

Mansfield Township Board of Education



September 19, 2024

7:00 p.m. Executive Session

7:30 p.m. Regular Meeting

Call to Order - Mrs. Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Roll Call - Ms. Morris, Acting Business Administrator, conducted Roll Call. The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Mansfield Township Board of Education

Name	Present	Absent
Judy Irwin	X	
Jonathan Lemp	X	
Alison Lorentson	X	
Diane Margolin	X	
Constance Quinn	X	
Jonathan Rood	X	
Jennifer Rosenblum	X	
Linda Watters	X	
James J. Winand	X	

Others in Attendance

Ms. Diana Mai, Superintendent,

Ms. Kelly Morris, Acting Business Administrator/Board Secretary,

Ms. Noreen Matias, Director of Curriculum and Instruction,

Mr. John Melitsky, Principal,

There were community and staff members in attendance.

First Executive Session

On a motion by Ms. Watters and seconded by Mr. Rood, the Board of Education adjourned to closed session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss personnel matters.

Voice Vote. All Yes.

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits the board of education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Mansfield Township Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss:

1. Personnel Matters

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mansfield Township Board of Education reserves the right to discuss such other matters rendered confidential by law should the need arise; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the minutes of this closed session be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists. Action may be taken.

On a motion by Ms. Quinn and seconded by Ms. Watters, the Board of Education returned to open session at 7:30 p.m.

Voice Vote. All Yes.

Call to Order - *Ms. Quinn opened the public BOE meeting at 7:31 p.m.*

President's Announcement - *Ms. Quinn read the Statement of Advance Notice*

Statement of Advance Notice

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, The Mansfield Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Mansfield Township Municipal Building and sent to the following newspapers: *The Express Times and Star Ledger*.

Pledge of Allegiance - *Ms. Quinn conducted the Pledge of Allegiance*

President's Report - Constance Quinn

Ms. Quinn reported that she and Mr. Winand, Chairman of the Finance Committee had a phone call with the forensic auditor to touch base on the process. There is no information that can be shared yet, and she stated that the process will take time. The auditor stated that everyone has been very helpful and cooperative. She reiterated that a public presentation will be shared when the process is completed.

Superintendent's Report - Diana Mai

- *Ms. Mai shared that the administrative team has been working to streamline communications with parents and the community by sharing more information about news and events through the Mansfield Minute (weekly newsletter), which can now be translated into all languages. Additionally, a Student and Family Handbook is on the agenda for approval tonight that will be made available on the website and via a link in the next newsletter.*
- *Ms. Mai prefaced the New Jersey State Learning Assessment presentation by Ms. Matias by sharing that the district showed stagnant growth in the 2023-2024 school year. Scores have been low in recent years, and the new scores are not better. A district goal this year*

is to increase student achievement, and this goal is being diligently pursued. Information regarding the NJSLA scores and the district goals can be found on the website.

Administrators' Reports

Acting Business Administrator - Kelly Morris

No Report

Principal - John Melitsky

- *Mr. Melitsky shared that the school year is off and running with only a few minor transportation issues that were quickly resolved. The dismissal procedures have changed for our youngest learners to better support them in grades Kindergarten and First. For safety reasons, there is an increased presence of staff and law enforcement at both arrival and dismissal. The staff has been directed to "See something, say something."*
- *Back to School Nights were successful and very well attended this year. Thank you to all who attended.*
- *Picture Day was held on Monday, and all went smoothly. The photographer's staff sought him out to compliment the students and staff for excellent behavior and organization.*

Director of Curriculum & Instruction - Noreen Matias

Ms. Matias presented the 2023-2024 NJSLA results for Math, ELA, and Science in a format that compared the district's data scores internally across prior years and externally to state averages. Subgroups were also analyzed. Data supported stagnant growth. She shared that she has been working with the Warren Hills sending district cluster and the Link It data platform to improve curriculum and its delivery.

Ms. Quinn commented that she found the numbers to be very upsetting. She stated that the overall performance of our students is "ridiculous and embarrassing", and that our "students deserve better." She shared her belief as an educator that "when the majority of students get a question wrong on a test, that is on her, not on them." She concluded by saying that while her comments were harsh, the Board will support teachers to improve.

Ms. Lorentson stated that she did not know about the past low achievement, as that data was not presented as such to the Board in prior years' presentations.

Ms. Margolin stated that moving forward toward better achievement is best, but also asked if there is any benefit to looking back to see what went wrong. Ms. Mai agreed that there was a benefit to reviewing current curriculum and practices to identify needs for professional development.

Communications and Petitions (If required) – *None received.*

Public Comment - Agenda Items Only

Public comments are invited on matters pertaining only to the agenda action items at this time.

All participants shall be given three (3) minutes to speak and shall state their name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate. The Board uses the public comment period as an

opportunity to listen to citizen concerns, but please be aware that not all issues brought to a board meeting will be resolved this evening; rather, the Board will, in appropriate cases, delegate the authority to investigate the matter to the Superintendent or his designee. Please let the record reflect that the BOE does not endorse your comments nor will the BOE be held liable for comments you make about a staff member, or other person, which the staff member, or other person, may consider defamatory and/or libelous, as that individual retains all rights to pursue any legal remedies against you. The Board will hear all public comments and then close the public comment session and respond if appropriate.

