

Mansfield Township Board of Education



January 16, 2025

7:00 p.m. Executive Session

7:30 p.m. Regular Meeting

Call to Order - Ms. Lorentson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

Name	Present	Absent
Sean Breheney	X	
Judy Irwin	X	
Jonathan Lemp		X
Alison Lorentson	X	
Jonathan Rood		X
Jennifer Rosenblum	X	
Richard Stewart	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, Principal

First Executive Session

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:

☐ *Personnel Matters*

☐ *Confidential Student 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.

On a motion by Ms. Watters and seconded by Ms. Rosenblum, the Board of Education adjourned to closed session at 7:01 p.m. to discuss personnel and confidential student matters.

Voice Vote. All Yes.

Reconvene to Public Session

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

Voice Vote. All Yes.

President's Announcement - *Ms. Lorentson 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 on the District website and in the Mansfield Township Municipal Building, and sent to the following newspapers: *The Express Times and Star Ledger*.

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

President's Report - Alison Lorentson

- *Ms. Lorentson shared the Board member appointments for 2025 as presented below:*

Ed/Policy: Linda Watters (Chair), James Winand, Jennifer Rosenblum

Finance: Judy Irwin (Chair), Sean Breheney, Rich Stewart

Negotiations: Jonathan Rood (Chair), James Winand, Alison Lorentson

Personnel: James Winand (Chair), Linda Watters, Jonathan Rood

Township: Jennifer Rosenblum (Chair), Jonathan Lemp

Delegate to NJ School Boards Association - Alison Lorentson

Alternate Delegate to NJ School Boards Association - Linda Watters

Policy Chairperson - Linda Watters

Representative to the County School Board Association - Alison Lorentson

CSA Evaluation Alternate Lead (If President Unavailable) - Linda Watters

Superintendent's Report - Diana Mai

- *Ms. Mai shared that there was one founded HIB incident in December; restorative practices and counselling resulted; no disciplinary action was issued.*

- *Ms. Mai shared that January is New Jersey School Board Recognition month, and she shared a statement of appreciation to express gratitude to our Board members for their service to our school community. "Board members volunteer their time to support our school and to help provide the best educational experience possible for our children. It is often a thankless job, but it is so very important. Thank you all for your commitment to the Mansfield Township School District and I look forward to continuing to work together to create positive change and growth in our district."*
- *Staff professional development was held this past Wednesday, 1/15/25 in the afternoon, including activities that were developed and presented by our own staff. Staff explored the concept of visible learning, learned strategies to better support multilingual learners, and worked in committees to improve all areas of our school. The level of enthusiasm, teamwork, and collaboration was incredible.*
- *Ms. Mai thanked our Acting Business Administrator, Kelly Morris, for her work in balancing our current budget and creating a transparent and well-run business office. At our mid-year budget review meeting with the department of education, Ms. Morris was applauded for her efforts and dedication to fiscal responsibility.*

Administrators' Reports

Business Administrator - Kelly Morris

- *Ms. Morris informed the Board that she registered them for their annual mandatory training through NJSBA, and that they should receive an email with instructions shortly, if not already.*
- *Ms. Morris reminded all that new Board members have 90 days to complete Governance I, while the rest of the Board has until December 31, 2025 to complete their assigned courses.*

Principal - Noreen Matias

- *Ms. Matias shared that this week we had the privilege of welcoming the incredibly talented author BJ Ward to our fourth-grade wing! With over 30 years of inspiring visits to our school, BJ's passion for storytelling has motivated countless young readers and writers. Our students are in for some amazing interactions and literary fun, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to the PTA for sponsoring this remarkable opportunity.*
- *Additionally, she expressed a HUGE thank you to the Mansfield Education Association Fast Committee and MEA Pride Head Chair Selena Donaldson for organizing a fantastic Health and Wellness Fair on January 9th at Mansfield Township Elementary School! This event was a wonderful success and fostered community engagement focused on the well-being of our students and families. She gave a special shout-out to our first responders, including the Mansfield Police, Tri-County Fire Department, and the Mansfield Fire Department for their presence and support, along with that of state and county services and Warren County Commissioner James Kern, which truly showcased our community's commitment to health and safety.*

Communications and Petitions (If required) – The Superintendent and members of the Board may acknowledge any communications and/or petitions received.

Public Comment - Agenda Items Only - *None*

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.

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 December 12, 2024 Regular meeting.
2. Motion to approve the open session **minutes** of the January 6, 2025 Reorganization meeting.
3. Motion to receive/approve the **HIB Report Cases**, as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a Motion by Ms. Watters and seconded by Mr. Stewart, the Consent Agenda was approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with 6-0-0 roll call vote.

Approval Agenda

Chair: Linda Watters

Education/Policy Committee - Recommended Action(s):

1. Motion to approve the First Reading of the below policies, as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent.
 - A. A Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials – 2023 Revisions
 - P 5512 Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (M) (Revised)
 - P 5533 Student Smoking (M) (Revised)
 - R 5533 Student Smoking (Revised)
 - P & R 7441 Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings and On School Grounds (M) (Revised)
 - P & R 9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies (M) (Revised)
 - B. General Policy and Regulation Updates
 - P 2365 Acceptable Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) (New)

P 5111	Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students (M) (Revised)
P 5516	Use of Electronic Communication Devices (Revised)
R 5516	Use of Electronic Communication Devices (New)
P 5701	Academic Integrity (Revised)
P 5710	Student Grievance (Revised)
P 8500	Food Services (M) (Revised)

On a Motion by Ms. Watters and seconded by Ms. Rosenblum, Education / Policy action items were approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with 6-0-0 roll call vote.

