this meeting shall be adjourned to an Executive Session (closed session) and the public will be excluded in order that the Board may discuss the items listed below, and upon reconvening this public meeting the Board President will announce, if possible, the time when and the circumstances under which the discussion conducted in Executive Session will be disclosed to the public. This resolution is authorized and allowed by and pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-13.

The general nature of the subject to be discussed per N.J.S.A. 10:4-13 (a):

Legal & Personnel Matters

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board go into executive session at 8:11 pm. Mr. D’Agostino advised the public that the Board would be in executive session for approximately twenty (20) to thirty (30) minutes.

At 8:50 pm, Mr. Gall advised the public that the Board required an additional twenty (20) minutes in executive session.

The Board returned to public session at 9:31 pm.

**Personnel:**

Personnel

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board

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approve the following substitute teachers, nurses, teacher assistants, secretaries, bus drivers, and custodians as listed for the 2023-2024 school year.\*

Substitute  
Approval

Teacher Assistant

Gabriel Barrientos  
Malina Bennett  
Randi Cosh  
Shaina Liu

Teacher

Sara Bartlett  
Shaina Liu

(\*All new substitutes and appointments are required to comply with State Statute regarding fingerprinting, security checks and appropriate legal agency clearance, and also Federal Employment)  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board accept the resignation of Erin Fuchs, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, Sussex Middle School, effective August 22, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Resignation –  
5.5 TA, SMS

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board accept the resignation of Kaitlyn Cahill, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, Sussex Middle School, effective August 23, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Resignation –  
5.5 TA, SMS

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Rachael Fonseca, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, location TBD, \$18.90 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is TBD.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
5.5 TA

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Elizabeth VanHorn, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, location TBD, \$18.90 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is TBD.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
5.5 TA

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Antoinette Danner, Play/Cafe Aide, Wantage Elementary School, \$15.33 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is 10:54am to 1:11pm.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
WES  
Play/Cafe

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Shaina Liu, 3.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, C.E. Lawrence School, \$18.90 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is 12:00pm -

New Hire –  
3.5 TA, CEL

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3:30pm.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Melissa Stoll, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, C.E. Lawrence School, \$18.90 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is TBD.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
5.5 TA, CEL

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Hailey Jennings, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, C.E. Lawrence School, \$18.90 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is 8:30am to 2:30pm with ½ hour unpaid lunch.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
5.5 TA, CEL

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Gabriel Barrientos, 3.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, Wantage Elementary School, \$18.90 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is 12:30pm to 3:30pm.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
3.5 TA, WES

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Pauline Decker, Play/Cafe Aide, C.E. Lawrence School, \$15.33 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is 10:55am to 1:10pm.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
CEL  
Play/Cafe

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Leslie LaRue, 3.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, C.E. Lawrence School, \$18.90 per hour effective September 05, 2023 for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is 12:00pm to 3:30pm.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
3.5 TA, CEL

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Denise Vanderhoof, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, Sussex Middle School, \$18.90 per hour, effective September 05, 2023 provided fingerprint clearance has been obtained for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is 9:30am to 3:30pm with ½ hour unpaid lunch.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
5.5 TA, SMS

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the revision of the following resolution that was approved at the July 27, 2023 Board of Education meeting:

*It is recommended that the Board approve Rhiannon Lubas, Long Term Leave Replacement 4th Grade Teacher, Wantage School, BA, Step 1, \$57,546.00 (prorated), effective September 05, 2023 to on or about November 28, 2023.*

Revise LTS,  
WES Teacher  
from 7/27/23  
Meeting



To read as follows:

It is recommended that the Board approve Rhiannon Lubas, Long Term Leave Replacement 4th Grade Teacher, Wantage School, BA, Step 1, \$57,546.00 (prorated), effective September 05, 2023 to on or about January 18, 2024.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Angela Silletti-Cayer, School Nurse, Sussex Middle School, for a move on the salary guide from BA+30, Step 14, \$84,116.00 to MA, Step 14, \$85,616.00 effective September 01, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

MOG

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Adderlyn Fernandez, Speech Language Pathologist/Speech Language Specialist, C. E. Lawrence School, for a move on the salary guide from BA+30, Step 1, \$59,796.00, to MA, Step 1, \$61,296.00 effective September 01, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

MOG

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Kathy Klag, Special Education Teacher, Wantage School, for a move on the salary guide from MA+15, Step 15, \$92,466.00, to MA+30, Step 15, \$95,466.00 effective September 01, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

MOG

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Alyse Vanden Heuval, Grade 1 Teacher, C. E. Lawrence School, for a move on the salary guide from MA, Step 11, \$75,266.00 to MA+30, Step 11, \$81,266.00, effective September 01, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

MOG

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the following personnel for co-curricular and extracurricular activities at Sussex Middle School for the 2023-2024 school year as follows:

2023-2024  
SMS Co-  
Curricular

<u>Name</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Sara Bartlett	Musical Director/Drama Coach	\$1,788.00
Stephanie Birnbaum	Assistant Musical Director	\$1,321.00
Stephanie Birnbaum	Choreographer	\$1,053.00
Sara Bartlett	Technical Director	\$1,053.00
Sara Bartlett	Musical Writing Club	\$ 985.00

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the following student teacher assignment as follows:

2023-2024  
Student  
Teacher  
Assignment

<u>Student/College</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Co-op Teacher</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
Desiree Church	Field Experience/	Rebecca Schnetzer	Sept-Dec '23
Ramapo College	Observation		(2 days per

week)

Jan-Apr '24  
(5 days per

week)

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the following transfers for the 2023-2024 school year:

2023-2024  
Staff  
Transfers

Name	From	at School	To	at School
Katherine Blazier	Resource Room	WES	Preschool Disabled and 2nd Grade RR	CEL
Sarah Fairweather	BSI/AM, Preschool Disabled/PM	CEL	4th Grade In-Class Support	WES

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the following teachers to plan and facilitate 4 (four) Family Math and Reading Nights workshops at \$40.00 per hour, 16 (sixteen) hours each, for a total of \$640.00 max per facilitator (unless noted otherwise). ***This is to be funded by the 2020 - 2023 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (ESSER II), and the 2022-2023 Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), Title IA Funds (if available).***

Family Math  
& Reading  
Nights

Lawrence School

Blazier, Katherine  
Flynn, Kelly  
Lewis, Natalie  
Schneider, Amie  
VandenHeuvel, Alyse  
Wagner, Angela  
Young, Brittany

WantageSchool

Fairweather, Alexandra (2 days only - \$320.00 max)  
McCarthy, Jennifer  
Obrotka, Melissa (2 days only - \$320.00 max)  
Roberts, Deborah  
Scannavino, Carrie  
VanWyk, Lisa (2 days only - \$320.00 max)  
Veltri, Andrea  
Williams, Christine  
Wolak, Danuta (2 days only - \$320.00 max)

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the following teachers to lead and coordinate 4 Family Math and Reading

Nights workshops at \$40.00 per hour, no more than 22.5 hours each, for a total of \$900.00 per facilitator: ***This is to be funded by the 2020 - 2023 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (ESSER II), and the 2022-2023 Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), Title IA Funds (if available).***

Family Math  
& Reading  
Nights

Lawrence School  
Maas, Sara

Wantage School  
Heddy, Jessica (11.25 hours/\$450.00 max)  
Obrotka, Melissa (11.25 hours/\$450.00 max)

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve [REDACTED], Special Education Teacher Assistant, Wantage School, for continuous, non-FMLA/NJFLA leave of absence, from September 05, 2023 duration to be determined, utilizing up to 46 accumulated sick days.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Non  
FMLA/NJFLA  
LOA, WES  
TA

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the following substitute teachers, nurses, teacher assistants, secretaries, bus drivers, and custodians as listed for the 2023-2024 school year.\*

Substitute  
Approval

Teacher  
James Abboud

Security Guard  
Anthony Korn

(\*All new substitutes and appointments are subject to compliance with all State Statute regarding fingerprinting, background checks and P.L. 2018, c.5)

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board accept the retirement of Heather Fowler, Reading Interventionist, C.E. Lawrence School, effective October 1, 2023 with thanks for 19 years of service to the District.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Retirement –  
CEL Reading  
Interventionist

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board accept the resignation of Tahni Mangino, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, Sussex Middle School, effective August 28, 2023.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Resignation –  
SMS 5.5 TA

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Jeanette Leggour for the part-time Confidential Central Office Secretary effective on or about September 18, 2023 pending release from current position for the 2023-2024 school year in the amount of \$34,000.00.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
BOE  
Confidential  
Secretary

