

**MENDHAM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BROOKSIDE, NEW JERSEY
MIDDLE SCHOOL MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025 @ 7:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m.

II. Flag Salute - Mrs. Modyr led the flag salute.

III. Roll Call of the Board of Education

Mrs. Joan Mody	President	Present
Dr. Rekha Mandel	Vice President	Present
Mrs. Elisabeth Carrino-Tamasi		Present
Mrs. Natasha Crossan		Present
Mr. Peter Dumovic		Present
Mr. Thomas Keeling		Present
Mrs. Diana Orban Brown		Present

Forty-two members of the public were also present.

IV. Sunshine Law – Mrs. Mody read the following statement

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, Mendham Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the Mendham Township Board of Education Office, sent to the Clerk of Mendham Township, and the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record. This is an official meeting.

V. Student Representative to the Board of Education

➤ **Student Representative - Grace Legacki**

Good Evening and Happy Easter to those who celebrate!

- To start, I would like to congratulate all the students for their hard work and also the teachers for their efforts, which resulted in the NJ Department of Education ranking our academic performance at the top of the state.
 - Dr. Ciccone assures us that we are the hardest-working kids in America which has definitely paid off
- As we reach the light at the end of the tunnel for this school year, teachers have been preparing for NJSLA testing
 - To do so, we have been using...

- Past NJSLA tests for Math
 - Websites such as “[venture](#)” for science (tested on 5th and 8th grade)
 - Reviewing transition + vocab words
 - 8th grade annual vocab bee with over 216 words learned over the year
 - Final grammar quiz
 - Practicing how to respond to different types of questions with thesis statements, and what type of essay is expected
- All through this work, there has also been lots of fun happening here at MTMS mixed in along with the learning
- The food drive is happening this month and is filled with incentives to help motivate grade levels to bring in goods to help their community
 - Mr. Smith's 5th-grade class was the winner of the soups
 - 6th grade won non-perishable dairy from Mrs. Hourts
 - 7th grade challenge for shelf-stable meat is this week
 - 8th grade visited the 4th graders at MTES to help smooth the transition for any worries.
 - I went on this trip, and not only was it wonderful to reminisce about my experiences at MTMS, but I also gave advice, which is something that I would have wanted to receive.
 - The 7th and 8th graders have begun reading a novel called “Pobre Ana” (Poor Ana), which is about a teenage girl in California and her struggles with her family and friends.
 - Seeing the outcome of all the effort put into our world language classes is very nice.
 - In Spanish, students across all grade levels have created websites that are edited each marking period with new projects, mantras, I can statements, and deep reflections on each project.
 - It is wonderful to see the growth across each grade level when looking back
 - The evening of the arts is coming up, and all art classes have created beautiful pots, sculptures of bugs, and sculptures of fruits, which will be featured

- Band, orchestra, and choir students are also preparing for their school performances, which will be followed by Dorney Park, which takes place sometime in the third week of May.
- I would also like to congratulate the orchestra students for doing a spectacular job in a district-wide concert at the high school

- I would like to welcome back Mrs. Ferenc, who gave an exciting first SEL lesson on “punching away bad thoughts.”

LASTLY

- Special congratulations to Yony M., who won the unsung heroes award for our school and the whole county!

VI. Superintendent’s Report

➤ District Updates, News, and Events

Board of Education Information - Presentations

- LBC Communications Training
- MTES Student Group - Grade 4 Poetry Jam

School Events

Restoring Rainbows WMMHS – School Supplies Donation Drive

- We are currently working with Anastasia Malikov, a student at Mendham High School, on a service initiative called *Restoring Rainbows WMMHS*. This is part of a broader international, youth-led nonprofit, *Restoring Rainbows*, which is dedicated to collecting and redistributing new and gently used school supplies to underserved communities.
- The student-led drive will run from **April 14th to April 25th**, and donations of school supplies will be collected and repurposed to benefit children in need. This is an excellent example of student leadership and community engagement, and we’re proud to support Anastasia and her team in this meaningful effort.

Community and Parent Engagement

- Workshop 2025 proposals:

Proposal Summary: “Sold a Story, Now What? Leading Through the Change”

This proposal outlines a plan to support school districts as they transition to practices aligned with the Science of Reading (SOR). The initiative aims to bridge

the gap between the concerns raised in the *"Sold a Story"* podcast and the real challenges schools face today. The focus will be on guiding school leadership—including supervisors, support staff, and parents—through this complex shift without promoting or selling curriculum products.

Instead, the support will center on helping districts vet and select instructional materials aligned with SOR research, with the goal of empowering teachers to teach reading and writing effectively. The presentation and plan would be especially relevant for Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, and BOE members, as their leadership is critical to a successful transition.

I am also excited to inform you that we have applied to present our innovative AI-powered personalized learning initiative at the 2025 New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) Workshop this October. This research study, conducted at Mendham Township Middle School, explores the use of generative AI to create personalized study guides for students based on their diagnostic assessment performance. The goal is to assess how these AI-generated tools can enhance student learning, provide targeted support, and reduce administrative burdens for teachers.

If selected, our presentation will highlight the integration of AI within Google Workspace for Education, the process of generating individualized study guides, and the impact on both student engagement and instructional efficiency. This opportunity would allow us to showcase Mendham Township's commitment to educational innovation and leadership in advancing personalized learning strategies.

Looking Ahead

- Budget Open Houses:
 - April 24, 9 AM & 6 PM (MTES MPR)
 - April 25, 9 AM (Virtual)

VII. Board Secretary's Report - None.

VIII. Board President's Report - None.

IX. Correspondence - None.

X. Committee Reports

- **Curriculum and School Programs** - Mr. Keeling delivered the report.
- **DEIB** - Mrs. Carrino-Tamasi delivered the report.
- **Operations and Finance** - Dr. Mandel delivered the report.

- **Personnel and Human Resources** - Mr. Dumovic delivered the report.
- **Policy** - Mrs. Orban Brown delivered the report.
- **Ad Hoc - Referendum/ROD Grant** - Mrs. Orban Brown delivered the report.

XI. Consent Items

Approval of Minutes

Work Session Minutes: March 18, 2025

Executive Session Minutes: March 18, 2025

Regular Session Minutes: March 25, 2025

Curriculum and School Programs

1. Center for Behavioral Health - Evaluations

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Center for Behavioral Health to conduct psychiatric evaluations, as needed, in support of the Child Study Team evaluation process. Evaluation rates for the 2024-2025 School Year: Psychiatric evaluation \$575.00 and Neuropsychiatric evaluation \$675.00.

2. Elementary and Middle School Field Trips (Attachments)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the attached field trips for the 2024-2025 school year.

Operations and Finance

1. Certification Reports

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education certify, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(a), that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the line item appropriation and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9, N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8, and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(B), after review of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's monthly financial reports for March 2025 that no major accounts and fund balances in the 2024/2025 budget have been over expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

2. Board Secretary's Report

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the March 2025 Board Secretary's Reports.

3. Treasurer's Report

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the March 2025 Treasurer's Reports.

4. **March 2025 Transfer Reports**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approve the March 2025 transfer report.

5. **April 2025 Bills List**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the April Bills List. This includes payroll checks N5585 through N5587 and N5588 through N5590.

Fund 10 - Treasurer Account	\$
Fund 11 - Treasurer Account	\$
Fund 20 - Grant Account	\$
Fund 30 - Referendum Account	\$
Fund 60 - Cafeteria Account	\$
Fund 80 - Unemployment Account	\$

Total: \$

6. **District Travel** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Board of Education approves the attached travel events in agreement with Chapter 53, Public Law 2007, NJSA 18A:11-12, NJAC 6A:23A-1. All mileage will be reimbursed at the maximum NJ Circular 08-19-OMB rate (currently \$0.47 per mile).

7. **Use of District Facilities** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approve the attached use of facility applications for the 2024-2025 school year with the right to cancel based on school events and needs.

8. **Contract for Use of Facility with Apollo After School, Inc. for the 2025-2026 School Year** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Use of Facilities contract with Apollo After School, Inc. for the purpose of conducting an extended daycare program at an annual fee of \$2,856.00 for the 2025-2026 school year.

9. **Submission of NJSIG Safety Grant Application 2025-2026**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby approves the submission of the grant application for the 2025-2026 Safety Grant Program through the New Jersey Schools Insurance Group for the purposes described in the application, to include safety initiatives within the buildings and classroom security, in the amount of \$3,400 for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. **Staff Resignation - Katelyn Crelin, Elementary School Teacher** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the letter of resignation from Katelyn Crelin, Elementary School Teacher, dated April 7, 2025, and last working day effective June 17, 2025, for the 2024-2025 school year.

2. **Leave of Absence (REVISED) – Jillian Glander, Elementary School Special Education Teacher**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Jillian Glander, Special Education Teacher, for a leave of absence, having received doctor's certification, commencing April 7, 2025, while utilizing Seventeen (17) sick days, under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) ending after Ten (10) weeks on June 17, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Five (5) weeks under the NJ Family Leave Act (FLA) for Jillian Glander, commencing on May 13, 2025, through June 17, 2025, as requested in writing;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Jillian Glander with an anticipated return to work date of September 2, 2025.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Jillian Glander, Special Education Teacher, for a leave of absence commencing on September 22, 2025, under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) ending after 2 weeks on October 3, 2025 and under the NJ Family Leave Act (NJFLA) ending after 4 weeks on October 17, 2025;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Jillian Glander with an anticipated return to work date of October 20, 2025.

3. **Leave of Absence (REVISED) – Aletha Consales, Assistant to the Superintendent for Human Resources**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Aletha Consales, Assistant to the Superintendent for Human Resources, for a leave of absence commencing on February 20, 2025, utilizing 61 sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and NJ Family Leave Act (NJFLA) ending on May 16, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves Aletha Consales with an extended paid leave of absence (Not covered under FMLA or NJFLA) commencing on May 19, 2025, and ending on June 30, 2025, while utilizing 15 vacation days and 15 sick days.

4. **Staff Retirement - Aletha Consales, Assistant to the Superintendent for Human Resources** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the letter of retirement from Aletha Consales, Assistant to the Superintendent for Human Resources, dated April 21, 2025, effective June 30, 2025.

5. Leave of Absence (REVISED) – Lauren Fittipaldi, Elementary School Music Teacher

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Lauren Fittipaldi, Elementary School Teacher, for a leave of absence, having received doctor's certification, commencing November 11, 2024, while utilizing Thirty-Two (32) sick days, under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) ending after Twelve (12) weeks on February 14, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Twelve (12) weeks under the NJ Family Leave Act (FLA) for Lauren Fittipaldi, commencing on January 6, 2025, through March 28, 2025, as requested in writing;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Lauren Fittipaldi for an extended unpaid leave of absence (Not covered under FMLA and NJ FLA) beginning March 31, 2025, through June 17, 2025.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Lauren Fittipaldi for an extended unpaid leave of absence, commencing September 2, 2025, through June 19, 2026 (Not covered under FMLA and NJ FLA).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Lauren Fittipaldi with a return to work date of the first day of the 2026-2027 school year.

6. Leave Replacement - Substitute Teacher Stephanie Manson

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Stephanie Manson as the Elementary School Physical Education substitute teacher, effective May 27, 2025, through June 17, 2025, at the current substitute rate of \$125.00 per day.

7. Chaperones (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves payment at the contractual rate for chaperones following the end of the contractual day.

8. Substitute Teacher

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following substitute teacher, pending completion of paperwork, at the current rate of \$125.00 per day for the 2024-2025 school year. Angela Riedinger

Policy and Planning

1. First Reading (Attachments)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the First reading of the following policies and regulations:

P 3433 Vacations

P 3435	Anticipated Disability
P 3436	Personal Leave
P 3439	Jury Duty
P 4111	Creating Positions
P 4124	Employment Contract
P 4130	Assignment and Transfer
P 4140	Termination
P 4145	Layoffs
P 4150	Discipline
P 4152	Withholding an Increment
P 4211.3	Consulting Outside the District
R 4211.3	Consulting Outside the District
P 4214	Conflict of Interest
P 4215	Code of Ethics
P 4220	Employee Evaluations
R 4220	Evaluation of Support Staff Member
R 4230	Outside Activities
P 4233	Political Activities
R 4233	Political Activities
P 4240	Employee Training
R 4240	Employee Training
P 4281	Inappropriate Staff Conduct
R 4281	Inappropriate Staff Conduct

2. **Second Reading** (*Attachments*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Second reading and adoption of the following policies and regulations:

P 3245	Research Projects by Staff Members
P 3280	Liability for Pupil Welfare
R 3280	Liability for Pupil Welfare
P 3281	Inappropriate Staff Conduct
R 3281	Inappropriate Staff Conduct
P 3282	Use of Social Networking Sites
P 3310	Academic Freedom
P 3321	Acceptable Use of Computer Network(s)/Computers and Resources by Teaching Staff Members
R 3321	Acceptable Use of Computer Network(s)/Computers and Resources by Teaching Staff Members
P 3340	Grievance
P 3351	Healthy Workplace Environment
P 3362	Sexual Harassment (M)

R 3362	Sexual Harassment of Teaching Staff Members Complaint	Procedure
P 3370	Teaching Staff Member Tenure	
P 3372	Teaching Staff Member Tenure Acquisition	
P 3373	Tenure Upon Transfer or Promotion	
P 3374	Tenure Upon Transfer to An Underperforming School	
P 3381	Protection Against Retaliation	
P 3410	Compensation	
P 3420	Benefits	
P 3425	Work Related Disability Pay	
P 3425.1	Modified Duty Early Return to Work Program - Teaching Staff Members	
R 3425.1	Modified Duty Early Return to Work Program - Teaching Staff Members	
P 5111	Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students (M)	

XII. ACTION ITEMS

Operations and Finance

1. Settlement Agreement MRS-L-429-22

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the settlement agreement MRS-L-429-22.

Dr. Mandel moved to approve the Action Items for April 22, 2025; Operations and Finance - item 1, seconded by Mr. Keeling, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mr. Keeling; yes, Dr. Mandel; yes, Mrs. Orban Brown; yes, Mrs. Carrino-Tamasi; yes, Mrs. Crossan; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, and Mrs. Mody, yes – motions carry.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. New Hire - Alice Nelson, Assistant to the Transportation Supervisor (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Alice Nelson, pending completion of paperwork, as the Full-Time Assistant to the Transportation Supervisor, effective May 12, 2025, for the 2024-2025 school year, at a prorated salary of \$70,000.00.

2. New Hire - Madison DeVitto, Transportation Dispatcher (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Madison DeVitto, pending completion of paperwork, as the Full-Time Transportation Dispatcher, effective April 23, 2025, for the 2024-2025 school year, at a prorated salary of \$45,000.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Madison DeVitto will be paid for in-office training from May 14, 2025, to May 16, 2025, at her hourly rate.

Mr. Dumovic moved to approve the Action Items for April 22, 2025; Personnel and Human Resources items 1-2, seconded by Dr. Mandel, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Dr. Mandel; yes, Mrs. Orban Brown; yes, Mrs. Carrino-Tamasi; yes, Mrs. Crossan; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, Mr. Keeling; yes, and Mrs. Mody, yes – motions carry.

XIII. Discussion

XIV. Verbal Communications from the Public

XV. Adjournment

Moved by Mr. Keeling, seconded by Dr. Mandel, to adjourn the Work Session Monthly Meeting of April 22, 2025. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Mosner
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary