

BUSINESS MEETING

February 20, 2025

The Business Meeting of the Stafford Township Board of Education was held on February 20, 2025 at 7:02pm at the Stafford Township Arts Center (STAC) and was live streamed over the web.

CALL TO ORDER

The Stafford Township Board of Education is called to order in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act Law - 1975 Chapter 231 (P.L. 1975-231C). This meeting was advertised in the Atlantic City Press. Notice has been posted in the office of the Stafford Township Clerk, all school buildings and on the district website. A mechanical device is being used to video record this meeting.

ROLL CALL

Brian Fenlon	Member (Absent)
Gregory Gioe	Member
Robert Morello	Member
Matthew Regulski	Member
Christopher Smith	Member
Bonnie Strouse	Member
Joseph Washco	Member
Kevin Cooney	Vice President
Tammy Wagner	President

ALSO PRESENT

George J. Chidiac	Superintendent
Lourdes LaGuardia	Business Administrator/Board of Education Secretary
Martin J. Buckley, Esq.	Board of Education Attorney

FLAG SALUTE

A. RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS

~Oxycocus Staff Recognition

- Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Meyer recognized two Oxycocus Staff members, Diane Petrozzino and Jackie Coletti, whose quick thinking and heroic actions may have saved a student's life. Back on January 17th, one of our preschool students began choking on a cracker while eating in class. Appropriate methods of dislodging the food were administered. The food was successfully dislodged without the need for the LifeVac device being used and the student was thankfully ok. If it were not for their swift actions of our staff who knows what could have happened. Thank you for your constant caring and dedication to keeping your students safe.

- Mr. Chidiac recognized Mr. Wilkinson stating that in January there was an emergency in front of the Oxycoccus School and his swift actions kept the students and staff and everybody calm.

~McKinley Student and Staff Recognition

- Mrs. Eberle and Mrs. Aliseo recognized the McKinley's PBSIS Team. PBSIS stands for Positive Behavior Supports in Schools. The purpose of this group is to work together to implement and oversee positive behavioral interventions and supports within our school. PBSIS helps to promote positive behaviors, create a positive school culture, and address behavioral challenges in a proactive, systematic, and data-driven way. Since its implementation, our PBSIS Team has revised our school logo, school motto, and implemented a reward system using "Mustang Money". Students are presented with Mustang Money by a staff member when they are being respectful, responsible, and/or reflective. Their reward of Mustang Money gives them a chance to be chosen to pick a prize from the "Swag Wagon" which is brought around to the classrooms. In addition, the Team has initiated a variety of other activities throughout the school. One activity in particular is our first McKinley Family Night called "What's the Scoop?" being held on February 27th where families will get the opportunity to enjoy a night of informational sessions and student activities concluding with an ice cream party served by McKinley Staff. Mrs. Eberle thanked the PBSIS team for their continued support, dedication, creativity and hard work as they have successfully rolled out this program. Congratulations to our PBSIS Staff: Jenna Cipriano, Mark Dillon, Kerry Eck'Art, Summer Gigerian, Susan Kilgallon, Brooke Reeves, Elise St. Germain, and Heather Colucci. Job Well Done!
- Mrs. Eberle and Mrs. Aliseo recognized the students in Mrs. Scheffler and Mrs. Adanatzian's class for their joint participation in a program entitled "Junior Helping Hands". Junior Helping Hands is a social skills group where special education students and general education students are able to interact with one another. Under the supervision of Mrs. Stephanie Szczepan, our school Psychologist, students in Mrs. Adanatzian's fourth grade class are teaching Mrs. Scheffler's students appropriate social skills and providing grade appropriate interactions with one another. During Junior Helping Hands, students work with one another by making crafts, making edible treats, and playing games together. There are many skills being learned during these activities such as working on back-and-forth conversations, taking turns, making appropriate eye contact, and responding appropriately to peers. Thank you to Mrs. Szczepan for developing this group and to all of the students involved and volunteering their time.
- Mrs. Eberle and Mrs. Aliseo recognized Heather Giles, a teacher aide in the MD class at McKinley. Recently, during snack time, Mrs. Giles saw a student take a bite out of a pear and noticed a funny look on his face. Thinking he may be choking; Mrs. Giles exercised appropriate methods for dislodging food. Student

had no further issues and resumed classroom activities. Thank you to Mrs. Giles for her prompt attention to a student in distress.

