

COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS
COLTS NECK, NEW JERSEY 07722

Mission Statement

The mission of Colts Neck Township Schools is to empower and inspire students to be confident, creative, self-sufficient learners who maximize their strengths and talents and contribute as responsible participants in their ever expanding world.

MINUTES: For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Education, **November 13, 2024**, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administration Building at 70 Conover Road, Colts Neck, New Jersey 07722

Public Participation

The 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. Public participation is governed under District Policy 0167 - Public Participation in Board Meetings as follows:

Public participation shall be governed by the following rules:

- 1. A participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface comments by an announcement of his/her name, municipality of residence, and group affiliation, if applicable;*
- 2. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes' duration;*
- 3. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic until all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard; and only then if time constraints and/or the presiding officer allow.*
- 4. All statements, questions, or inquiries shall be directed to the presiding officer; and any questions or inquiries directed by a participant to another Board member or Superintendent shall be redirected to the presiding officer who shall determine if such statement, question, or inquiry shall be addressed by the presiding officer on behalf of the Board or by the individual Board member or Superintendent;*
- 5. It is the expectation of the Board that communications between participants and the Board will remain positive and focused around the best interest of the student(s) and the district as a whole. All communications from all stakeholders shall be conducted with mutual respect and civility. The Board will not condone communications and interactions that can be perceived as harassing, insulting, threatening, or lacking in respect or civility.*

The presiding officer may:

- a. Interrupt, warn, and/or terminate a participant's statement, question, or inquiry when it is too lengthy;*
- b. Interrupt and/or warn a participant when the statement, question, or inquiry is abusive, obscene, or may be defamatory;*
- c. Request any person to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;*
- d. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person prevents or disrupts a meeting with an act that obstructs or interferes with a meeting;*
- e. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting; and*
- f. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or to maintain an orderly operation of the Board meeting.*

CALL TO ORDER

President Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. Approximately eleven members of the public were in attendance.

ROLL CALL

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Alison DeNoia, Brenna Dillon, Jason Orrico, Jessica Ramirez, Vincent Rugnetta, Angelique Volpe, Kevin Walsh and Richard Wickberg

Board Members Absent: Amy Dimes

LEGAL NOTICE OF MEETING

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, this meeting has been duly advertised in the Asbury Park Press in a schedule of meetings dated January 11, 2024 notice of which has been filed with the Deputy Clerk for Colts Neck Township and the requirements of posting of notices have been met.

EXECUTIVE SESSION RESOLUTION (N.J.S.A. 10:4-9,12)

At approximately 6:43 p.m President Ramirez announced that the Board would move into Executive Session for approximately fifteen (15) minutes to discuss pending litigation. She further announced that action would not be taken afterwards and articulated that Executive discussion may be disclosed upon future resolution.

It was moved by Brenna Dillon, seconded by Alison DeNoia and carried on a unanimous roll call vote in the affirmative to move into Executive session.

FLAG SALUTE

FLAG SALUTE

President Ramirez led the Flag Salute.

COMMENTS FROM ATTENDING CONSTITUENTS – ALL SUBJECTS

Kevin O'Brien, 18 The Enclosure - requested that the Board change their 2025 meeting dates so as not to conflict with the Township meetings. He commented on the affordable housing project being constructed in town and inquired how the Board plans to support an influx of students.

ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL:

1. It was moved by Alison DeNoia, seconded by Vincent Rugnetta and carried on a unanimous roll call vote to approve the electronic submission of the District Performance Review Self-Assessment documents associated with the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum ("NJQSAC") for the 2024 - 2025 school year. ([Revised.Attachment # S-1](#))

NJQSAC FOR
2024-2025 SCHOOL
YEAR

Yes: Alison DeNoia, Brenna Dillon, Amy Dimes (remote), Jason Orrico, Jessica Ramirez, Vincent Rugnetta, Angelique Volpe, Kevin Walsh and Richard Wickberg

No: None

Absent: None

2. It was moved by Alison DeNoia, seconded by Vincent Rugnetta and carried on a unanimous roll call vote to approve the submission of the Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Three Year Plan (2024-2027) to the New Jersey Department of Education, which is on file in the office of Curriculum and Instruction.

APPROVAL OF
SUBMISSION OF
LANGUAGE
INSTRUCTION
EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAM (LIEP)
THREE YEAR PLAN
2024-2027

Yes: Alison DeNoia, Brenna Dillon, Amy Dimes (remote), Jason Orrico, Jessica Ramirez, Vincent Rugnetta, Angelique Volpe, Kevin Walsh and Richard Wickberg

No: None

Absent: None

3. It was moved by Alison DeNoia, seconded by Vincent Rugnetta and carried on a unanimous roll call vote to approve the employment of the following individual as a Long-Term Substitute Teacher during the 2024-2025 school year, as indicated below:

EMPLOYMENT:
LONG-TERM
SUBSTITUTE
TEACHER
2024-2025 SCHOOL
YEAR

Name	Position/Location/ Account No.	Effective Dates	Salary
Joanne Chavers (Replacing Patricia Straman, who is on a leave of absence)	Long-Term Substitute Teacher/Cedar Drive Middle School/ (a/c# 11-130-100-101-030-100-1)	11/18/24 – 12/20/24	\$245 Per Day

Yes: Alison DeNoia, Brenna Dillon, Amy Dimes (remote), Jason Orrico, Jessica Ramirez, Vincent Rugnetta, Angelique Volpe, Kevin Walsh and Richard Wickberg

No: None

Absent: None

COMMITTEE/BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

COMMITTEE /BOARD
LIAISON REPORTS

Board Member Liaisons

Colts Neck Twp. Schools Parent Advisory

- Brenna Dillon reported the next meeting is scheduled for November 21st; there will be a morning and evening session.
- Reminder for new BOE members that the Liaison role will need to be filled.

Colts Neck PTO

- Amy Dimes mentioned upcoming events such as the Frosty’s Holiday Shop on December 7th at CRPS and next week is the Harlem Wizards event.

Colts Neck Senior Citizens

- Kevin Walsh provided updates on the seniors' activities, including a holiday lunch on December 16th at the Molly Pitcher Inn and a trip to Lancaster.

Colts Neck Township Committee

- Jessica Ramirez noted upcoming events: November 24th Coffee with a Cop at the Colts Neck General Store from 9-11am; December 7th is the Tree Lighting at Town Hall at 4pm; December 8th Colts Neck Historical Preservation Committee has Country Christmas at the Montrose School from 1-4 pm; Breakfast with Santa is on December 14th & 15th at 9 am and 11am; the Reorganization meeting is on January 3rd at 5pm; and January 14th there is a Planning Board meeting open for public input on the affordable housing project at 7:30 pm.
- The Township is still looking for volunteers for their committees.

Student Representatives

- Dr. Garibay reported that there will be reports from three of the student representatives at the next Board meeting next Wednesday.
- Mr. Rugnetta will discuss things we want to engage them in throughout the year.

State & County School Boards Association Representative

- Alison DeNoia - December 5th is the Monmouth County meeting.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION

AD-HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE ARTS, SPORTS, & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

1. Review / Discuss current charter for the Ad-Hoc Committee for the Arts, Sports, & Extracurricular Activities, as per Bylaw Regulation 0155 - Board Committees

Vincent Rugnetta gave an update on Colts Neck recreation programs as well as registration. He also provided a brief update on the Cedar Drive Middle School sports.

Dr. Garibay discussed the purpose and mission of the ad hoc committee, emphasizing the need for data-driven decisions and community engagement.

Alison DeNoia questioned whether there is a real need for the ad hoc committee. Brenna Dillon suggested a sports foundation liaison instead.

Jessica Ramirez explained the role of ad hoc committees and the importance of long-range planning for the enhancement of the arts, sports, and extracurricular activities.

2. Recommendations for surveys to inform potential actions for committee (parents, student representatives)

Dr. Garibay will work with the staff to put together a survey.

3. Cedar Drive Middle School 60th Birthday Celebration - April 24, 2025

Dr. Garibay will be working with Dr. Rigby to put together how the event will look.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS/SAFETY AND SECURITY

1. State-Mandated Affordable Housing in Colts Neck - Colts Neck Twp. Schools

Kevin Walsh emphasized a need for long-range planning to address the potential impact of new affordable housing units on the school district.

