

MINUTES
PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
REORGANIZATION MEETING
January 3, 2024
7:00 p.m. Anticipated Public Session
NEW EGYPT HIGH SCHOOL

Vision Statement

“Unleashing Unlimited Opportunities . . . Empowering One Warrior At A Time!”

Mission Statement

The Plumsted Township School District shall inspire all students to realize their personal potential. A rich and challenging learning environment, in partnership with the community, will develop critical thinkers, lifelong learners and productive citizens in an emerging global society.

2022-2023 Board of Education Goals

1. *The Plumsted Township Board of Education will continue to maintain transparent communication through various media platforms to highlight news districtwide as well as inform the community of legally permissible topics/information at monthly Board of Education meetings.*
2. *The Plumsted Township Board of Education supports the implementation of targeted professional development to address ways to reduce the number of out of district placements for students with special needs, vertical articulation across grade levels to promote cohesion within the curriculum, and personalized learning opportunities that promote increased college and career readiness and student/teacher retention.*
3. *The Plumsted Township Board of Education supports the implementation of a district five-year strategic plan aimed at teacher retention and appreciation and providing a safe, supportive learning environment that promotes self-worth and encourages productive contributions in a constantly evolving global society. The Superintendent will develop strategic planning committees who will work cohesively with the Board of Education to provide regular comprehensive updates. Prior to the start of Year 5 initiatives and strategies a thorough review and evaluation of Year 4 outcomes will be conducted with the Board of Education and District Stakeholders.*

2022-2023 District Goals

1. *The Plumsted Township School District will create and begin the implementation of a New Teacher Academy to support and retain new teachers. These four year cohorts will be designed to offer targeted training and professional learning to foster growth and collaboration among new teachers with the guidance of master teachers and administration.*
2. *The Plumsted Township School District will establish three community committees and host three meetings over the course of the 2022-2023 school year to engage an array of stakeholders in collaborating on district initiatives:*
 - *Equity Committee*
 - *Curriculum Committee*
 - *Success, Recognition and Promotion Committee*
3. *The Plumsted Township School District will support staff and expand expertise in data analysis and implementation of differentiated instruction to facilitate student learning and mastery of New Jersey Learning Standards while increasing NJSLA results.*

Board of Education approval October 12, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Gately, Board Secretary, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT

In compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act, this is to announce that adequate notice of this meeting has been given in the form of an Annual Notice contained in Resolution No. 2023-1, which Resolution was immediately thereafter posted upon the bulletin board in the main office of all four schools and the Board Secretary's office and disseminated within seven (7) days of passage to the Asbury Park Press and The Trenton Times, and a copy of such resolution was filed with the Plumsted Township Clerk. No advance written notice of this meeting was requested and paid for by any person according to the record of the Secretary of the Board. I direct the Secretary of the Board to enter into the minutes of this meeting this public announcement.

III. FLAG SALUTE - Mr. Gately, Board Secretary, led all in the salute to the flag.

IV. REORGANIZATION

A. Election Results

Mr. Gately, Board Secretary, presented the election results of the 2023 Official School Election held on November 7, 2023.

Bernard Bahnam	484
Kathryn Kovacs	950
Robert Stepnowski	938

Two (2) Board of Education members were elected to fill two (2) expired three (3) year terms as follows:

Kathryn Kovacs	950
Robert Stepnowski	938

B. Administer the Oath of Office

Mr. Gately, Board Secretary, administered the oath of office to Mrs. Kovacs and Mr. Stepnowski.

V. ROLL CALL/REORGANIZATION

Roll Call

Dr. Giardina	Present
Mr. Goodman	Present
Mrs. Kovacs	Present
Mr. Meroney	Present
Mrs. Morgan	Absent
Mrs. Raywood	Absent
Mr. Stepnowski	Present

Also Present

Mr. Ytreboe, Superintendent

Mr. Gately, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Mr. Supsie, Board Attorney

A. Election of President

Mr. Gately called for the nomination of President of the Board of Education

A motion was made by Mr. Goodman to nominate Dr. Giardina as the Board President.
Seconded by Mrs. Kovacs.

B. Close nominations for the Office of the President of the Board

A motion was made by Mr. Meroney to close nominations for election of the Board President.
Seconded by Mr. Goodman.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Kovacs,
Mr. Stepnowski,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

The following roll call vote was taken for the motion to nominate Board President.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Goodman, Mrs. Kovacs,
Dr. Giardina, Mr. Meroney,
Mr. Stepnowski,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

C. Election of the Vice-President

Mr. Gately called for the nomination of Vice President of the Board of Education.

A motion was made by Mr. Meroney to nominate Mrs. Raywood as the Board Vice President.
Seconded by Dr. Giardina.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kovacs to nominate Mr. Goodman as the Board Vice President.
Seconded by Mr. Stepnowski.

D. Close nominations for the Office of the Vice President of the Board

A motion was made by Dr. Giardina to close nominations for election of the Board Vice President.
Seconded by Mr. Meroney.

Roll Call

Yes

Dr. Giardina, Mr. Meroney,
Mr. Goodman, Mrs. Kovacs,
Mr. Stepnowski,

No
Absent

None
Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

The following roll call vote was taken for the motion to nominate Mrs. Raywood as Board Vice President.

Roll Call

Yes
No

Absent

Mr. Meroney,
Dr. Giardina, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

The following roll call vote was taken for the motion to nominate Mr. Goodman as Board Vice President.

Roll Call

Yes

No

Absent

Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina, Mr. Goodman
Mr. Meroney
Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

VI. REORGANIZATION MOTIONS

A. Code of Ethics

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that VI A. be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

The Board of Education Members had the required Board of Ethics Training session as required under N.J.A.C. 6:3-1.3 and N.J.A.C.6A:30.

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey School Boards Association “Code of Ethics” shall be considered the official Code of Ethics of the Plumsted Township Board of Education:

- a. I will uphold and enforce all laws, state board rules and regulations, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes should be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.
- b. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools which meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex or social standing.
- c. I will confine my Board action to policy-making, planning, and appraisal and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the Board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
- d. I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow Board members, to see that they are well run.
- e. I will recognize that authority rests with the Board of Education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action which may compromise the Board.

- f. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interests or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
- g. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. But in all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow Board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its schools.
- h. I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
- i. I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.
- j. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on such complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

B. Adoption of Official Newspapers

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that VI. B be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

To authorize the Asbury Park Press and The Trenton Times be adopted as the official newspapers to be used for the advertisement of meetings and legal ads and all other necessary public notifications for the 2023-2024 school year.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

C. Parliamentary Procedures

Mr. Goodman moved with a second by Mr. Money that XV. C be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

To adopt Robert's Rules of Order as the official parliamentary procedure manual to be used to conduct meetings and appoint the Board Secretary and Board Attorney to act as the parliamentarians for the 2023-2024 school year.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Goodman, Mr. Meroney,

No	Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Absent	Dr. Giardina,
	None
	Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

D. Board Policies/Regulations

Mr. Goodman moved with a second by Mr. Stepnowski that XV. D be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

The adoption of all existing Board Policies and Regulations.

Roll Call

Yes	Mr. Goodman, Mr. Stepnowski,
	Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Meroney,
	Dr. Giardina,
No	None
Absent	Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

E. Doctrine of Necessity

Mr. Goodman moved with a second by Mr. Money that XV. E be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

WHEREAS, the School Ethics Act, N.J.S.A. 18AA:12-21 et seq. was enacted by the New Jersey State Legislature to ensure and preserve public confidence in school Board members and school administrators and to provide specific ethical standards to guide their conduct; and

WHEREAS, questions have arisen regarding how a Board should invoke the Doctrine of Necessity when a quorum of a Board of Education has conflicts of interest on a matter required to be voted upon; and

WHEREAS, the School Ethics Commission has provided some guidance in Public Advisory Opinion A03-98 (April 1, 1998) but finds that there is a need to repeat and clarify its opinion; and

WHEREAS, the opinion set forth that, when it is necessary for a Board to invoke the Doctrine of Necessity, the Board should state publicly that it is doing so, the reason that such action is necessary and the specific nature of the conflicts of interest; and

WHEREAS, the opinion further provided that if the Board must invoke the Doctrine of Necessity not just to vote, but also to form a negotiations committee because it is without even three members to serve as a committee, then the Board must determine whether to act as a committee of the whole or to choose a smaller negotiations committee from among its members after stating publicly its reason for doing so as set forth above; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with the Legislative purpose as set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:12-22(a) the School Ethics Commission views public disclosure of conflicts of interest to be paramount when it is necessary to invoke the Doctrine of Necessity;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the School Ethics Commission hereby requires Boards of Education and Charter School Boards of Trustees that must invoke the Doctrine of

Necessity to adopt a resolution setting forth that they are invoking the Doctrine, the reason for doing so and the specific nature of the conflicts of interest; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Boards of Education and Charter School Boards of Trustees that invoke the Doctrine are directed to read the resolution at a regularly scheduled public meeting, post it where it posts public notices for 30 days and provide the Commission with a copy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission shall distribute this Resolution to the county superintendents for distribution to the school districts and charter schools, the New Jersey School Boards Association, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials and the New Jersey Education Association.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Goodman, Mr. Meroney,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that VII be approved:

- A. Recommend that the Board approve the reorganization meeting agenda for January 3, 2024.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. None

IX. DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

- A. Board Meeting dates:

The remaining Board of Education meetings will be held: (pending the vote on motion E.02)

- B. [Student Enrollment](#)

- C. [Fire/Drill/School Security Drills](#)

D. [Suspension List](#)

X. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

XI. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS - None

XII. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Mr. Ytreboe congratulated the new BOE members, as well as Dr. Giardina and Mr. Goodman on their positions as the 2024 BOE President and Vice president.

Congratulated Mrs. Raywood on her receiving the Teacher of the Year for Mansfield School District.
Spoke on being present for the New Egypt Challenge Day.

XIII. PRESENTATION/AWARDS - None

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - None

XV. SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA

The following items are presented for approval as recommendations by the Superintendent of Schools:

A. Finance Motions

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that XV A.1 be approved:

1. Recommend ratification of approval of the bus routes for the 2023-2024 school year.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that XV A.2 be approved:

2. Recommend approval of an addendum to extend the agreement with ESS Northeast, LLC., to provide substitute staffing services effective January 1, 2024.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

B. Personnel Motions - None

C. Policy - None

D. Professional Development/Travel Reimbursements

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that XV D.1 be approved:

1. Recommend approval of the [attached](#) staff professional development:

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

E. Other Motion

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that XV E.1 - E.2 (as amended) be approved:

1. Recommend receipt of the HIB (Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying) Report on January 3, 2024, by the Board of Education.
2. Recommend approval of [resolution 2023-2024 No. 1](#), Open Public Meeting Act.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

Mr. Goodman moved with a second by Mr. Stepnowski that XV E.3 be approved:

3. Recommend approval of a motion for the continuation of the long term suspension of student 202978 until the next regularly scheduled board of education meeting, which is currently scheduled for January 17, 2024.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Goodman, Mr. Stepnowski,
Mrs. Kovacs, Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Abstain

Mr. Meroney

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

F. Facilities - None

G. Field Trips

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mr. Goodman that XV G.1 be approved:

1. Recommend approval of the [attached field trips](#):

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mr. Goodman,
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Stepnowski,
Dr. Giardina,

No

None

Absent

Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Raywood

XVI. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY SCHOOL RELATED TOPIC

Debbie Munch, 82 Hopkins Road, New Egypt, NJ 08533 - please use or turn up microphones.
Bernard Banham, 370 East Millstream Road, Cream Ridge, NJ 08514 - spoke on parents rights
and policies.

Deanna Tedesco, 61 Maple Ave., New Egypt, NJ 08533 - spoke on Summit.

XVII. NEW BUSINESS

XVIII. OLD BUSINESS

XIX. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

Dr. Giardina congratulated the new members.
Mr. Meroney spoke about the Summit Platform.

XX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Goodman moved and seconded by Mr. Meroney to go into Executive Session at 7:38 p.m to discuss
collective negotiations and student matters. Will return from the executive session.

Mr. Goodman moved and was seconded by Mr. Stepnowski to come out of executive session at 8:32 p.m.

Roll Call

Dr. Giardina	Present
Mr. Goodman	Present
Mrs. Kovacs	Present
Mr. Meroney	Present
Mrs. Morgan	Absent
Mrs. Raywood	Absent
Mr. Stepnowski	Present

XXI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Goodman made a motion to adjourn.
Seconded by Mrs. Kovacs, passed unanimously.

Sean Gately
Business Administrator/Board Secretary