7:13pm Short Break

Mrs. Wagner read the following statements on behalf of the Board of Education:

(1) In regards to the return of the superintendent, “the Board of Education prides themselves on being transparent, and we are receptive to your comments as always. Please know that policies, laws, ethics, and regulations limit the board of education's ability to engage in public discussion on personnel matters. The superintendent's personal attorney and our board of education attorney has advised we follow these policies, laws, ethics, and regulations relating to personal communication. Although we are somewhat constrained in what we can openly discuss, one thing we would like to clarify is the agenda item for the March meeting has nothing to do with Mr. Chidiac's work as Stafford Superintendent, but are simply memorializing our previously agreed upon shared service with Eagleswood. Consideration of Mr. Chidiac's contract extension and raise was closed at the 11/18/2024 meeting, and the board has made it clear that we do not intend to reconsider or negotiate those terms for the foreseeable future. However, Mr. Chidiac is currently on track and performing services at the Eagleswood School District. At the advice of our attorney, we must amend his contract to account for those services. If the shared services agreement were to end for any reason, Mr. Chidiac's salary would revert back to his original contracted rate. We really appreciate everyone coming out to convey their concerns and feedback. We hear you and we value all voices in the Stafford Township community. Thank you.”

(2) On behalf of the Board of Education, “we would like to sincerely thank the STEA for dedicating their time and efforts in writing grants for district-wide events for our district for the 2024-2025 school year. They successfully raised \$34,000. These initiatives stem directly from their creativity and commitment. Their willingness to volunteer time to give back to our school community is truly inspiring, and we couldn't let this moment pass without recognizing their efforts. Thank you to our wonderful Stafford Township Education Association.”

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S EDUCATIONAL REPORT – Attachment

- Mr. Chidiac announced that the Stafford Township School District passed QSAC with flying colors. QSAC is done every three years. QSAC is state monitoring in which they assess the district in five areas: instruction and program, fiscal management, governance, operations, and personnel. Mr. Chidiac thanked the staff and administrative team for all their hard work, and great job to all.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

*NOTE: If a board member was absent (listed below), they are to abstain from the vote on that item/meeting.

To approve the minutes of the following meeting(s):

- 1. January 8, 2025 Reorganization Meeting – No Absences
- 2. January 8, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting – No Absences
- 3. January 8, 2025 Business Meeting – No Absences
- 4. January 8, 2025 Closed Session – No Absences

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Morello to approve Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s) #1-4. Roll call vote: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed.

D. COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

None

E. CORRESPONDENCE TO AND FROM THE BOARD

None

F. BOARD BUSINESS

- 1. There were four incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying.
- 2. To approve non-resident student #21681 to remain in the Stafford Township School District beginning February 5, 2025, for a period of time no greater than thirteen weeks, per Policy and Regulation 5111.

A motion was made by Mr. Morello and seconded by Mr. Gioe to approve Board Business item(s) #1-2. Roll call vote: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

G. FINANCE/INSURANCE/TRANSPORTATION

The Committee of the Whole has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the superintendent, school business administrator/board secretary and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals. In addition, we further certify that we have reviewed the attached bill list and are satisfied that curriculum related expenditures are directly related to the results of assessment data and that professional development expenditures are directly related to professional development plans.

- 1. To approve for payment of February 2025 bills list totaling \$1,704,586.78 as attached. (G-1)

Fund 10 - \$1,404,416.41
Fund 20 - \$260,363.45
Fund 30 - \$30,500
Fund 40 - \$0
Fund 60 - \$1,176.16
Fund 61 - \$0
Fund 62 - \$8,130.06

*Note - \$654,613.89 of the amounts listed were made as EFT payments. (G-1a)

*To approve for payment of January 2025 additional bills list totaling \$1,280,285.10 as attached. (G-1b)

Fund 10 - \$1,013,733.23
Fund 20 - \$20,059.32
Fund 30 - \$0
Fund 40 - \$106,275
Fund 60 - \$125,628.72 + \$31.45 = \$125,660.17
Fund 61 - \$1,113.68
Fund 62 - \$13,443.70

*Note - \$725,703.63 of the amounts listed were made as EFT payments. (G-1c)

*To approve for payment of December 2024 additional bills list totaling \$481,476.79 as attached. (G-1d)

Fund 10 - \$481,429
Fund 20 - \$0
Fund 30 - \$0
Fund 40 - \$0
Fund 60 - \$0
Fund 61 - \$0
Fund 62 - \$47.79

*Note - \$0 of the amounts listed were made as EFT payments. (G-1e)

2. To approve for payment of payroll
 - a. dated December 20, 2024 totaling \$1,556,741.11
 - b. dated January 15, 2025 totaling \$1,500,492.41
 - c. dated January 30, 2025 totaling \$1,594,483.96

3. To accept the Treasurer's Report for the month of December 2024.

- 4. To accept the Secretary’s Report for the month of December 2024.
- 5. Certification of Overexpenditures:

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c)3, I, Lourdes LaGuardia, Board of Education Secretary, certify that as of December 2024 no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures, which in total exceed the line item appropriation in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a).

Board of Education Secretary

Date

Board Resolution:

Through the adoption of this resolution, we, the Stafford Township Board of Education, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c)4, certify that as of December 2024 after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the business administrator and other appropriate district officials, that no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(b)4 I-VI and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

- 6. To approve the attached line item transfers for December 2024.
- 7. To authorize the Business Administrator to make payment of post-Board meeting bills for the month of February 2025 and to execute mid-cycle contracts such as utilities and out-of-district contracts. Specifics of these transactions, if any, will be provided for ratification at the next regular scheduled board meeting.
- 8. To approve the attached list of donations.
- 9. To amend the award to New Road Construction Management Services Company, Inc. that was originally approved at the December 9, 2024 board meeting. Total contract cost revision was \$797,400 and now \$747,800 per RFP/contract award. Attached is the revised contract.
- 10. To approve the attached ESCNJ cooperative pricing contract with Mobilease Modular Space, Inc. of Pedricktown, NJ for a Modular Classroom Building with installation of 8”x8”x16” double dry stack CMU piers on ABS pads for a 24 month operating lease at \$22,050 per month plus additional costs as per contract. Further, costs for plumbing, electrical and data/communications to be determined. This proposal is part of the Referendum Projects.
- 11. To approve student #22666 to receive home instruction for the 2024-2025 school year, commencing January 8, 2025 and ending March 7, 2025. This student will receive five (5) hours of home instruction per week at the rate of \$51.44 per hour.

12. To approve student #24138 to receive home instruction for the 2024-2025 school year, commencing January 14, 2025 and ending June 13, 2025. This student will receive ten (10) hours of home instruction per week at the rate of \$51.44 per hour.
13. To approve student #2168 to receive home instruction for the 2024-2025 school year, commencing January 27, 2025 and ending March 11, 2025. This student will receive five (5) hours of home instruction per week at the rate of \$51.44 per hour.
14. To approve student #24139 to receive home instruction for the 2024-2025 school year, commencing January 31, 2025. This student will receive ten (10) hours of home instruction per week at the rate of \$51.44 per hour.
15. To approve the attached Shared Service Agreement with Southern Regional Board of Education to receive Media Specialist Services at a cost of \$50.79 per week (total cost \$2,031.60) for the 2024-2025 school year, commencing on February 21, 2025.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Cooney to approve Finance/Insurance/Transportation item(s) #1-15. Roll call vote item #1: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed. Roll call vote item #2: seven (7) members present voted yes; motion passed. Mr. Gioe abstained on item #2. Roll call vote items #3-15: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed.

H. BUILDINGS/GROUNDS/CAFETERIA

The Buildings/Grounds/Cafeteria Committee has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the school business administrator/board secretary and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals.

NO ACTION ITEMS

I. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY

The Committee of the Whole has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the superintendent and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals. In addition, we further certify that we have reviewed the attached professional development request list and are satisfied that each professional development event is directly related to the employee's duties, each event is fiscally prudent (consistent with N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12), that teaching staff requests are aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and that administrator requests are aligned to the Professional Standards for School Leaders.

1. To approve the professional development requests shown on the attached

listing.

A motion was made by Mr. Morello and seconded by Mr. Washco to approve Curriculum/Instruction/Technology item(s) #1. Roll call vote: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed.

J. PERSONNEL

The following Personnel items were discussed:

Chairperson of the Personnel Committee – Tammy Wagner

Report: The superintendent recommends the board approve/ratify the appointment of the following named individuals who constitute a careful selection and screening of applicants, in accordance with the board/district hiring policies/procedures, and are hereby recommended for an employment contract contingent upon the successful completion of their accredited degree program, New Jersey Department of Education certification requirements, Federal NCLB Highly qualified Teacher requirements, a criminal history clearance and the successful completion of a medical examination as required by the board of education. These initial assignments/appointments may be changed as district needs develop unless otherwise stipulated. The Personnel/Policy Committee has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the superintendent and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals.