Dr. Garibay and Jason Orrico discussed the importance of data-driven decisions and the need for updated enrollment projections to account for new developments. The board agreed to look into the possibility of updating the 2022 demographic study to better understand the potential influx of students.

2. Discussion of LRFP items for priority Budget considerations.

Mr. Marasco outlined various facilities projects that may be considerations for the '25-26 budget. Projects range from smaller maintenance/repair types to projects within the LRFP that would allow for the use of Capital Reserve funds. Mr. Marasco mentioned the following project considerations:

- Replacement of critical roofing sections on CDMS that are not part of the ESIP.
- Replacement of HVAC components in Admin Bldg (original, 30 yrs old). Building is also in need of a fire alarm system.
- Replacement of original school building windows - CRES, CDMS.
- Replacement of original casework/bookcases - CRES, CDMS.
- Replacement of original classroom doors/hardware - CRES, CDMS.
- Replacement of electrical main switchgear at CRES.
- Updating/replacement of lockers and science labs at CDMS; these are some of the items that have more history to them due to failed referendums in the past.

The board discussed the importance of balancing immediate needs with long-term planning and the use of capital reserve funds. Dr. Garibay emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to facilities planning, considering both immediate repairs and long-term goals.

There was a suggestion to possibly form an ad hoc committee to review these priorities in more detail as part of the budget development process.

3. Dr. Garibay and Mr. Marasco also discussed a replacement of the current and out-dated alarm system district-wide, for better security and safeguarding of district assets. Such replacement also is an extension of the access control project

because it would expand new motion sensors and associated networking of door access / alarm functions. Initial proposal for this project is approx. \$75k.

4. Continuation of urinal panel discussion from 9/11/24 COW:

Dr. Garibay and Mr. Marasco discussed the recommendation from a student representative to install urinal panels in middle school bathrooms. The board has considered the scope of the project and potential costs, and has decided there is the need for a survey to gauge broader student interest.

Angelique Volpe and President Ramirez emphasized the importance of addressing student concerns while considering the broader impact on the district.

The board agreed to proceed with quotes for installing urinal panels in sixth and seventh-grade bathrooms, with the possibility of expanding to other grades based on student feedback.

5. External district lighting (inquiry & investigation)

Kevin Walsh raised concerns about inadequate lighting in school parking lots and the need for a professional study to assess the required improvements. Dr. Garibay and Mr. Marasco discussed the idea to collaborate with the county and vendors they may have used, for a comprehensive study on lighting enhancements.

Mr. Walsh emphasized the importance of lighting for security, video capture, and overall safety in school parking lots.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Committee name change : Additional Goals

- Assist with parental access to digital resources
- Stay current with technology trends in education (ie: A.I., screentime, etc.)

Amy Dimes provided updates on the committee name change and additional goals, and advised that she will be meeting with Mr. Capasso to finalize the changes.

2. Parental Engagement for 24-25 School Year - Difference between Parent Advisory / Parent Academy / Coffee Chat

Amy Dimes spoke briefly on this topic and is hopeful that once the new Board comes on board in January someone will step up and take over these roles.

3. BOE Meeting Live Streaming - Protocol & Personnel Responsibilities

The board discussed the need to clarify responsibilities for live streaming, ensuring it is within the scope of Mr. Capasso's job responsibilities.

Dr. Garibay will provide the Board with a comprehensive list of setup and monitoring requirements for live streaming, along with potential policy updates.

Dr. Garibay discussed the need to ensure proper setup and timing for live streams, emphasizing the evolution of responsibilities. President Ramirez would like to be able to have the setup details ready by the December COW meeting.

4. Restarting Board Newsletter: Focus on ESIP - Include recap of activities: include pictures - Veterans Day Programs

Amy Dimes discussed the restart of the newsletter, initially a joint effort with Mr. Walsh and the seniors committee. Mr. Walsh expressed his reluctance to take on the newsletter role, leading to a call for volunteers among new board members. Angelique Volpe suggested that one of the new board members could take over the newsletter, with a framework provided by Amy.

Mrs. Dimes offered to present a framework for the newsletter and suggested involving the seniors in the process.

5. Update: Mass Communication System & Website Update / Reconfiguration Options

Dr. Garibay mentioned that Mr. Capasso is in the process of preparing a website comparison and the goal to improve communications and made the suggestion that possibly Mrs. Dillon could attend the upcoming meeting to provide input on the website update.

Mrs. Dimes emphasized the importance of presenting the website update at the next COW meeting.

CURRICULUM

1. Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

- 2024-25 Student Participation (to date)
- NEW - 8th Grade Grief Curriculum / Instruction Mandate

Dr. Garibay provided an update on the implementation of health lessons, including 6th grade cycle one and upcoming lessons for 6th grade cycle two, kindergarten, second grade, and eighth grade. She also discussed the inclusion of grief instruction in the 8th grade curriculum as required by NJSA chapter 35.

Dr. Garibay also updated the status of the fall benchmark data for NJSLA MAP and the ongoing data review to identify students for enrichment or intervention programs

and also highlighted the importance of tracking and reaching out to parents for health lessons.

2. Fall Benchmark Data
 - NWEA Fall Map Results & Data Review for students in Grades 2-8
 - Common Assessments
3. QSAC Update - Instruction & Program

Dr. Garibay mentioned that in the I&P DPR area those points come from scores from the NJDOE.

4. Consideration/ Financial Planning for 2025 Summer Bridge Program

Dr. Garibay discussed the cost of the Summer Bridge program and the need to find ways to sustain it without grants. The district has received a lot of positive feedback and the impact of the Summer Bridge program on student test scores.

Dr. Garibay also emphasized the importance of the Summer Bridge program and the need to consider how it could be funded. Brenna Dillon suggested considering a nominal fee for the Summer Bridge program to sustain it.

5. School Ethics Commission - Public Advisory Opinion – A12-22 regarding requirements for Comprehensive Health & Physical Education ([Attachment # C-1](#))

Jessica Ramirez recapped the public advisory opinion received by the district and the need to seek a second advisory opinion. She discussed the rationale for moving to an opt-in policy for sensitive information like health curriculum.

Dr. Garibay explained the current practice of using a permission slip format for health curriculum, which operates similarly to an opt-in model.

FINANCE

1. Meal Charge Policy (recurring from 9.11.24 COW)
 - Strauss Esmay Summary of P8550 - Meal Charge ([Attachment #P-1](#))
 - Sample: Holmdel P8550 - 8550 MEAL CHARGES/OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE BILL ([Attachment #P-2](#))

Mr. Marasco noted that while the district does not participate in the NSLP, it is recommended that the District review and adopt a Policy consistent with NJ law (18A:33-21) pertaining to students who are in arrears on their school meal accounts. Having policy structure and clear guidance will assist how we manage unpaid meal charges and will promote consistency and uniformity.

2. Future of PEA (Pre-k Education Aid) Grant in Colts Neck

Dr. Garibay discussed the potential steps and decisions needed for the district to be eligible for preschool expansion aid. She indicated that the District would need to join the National School Lunch Program and that there are programmatic changes that would come with it.

Jason Orrico expressed his concerns about the quality of food if the district joins the National School Lunch Program.

Dr. Garibay further highlighted the additional requirements and changes that would come with preschool expansion aid, including busing and programmatic changes.

3. Budget '25-26 factors - 'Banked Cap', State Aid, Debt structure, NVTs.

Mr. Marasco discussed some of the factors that will impact the '25-26 budget development. He noted State Aid will likely be flat or reduced - this makes up 10-12% of total revenues. The main revenue drivers are tax levy, categorical state aid, and the use of fund balance. He explained the district's tax levy 'bank' from prior years, giving the Board additional tax levy authority available for '25-26 in the amount of approximately \$1.5mil.

Mr. Marasco discussed the district's bonded debt balance will be retired by the end of 2027; a key perspective when thinking about the Debt Service component of the Tax Levy. He also noted that we began this year with the first installment payment of the ESIP lease, prompting the need to budget approximately \$379k for year two of the nineteen annual lease payments. He also mentioned other standing lease obligations (buses, copiers, chromebooks, phone hosting, I.T. licenses) that are non-discretionary, in addition to pension obligations and settled collective bargaining agreements that will be factors in the '25-26 budget.