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board

Transfer –

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approve the transfer of Jennifer Armstrong, Administrative Secretary to Confidential Central Office Secretary (full-time) effective September 1, 2023 for the 2023-2024 school year in the amount of \$64,730.00 plus longevity.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

BOE  
Secretary

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Laura Lau, 5.5 hour Special Education Teacher Assistant, location TBD, Step 1, \$18.90 per hour, for the 2023-2024 school year. Shift is TBD.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

New Hire –  
5.5 TA

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Mary Eileen Schoen, Long Term Leave Replacement Teacher, Special Education, Wantage School, BA, Step 1, \$57,546.00 (prorated) from September 5, 2023 to on or about November 28, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

LTS Special  
Ed Teacher,  
WES

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve the following CST Administrative Secretaries to work up to a maximum of five (5) additional hours per week for the month of September 2023 at their hourly rate upon submission of vouchers to Director of Special Services for approval:

CST PT  
Secretaries  
Additional  
Hours –  
September

Christy Gebhard  
Karen Taliercio

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve Susan Vecharello, Assistant to the BA, for a \$100.00 salary increase for 6 college credits earned, effective September 01, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Credits  
Earned

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad that the Board approve [REDACTED], District Bus Driver, for a continuous, FMLA/NJFLA designated leave of absence from September 05, 2023 to on or about September 15, 2023 utilizing accumulated leave. Anticipated return to work date is September 18, 2023.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

FMLA/NJFLA  
LOA

Policy:

Policy

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Dely that the Board approve the following resolution:

HIB Approval

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education has received the Superintendent's report of incident(s) of Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying ("HIB") within the District; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board has had the opportunity to review the Superintendent's recommendations with respect to the incident(s) of HIB on this report;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board accepts the Superintendent's recommendations as presented on the report.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(d), the Superintendent of Schools, and/or his designee, has informed the applicable parents/guardians of the students involved in these incidents with the following information within five (5) days of this Board meeting:

- The nature of the investigation;
- Whether the District found evidence of HIB;
- Whether discipline was imposed;
- Whether services were provided to address the incident of HIB.

Presented to the Board for first review:

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Presented to the Board for second review/approval:

Summer Care #1 2023-2024

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Dely that the Board approve the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials for the 2023-2024 School Year.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approves on First Reading the following Policies and Regulations:

a	Policy & Reg 1642.01	Sick Leave (New)
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Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

2023-2024  
Uniform  
Memo of  
Agreement  
with Law  
Enforcement

First  
Reading  
Policy

**Finance:**

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve the final payroll for the month of July 2023 in the amount of \$270,960.78 as reviewed and as per the attached check register. (F1)

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve the payment of bills for August 1, 2023 through August 31, 2023 in the amount of \$1,582,255.82 as reviewed and as per the attached check register. Be it further noted that the breakdown by category is as follows: (F2)

Fixed	\$ 374,089.94
Operating	\$ 840,578.23
Salaries	\$ 184,720.34
Special	\$ <u>182,867.31</u>
Total	\$ 1,582,255.82

Finance

Bills List –  
End of July  
2023

Bills List –  
August 2023

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve Quote # Q-202220 from Scholastic, Inc. for the purchase of Storyworks (Print with Digital subscriptions) for Grades 3-5, Scholastics News Grades 3-5 and Science Spin Grades 3-5 in the total amount of \$5,228.10. ***This is to be funded by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title IVA grant - Account # 20-280-100-600-000-000.***

Scholastic Purchase

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve Proposal # W07282023-D1 from McCloskey Mechanical Contractors, Inc., HCESC-SER-21A-2 years HVAC Services, for the replacement of three (3) Trane Water Sourced Heat Pumps in Room 101D, 101A and 102 in the amount of \$34,964.00. ***This is a budgeted 2023-2024 item - Account # 11-000-262-420-000-010.***

McCloskey Mechanical Contractors, Inc.

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve a 2023-2024 Out of District Placement for student # [REDACTED] with New Beginnings effective July 5, 2023 through June 30, 2024 for the amount of \$ 91,584.00 for tuition and \$59,360.00 for extraordinary services for a total contract amount of \$150,944.00.

OOD Tuition – New Beginnings

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve a 2023-2024 Joint Transportation Agreement - School Related Activities with the High Point Regional High School, route # SW-TR, effective September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 as follows:

2023-2024 Joint Transp. Agreement – School Related Activities - High Point

Host District: **High Point Regional HS**

Joiner District: **Sussex-Wantage Bd of Ed**

Start Date	End Date	Host District's Route #	Destination	Basis of the Agreement Per Bus	Per Bus Cost
9/1/2023	6/30/2024	SW-TR	Various	One 54 passenger school bus to local areas for 50 trips	\$86.40

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve the following 2023-2024 Joint Transportation Agreement - To and From School, Route # 308, with High Point Regional High School effective September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$29,342.14 as follows:

2023-2024 Joint Transp. Agreement – To and From School - High Point

Host District: **High Point Regional HS**

Joiner District: **Sussex Wantage Bd of Ed**

Joiner District To and From Total Route Cost: **\$29,342.14**

Start Date	End Date	Host District's Route #	Destination	# of Host District's Students	# of Joiner District's Students	Joiner Cost
09/01/23	06/30/24	308	Sussex Middle School/Lawrence School/Wantage School	0	54	\$29,342.14

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve the following 2023-2024 Transportation Agreement - To and From School, Route # 102, Renewal # 2, with Stocker Bus Company effective September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$53,939.44 as follows:

2023-2024  
Transp  
Agreement –  
Stocker

Board of Education: **Sussex-Wantage**                      Route #: **102**  
 Renewal #: **2**  
 Contract Period: **9/1/2023-6/30/2024**  
 Contractor Name: **Stocker Bus Company**                      Terminal Location:  
**Newton, NJ**  
 Contractor Code: **6119**

Total Renewal Contract Amount: **\$53,939.44**

Start Date	End Date	Host District's Route #	Destination	Annual Renewal Contract Amount	Inc/Dec Provision	NJSA 18A:39-3 Extension	Total Renewal Contract Amount
09/01/23	06/30/24	102	Sussex Middle School/Lawrence School/Wantage School	\$50,953.57	2.00	\$2,985.87	53,939.44

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve the following 2023-2024 Joint Transportation Agreement - To and From School, Route # 304, with Montague School District effective September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$1,131.50 as follows:

2023-2024  
Joint Transp  
Agreement –  
To and From  
School –  
Montague

Host District: **Montague School District**  
 Joiner District: **Sussex Wantage Bd of Ed**

Joiner District To and From Total Route Cost: **\$1,131.50**

Start Date	End Date	Host District's Route #	Destination	# of Host District's Students	# of Joiner District's Students	Joiner Cost
09/01/23	06/30/24	304	Sussex Middle School, Sussex, NJ	53	1	\$1,131.50

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve COR # 001 for T.M. Brennan Contractors, Inc. for the Auditorium HVAC Upgrades Project at Sussex Middle School as follows:

COR # 001  
SMS  
Auditorium  
HVAC  
Upgrades –  
TM Brennan

COR-001: Labor and Material to provide power to unit ventilators \$ 7,877.00

Sub-Total \$ 7,877.00

Original Allowance \$ 40,000.00  
 Amount of Allowance Used \$ 0.00  
 Current Allowance \$ 40,000.00  
 Total Amount of this Change Order \$ 7,877.00  
 New Remaining Contract Allowance Amount \$ 32,123.00

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Zill-Barry, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve the purchase of twenty (20) Texas Instruments TI-84 Plus EZ-Spot Graphing Calculators for Sussex Middle School from EAI Education in the amount of \$2,253.00. ***This is to be funded by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title I SIA carryover funds - Account # 20-233-100-600-000-001.***

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

EAI Education  
Purchase of  
Calculators –  
SMS

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve a settlement agreement with S.L. and J.L. on behalf of student # [REDACTED].

Settlement  
Agreement

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve COR # 001 for Iron Mountain Mechanical, LLC for the Filtration System at C.E. Lawrence Elementary School as follows:

COR # 001  
CEL Filtration  
System – Iron  
Mountain  
Mechanical

COR-01: Static Mixer \$ 2,450.00  
 COR-02: Additional Material \$ 673.87  
 Sub-Total \$ 3,123.87  
 Original Allowance \$ 10,000.00  
 Amount of Allowance Used \$ 0.00  
 Current Allowance \$ 10,000.00  
 Total Amount of this Change Order \$ 3,123.87



New Remaining Contract Allowance Amount \$ 6,876.13  
 Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve the following 2023-2024 Transportation Agreement - To and From School, Route # 202, Bid # 20232024-SR-2, with Krapf School Bus NJN, Inc. effective September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$64,800.00 as follows:

2023-2024  
Transp  
Agreement –  
To and From  
School –  
Krapf

Board of Education: **Sussex-Wantage** Route #: **202** Bid Number: **20232024-SR-2**  
 Contract Period: **9/1/2023-6/30/2024**  
 Contractor Name: **Krapf School Bus NJN, Inc.** Terminal Location: **Wantage, NJ**  
 Contractor Code: **C958**

Total Renewal Contract Amount: **\$64,800.00**

Start Date	End Date	Host District's Route #	Destination	Arrival Time	Departure Time	# of Days	Inc/Dec Provision	Total Annual Contract Amount
09/01/23	06/30/24	202	Sussex Middle School/ Lawrence School/Wantage School	8:10 am	3:15 pm	180	1.89	\$64,800.00

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve an Out of District Tuition Contract with Garfield Park Academy effective September 5, 2023 through June 30, 2024 for student # [REDACTED] in the amount of \$63,725.40 for tuition and \$31,320.00 for extraordinary services for a total contract amount of \$95,045.40.

OOD Tuition  
– Garfield  
Park  
Academy

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve a 2023-2024 Master Therapy Services Agreement with Performance Pediatrics effective September 5, 2023 through June 30, 2024 on an as needed basis.

2023-2024  
Master  
Therapy  
Services –  
Perf Ped

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve COR # 001 for Pennetta Industrial Automation for the Boiler Replacement at Sussex Middle School as follows:

COR # 001  
SMS Boiler  
Replace –  
Pennetta

COR-01: Replace existing gate valve that will not open or close

\$ 4,565.00  
 Original General Allowance \$ 75,000.00  
 Amount of General Allowance Used \$ 0.00  
 Current General Allowance \$ 75,000.00

Amount of this Change Order	\$ <u>4,565.00</u>
Remaining General Allowance	\$ 70,435.00
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1	

**Special Services:**

Special Services

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Psychological Evaluation for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$396.55. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Psych Eval

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Psychological Evaluation for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$396.55. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Psych Eval

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Psychological Evaluation for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$396.55. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Psych Eval

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Psychological Evaluation for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$396.55. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Psych Eval

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Three (3) Evaluation Bundle - Educational, Psychological & Social for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$1,055.75. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Three Eval Bundle

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Three (3) Evaluation Bundle - Educational, Psychological & Social for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$1,055.75. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Three Eval Bundle

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Psycho-Sexual Evaluation for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by The Center for Evaluation and Counseling for an amount not to exceed \$750.00. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Psycho-Sexual Eval

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Psychological Evaluation for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$396.55. Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Psych Eval

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Simmons that the Board approve a Social

Social Eval

Evaluation for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) for an amount not to exceed \$396.55.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Moved by Mrs. Dely, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella that the Board approve a Risk Assessment for student # [REDACTED] to be performed by The Center for Evaluation and Counseling for an amount not to exceed \$750.00.  
Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

Risk Assessment

**Curriculum:**

Curriculum

Moved by Mrs. Tortorella, seconded by Mrs. Cecchini that the Board approve the following field trips:

Field Trips

Date	Grade Level/Teacher	Destination, Purpose, Cost
9/26, 10/03, 10/10, 10/17, 10/24/23	5/Roberts, Blazier, Wolak	Pin Street Lanes WES Bowling Club Cost to students \$9.00 per event

Carried; Yes 8, No 0, Absent 1

**Unfinished Business:**

Unfinished Business

- None

**New Business:**

New Business

- Mrs. Simmons, shared that the Mindfulness Committee has met several times and would like to see Mindfulness made as a District Goal. Mr. Gall said that the Board does need several goals this school year and thought that would be a good one.
- Mrs. Simmons, asked about Student Council attending Board meetings. Mr. Gall reported that they will be getting back to us.
- Mrs. Witt shared that on social media she saw that there were a lot of items that may look like school supplies, but were disguised vapes.
- Mr. D'Agostino thanked everyone tonight for the good discussion and good luck to everyone for the start of the school year.

**Audience Remarks:**

Audience Remarks

- None

Moved by Mrs. Cooper-Trinidad, seconded by Mrs. Tortorella to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm.

Adjourn-  
Ment

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christina M. Riker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Christina M. Riker  
Board Secretary