1. To approve the attached list of substitutes for the 2024-2025 school year.
2. To approve the transfers for the attached list of personnel for the 2024-2025 school year.
3. To approve the following retirements:
 - a. Maura Davis, Teacher, effective July 1, 2025
 - b. Maryanne Tallon, Teacher Aide, effective July 1, 2025
4. To approve the following resignations:
 - a. Jennifer Thiemer, Teacher Aide, effective January 6, 2025
 - b. Brittany Rabinowitz, Teacher Aide, effective March 3, 2025
 - c. Megan Scheffler, Teacher, effective March 3, 2025
5. To approve the following leaves:
 - a. Employee ID #6188, unpaid family leave FMLA, beginning April 1, 2025 and returning July 1, 2025
 - b. Employee ID #5825, unpaid family leave FMLA, beginning January 8, 2025 and returning March 5, 2025

- c. Employee ID #6532, unpaid leave of absence, beginning January 2, 2025 and returning January 6, 2025
 - d. Employee ID #5985, unpaid family leave INTERMITTENT FMLA, beginning January 2, 2025 and ending July 1, 2025
 - e. Employee ID #6608, unpaid family leave FMLA REVISED, beginning January 13, 2025 and returning February 18, 2025
 - f. Employee ID #6460, unpaid family leave FMLA, March 12, 2025 and returning June 11, 2025
 - g. Employee ID #6460, unpaid contractual child rearing leave, beginning June 11, 2025 and returning July 1, 2025
 - h. Employee ID #6641, unpaid leave of absence, beginning January 8, 2025 and returning February 13, 2025
 - i. Employee ID #6334, unpaid contractual child rearing leave EXTENDED, beginning January 27, 2025 and returning April 1, 2025
 - j. Employee ID #6174, unpaid contractual child rearing leave, beginning April 1, 2025 and returning July 1, 2025
 - k. Employee ID #6663, unpaid leave of absence, beginning January 2, 2025 and returning March 3, 2025
 - l. Employee ID #5623, unpaid family leave FMLA, beginning February 21, 2025 and returning April 14, 2025
 - m. Employee ID #4174, unpaid leave of absence, beginning January 22, 2025 and returning January 27, 2025
 - n. Employee ID #6485, unpaid leave of absence, beginning January 30, 2025 and returning February 3, 2025
 - o. Employee ID #6870, unpaid leave of absence, beginning January 29, 2025 and returning January 30, 2025
6. To approve to rescind the retirement for James Blomquist, Teacher.
7. To approve the Tracey Tylicki as Set Designer construction for the 2024-2025 school year.
8. To approve Tracey Tylicki as Music Show Director for the 2024-2025 school year.
9. To approve Kelly Newcomb as Yearbook Advisor for the 2024-2025 school year.
10. To approve Megan Galeotafiore to receive BA+15 stipend in the 2025-2026 school year, beginning September 1, 2025.
11. To approve Jesse Kundrat to receive BA stipend in the 2025-2026 school year, beginning September 1, 2025.
12. To approve Sheryll Sheehan to receive BA+15 stipend in the 2025-2026 school year, beginning September 1, 2025.

13. To approve to terminate the employment of Mary Ann Doorly, PT Teacher Aide, effective, October 8, 2024.
14. To approve the following personnel for Extra-Curricular and Enrichment Programs for the 2024-2025 school year:
 - a. Megan Galeotafiore – Substitute for Spring Enrichment
 - b. Ivette Zambardi – Teacher Aide for 1:1 student
15. To approve Denice dela Cruz Chuzeville to receive 30 college credits stipend in the 2025-2026 school year, beginning September 1, 2025.
16. To approve the rehire of Barbara D'Apuzzo as Interim Administrator for the 2024-2025 school year on an as needed basis.
17. To approve the following teachers as Homebound Instruction Teachers for the 2024-2025 school year:
 - a. Katherine Buckley
 - b. Madison Dean
 - c. Leah Scali
 - d. Alicia Segalla
 - e. Kelly Reese
18. To approve the attached revised job descriptions:
 - a. G-3 Teacher Aide
 - b. G-10 Registered Behavior Technician
19. To approve the principal internship for Daniel Kilgallon, Stockton University, for placement with Susan D'Alessandro, Principal, Ocean Acres Elementary School, beginning January 2025 and ending May 2025.
20. To approve Lisa St. Pierre as Part Time Hourly Teacher Aide, PSD Class, Oxycocus Elementary School, beginning January 16, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 3, +BA, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a replacement position.
21. To approve Jillian Siragusa as Part Time Hourly Teacher Aide, ERI Class, Ocean Acres Elementary School, beginning February 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 1, +BA, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a new position due to an IEP.
22. To approve Kaitlyn Sorbara as Part Time Hourly Teacher Aide, Resource, Ronald L. Meinders Primary Learning Center, beginning February 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 1, +BA, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a new position due to an IEP.

23. To approve Kyla Bender as Part Time Hourly Teacher Aide, ERI Class, Ocean Acres Elementary School, beginning February 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 1, +AA, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a new position due to an IEP.
24. To approve Lucy Paster as Part Time Hourly Teacher Aide, PSD Class, Oxycocus Elementary School, beginning February 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 3, +BA, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a new position due to an IEP.
25. To approve Dina Crombie as Cafeteria Playground Aide, Ronald L. Meinders Primary Learning Center, beginning February 16, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 3, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a replacement position.
26. To approve Eva Haines-Mueller as Bus Attendant, beginning February 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 6, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a replacement position.
27. To approve Jacqueline Geordino as Speech Teacher, Intermediate School, beginning April 16, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 4, +MA, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a non-tenure track leave replacement position.
28. To approve Tiffany Hahl as Elementary School Teacher, MD Class, McKinley Avenue Elementary School, beginning February 16, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 4, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a replacement position.

Employee appointments are provisional pending satisfactory completion of the Criminal History Background Check, Pre-employment P.L. 2018,C.5 Disclosure and Physical Exam Requirements required by the State of New Jersey.

A motion was made by Mr. Washco and seconded by Mr. Smith to approve Personnel item(s) #1-28. Roll call vote: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed.

K. POLICY/LEGISLATIVE

The Committee of the Whole has reviewed the following policies and regulations, has consulted with the board attorney and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certify, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1, that the attached policies and regulations are in compliance with all applicable statutes and administrative code provisions and are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals.

1. To approve the **first reading** of following **new** policies and regulations:
 - 2365 Acceptable Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

- R5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices
2. To approve the **first reading** of following **revised** policies and regulations:
- 5512 Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying
 - 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices
 - 5533 Student Smoking
 - 5701 Academic Integrity
 - 5710 Student Grievance
 - 7441 Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings and On School Grounds
 - 8500 Food Services
 - 9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies
 - R5533 Student Smoking
 - R7441 Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings and On School Grounds
 - R9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies

A motion was made by Mr. Morello and seconded by Mr. Cooney to approve Policy/Legislative item(s) #1-2. Roll call vote: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed.

L. ADVANCED PLANNING

None

Mr. Chidiac made the following statement:

“I would really like to say it's with tremendous gratitude and humility that I return to my position as superintendent of schools. The overwhelming support of the staff and parents over the past twelve years has been instrumental in my decision to return. The time away has allowed me to reflect and address my personal matters. As humans, we all make mistakes and the key is to learn and to grow from that adversity. In lieu of my absence, I want to acknowledge Mrs. Bush for doing a very good job. Thank you to Mrs. Bush.”

Mr. Buckley made the following statement:

“Good evening, for those that do not know me, my name is Martin Buckley and I have the privilege of serving as the Board Attorney for this Board of Education. I wanted to jump in before our public comment period to highlight some language that is a part of our agenda at every Board meeting, in an effort to provide the groundwork for the public comment portion of the meeting, as well as provide some additional context on behalf of the Board.

School boards are required to set aside a portion of every meeting for public comments. School boards use the public comment period as an opportunity to listen to community concerns - not to debate issues or enter into a question-and-answer session. School boards are not required to respond to questions but may choose to respond to public

comments by seeking additional information or delegating authority to the superintendent or a designee to investigate an issue brought forth during public comment.

As I have already discussed with some of you offline, there are certain things a Board or its members cannot, or may choose not to, comment publicly on. I think it is important to note that before the employment status of an employee can be discussed, that employee must receive a Rice notice. A Rice notice notifies them that an aspect of their employment is going to be a topic of discussion at an upcoming board meeting.

Rice notices are related to the Open Public Meetings Act, also known as, the Sunshine Law, which requires that most public meetings are open to the public in order to encourage transparency.

This is why I have discouraged the District's Board Members from commenting via email regarding the proverbial elephant in the room in Mr. Chidiac, his employment status, his pending municipal court matter, and the like. Email discussions on these topics are not appropriate, especially without the proper notice to Mr. Chidiac.

However, there is an exception to the Sunshine Law and Open Public Meetings Act. As indicated, these laws substantially stand for the notion that Public Entities such as school boards shall have their meetings in public. One of those exceptions is the discussion of individual personnel matters. The discussion of personnel matters are exempt from the public forum essentially because courts have recognized that the ability to have uninhibited discussion regarding personnel matters outweighs the benefit of a transparent potentially inhibited discussion in public. While the intent of this exception is to respect the privacy of the individual being discussed, it is possible that the employees might be denied the opportunity to participate.

To counter this, the aforementioned Rice notice was established, which required school boards who are planning to discuss personnel matters to first notify the employee in writing at least 48 hours in advance. A Rice Notice must also advise the employee that they have the right to compel the public body to hold the meeting or discussion in public.

As such Mr. Chidiac received a Rice notice in advance of tonight's meeting. He did not opt to have that discussion in public. As such, the Board had those discussions regarding his employment in executive session.

Therefore, when you come to the mic and you have comments regarding his employment know that there may not be much return dialogue from the Board or administration.

While public education can be an emotional issue, the school board strives to maintain a certain level of decorum at its meeting. As such, all persons speaking during the public comment period should maintain a tone of respect and civility. Courteous behavior is extremely important by all members and attendees.

To allow all speakers to address their comments to the board, it may be necessary for the board and/or administration to hold any responses until after the conclusion of the public comment period; rather than respond to individual speakers. The board cannot recognize proxies, nor will the board tolerate persons that call out, shout down or disrupt others in attendance during public comment.

The Stafford Township Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest, especially when it is intended to assist the Board of Education.

Please feel free to speak to the Board during the public session. Pursuant to Board Policy 0167, comments and discussion will be limited to one three (3) minute period per individual unless requested by the chairperson to continue on a point of clarification.

In accordance with the Board of Education Policy, each participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address and group affiliation, if applicable.

Your anticipated courtesy to the members of the public and the Board is appreciated. Thank you.”

M. PUBLIC COMMENT

School boards are required to set aside a portion of every meeting for public comments. School boards use the public comment period as an opportunity to listen to community concerns - not to debate issues or enter into a question-and-answer session. School boards are not required to respond to questions but may choose to respond to public comments by seeking additional information or delegating authority to the superintendent or a designee to investigate an issue brought forth during public comment.

While public education can be an emotional issue, the school board strives to maintain a certain level of decorum at its meeting. As such, all persons speaking during the public comment period should maintain a tone of respect and civility. Courteous behavior is extremely important by all members and attendees.

To allow all speakers to address their comments to the board, it may be necessary for the board and/or administration to hold any responses until after the conclusion of the public comment period; rather than respond to individual speakers. The board cannot recognize proxies, nor will the board tolerate persons that call out, shout down or disrupt others in attendance during public comment; any person who cannot abide by this will be asked to leave.

The Stafford Township Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest, especially when it is intended to assist the Board of Education.

Please feel free to speak to the Board during the public session. Pursuant to Board Policy 0167, comments and discussion will be limited to one three (3) minute period per individual unless requested by the chairperson to continue on a point of clarification.

BUSINESS MEETING

February 20, 2025

Public comment at special meetings of the Board shall be related to the call of the meeting. In accordance with the Board of Education Policy, each participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address and group affiliation, if applicable.

Your anticipated courtesy to the members of the public and the Board is appreciated.

For additional information, please review the "Guide to Board of Education Meetings in New Jersey" available on the New Jersey Boards Association website at www.njsba.org.

- Parent/Board Member - For the past two months, the board has chosen to allow our highly competent counsel to speak on our behalf and allow Marty to lay out the legal realities governing these sorts of situations. It is this board's opinion that Mr. Chidiac is an excellent administrator of this district and a vital part of the school community here in Stafford. I believe that George Chidiac should remain because our kids are better off with him at the helm.
 - A community member questioned the Superintendent's Shared Services Agreement with Eagleswood inquiring on contract terms, savings, and extension of services provided.
 - A parent questioned the integrity of the superintendent and said he should be held to a higher standard and questioned the \$35K.

N. BOARD INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

O. CLOSED SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Morello and seconded by Mr. Cooney to adjourn the meeting at 7:38pm. Voice vote: All members present voted yes (8-0); motion passed.

Lourdes LaGuardia
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

LL/km/2-28-2025