Mr. Marasco further highlighted the trend of rising taxable property values in Colts Neck Township of about 13% year-to-date and the need to consider other capital items in the budget. A budget calendar will be shared with the BOE in the near future.

POLICY

1. Transition from Strauss Esmay Policy Services to NJSBA

Dr. Garibay provided an update on the transition from Strauss Esmay to New Jersey School Boards Association policies. She emphasized the importance of board review and input to ensure the new policies reflect the district's custom language and practices. Jessica Ramirez stressed the importance of board members reviewing and approving the new policies to maintain district-specific language and practices.

Lastly, Dr. Garibay provided the timeline for the transition and the need to capture all current policies before the transition is complete.

NEGOTIATIONS

None

PERSONNEL

1. Employee resignations - 2
2. Replacement club advisor - CDMS
3. Guest speaker science class
4. Amended leave of absence for staff member
5. Amended extracurricular advisors-CDMS

Dr. Garibay noted that the above items are recommendations that will be on the next regular action meeting.

TRANSPORTATION

None

NEW BUSINESS

Angelique Volpe inquired whether the Board would recognize at a future Board meeting those students who have made the Honor Roll / High Honor Roll.

Dr. Garibay mentioned that she is looking into the possibility of changing the dates of future BOE meetings so as not to conflict with the Township. She also mentioned that Major Penzcak from the ROTC program at CNHS is retiring and she would possibly ask the Board to consider honoring him at a future Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 9pm, it was moved by Brenna Dillon, seconded by Jason Orrico and carried on a unanimous roll call vote to adjourn the meeting.

Yes: Alison DeNoia, Brenna Dillon, Amy Dimes (remote), Jason Orrico, Jessica Ramirez, Vincent Rugnetta, Angelique Volpe, Kevin Walsh and Richard Wickberg

No: None

Absent: None

REFERENCE SHEET	
Attachment # C-1	School Ethics Commission - Public Advisory Opinion – A12-22 regarding requirements for Comprehensive Health & Physical Education
Revised.Attachment # S-1	QSAC District Performance Review Self-Assessment
Attachment # P-1	Strauss Esmay Summary of P8550 - Meal Charge
Attachment # P-2	Sample: Holmdel P8550 - 8550 MEAL CHARGES/OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE BILL

BOARD MEETINGS*		
November 20, 2024	December 11, 2024	December 18, 2024
	January 8, 2025 @ 6:00 (Organization Meeting)	

* All Regular Board Meetings will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administration Building unless otherwise noted and advertised.

2024		
Wednesday	November 27	Short Session Day for Students and Staff
Thursday-Friday	November 28-29	Thanksgiving Recess – Schools/Central Office Closed
Friday	December 20	Short Session Day - Students and Staff - Start Winter Recess
Monday-Tuesday	December 23-31	Winter Recess – Schools/Central Office Closed
2025		
Wednesday	January 1	Winter Recess - Schools/Central Office Closed
Thursday	January 2	Schools Reopen for Students and Staff
Monday	January 20	Martin L. King's Birthday – Schools Closed for Students Professional Development Day – Full Day for Staff
Thursday	February 13	Short Session Day for Students Full Day for Staff with In-Service After Student Dismissal
Friday - Monday	February 14 - 17	Presidents' Day Weekend – Schools/Central Office Closed
Wednesday	February 26	Short Session Day – Parent/Teacher Conferences (Afternoon)
Thursday	February 27	Short Session Day – Parent/Teacher Conferences (Afternoon & Evening)
Friday	February 28	Short Session Day – Students & Staff
Friday	April 11	Short Session Day - Students & Staff - Start of Spring Recess
Monday - Monday	April 14 - April 21	Spring Recess – Schools/Central Office Closed
Tuesday	April 22	Schools Reopen
Friday	May 23	Short Session Day for Students Full Day for Staff with In-Service After Student Dismissal
Monday	May 26	Memorial Day - Schools/Central Office Closed
Monday	June 23	Short Session Day for Students / Full Day for Staff

Tuesday	June 24	Last Day of School - Short Session Day for Students and Staff
---------	---------	---

Respectfully Submitted,
Vincent S. Marasco
Vincent S. Marasco
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary