

Oakland Public Schools
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 11, 2025
7:00 PM

A Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Education was held on February 11, 2025. The meeting was called To order at 7:03 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 January 12, 2025 and February 4, 2025 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 board members were present: Ms. Cooper, Ms. Kilday, Mr. Mazzilli, Ms. Shelkin and Mr. Scerbo.

Also present:

Dr. Gina M. Coffaro, Superintendent of Schools, and 50 members of the public.

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Coffaro recognized the Valley Middle School American Legion Essay winners.

The American Legion Representatives presented the winners with their awards.

I. MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Shelkin to approve the following Minute item A through D:

- A. Approve the Reorganization Meeting minutes from January 7, 2025.
- B. Approve the Regular Monthly Meeting minutes from January 7, 2025.
- C. Approve the Work Session minutes from January 7, 2025.
- D. Approve the Executive Session minutes from January 7, 2025.

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

II. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

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

- A. Approve the safety drill report for the month of January 2025.

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

III. PERSONNEL

Ms. Cooper

Board Liaison

A motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Kilday to approve Personnel items A through S as follows. Item Q was tabled.

- A. Rescind the approval of Julie Louis, student at William Paterson University, as speech-language pathology extern at Manito Elementary School for the 2024-2025 school year.
- B. Extend the end date of Gertrude Naples, Leave Replacement Special Education Teacher at Manito Elementary School for Gabrielle Iannucci, to the end of the 2024-2025 school year.
- C. Amend the annual salary of Tasha Bushnauskas, Night Custodian at Valley Middle School, to include an \$800 boiler license stipend to be prorated for the 2024-2025 school year, effective January 16, 2025.
- D. Approve the request of Nicole Duno, Teacher at Heights Elementary School, for Board Leave (unpaid, no benefits) starting on February 13, 2025 through May 16, 2025. Ms. Duno plans to return to District on or about May 19, 2025.
- E. Approve the request of Gabrielle Iannucci, Special Education Teacher at Manito Elementary School, for Board Leave (unpaid, no benefits) starting on April 2, 2025 through April 1, 2026. Ms. Iannucci plans to return to District on or about April 2, 2026.

PERSONNEL (continued)

- F. Approve the request of Jennifer Karasek, Teacher at Heights Elementary School, for FMLA starting on January 27, 2025, using 30 sick days through March 14, 2025, paid with benefits. Ms. Karasek plans to return to District on or about March 17, 2025.
- G. Approve the request of Mark Sheridan, District Vehicle Driver, for FMLA starting on February 3, 2025, using 43.5 sick days through April 10, 2025, paid with benefits. Beginning on April 10, 2025, continuing FMLA, unpaid with benefits, until April 25, 2025. Mr. Sheridan plans to return to District on or about April 28, 2025.
- H. Approve the request of Rina Costello, Full-time Paraprofessional at Heights Elementary School, for FMLA/NJFLA starting on or about February 10, 2025, using 5 sick days through February 14, 2025, paid with benefits. Ms. Costello plans to return to District on or about February 17, 2025.

- I. Approve the request of Cynthia Parr, Teacher at Manito Elementary School, for FMLA starting on or about February 24, 2025, using 17 sick days through March 18, 2025, paid with benefits. Ms. Parr plans to return to District on or about March 19, 2025.
- J. Approve the request of Alyssa Buske, Teacher at Heights Elementary School, for FMLA starting on or about May 5, 2025, using 35 sick days through the end of the 2024-2025 school year, paid with benefits. Beginning on September 1, 2025, continuing FMLA, unpaid with benefits, until FMLA is exhausted. NJFLA, unpaid with benefits, beginning September 1, 2025 through November 21, 2025. Ms. Buske plans to return to District on or about November 24, 2025.
- K. Approve the request of Vanessa Pucciarelli, District Art Teacher, for FMLA starting on or about June 11, 2025, using 10 sick days through the end of the 2024-2025 school year, paid with benefits. Beginning on September 1, 2025, continuing FMLA, unpaid with benefits, until FMLA is exhausted. NJFLA, unpaid with benefits, beginning September 1, 2025 through November 21, 2025. Ms. Pucciarelli plans to return to District on or about November 24, 2025.
- L. Approve the request of Sarah Freeman, Speech/Language Specialist at Heights Elementary School, for FMLA/NJFLA starting on or about September 1, 2025 through November 21, 2025, unpaid with benefits. Ms. Freeman plans to return to District on or about November 24, 2025.
- M. Approve the following appointments of certified staff for the 2024-2025 school year, upon satisfactory completion of all employment obligations:

Name	Position	Location	Replacing	Step	Degree	Salary	Effective
Kaitlyn Pipolo	Leave Replacement Special Education Teacher TCHR.VM.LLD.MG.01	Valley	Allison Perkins	1	MA	\$67,934 *To be prorated	On or about 2/7/2025 through the end of the 2024-2025 school year
Crystal Santiago	Special Education Teacher TCHR.MT.ERI.MG.01	Manito	New Tenure Track Position	7	BA	\$73,091 *To be prorated	On or about 2/24/2025

PERSONNEL (continued)

- N. Approve the following appointments of non-certified staff for the 2024-2025 school year, upon satisfactory completion of all employment obligations:

Name	Position	Location	Replacing	Hourly Rate	Effective
Claudina Kass	Part-time Paraprofessional AIDE.MT.RES.MG.07	Manito	Grace Luinenburg	\$19.10	On or about 2/24/2025
Linda Rutz	Full-time ABA Therapist Paraprofessional AIDE.MT.ERI.MG.01	Manito	New Position	\$23.00	On or about 2/24/2025

- O. Approve the appointment of the following staff members to the stipend positions listed below for the 2024-2025 school year, effective February 16, 2025, at annual pensionable stipends as per the negotiated agreement, to be prorated:

Name	Stipend Position
Ryan Gilligan	Technology Education and Information Services
Travis Hunt	Testing, Assessment and Analysis

- P. Approve the appointment of Stacy Contreras and Jamie Opalka as mentors for novice School Library Media Specialist Kelly Bosgra for the 2024-2025 school year, effective January 13, 2025.

- Q. Approve the appointment of the following Valley Middle School teachers as chaperones for students participating in the overnight Grade 8 trip to Gettysburg and Hershey Park on Thursday, June 12, 2025 to Friday, June 13, 2025. Salary payment will be consistent with the stipend for overnight trip supervision contained within the Employment Agreement between the Oakland Board of Education and the Oakland Education Association and upon submission of an approved voucher:

Lauren Binder	Saul Gondelman	Leonard Parra
Jason Clark	Jake Gursaly	Lauren Russo
Steven Cohen	Kevin Jacobsen	Stanley Saja (Paraprofessional)
Kim Festa	Alea Mayer-Costa	Mary Gael Strohmeier
Phylissa Gallotta	Matthew Myones	Graziella Valenti

- Jennifer Zimmerle (Administrator)
- TBD (Nurse)

- Mark Sinclair (Overnight Trip Coordinator)

Alternate Staff: Natalie DeLuca, Matthew Fichter, Christopher Lawrence,
John Messina, Joel Noonan

PERSONNEL (continued)

- R. Approve the appointment of the following as daily substitute personnel for the 2024-2025 school year, upon satisfactory completion of all employment obligations:

Name	Substitute Assignment
Robyn Caporuscio	Teacher/Paraprofessional
Martha Coffman	Teacher
Ashley Eskholme	ABA Therapist Paraprofessional
Tara Farley	ABA Therapist Paraprofessional, Paraprofessional, Bus Aide
Peppi Gardner	ABA Therapist Paraprofessional
Claudina Kass	Bus Aide
David Le Parc	Teacher/Paraprofessional
Linda Rutz	Bus Aide
Stanley Saja	Teacher
Isabella Taglieri	Teacher/Paraprofessional

- S. Acknowledge the following employees' days without pay for the 2024-2025 school year as listed below:

Name	School	Dates
Dolores Baills	T.O.P.S. ECL	1/13/2025-1/24/2025

Maria Glasson	Heights	1/17/2025, 1/31/2025
Nicole Marino	Valley	2/3/2025 (0.5)
Lucia Mucci	Heights	2/3/2025
Lauren Harkins	Heights	2/7/2025 (0.5)
Majella Wagnes	Dogwood	5/9/2025, 5/12/2025

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. Kilday to approve Regular Education items A and F as follows:

- A. Approve the HIB Report for the period January 7, 2025 through February 11, 2025 as follows:

Number of HIB Investigations	4
Number of Affirmed HIB Incidents	0

- B. Approve the submission of the Student Safety Data System (SSDS) Report to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for period 1, September 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.
- C. Approve the revised 2024-2025 Calendar as per the attached.
- D. Approve the Grade 8 Overnight Trip as per the attached itinerary, departing from Valley Middle School on June 12, 2025 and returning on June 13, 2025.

REGULAR EDUCATION (cont.)

- E. Approve the attached Music Elective, "Creativity in Music Technology", to be offered at Valley Middle School in the 2025-2026 school year.
- F. Approve the revised VMS Basketball Schedules and locations for the 2024-2025 school year as per the attached.

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

V. SPECIAL EDUCATION

A motion was made by Ms. Kilday and seconded by Mr. Mazzilli to approve Special Education items A through G as follows:

- A. Amend the out-of-district 2024-2025 school year placement which was board approved June 25, 2024 for one student, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office, to attend the ARCH Program at Lincoln Middle School, Hawthorne, New Jersey. Last day the student attended school in Hawthorne was January 17, 2025.
- B. Amend the out-of-district 2024-2025 school year placement which was board approved January 7, 2025 for one student, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office, to attend the Elmwood Park Public Schools, Elmwood Park, New Jersey. The student attended school in Elmwood Park from January 2, 2025 to January 17, 2025.
- C. Approve the Contract with Bergen County Special Services to provide home instruction services for one student, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office, from December 9, 2024 to June 27, 2025, for a maximum of three hours per week, with additional prep time as required, amount not to exceed \$8,000.00.
- D. Approve Innovations in Online Education, Inc. for virtual home instruction as needed for the 2024-2025 school year at the rate of \$75.00 per hour.
- E. Approve the following out-of-district placements for the 2024-2025 school year for students whose names are on file in the Superintendent's office:

School	Start Date	Amount
Teen P.L.A.C.E. Program, Lakeside Middle School, Pompton Lakes, NJ	January 21, 2025	\$70,223.00 Prorated

Sage Alliance: Sage Day Lower and Middle School, Mahwah, NJ	January 27, 2025	\$74,878.20 Prorated
REALM program, Peter Cooper Elementary School, Ringwood, NJ	February 24, 2025	\$47,001.97 Prorated

- F. Approve the revised 2024-2025 1:1 Aide contract with Shepard School, Kinnelon, New Jersey, for one out-of-district student, whose name is on file in the Superintendent's office, from January 16, 2025 to June 20, 2025.

SPECIAL EDUCATION (cont.)

- G. Approve the establishment of a full day Emotional Regulation Impairment Program Grades K-3 located at Manito Elementary School.

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. Kilday to approve Finance items A through M as follows:

- A. Approve the January 2025 certified gross (net & agency) payroll in the amount of \$2,027,723.82.
- B. Approve the payment of the attached list of bills in the amount of \$4,790,927.69 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 November 30, 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 2024-2025 Budget appropriation transfers for the month ending January 31, 2025.
- E. Approve the Board Secretary's Financial Report for the month ending January 31, 2025.
- F. Approve the Treasurer of School Monies Report for the month ending January 31, 2025.
- G. Approve staff participation in professional conferences/workshops outside the District, as per the attached.
- H. Approve Velez Educational Services to complete staff and student related State and Federal reports beginning February 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025 a fee not to exceed \$34,000.
- I. Approve Focus Staffing Group to provide staffing services for the 2024-2025 school year as per the attached fee schedule, amount not to exceed \$43,000.
- J. Accept, with appreciation, the donation of fish and fish food from Pet Supplies Plus in Oakland for the Valley Middle School Environmental Club.

FINANCE (continued)

- K. Approve additional funding under the provisions of Chapters 192/193, Nonpublic Auxiliary and Handicapped Services, in the amount \$2,938.00 for the 2024-2025 school year to be allocated as follows:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Additional</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
	<u>Allocation</u>	<u>Funding</u>	
Chapter 192 Compensatory Education	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Chapter 192 E.S.L	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Chapter 192 Total	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Chapter 193 Initial Exam and Classification	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,326.00	\$ 1,326.00
Chapter 193 Annual Exam and Classification	\$ 760.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 760.00
Chapter 193 Corrective Speech	\$5,301.00	\$ 1,116.00	\$ 6,417.00
Chapter 193 Supplementary Instruction	\$1,652.00	\$ 496.00	\$ 2,148.00
Chapter 193 Total	\$7,713.00	\$2,938.00	\$10,651.00

L. Approve the request to the Bergen County Special Education Specialist for a waiver of the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) requirements for the 2025-2026 school year, due to the fact that the eligible student count will be less than 40.

M. **WHEREAS**, a number of Boards of Education in Bergen County have joined together to form a Joint Insurance Group as permitted by N.J. Title 18A-.18B and;

WHEREAS, said Group was approved effective July 1, 1985 by the New Jersey Commissioner of Insurance and has been in operation since that date and;

WHEREAS, the Bylaws and regulations governing the creation and operation of this Insurance Group contain elaborate restrictions and safeguards concerning the safe and efficient administration of the public interest entrusted to such a Group, and;

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Oakland has determined that membership in the Northeast Bergen County School Board Insurance Group is in the best interest of the District;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Board of Education of Oakland does hereby agree to renew

membership in the Northeast Bergen County School Board Insurance Group and hereby accept the Bylaws as approved and adopted. The renewal term is from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary/Business Administrator is

authorized to execute the application for membership and the accompanying certification

on behalf of the District and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary/Business Administrator is authorized and directed to execute the Indemnity and Trust Agreement and such other documents signifying membership in the Group as are required by the Group's Bylaws and to deliver the same to the Executive Director.

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

XII. ADMINISTRATION

A motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Kilday to approve Administration items A through B

As follows:

A. Approve the revised list of Board of Education meeting dates as per the attached.

B. Approve the District Data Specialist and Analysis Coordinator job description.

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 item A through C as follows:

- A. Approve the list of field trips for students in the Oakland School District for the 2024-2025 school year as per the attached.
- B. Approve the Oakland School District's membership in the Northwest Bergen Council for Special Education (NWBCSE) Region I/Mahwah Board of Education, for the 2025-2026 school year.
- C. BE IT RESOLVED that the Oakland Public Schools Board of Education does hereby approve an agreement with the Region I/Mahwah Board of Education, a Coordinated Transportation Services Agency, for the purpose of transporting students in accordance with Chapter 53, P.L. 1997 for the 2025-2026 school year. The services to be provided include, but are not limited to, the coordinated transportation of public, nonpublic and special education students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Oakland Public Schools Board of Education agrees to abide by the Transportation Services Agreement as published by the Region I/Mahwah Board of Education and attached to this resolution.

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

IX. POLICY

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

- A. Approve the *first* reading of new/revised Board policies/regulations as listed below:

8500 Food Services

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

X. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

A student from Mr. Peller's Dogwood Hill Elementary School fourth grade class presented to the Board as part of a Public Speaking assignment.

A parent inquired about changes at the U.S. Department of Education.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Shelkin that the meeting be adjourned at 7:35 PM.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Gina M. Coffaro
Superintendent of Schools

All approved policies can be found on the
Oakland Board of Education Website under
Board of Education/Board Policies:

<https://www.oaklandschoolsnj.org/>