Approval Agenda

Chair: James Winand

Personnel Committee - Recommended Action(s)

1. Motion to deny a request to waive the **Payback of Tuition** for former Employee #92711357 in the amount of \$19,207.56 for coursework completed during their final three years of employment in the District, which is to be repaid to the District by the Employee as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, as recommended by the Superintendent.
2. Motion to approve a \$275 per diem rate for **Substitute Nurses**, effective January 17, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.
3. Motion to approve horizontal movement on the salary guide for **Erin Sassaman**, Teacher, from BA/Step 4 to BA+15/Step 4, effective February 1, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.
4. Motion to approve horizontal movement on the salary guide for **Kristin Baker**, Teacher, from MA+30/Step 18 to MA+45/Step 18, effective February 1, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.
5. Motion to approve the below staff requests for **Tuition Reimbursement**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Employee	School/Course	Date(s)	District Cost
Erin Burton	OL5032 Empathy & Understanding: The New Tool for Students w/Challenging Behaviors - American College of Education	Spring 2025	3 credits - \$440.10
Erin Burton	OL-5311 Behavior Supports for Students with Autism - American College of Education	Spring 2025	3 credits - \$440.10
Erin Burton	OL-5853 A Moving Body, A Thinking Brain - American College of Education	Spring 2025	3 credits - \$440.10

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

Employee	Program/Location	Date(s)	District Cost
Jessica Eresman	NJTESOL/NJBE 2025 Spring	05/27-05/28/25	Fee: \$350.00

	Conference; Webinar		Mileage: \$0 Sub: \$0
Kristin Baker	WCCSE Executive Board Committee	01/28/25	Fee: \$0 Mileage: \$15.04 Sub: \$125.00
Jake Wilson	NJPSA MTSS Training: Designing, Implementing, Sustaining, Monroe, NJ	01/24/25	Fee: \$400.00 Mileage: \$51.70 Sub: 0

On a Motion by Ms. Watters and seconded by Mr. Breheney, Personnel action items were approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with 6-0-0 roll call vote.

Township Liaison Agenda

Township Chair: Jennifer Rosenblum

Township Committee - Recommended Action(s):

1. No requested action/update as needed. - *None*

Approval Agenda

Chair: Judy Irwin

Facilities/Finance Committee - Recommended Action(s)

1. Motion to approve the **payment of bills** for the period of December 13, 2024 through January 16, 2025, as presented, in the amount of \$1,533,022.88
2. Motion to acknowledge that there are no **line item transfers** for the month of December 2024.
3. Motion to approve a Shared Services agreement with Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission (HCESC) for the provision of **Professional Services**, as needed, for the 2024-2025 school year, as recommended by the Superintendent.
4. Motion to approve the below **Rates for Use of School Facilities** for the 2024-2025 school year, effective January 1, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Non-profit Organizations - no rental fee; \$35.00 per hour for custodial services outside of normal working hours.

For-profit Organizations - \$150 flat fee per day (APR); \$150 flat fee per day (Gym); \$20 flat fee per day (per classroom); \$35 per hour for custodial services.

On a Motion by Ms. Irwin and seconded by Ms. Watters, Finance / Facilities action items were approved by the Mansfield Township Board of Education with 6-0-0 roll call vote.

Public Comment - None

Public comments are invited on matters pertaining to the district 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.

New Business

1. *The Board discussed recording Board meetings and decided that, moving forward, meetings will not be recorded now that COVID is in the past.*
2. *The Board discussed the agenda order and timing for Closed Executive Sessions. It was decided that meetings will begin with Regular Business at 7:00 p.m. moving forward. Closed Executive Sessions will be held at the end of meetings when possible, and an announcement will be made as to whether or not action will follow upon return to open session. If an agenda item for the meeting is contingent upon a confidential Board discussion, then the Board will move to Closed Executive Session at the beginning of the meeting as a matter of necessity.*
3. *Ms. Lorentson asked if report cards will be revisited so as to make them easier for parents to understand their children's progress in a timely manner. Ms. Mai shared that Administration has met with each grade level team to review the report cards in place presently and to discuss consistency with reporting so that parents have good information.*
4. *Ms. Rosenblum recommended that the movie, "A Million Miles Away", which is about the life and family of a transient student, be considered for inclusion in the curriculum, as she found it to be fascinating and inspiring.*
5. *Ms. Rosenblum shared that the Anne Frank House exhibit is in New York City for a short time, and she asked if consideration could be given to this program as field trips are planned. Ms. Mai shared that field trips were already in place for this year.*

Old Business - None

Future Board Meeting Dates:

Thursday, February 20, 2025 - Regular Business Meeting

Thursday, March 13, 2025 - Regular Business Meeting

Recommended Action - Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Stewart and seconded by Ms. Watters, the Board of Education adjourned from the Regular Meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Voice Vote. All Yes.

Respectfully submitted,



Kelly Morris
Acting Board Secretary