1. *Lori Bravo acknowledged that the NJSLA testing scores are only for grades third and above, and she asked if any action is being considered on lower grade levels as a result of low achievement. Ms. Mai shared that the district is using benchmark assessments to gain data with varied measurement tools to direct instruction, monitor growth, and identify areas for improvement. She also shared that teacher committees are presently forming to guide programmatic decision making.*
2. *Matt Rolf asked if scores will be posted on the district website. Ms. Mai confirmed that they will be available. He also questioned the data point in the presentation showing the percentage of proficient students in the state for Science, as the totals in all proficiency level areas exceeded 100%. Ms. Mai promised to check the data with Link It, as they prepared the reports for us with data from the state.*

Consent Agenda - Recommended Action(s)

Board Member: Linda Watters

Approval of Minutes and Reports

1. Motion to approve the open and closed session **minutes** of the August 15, 2024 Regular meeting.
2. Motion to approve the below staff requests for **Tuition Reimbursement**, as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Employee	Course/College/Credits	Dates	Tuition Cost
Endrizzi, Kristen	GED 639 Diagnosis & Correction of Reading and Writing Difficulties I Centenary University - 3 credits	8/1/24 - 12/20/24	\$2,068.95
Endrizzi, Kristen	GED 640 Diagnosis & Correction of Reading and Writing Difficulties II Centenary University - 3 credits	1/1/25 - 5/1/25	\$2,068.95
O'Brien, Laurie	5057 Move, Grow, Play Augustana University - 3 credits	Fall 2024	475.00
O'Brien, Laurie	5287 Transforming Math for Young Children Augustana University - 3 credits	Fall 2024	475.00

O'Brien, Laurie	5232 Technology for Littles Augustana University - 3 credits	Fall 2024	475.00
Baker, Kristen	CDL513 Complexities of Twice Exceptionality Bridges Grad School of Cognitive Diversity in Ed. - 3 credits	7/28/24 - 9/28/24	\$1,748.25
Baker, Kristen	CDL511 Cognitive Diversity and Strength-Based, Talent-Focused Education Bridges Grad School of Cognitive Diversity in Ed. - 3 credits	1/5/25 - 3/8/25	\$1,748.25
Baker, Kristen	IEC511 Intro to Cognitive Diverse Minds Bridges Grad School of Cognitive Diversity in Ed. - 3 credits	3/23/25 - 5/24/25	\$1,748.25

3. Motion to approve the below staff requests for **Professional Development/Travel**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Employee	Event	Date(s)	District Cost
Robin Florentine	Move, Connect, Ed: Unlocking the Full Potential of Every Student Through the Power of Play and Movement (Virtual)	September 2024	Fee: \$650 Mileage: 0 Sub: 0 Other: 0

4. Motion to receive/approve the **HIB Report Cases**, if any.
None to report.

On a Motion by Ms. Watters and seconded by Ms. Lorentson, the Consent Agenda was approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with a 9-0-0 roll call vote.

Approval Agenda

Chair: Diane Margolin

Education/Policy Committee - Recommended Action(s):

1. Motion to approve the **Student/Family Handbook** for the 2024-2025 school year, as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent.
2. Motion to approve continuation of the below **Curricular Programs** as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent:

Books/Programs 24/25	Grades	Content Area
Schoolwide - ELA	Grades 2 - 5	ELA
Foundations Consumables	Grades K - 2	ELA
TCI social studies work books	Grades 5 and 6	S.S.

Read Naturally	Special Education/CST	
Edmark	Special Education/CST	
Project Read	Special Education/CST	
Wilson Reading Program	Special Education/CST	
Special Reads for Special Needs	Special Education/CST	
Framing Your Thoughts	Special Education/CST	
Numicon	Special Education/CST	
Touch Math	Special Education/CST	
Go Math	All Grades	Math
Starfall	Grades K - 3	ELA & Math
BrainPOP - ELL	All Grades - ELL	All Subjects
RAZZ Kids	All Grades - ELL	ELA for ELL
Mystery Science	K - 5	Science
Mystery Writing	Grades 3 - 5	ELA
MemBean - vocabulary	Grade 6	ELA
ST Math	Intervention - All Grades	Math
IXL	All Grades	Math & ELA
Collections by HMH	Grade 6 - ELA	ELA
National Geographic	Grade K - 5	Science
iScience	Grade 6	Science
Discovery Education	Grades K-6	Mostly used 4 - 6 use
Waterford	PreK - 1	Math & ELA

3. Motion to approve the **Final Reading and Adoption** of Policy Alert 233:

0141 - Board Member Number and Term - Policy

0141.1 - Board Member Number and Term – Sending District - Policy

0141.2 - Board Member Number and Term – Receiving District - Policy

0164.6 - Remote Public Board Meetings During a Declared Emergency - Policy (M)

(ABOLISHED)

2200 - Curriculum Content - Policy (M)

3160 - Physical Examination - Policy & Regulation (M)

4160 - Physical Examination - Policy & Regulation (M)

5200 - Attendance - Regulation (M)

5337 - Service Animals - Policy (M)

5350 - Student Suicide Prevention Policy (M)

7231 - Gifts From Vendors - Policy (M) **(ABOLISHED)**

8420 - Emergency and Crisis Situations Policy (M)

8467 - Firearms and Weapons Policy & Regulation (M)

9181 - Volunteer Athletic Coaches and Co-Curricular Activity Advisors/Assistants - Policy

On a Motion by Ms. Margolin and seconded by Ms. Lorentson, the above Education/Policy Items were approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with a 9-0-0 roll call vote.

Approval Agenda

Chair: Alison Lorentson

Personnel Committee - Recommended Action(s)

1. Motion to approve a paid **leave of absence for Employee #47264429** under Federal FMLA beginning on or about January 6, 2025 to January 31, 2025, and an unpaid leave of absence to immediately follow, with a return to work date of June 2, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.
2. Motion to accept, with sincere gratitude for 20 years of service to the District, the resignation for the reason of retirement of **Debra Salvo**, Preschool Teacher, effective December 31, 2024, as recommended by the Superintendent.

***Ms. Quinn thanked Ms. Salvo for her many years of dedicated service to the district on behalf of the Board and wished her well. She will be missed.*
3. Motion to approve the resignation of **Melissa Thomas**, Paraprofessional, effective August 21, 2024, as recommended by the Superintendent.
4. Motion to approve an amended salary for **Rachel Rothrock**, Special Education Teacher, to BA/Step 3, effective August 21, 2024, as recommended by the Superintendent.
5. Motion to approve the appointment of **Rachel Rothrock** to the position of Preschool Disabled Teacher, effective December 2, 2024, as recommended by the Superintendent.
6. Motion to accept **Krystal Ulm, Graduate Student Extern** from East Stroudsburg University, to complete her practicum experience with Matthew Magnuson, Speech Language Specialist as her mentor, requiring a minimum of 175 practice hours from September 23, 2024 to December 15, 2024, as recommended by the Superintendent.
7. Motion to appoint **Jaelynn Miller** to the position of Substitute Teacher, pending completion of onboarding paperwork, effective September 20, 2024, as recommended by the Superintendent.
8. Motion to approve the **Faculty/Staff Handbook** for the 2024-2025 school year, as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent.
9. Motion to approve the **Substitute Handbook** for the 2024-2025 school year, as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent.
10. Motion to approve all certified teaching staff to serve as **Tutors and/or Home Instructors**, as needed, during the 2024-2025 school year, to be paid at the professional student contact rate as per the negotiated agreement, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a Motion by Ms. Lorentson and seconded by Ms. Quinn, the above Personnel Items were approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with a 9-0-0 roll call vote.

Township Liaison Agenda

Township Chair: Linda Watters and Jennifer Rosenblum

Township Committee - Recommended Action(s):

Ms. Watters shared that the Mayor and a Committee member met with Ms. Mai and Ms. Morris to discuss the current financial situation of the District. She stated that they left feeling good about the management of the matter by the school's administration.

Approval Agenda

Chair: James Winand

Facilities/Finance Committee - Recommended Action(s)

1. Motion to rescind previous approval and approve the amended **Student Transportation Jointure Agreement with Franklin Township School District** for the 2024-2025 school year as per the below chart, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Route	Cost
F	\$41,128.20
N	\$41,128.20
W	\$41,734.80
Total	\$123,991.20

2. Motion to approve the **payment of bills** for the period of August 16, 2024 through September 19, 2024, as presented, in the amount of \$996,733.65.
3. Motion to approve **line item transfers** for the month of August 2024 in the amount of \$98,054.49, as presented.

On a Motion by Mr. Winand and seconded by Ms. Lorentson, the above Facilities/Finance Items were approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with a 9-0-0 roll call vote.

Public Comment

1. *Rich Stewart questioned the delay in beginning the forensic audit to “find the missing funds,” and he asked why special meetings were not being held to gain immediate resolution. Ms. Mai clarified that money is not missing; rather the district is facing a budget deficit. She also shared that the Board is acting as quickly as possible within compliance standards for procuring professional services.*

New Business - Members of the Board may introduce any new item or topic of discussion for the Board to consider.

Ms. Watters asked about the addition of new staff / additional staff at afternoon pick-up and how that happened. Ms. Mai shared that the goal is for the car line to move much faster.

Old Business - Members of the Board may comment on any item or topic that was previously discussed by the Board.

Future Board Meeting Dates:

Thursday, October 17, 2024 - Regular Meeting

Thursday, November 21, 2024 - Regular Meeting

Recommended Action - Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Rood and seconded by Ms. Watters, the Board of Education adjourned from the Regular Meeting with an 9-0-0 roll call vote at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly Morris".

Kelly Morris
Acting Board Secretary