

Oakland Public Schools  
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Monday, April 29, 2024  
6:30 PM

A Budget Hearing/Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Education was held in person on April 29, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mr. Scerbo.

Mr. Scerbo led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Open Public Meeting announcement as follows: The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure 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 this Act, the Oakland Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted on April 22, 2024 in the Municipal Building, the Board Offices, all school offices and copies sent to newspapers serving Oakland: The Record News. The Board reserves the right to limit public discussion of personnel items, so as to preserve individual privacy.

The Board appreciates the concerns and comments expressed by the public and will take them into consideration. However, please remain advised that, neither the Board nor the administration may comment on or respond to public inquiries or statements regarding any internal personnel matters involving a District employee.

Please be further advised that there is no privilege or qualified privilege with regard to any statements that you make before the Board of Education. Furthermore, in addition to their respective rights to privacy, employees of this school district retains all rights regarding defamation and slander according the laws of New Jersey.

Persons wishing to speak must, upon being recognized, rise, sign in, and state their names and addresses. Each speaker shall be limited to three minutes. A speaker who has not finished in the allotted time will be directed by the presiding officer to summarize quickly and relinquish the floor within 30 seconds.

**Roll Call**

The following members were present: Ms. Cooper, Ms. Kilday, Mr. Mazzilli, Mr. Scerbo and Ms. Shelkin.

Also present: Dr. Gina M. Coffaro, Superintendent of Schools, and Ms. Annette M. Wells, Board Secretary/Business Administrator and 23 members of the public.

## **Public Budget Hearing**

### **PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

This Budget Hearing has been called, as required by law, as a Public Hearing on the School Budget for the 2024-2025 school year. It is intended to provide the public with information concerning the budget and to answer any questions there may be on that subject. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board of Education will deliberate, as needed, and take action to adopt a budget for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **II. 2024-2025 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Dr. Coffaro thanked the board and Ms. Wells for all of the work on the budget.

Ms. Wells presented the 2024-2025 budget.

### **III. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public expressed the following concerns:

- Will the students coming back from out of district receive the same services they currently have?
- How does the movement to OLPH free up space for the new development?
- Is OLPH getting a nurse or a nurse's aide?
- Where is the Supervisor position posted?
- What students are we bringing back from out of district?
- What happens if the church decides to sell?
- Inequity in test results among the elementary schools
- Low math scores
- Providing teacher staff development

Responses included:

- Student services are IEP driven
- Dr. Coffaro described the movement between schools to free space in Manito for the first phase of the McCoy development.
- At this point, the district is supplying a nurse's aide at OLPH
- The supervisor position was posted in all schools and the district website.
- ABA Preschool and a multiple disabilities class are anticipated to come back into the district.
- The church and district are both committed to a long-term relationship
- The budget contains money for teacher staff development
- The district is working towards equity among the schools.

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

**I. MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Mazzilli and seconded by Ms. Kilday to approve the following Minute Items A through E as follows:

- A. Approve the Special Meeting minutes from March 7, 2024.
- B. Approve the Executive Session minutes from March 7, 2024.
- C. Approve the Regular Monthly Meeting minutes from March 19, 2024.
- D. Approve the Work Session minutes from March 19, 2024.
- E. Approve the Executive Session minutes from March 19, 2024.

Upon call of the roll Ms. Cooper abstained on item C, D and E all others voted yes. Motion carried.

**II. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

A motion was made by Ms. Shelkin and seconded by Ms. Kilday to approve Buildings and Grounds item A as follows:

- A. Approve the safety drill report for the month of March.

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote recorded.

**III. PERSONNEL**

A motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Kilday to approve Personnel items A through P as follows:

- A. Approve the job description for Supervisor of Special Education and Early Childhood Development as per the attached.
- B. Accept the following resignations and retirement:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Deborah Craffen	PT Paraprofessional <b>AIDE.MT.RES.MG.06</b>	Manito	5/6/2024	Resignation
Martha Coffman	ELA Teacher <b>TCHR.VM.REG.MG.25</b>	Valley	7/1/2024	Resignation
Elizabeth Blender	Teacher <b>TCHR.VM.REG.MG.03</b>	Valley	7/1/2024	Retirement

- C. Amend the dates for Jaclyn Mainiero’s leave as follows: NJFLA, unpaid with benefits, beginning February 26, 2024 through May 17, 2024. Ms. Mainiero plans to return to District on May 20, 2024.

- D. Amend the end date of Emily Brackenbury, Leave Replacement ELA Teacher for Jaclyn Mainiero, to May 17, 2024.
- E. Approve the following appointments of certified staff, upon satisfactory completion of all employment obligations. These are tenure track positions.

Name	Position	Location	Replacing	Step	Degree	Salary	Start Date
Emily Brackenbury	ELA Teacher <b>TCHR.VM.REG.MG.25</b>	Valley	Martha Coffman	1	BA	\$64,229.00	9/1/2024
Christopher Lawrence	Guidance Counselor <b>TCHR.VM.GUID.MG.01</b>	Valley	Elizabeth Connolly	2	MA+15	\$71,323.00	9/1/2024
Gabrielle Paradiso	Special Ed Teacher <b>TCHR.VM.RES.MG.05</b> (Transfer to Special Ed)	Valley	Elizabeth Blender	1	BA	\$64,229.00	9/1/2024

- F. Approve the appointment of Gregory Zaleski as Supervisor of Special Education and Early Childhood Development at an annual salary of \$140,000.00, effective on or about July 1, 2024. This appointment is contingent upon satisfactory completion of all employment obligations.
- G. Approve the appointment of Noelle Nebbia as a Title I Substitute Teacher at Dogwood Hill Elementary School for the 2023-2024 school year at an hourly rate of \$100.00, upon submission of an approved voucher. This salary will be funded with Title I funds.
- H. Approve the appointment of the following as Home Instruction Teachers for the 2023-2024 school year at an hourly rate of \$60.00, upon submission of an approved voucher.

William Kobb	Ruth Kokkinakis
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- I. Approve Nancy Rivera to work extra time, as needed, at her contracted hourly rate of pay during the 2023-2024 school year, upon submission of an approved voucher.
- J. Approve Cindy Spartz to work as a Paraprofessional, as needed, at an hourly rate of \$18.50 during the 2023-2024 school year, upon submission of an approved voucher.
- K. Approve the appointment of Kiley Kesenheimer as a Bus Aide for the 2023-2024 school year at an hourly rate of \$17.00, upon submission of an approved voucher.
- L. Approve the following teachers to work Spring 2024 STEAM Family Night at \$80.00 per hour, upon submission of an approved voucher. These salaries will be funded with ESSER III/ARP funds.

Robert Albano	Laura Colonnelli	Neil Peller
Joanna Aliha	Casey Cummings	Kimberly Salacki
Heather Anzalone	Matthew Fichter	Gina White
Erin Bassett	Noelle Nebbia	

- M. Approve the following teachers for spring curriculum writing at \$52.00 per hour, upon submission of an approved voucher.

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Cynthia Parr	Math – Grade 1	5	\$260.00
Ruthann Russo	Math – Grade 1	5	\$260.00
Joanna Aliha	Math – Grade 2	10	\$520.00
Erin Bassett	Math – Grade 3	5	\$260.00
Laura Colonnelli	Math – Grade 3	5	\$260.00
Neil Peller	Math – Grade 4	5	\$260.00
Tara Reischel	Math – Grade 4	5	\$260.00
Santina Carbone	Math – Grade 5	5	\$260.00
Heather Obertlik	Math – Grade 5	5	\$260.00
John Dougherty	Math – Grade 6	5	\$260.00
Kimberly Salacki	Math – Grade 6	5	\$260.00
Emily Smolenski	Math – Grade 7	10	\$520.00
Mary Gael Strohmeier	Math – Grade 8	10	\$520.00
Natalie DeLuca	Nutrition	10	\$520.00
Gina White	STEAM	10	\$520.00
Amanda Steng	Culinary Arts	7	\$364.00

- N. Approve the appointment of Barbara Verga as 2024 Safety Town Nurse at her contracted hourly rate of pay, upon submission of an approved voucher. This salary will be funded with tuitions paid by program participants.
- O. Approve the appointment of the following as daily substitute personnel for the 2023-2024 school year, upon satisfactory completion of all employment obligations.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Substitute Assignment</b>
Emily Brackenbury	Teacher and Paraprofessional
Brian Morello	Teacher and Paraprofessional
Taylor Thurston	Teacher and Paraprofessional

P. Acknowledge the following employees' days without pay for the 2023-2024 school year as listed below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Kathryn Brennan	Dogwood	3/20
Maria Glasson	Heights	3/20, 3/21, 4/1
Dawn Odell	Manito	3/21, 3/28
Kiley Kesenheimer	Heights	3/22, 4/4
Stephanie Chirichella	Heights	3/25
Peppi Gardner	Heights	4/22-4/26, 4/29
Annie Casamento	Heights	4/24 in lieu of 4/25
Selena Guller	Valley	4/26
Allison Marchini	Manito	5/31
Christine Picioccio	Dogwood	6/7 (.5)

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote recorded.

**IV. REGULAR EDUCATION**

A motion was made by Ms. Shelkin and seconded by Ms. Cooper to approve Regular Education item A as follows:

A. Approve the HIB Report for the period March 19, 2024 through April 29, 2024 as follows:

Number of HIB Investigations	6
Number of Affirmed HIB Incidents	2

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote recorded.

**V. SPECIAL EDUCATION**

A motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Shelkin to approve Special Education items A through F as follows:

- A. Amend the out-of-district placement for one student, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office, to attend the behavior program at Wanaque Elementary School, Wanaque, New Jersey 2023-2024 school year. Last day of contract is March 25, 2024.
- B. Approve the out-of-district placement for one student, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office, to attend Sage Alliance: Sage Day Lower and Middle School - Mahwah Campus, from April 8, 2024 to June 14, 2024.
- C. Approve Bergen County Special Services for Teacher of the Deaf Consultation Services to provide evaluation and services for the 2023-2024 school year for one student, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office with a start date on or about March 26, 2024, at a cost not to exceed \$495.00.

- D. Approve the revised 2023-2024 contract with Bergen County Special Services for Educational Audiology Services to be provided to seven students, at an amount not to exceed \$6,956.00.
- E. **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Oakland Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") that the terms, stipulations and conditions as established in the Settlement Agreement and Release between the Board and the Parents of a student whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office are hereby adopted and approved by the Board. The Board President and Business Administrator/Board Secretary are hereby authorized and directed to execute the Settlement Agreement and Release, and any other documents necessary to effectuate the settlement.
- F. Approve the contract with Aequor Healthcare Services, LLC to provide Special Education staffing services, from April 29, 2024 to June 30, 2024, at a rate of \$50.00 per hour.

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote recorded.

**VI. FINANCE**

A motion was made by Mr. Mazzilli and seconded by Ms. Shelkin to approve Finance items A through T as follows:

- A. Approve the March 2024 certified gross (net & agency) payroll in the amount of \$1,947,205.90.
- B. Approve the payment of the attached list of bills in the amount of \$6,330,132.08 which in proper legal form and subject to audit, provided funds are available in their respective accounts.
- C. Approve the Board Secretary's certification to the Oakland Board of Education that, as of March 31, 2024 no line-item account has encumbrances and expenditures, which, in total, exceed the line-item appropriation in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(c)3; and further,  
  
Approve the Oakland Board of Education's certification that, after a review of the Board Secretary's and Board Treasurer's monthly financial reports and the advice of District officials, there is no reason to doubt that any major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(c)4.
- D. Approve the school year 2023-2024 Budget appropriation transfers for the month ending March 31, 2024.
- E. Approve the Board Secretary's Financial Report for the month ending March 31, 2024.
- F. Approve the Treasurer of School Monies Report for the month ending March 31, 2024.
- G. Approve staff participation in professional conferences/workshops outside the District, as per the attached.
- H. Approve the wire transfer to the NJ Department of Labor for NJ Unemployment Compensation in the amount of \$12,568.08 for First Quarter of 2024.

- I. Approve wire transfer to the NJ Department of Labor for NJ Unemployment Compensation in the amount of \$8,777.34.
- J. Resolved that the Oakland Board of Education adopt the following School District Budget for the 2024-2025 school year and hereby authorizes the School Business Administrator to submit the proposed budget and required supporting documentation to the Bergen County Superintendent of Schools for approval:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Local Tax</u>
Total General Fund	\$37,110,566	\$33,809,839
Total Special Revenue Fund	\$565,969	\$ -0-
Total Debt Service Fund	\$-0-	\$ -0-
Totals	\$37,676,535	\$33,809,839

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Oakland Board of Education includes in the proposed budget the adjustment for banked cap in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-10.1(b). The district has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority and must increase the base budget in the amount of \$356,900 for the purpose of leasing space.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Oakland Board of Education includes in the proposed budget the adjustment for enrollment in the amount of \$75,420. The additional funds will be used for supplies necessary for additional students.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Oakland Board of Education includes in the proposed budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$67,680. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

- K. **RESOLVED** that there should be raised for General Fund School District Tax Levy \$33,809,839, for the ensuing 2024-2025 school year.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that \$87,300 will be withdrawn from the District's Emergency Reserve Account for security related costs, including but not limited to additional security cameras and window shades.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a withdrawal will be made from the Maintenance Reserve Account in the amount of \$111,225 required maintenance repairs including new boiler controls and sink replacement at Dogwood Hill Elementary, HVAC and floor replacement at Manito Elementary, new doors at Heights, sink replacement at Valley Middle School and gym floor refinishing at all four district schools.

L. Approve the estimated tuition costs for the 2024-2025 school year:

Kindergarten	\$19,918
Grades 1-5	\$22,847
Grades 6-8	\$22,869
LLD	\$59,333
Preschool Disabled	\$20,469

M. Approve Methfessel & Werbel, P.C. for legal services at the following rates:

Partner: \$175/hr.

Associate: \$155/hr.

Estimated Annual \$20,000

N. Approve Open Systems for the purchase and installation of communication/security system upgrades at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the amount of \$79,956.00 through Educational Services Commission of New Jersey, #ESCNJ 19/20-38 and #ESCNJ 20/21-13.

O. Approve RFS Commercial, Inc. for the removal of carpet and installation of flooring in six classrooms at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the amount of \$44,288.93 through Hunterdon County Cooperative, Commercial Floor Covering & Related Services #215.

P. Approve Northeastern Interior Services for the purchase and installation of three exterior doors for Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the amount of \$32,227.50 through Hunterdon County Cooperative #HCEC-SER-20F.

Q. Approve the purchase of 175 Acer Chromebooks, licenses, and warranty from CDW-G in the amount of \$64,487.50 through the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey #ESCNJ/AEPA-22G.

R. Accept, with appreciation, the donation of \$15,222.00 from Dogwood Hill Elementary School PTO for the purchase of stage curtains and motorized basketball hoop backstop.

S. Accept, with appreciation, the donation of a Smartboard from Joseph Furio, RCM Technologies.

T. Accept, with appreciation, the purchase of the following new items from Valley Middle School PTO:

- Sound System
- Student calculators
- Cricut Joy Xtra Art classes and clubs
- 5 Italian Posters for Italian class
- Nonfiction Hi-Lo Informational Texts
- Vernier LabQuest 3 use in STEAM
- Two Book Display Cases for the VMS Library

Mr. Mazzilli and Mr. Scerbo expressed how proud they were of the 2024-2025 budget.

Ms. Shelkin thanked the PTO's for the donations to our schools.

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote recorded.

**VIII. TRANSPORTATION**

A motion was made by Ms. Kilday and seconded by Mr. Mazzilli to approve Transportation items A through D, as follows:

- A. Approve the list of field trips for students in the Oakland School District for the 2023-2024 school year as per the attached.
- B. Approve the emergency bus drills as per the attached.
- C. Approve the per seat subscription transportation fee of \$725 (round trip) and \$450 (one way) for the 2024-2025 school year.
- D. Approve the family subscription fee of \$1,650 for families with more than two children utilizing subscription busing services for the 2024-2025 school year.

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote recorded.

**IX. POLICY**

A motion was made by Ms. Kilday and seconded by Mr. Mazzilli to approve Policy items A through B as follows:

- A. Approve the *first* reading of new/revised Board policies/regulations as listed below:
  - P & R 2423 Prevention and Treatment of Sports- Related Concussions and Head Injuries
  - P 4360 Support Staff Member Tenure
  - P 3324 Right to Privacy Teaching Staff
  - P 4324 Right to Privacy Support Staff
  - P&R 7510 Use of School Facilities
- B. Approve the *second* reading of new/revised Board policies/regulations as listed below:
  - P&R 5111 Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students (M) (Revised)

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote recorded.

**X. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

One member of the public inquired about teachers providing home instruction.

Dr. Coffaro responded that this service is provided on a temporary basis, to students who can't attend classes.

Ms. Groff, President of the OEF discussed the success of the Casino Night fundraiser and announced that the event will be held next year on April 25, 2025. Ms. Groff discussed the scholarships being offered by the OEF

to Ramapo Indian Hills graduates for students going into the field of education and service-based scholarships to any student who graduated from Valley Middle School. Ms. Groff also discussed the plans for school and teacher grants for our district.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion made by Mr. Mazzilli and seconded by Ms. Shelkin to enter executive session at 7:48 PM.

WHEREAS, The Board of Education must discuss subjects concerning personnel matters, legal issues, Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying, and/or contract negotiations concerning the District, and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid subjects are not appropriate subjects to be discussed in a public meeting; and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid subjects to be discussed are within the exemptions which are permitted to be discussed and acted upon in closed executive session pursuant to P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, it is therefore

RESOLVED, that the aforesaid subjects shall be discussed in a closed executive session by this Board and administrative staff and information pertaining thereto will be made available to the public as soon thereafter as possible and once the reasons for nondisclosure no longer exist.

Upon call of the roll, the motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION-**

The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:25 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ms. Kilday and seconded by Mr. Mazzilli that the meeting be adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Upon call of the question, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette M. Wells  
School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary