

**REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 29, 2025
AGENDA**

*A regular meeting of the Chester Board of Education will be held on
April 29, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Chester Borough Courtroom.
50 North Road, Chester, NJ*

1. Call to Order Time_____

2. Sunshine Announcement

Be advised that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 P.L. 1975 (Sunshine Law) and that adequate notice of the date, time and location has been sent to the Daily Record and has been posted and filed with the Chester Township and Chester Borough Clerks. The annual meeting calendar has also been sent to each District school and the Chester Post Office. Additionally, the agenda has been posted on the District website prior to the Board meeting.

3. Roll Call

Erick Arostegui		Suzanne Dundon	
John Barounis		Melissa Mauro-Duffy	
Amy Buck Faundez		Sarah Schultz	
Carolyn Byszewski		Adam Sorchini	
Adam Colicchio		Quorum	

4. Pledge of Allegiance

4.1 Executive Session

RESOLVED, that pursuant to NJS.A. 10:4-12 and 10:4-13 the Chester Board of Education holds a closed session on April 29, 2025 at ____ p.m. to discuss personnel. It is expected that the minutes will be made public as soon as official action is taken.

Motion by_____

Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS

4.2 Return to Public Session Time_____

Motion by_____

Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS

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5. Presentations:

Public Hearing on the Budget-Peter Frascella

6. Administration-Interim Superintendent Dr. Thomas Ficarra
and Peter Frascella Business Administrator/Board Secretary

6a. Superintendent's Report

6b. Business Administrator's Report

7. President's Comments

8. Public Commentary

Please be aware that this portion is your opportunity to comment, and is not a forum for the Board to respond to your comments. However, the Board will certainly give all comments appropriate consideration.

When permitted, public participation shall be governed by the following rules under Policy 9325.2:

- 1. Anyone wishing to speak before the Board shall indicate so during the Public Commentary portion of the agenda. The presenter shall give his/her name and address and make the presentation as brief as possible. Unless an extension of time is granted, each speaker should be limited to 3 minutes.*
- 2. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of school operations and programs as concern them. But in public session, the Board will not hear concerns about the specific school personnel or any person connected with the school system. Other channels provide the Board consideration and disposition of such matters involving individuals.*
- 3. The Board vests in its President or other presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when they do not adhere to the rules established above.*

9. Approval of Minutes

9a. Approves Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2025 and March 18, 2025

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Regular meeting minutes of the meeting held on March 4, 2025 and March 18, 2025

9b. Approves Executive Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2025 and March 18, 2025

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Executive meeting minutes of the meeting held on March 4, 2025 and March 18, 2025.

Motion by_____ Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS

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10. Committee of The Whole—All.

None

11. Buildings, Grounds, Transportation/Finance— Adam Colicchio (Chair), Adam Sorchini, Carolyn Byszewski and John Barounis

11a. Approves Bills List

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, the Chester Board of Education approves payment of the bills list as approved by the Finance Committee.

Bills List		Totals
Payroll	03/28/2025	\$698,738.48
Payroll	04/15/2025	\$716,889.84
Bills List	03/27/2025	\$1,005.28
Bills List	04/15/2025	\$407,756.70
Bills List	04/29/2025	\$539,631.37

11b. Approves Monthly Appropriation Transfers for February 2025

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the following transfers within the 2023-2024 budget for the month of February 2025 in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A: 23A-16.10 (c) 1.; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

11c. Approves Monthly Transfer Report for February 2025

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.3, the Chester Board of Education approves the Monthly Report of Transfers for February 2025; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

11d. Approves Board Secretary Report for February 2025

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9 and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(h), the Chester Board of Education approves the Report of the Board Secretary for February 2025; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

11e. Approves Board Treasurer Report for February 2025

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-36, the Chester Board of Education approves the Report of the Treasurer of School Monies for February 2025; a copy of which is available for public review in the Chester Board of Education Business Office.

11f. Approves Certification of Secretary and Treasurer Report for February 2025

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-16.10 (c) 3, the Board Secretary does certify that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the line item appropriation; and

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c) 4, the Chester Board of Education has reviewed

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for the minutes of this meeting the Board Secretary and Treasurer's monthly financial report for February 2025 and that no major account or fund has been over-expended.

11g. Approves Travel Requests

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 and N.J.A.C.6A:23A and Board Policy 9250 and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following travel requests.

Date	<u>Employee</u> Conference/Workshop	Registration-	Travel Misc.	Estimated Total Expense
05/01/2025	Danielle Guli 7 th Annual Regional Women's Educational Workshop. Kean University, NJ	\$55.00	\$28.00	\$83.00
05/01/2025	Colleen Cahill 7 th Annual Regional Women's Educational Workshop. Kean University, NJ	\$55.00	\$0.00	\$55.00
Self - Paced	Brandon Kornbluh Ethics 8 Cultural Com- petency Training Bun- dle Virtual	\$299.99	\$0.00	\$299.99
05/14 – 05/16 2025	Brad Currie NJASA Spring Con- ference Atlantic City, NJ	\$0.00	\$665.15	\$665.15
05/01/2025	Jennifer Christal 7 th Annual Regional Women's Educational Workshop. Kean University, NJ	\$55.00	\$25.85	\$80.85
05/19/2025	Marisa Cumello (Ryan) Using AI to Save Time and Energy	\$225.00	\$49.35	\$294.35
05/01/2025	Kelly Tompkins Using AI Tools to In- crease the Success of Gifted Learners Virtual	\$275.00	\$0.00	\$275.00
05/01/2025	Erica David	\$275.00	\$0.00	\$275.00

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	Using AI Tools to Increase the Success of Gifted Learners Virtual			
05/01/2025	Dana Mazza Using AI Tools to Increase the Success of Gifted Learners Virtual	\$275.00	\$0.00	\$275.00

11h. Approves Renewal of Joint Transportation Agreement (ESC of Morris County)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, the Chester Board of Education approves renewal of Joint Transportation Agreement with Educational Service Commission of Morris County effective July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

11i. Approves Joint Transportation Agreement for the 2025-2026 School Year

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 1SA:39-11 provides that the Boards of Education of two or more school districts may provide jointly for the transportation of pupils to and from any school or schools within or without the district, and
RESOLVED, in order to accomplish the above purposes, **Roxbury School District** and Chester School District are desirous of entering into this non-profit agreement for the transportation of pupils jointly in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey, the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education governing the transportation of pupils

11j. Approves Spring Bus Evacuation Drills

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.2, the Chester Board of Education documents that the following bus evacuation drills were held:

At Black River Middle School, on April 15, 2025 at 2:25 p.m. in the front parking lot of school, bus evacuation drills were held for bus routes 1-11 and vans 7 and 8 by Principal Andrew White.

11k. Approves Out of District Tuition Student (student #21344)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education accept out of district student #21344 to attend the Chester School District for the 2025-2026 school year at an annual tuition fee of \$28,669.

11l. Approves Parent Chaperones (BRMS Bronx Zoo Field Trip)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approve the following parent chaperones to attend the BRMS Bronx Zoo field trip:

Melissa Ash	Kelly Feldman
Kathy Knorr	Kerri Giacomazza
Amy Suchanek	Lindsey Cossman
Natalie McTighe	Karen Kuhn
Emily Meseck	Allison Pajunas

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Suzanne Dundon
Carly Melton

Adi Kurz

11m. Approves Kit Consulting

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Kit Consulting to provide BCBA services for 20 hours a week at \$125.00 an hour for the 2025-2026 school year.

11n. Approves Home Instruction by LearnWell

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves LearnWell to provide home instruction for student # 20593 for 10 hours a week at a cost of \$58.75 per hour effective 4/20/2025.

11o. Approves Morris County Education Services

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves physical therapy services for the Camp Achieve summer program from June 30, 2025 through July 31, 2025 at the contracted rate of 9 hours weekly.

11p. Approves Adoption of Tentative 2025-2026 School Budget

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2025-2026 School Year using the state aid figures and the Secretary to the Board of Education be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent for approval in accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:7F-5 and 18.A:7F-6:

	GENERAL FUND	CAPITAL RESERVE	MAINT RESERVE	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL
2025-26 Total Expenditures	\$25,699,079	\$105,000	\$300,000	\$388,943	\$1,156,480	\$27,649,502
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$3,075,311	\$105,000	\$300,000	\$388,943	\$105,000	3,974,254
Taxes to be Raised	\$22,623,768				\$1,051,480	\$23,675,248

AND, to advertise said tentative budget in the Daily Record in accordance with the form suggested by the New Jersey Department of Education and according to law;

11q. CAPITAL RESERVE Capital Reserve Account Withdrawal: \$105,000

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the budget a capital reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$105,000 for:

☐ Transfer to Debt Service - \$105,000

11r. MAINTENANCE RESERVE Maintenance Reserve Account Withdrawal: \$300,000

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the budget a maintenance reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$300,000 for the purpose of providing facilities maintenance projects in accordance with the M-1 and CMP for 25-26 school year.

11s. Approves Maximum Travel

WHEREAS, Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, a board of education must establish a maximum dollar limit for travel expenditure, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq.,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education includes in the tentative budget a maximum travel expenditure in the amount of \$95,000 for the 2025-26 school year.

11t. Approves Travel Expense Threshold

WHEREAS, the Chester Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, a Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7. as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget travel and related expense reimbursement in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7, to a maximum expenditure of \$95,000, for all staff and board members for the 2025-26 school year. The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

11u. Establishes the 2025-2026 Maximum Level for Professional Services

WHEREAS, the tentative budget includes the following appropriations:

Legal Services	\$60,000
Auditing Services	\$30,000
Architectural Services	\$36,000
Medical	\$15,000

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WHEREAS, the administration needs to notice the board if there arises a need to exceed said maximums; upon which the board may adopt a dollar increase in the maximum amount through formal board action; and

WHEREAS, the Board and Administration wishes to minimize the amount of paperwork involved in this area;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education establishes maximums for professional services in the area listed abo for the 2025-2026 school year.

Motion by_____

Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS

- 12. Curriculum/Governance/Personnel**— Melissa Mauro Duffy (Chair), Erick Arostegui, Suzanne Dundon and Amy Buck Faundez

12a. Approves Non-Tenured Teachers/Nurses 2025-2026 School Year

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following non-tenured teachers for the 2025-2026:

Bragg	Julie Budzinski-Flores	03/22/2027	BA+15 Step 11-12	\$68,315.00
Bragg	Theresa Collins	12/18/2027	MA Step 20	\$89,555.00
Bragg	Kylie Fazio	08/27/2028	BA Step 2-3	\$59,455.00
Bragg	Cathleen Matthews	08/31/2026	BA Step 11-12	\$43,429.75
Bragg	Cheryl O'Melia	03/02/2028	MA+30 Step 19	\$90,640.00
Bragg	Alison Pigott	08/31/2027	MA+30 Step 4-5	\$69,980.00
Bragg	Marisa Ryan	08/31/2027	MA Step 9	\$68,060.00
BRMS	Nicole Callahan	08/31/2027	MA+30 Step 2-3	\$69,580.00
BRMS	Julia Dorward	08/31/2027	MA Step 9	\$68,060.00
BRMS	Timothy Morris	09/17/2028	MA Step 18	\$83,575.00
BRMS	Nicole Rittenhouse	10/07/2027	BA+30 Step 16-17	\$79,985.00
BRMS	Ashley Wilhite	08/31/2027	MA Step 11-12	\$72,815.00
Dickerson	Jordyn Gangemi	08/23/2026	BA Step 4-5	\$59,855.00
Dickerson	Margaret George	08/31/2027	BA Step 9	\$24,824.00
Dickerson	Katarzyna Getto (RN)	08/27/2028	BA+15 Step 22	\$91,435.00
Dickerson	Pierre Lawrence	11/02/2027	BA+30 Step 11-12	\$72,065.00
Dickerson	Gabrielle Pecoraro	08/23/2026	MA Step 4-5	\$65,855.00
Dickerson	Samantha Pepe	08/31/2027	BA Step 7	\$60,860.00
Dickerson	Alyssa Stachura	10/22/2026	BA Step 4-5	\$59,855.00

12b. Approves Teachers Who Receive Tenure in the 2025-2026 School Year

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following teachers who will receive tenure in the 2025-2026 school year:

Name	Position	Step	Salary	Tenure Date
Evelyn Casperson	Bragg Teacher	Step 9, MA+15	\$68,810.00	08/24/25
Brandon Kornbluh	Bragg Social Worker	Step 19, MA	\$86,515.00	04/05/26
Danette Lewis	Bragg Teacher	Step 14-15, MA+15	\$78,745.00	08/24/25
Elizabeth Wilson	Dickerson Teacher	Step 18, MA+30	\$87,700.00	08/24/25
Elizabeth McGookin	BRMS Teacher	Step 6, MA+15	\$67,110.00	08/24/25
Courtney Nealon	Dickerson Teacher	Step 4-5, BA	\$59,855.00	08/24/25
Denielle Saucedo	Dickerson Teacher	Step 14-15, MA+15	\$78,745.00	08/24/25
Micol Viscuso	BRMS Teacher	Step 8, BA	\$61,460.00	03/01/26
Annabelle Edelmann	Dickerson Teacher	Step 6, BA+15	\$61,860.00	08/24/25
Valerie Lemp	Dickerson Teacher	Step 6, BA	\$60,360.00	08/24/25
Andrea DiFabrizio	Bragg Teacher	Step 9, MA	\$68,060.00	10/22/25

12c. Approves Non-Tenured Administrators

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following non-tenured administrators for the 2025-2026 school year.

Name	Position	Salary	Tenure Date
Rebecca Tsihlas	BRMS Vice Principal	*\$110,210	07/11/2027
Michele Tarnofsky	Dickerson Principal	*\$140,000	07/16/2028

**2024-2025 salaries pending ratified contract*

12d. Approves Non-Tenured Secretary for the 2025-2026 School Year

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following non-tenured secretary for the 2025-2026 school year.

Non-Certified Personnel-Secretary				
Name	Step	Salary	Longevity	Total
Darnell Angulo-Bragg Secretary	8	\$59,910.00	0	\$59,910.00

12e. Approves Paraprofessional (Wadleigh)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Anne Wadleigh as paraprofessional for the 2024-2025 school year at a salary of \$27,720 prorated with benefits effective March 24, 2025.

12f. Accepts Retirement (Ironson)

RESOLVED, that upon the Chester Board of Education accepts the retirement of 8th grade Language Arts teacher, Meryl Ironson, effective June 30, 2025 with much gratitude for 22 years of service to the Chester School District.

12g. Accepts Retirement (Yankowicz)

RESOLVED, that upon the Chester Board of Education accepts the retirement of 8th grade Math teacher, James Yankowicz, effective June 30, 2025 with much gratitude for 35 years of service to the Chester School District.

12h. Accepts Resignation (Velez)

RESOLVED, that upon the Chester Board of Education accepts the resignation of Bragg School 5th grade teacher, Desiree Velez effective June 13, 2025.

12i. Accepts Resignation (Ievolella)

RESOLVED, that upon the Chester Board of Education accepts the resignation of Bragg School 4th grade teacher, Cailey Ievolella effective June 13, 2025.

12j. Accepts Resignation (Desouza)

RESOLVED, that upon the Chester Board of Education accepts the resignation of Dickerson Preschool teacher, Mariz Desouza effective June 13, 2025.

12k. Approves Summer 2024 Intern (Kometani)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Stevens Institute of Technology student Tyler Kometani as 2025 Board Office/Technology Intern effective June 2, 2025 through August 29, 2025 at a rate of \$16.00 per hour up to 40 hours per week.

12l. Approves Assistant Superintendent 2024-25 Contract (Currie)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the 2024-2025 contract for Assistant Superintendent, Brad Currie to be paid an annual salary of \$175,000 prorated effective April 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025.

12m. Approves Bragg School Principal (Mercurio)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Peter Mercurio as Bragg School Principal effective July 1, 2025 at an annual salary of \$165,000 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.

12n. Approves Director of Student Services (Celebre)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Richard Celebre as Director of Student Services effective July 14, 2025 at an annual salary of \$125,000 prorated.

12o. Approves Camp Achieve/Camp Success Bus Drivers

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of

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Education approves the revised hourly rates for the following bus drivers for Camp Achieve and Camp Success programs for the 2025-2026 ESY from June 30, 2025 through July 31, 2025 (20 days) at their contracted hourly rate:

Driver	Hourly Rate
Holly Law	\$33.59
Pamela Roberts	\$33.08

12p. Approves 2024-25 Summer Scholars Program Substitute Teacher (Andolina)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Karen Andolina as a Substitute teacher for Summer Scholars Program for the 2024-2025 school year from July 7, 2025 through August 7, 2025, to be paid the professional rate of \$62.00 per hour as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association.

12q. Rescind resolution 12c. from March 18, 2025 Agenda (Lewin)

RESOLVED, that upon the, the Chester Board of Education rescinds resolution approving Alex Lewin as aide for the Camp Achieve 2025 summer program.

12r. Approves Teacher for Translations (Capan)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Gretchen Capan to translate documents from English to Spanish for up to 10 hours per month for the 2025-2026 school year at the professional hourly rate of \$62.00.

12s. Approves Nurse for Student #20754 (Ahmadi)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves Sally Ahmadi to provide nursing services to student #20754 for up to 3 hours daily at the rate of \$77.00 an hour for the Camp Achieve program.

12t. Approves Chaperone/ Supervisor (Callahan)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Nicole Callahan to chaperone/supervise student #19952 during extracurricular activities for the 2024-2025 school year with stipends as determined by Schedule “B” of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association.

12u. Approves 2025 Camp Achieve/Camp Success Teacher (ABA)

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Tara O’Neill as a special education teacher for the 2025 Camp Achieve/Camp Success program from June 30, 2025 through July 31, 2025 (plus one prep day) for up to 4.5 hours daily to be paid \$62.00 hourly for a total of \$5859 pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L.2018, c5.

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- 13. Policy-**Adam Sorchini (Chair), Adam Colicchio, John Barounis and Melissa Mauro Duffy
None

14. Executive Session

RESOLVED, that pursuant to NJS.A. 10:4-12 and 10:4-13 the Chester Board of Education holds a closed session on April 29, 2025 at ____ p.m. to discuss HIB, personnel, negotiations and items falling under attorney client privilege. It is expected that the minutes will be made public as soon as official action is taken.

Motion by_____

Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS

15. Return to Public Session Time_____

Motion by_____

Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS

16. Committee of The Whole—All.

16a. Approves Superintendent's Recommendation for HIB Case # 11

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation for HIB Case # 11

Motion by_____

Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS

17. Unfinished Business

18. New Business

19. Adjournment Time_____

Motion by_____

Seconded by_____

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	CB	AC	MD	SD	MMD	SS	AS