



LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTING MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

Executive Session - Hybrid Meeting - 6:30 p.m.

Public Session - Hybrid Meeting at Administration Building – 7:00 p.m.

A **Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date in the large conference room in the Administration Building and via Zoom and Facebook Live. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by the Board President, Seth Cohen, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 4, 2022 and posted at the Board of Education office and communicated to *The Star Ledger*, *West Essex Tribune*, *TAPinto Livingston* and the Livingston Township Clerk.

Members Present: Jenissa Arnette, Pamela Chirls, Seth Cohen, Vineeta Khanna, Samantha Messer and Ethan Hirsch

Also in Attendance: Dr. Matthew Block, Michael Davison, Lisa Capone-Steiger, Susan Burman and Joann Goldberg

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

Executive Session

Whereas, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits the Board of Education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss:

- Superintendent's Evaluation and Legal Settlement

Action may be taken upon return to public session. The full length of the meeting is anticipated to be approximately 30 minutes and be it

Further Resolved, the minutes of this closed session be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mrs. Khanna, Mr. Cohen
Nays - None

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Cohen reconvened the public meeting.

There were approximately 15 members of the public and staff in person and approximately

42 members of the public and staff watching remotely through the webinar and a Facebook Live Stream.

Before the meeting started, Mr. Cohen explained that the district is aware of the announcement to lift the mask mandate, that we have been and will continue to consult with our local health leaders and that Dr. Block will let everyone know when a decision is made about how we will proceed. Mr. Cohen continued they welcome questions about it tonight but want to be clear that they won't be providing any direct answers.

Superintendent's Report

1. AAPI Law Advocates

Dr. Block recognized and congratulated the members of the Livingston AAPI Youth Alliance which include Eric Dalangin, Russell Fan, Hannah Kim, Eshaan Mahajan, and Hannah Mattam, for their work in advocating for the passage of two legislative bills mandating that the contributions, history and heritage of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are included in the New Jersey Learning Standards for Social Studies for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12.

The students each took turns describing how they sent emails, shared personal experiences and spoke with administrators, legislators and government committees about the need for AAPI contributions to become part of the school district's curriculum.

The board members all congratulated the students and expressed how proud they are of them for taking the initiative and following through to make this change happen not only for themselves but for future generations as well.

2. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report - Wiss & Company

Dr. Block and Mr. Davison began by thanking Patty Ramos and the Business Department team for their commitment to maintaining internal controls and compliance while managing the district's funds.

Mr. Scott Clelland of Wiss & Company, explained that the 2021 audit report came back with an unmodified opinion, which is a clean opinion and that no corrective action plan is required.

Mr. Clelland continued by reviewing highlights from the report which include shortfalls in the food service program due to the pandemic, funding for everyday operations of the district, outstanding bond issues and capital leases.

Mrs. Chirls asked what the statutory limit is on bonds and Mr. John Farina from Wiss & Company, responded it is \$270 million.

Mrs. Khanna asked what a reasonable time frame would be to use the remaining referendum funds and Mr. Clelland responded the funds should be used to offset future debt service within six years.

3. District Goals Update

Dr. Block provided an update on the district goals. Under the first goal, which is to improve the culture and community within LPS by enhancing inclusiveness, cultural awareness, anti-racism and acceptance of individual differences through mandated curricular programming, extracurricular programming and district operations, Dr. Block explained we are continuing to work with teachers to make instruction more responsive to diversity and inclusive of various cultures and have strategically implemented professional development and school based programming focused on these areas, expanded the work of equity teams, sponsored cultural events and encouraged student engagement.

Under the second goal, which is to ensure the emotional well-being and mental health of all our students through a strong feeling of connectedness, a sense of belonging to their school community and awareness of the resources and support available to students and their families in an effort to thwart the negative impact of stress and mental illness, Dr. Block explained the district has enhanced policies, procedures, practices and structures for all staff to play an active role together in focusing on mental health and the overall wellbeing of students, participate in parent engagement and community outreach programs and continue to offer professional development and curriculum updates.

Under the third goal, which is to review and refine strategies to enhance instruction and student learning outcomes in elementary and middle school mathematics, Grades K-8, Dr. Block explained we have implemented Math in Focus at the third grade level, created a math workshop model for each grade level K-6, continue professional development supports for teachers and administer common standards-based assessments at each grade level to utilize data to drive instruction and discuss efficacy of the program.

Under the fourth goal, which is to engage stakeholders in the development of a meaningful, innovative, bold and comprehensive five-year strategic planning initiative, to build on furthering a vision for the future of the Livingston Public Schools, Dr. Block explained we have put together a diverse core committee, completed a survey of stakeholders where data was collected and shared and are participating in ongoing work with a consultant to create a meaningful and productive process.

With regard to the mental health goal, Mr. Cohen asked if we are getting participation in the parent academics and Dr. Block and Mrs. Steiger responded they are getting more, especially with the offering of participation through Zoom.

Mr. Cohen also asked if we are seeing a positive change through our efforts and Mrs. Steiger responded that the school counselors and Mrs. Crews report that they feel the tools are helpful in being proactive.

With regard to the equity goal, Mr. Cohen asked how we are transferring the information collected in our equity and affinity groups into action.

Dr. Block responded that conversations within equity teams are shown in the types of things displayed around the schools, are shown in the types of resources in which we are investing, are addressed in faculty meetings, are shown in the way students might be addressed and in an awareness of how logistics are handled around certain procedures or protocols in schools.

Mrs. Chirls asked for an example of an issue we identified in a school building as a result of the equity team meetings and what we changed in response as well as when a follow up culture and community survey will be administered.

Mrs. Steiger responded that we will do an equity survey each year in June so we can review and ensure we are making progress in the appropriate areas.

Mrs. Steiger continued there are subtle changes in the buildings such as providing opportunities to celebrate cultures in a broader way, making sure students see themselves in the books in our media centers, by piloting work in social justice at an elementary school and by providing a community period at the high school after hearing older students tell us they didn't feel like they had a voice.

Ms. Messer stated she appreciates all the programming put into place to address mental health but asked about students getting an adequate amount of sleep and if homework levels have been a topic of discussion.

Dr. Block responded that homework levels have been an ongoing conversation in a multitude of forums, particularly at the secondary levels, and they are struggling to find the right balance between the expectations of a high performing district and addressing mental health issues.

Ms. Arnette asked about our hiring practices so that students see themselves in the staff and Dr. Block responded that one step we have taken to make a conscious effort in this area is to work with CJ Pride, an organization of school districts whose mission is to attract diverse candidates.

Mrs. Khanna suggested another way to communicate with parents other than emails is to text them when a new program is offered.

Mr. Hirsch suggested having an easier way for students to see their guidance counselor's availability during the day.

Mr. Hirsch suggested we reach out to the College Board to see if they are able to shorten some curriculums in an effort to eliminate some homework so that staff can get through what needs to be taught in the course. Dr. Block suggested Mr. Hirsch speak with other students to see what advocating for this could look like.

Board Reports

Mrs. Chirls thanked the MPE HSA for hosting their meeting.

Mrs. Chirls announced the Livingston Committee for Diversity and Inclusion held a number of events this past weekend celebrating diversity in the community.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Messer moved the following:

1. Voting Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2022
2. Public Portion of Executive Session Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2022

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mrs. Khanna, Ms. Messer, Mr. Cohen
Nayes - None

Public Input on Agenda Items ~ up to 15 minutes

There was no public input on agenda items.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL

PROGRAM/CURRICULUM

Ms. Messer moved the following:

1.1 Textbooks/DVDs

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the novels as shown on **Attachment A**.

1.2 Student Teacher

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the student teacher as shown on **Attachment B**.

1.3 English Language Learner Three-Year Plan

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the English Language Learner Three-Year Plan.

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mrs. Khanna, Ms. Messer, Mr. Cohen
Nayes - None

STUDENT SERVICES

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

2.1 Out of District Placements

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves placement for the academic year 2021-2022 for two (2) Livingston students with disabilities, as classified and recommended by the Child Study Team, in facilities with tuition costs to be determined within the limits established by the New Jersey Board of Education as shown on **Attachment C**.

2.2 Related Services/Medical Consultants

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following consultants that will be utilized to provide related services for the 2021-2022 school year:

BEHAVIORAL TRAINING & ASSISTANCE / APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS

XYZABA, LLC \$95.00/hour

HOME INSTRUCTION

Aspire \$60.00/hour

Ms. Messer seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mrs. Khanna, Ms. Messer, Mr. Cohen
Nayes - None

BUSINESS

Ms. Messer moved the following:

3.1 Payment of Bills

Whereas, the Board Secretary has audited certain vendor claims as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2 and Board Policy 6470 and presented them to the Livingston Board of Education with the recommendation they be paid, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the payment of the following bills in the amounts listed and attach a complete copy of these bills to the minutes of this meeting.

Fund	Name	Amount
10&11	Regular	\$1,164,228.72
12	Regular	128,273.48
20	Regular	51,173.88
	TOTAL	\$1,343,676.08

Regular Checks	95258-95669	1,343,676.08
	TOTAL	\$1,343,676.08

3.2 Board Secretary Report – December 2021

Whereas, the Livingston Board of Education has received the Report of the Board Secretary for December 31, 2021, consisting of:

- 1) Interim Balance Sheets
- 2) Interim Statements Comparing Budgeted Revenue with Actual to Date and Appropriations with Expenditures and Encumbrances to Date
- 3) Schedule of Revenues - Actual Compared with Estimated
- 4) Statement of Appropriations Compared with Expenditures and encumbrances, and

Whereas, the Livingston Board of Education has received the report of the Treasurer for December 31, 2021, which report is in agreement with the Report of the Board Secretary, and

Whereas, these reports show the following balances on the date indicated:

	Cash Balance	Appropriation Balance	Fund Balance
(10) General Current Exp. Fund	19,530,758	25,718,154	
(11) Current Expense			11,830,746
(12) Capital Outlay		441,205	4,389,775
(20) Special Revenue Fund	374,910	2,212,618	
(30) Capital Projects Fund	4,543,681		
(40) Debt Service Fund	1,497,241		
Total:	25,946,590	28,371,977	16,220,521

Whereas, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-212(d), the Board Secretary has certified that as of December 31, 2021, no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments contractual orders which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8, 18A:22-8.1, now therefore be it

Resolved, the Livingston Board of Education accepts the above referenced reports and certification and directs that they be made part of this resolution by reference, and be it

Further Resolved, the Livingston Board of Education certifies that, after review of the Secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of its knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C.6:20-2.13(d) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

3.3 Transfers

Whereas, the Superintendent of Schools recommends certain transfers among accounts in the 2021-2022 budget for December pursuant to Board of Education Policy 6422, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education ratify transfers pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8.1 and N.J.A.C. 6:20-2A.10:

<u>Object</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>
590	Misc. Purchased Serv.		1,500
600	Supplies and Materials	1,500	
610	General Supplies	1,000	
640	Textbooks		1,000
	TOTALS	\$2,500	\$2,500

3.4 Committee Assignments

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the president’s designation of *Seth Cohen* as the board’s representative to the Essex Regional Educational Services Commission for 2022.

3.5 Approval of Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the June 30, 2021 audit report.

3.6 Settlement Agreement

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the Settlement Agreement for Case #01-2022 which is on file at the Board of Education office.

3.7 Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission Cooperative Pricing Agreement

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves entering into a cooperative pricing agreement with the Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission as shown on **Attachment D**.

3.8 Conferences and Overnight Trips

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves three coaches to chaperone qualifying members of the Livingston High School Varsity Wrestling team to attend the NJSIAA Individual State Championships in Atlantic City from March 2 to March 5, 2022.

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls (abstain check #95313), Mrs. Khanna, Ms. Messer, Mr. Cohen
Naves - None

PERSONNEL

Ms. Arnette moved the following:

4.1 Resignations

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the resignations of:

Name	Position	Reason	Location	Last Day of Employment
<i>Jeffrey Wieboldt</i>	Teacher of Math	Retirement	LHS	June 30, 2022
<i>Linda Kleban</i>	Teacher of Art	Retirement	LHS	June 30, 2022
<i>Maureen Oswald</i>	Intervention/ Enrichment Specialist	Retirement	Harrison	June 30, 2022
<i>Victoria Risorto</i>	Teacher of Business Ed	Resignation	HMS	March 25, 2022
<i>Samantha Engel</i>	Teacher of Social Studies	Resignation	LHS	March 31, 2022
<i>Jamal Chavis</i>	ABA Discrete Trial TA	Resignation	BHE	February 11, 2022
<i>Karen Barling</i>	Playground Aide	Resignation	BHE	January 28, 2022

**as amended from a previous agenda*

4.2 Leaves of Absences

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the leaves of absences of:

Name	Location	Position	LOA w/pay and benefits	LOA w/o pay, but with benefits (if applicable)	Extended LOA w/o pay or benefits	Return Date
<i>Gregory Peters</i>	HMS	Teacher of Science	2/14/2022-3/18/2022**	3/21/2022-5/20/2022**	NA	5/23/2022
<i>Sofia Haskell</i>	BHE	Teacher of Spanish	11/29/2021-2/3/2022	2/4/2022-2/10/2022 & 2/11/2022-5/20/2022**	NA	5/23/2022
<i>Robert Brenneck*</i>	CO	IT Support Specialist	NA	4/21/2022-5/13/2022**	NA	5/16/2022
<i>Jenna McCarthy</i>	LHS	Teacher of Biology	3/14/2022-5/30/2022	5/31/2022-10/28/2022**	NA	10/31/2022

**as amended from a previous agenda*

***Designates time counted toward NJFLA/FMLA*

4.3 Appointments

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the applications indicated below (*) for emergent hiring for the following appointments under the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1 et.

seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39.17 et. seq.; N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. All appointments are contingent upon reference checks in accordance with P.L. 2018, c.5.

Name	Location	Title	Tenure Track/LOA or LT Replacement	Replacing	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Date
<i>Elena Cannarozzi</i>	LHS	Teacher of Math	Leave Replacement	P. Catalano/ P. Peklo	BA	1	\$54,550 (prorated)	1/3/2022
<i>Samantha Da Silva</i>	LHS	Teacher of Social Studies	Leave Replacement	K. Picardo	BA	1	\$54,550 (prorated)	1/3/2022
<i>Jordan Virgil</i>	HMS	Teacher of English	Leave Replacement	B. Moghadam niya	MA	1	\$61,884 (prorated)	3/15/2022 or earlier if released from current district
<i>Daniel Quackenbush*</i>	LHS	Teacher of Business Ed.	First Year Tenure Track	M. Wohltmann	MA+32	13	\$97,308 (prorated)	2/16/2022
<i>Alyssa Ratner*</i>	HIL/COL	TOSD	First Year Tenure Track	NA	BA	1-2	\$54,550 (prorated)	1/10/2022
<i>Smruti Shah*</i>	HMS/LHS	Teacher of ESL	First Year Tenure Track	L. Brown	MA	9	\$72,562 (prorated)	1/25/2022
<i>Joanne O'Donnell*</i>	Transportation	Bus Driver	NA	W. Ablard	BD	5	\$24,588 (prorated)	1/18/2022

**as amended from a previous agenda*

4.3a Appointment

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the application indicated below (*) for emergent hiring for the following appointment under the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1 et. seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39.17 et. seq.; N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. All appointments are contingent upon reference checks in accordance with P.L. 2018, c.5.

Name	Location	Title	Tenure Track/LOA or LT Replacement	Replacing	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Date
<i>Cindy Cooney</i>	HMS	Teacher of Business ed	First Year Tenure Track	V. Risorto	MA+32	13	\$97,308 (prorated)	3/9/2022

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the ABA Discrete Trial TA's and Instructional Aides as listed on **Attachment E**.

4.4 Transfers

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the transfers as listed on **Attachment F**.

4.5 Substitutes

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the individuals listed below to serve as substitutes on an as-needed basis for the 2021-2022 school year:

Teachers

Bradley Gerstle
Alexa Malone
John Mansfield

Owen McFadden
Gabriella Mattia

Secretarial

Colleen Currao (\$17.50/hr)

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals listed on **Attachment G** as certified substitutes. These individuals are currently employed by the District. In the event these individuals are called upon to serve as a substitute, they will be compensated an additional \$50/day (\$10/period) for that assignment.

4.6 Extra Work Pay

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following payments as listed on **Attachment H** for work performed.

4.7 Extra Period Assignments

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals listed on **Attachment I** for extra period assignments during the 2021-2022 school year.

4.8 Longevity

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals listed on **Attachment J** for longevity effective and retroactive to February 1, 2022.

4.9 Stipends

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment K** for athletic stipends at Livingston High School for the 2021-2022 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment L** for co-curricular stipends at Livingston High School for the 2021-2022 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment M** for co-curricular stipends at Heritage Middle School for the 2021-2022 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the resignation of *Priti Peklo* from the stipend position of *Class of 2022 (Senior Class) Advisor* for Livingston High School for the 2021-2022 school year effective January 28, 2022.

4.10 Mentor Fees

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment N** listed as assigned mentors to receive payment in accordance with the schedule listed.

Ms. Messer seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mrs. Khanna, Ms. Messer, Mr. Cohen
Nayes - None

MISCELLANEOUS

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

5.1 HIB Report

Resolved, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the findings of HIB cases.

Ms. Messer seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE - Ayes - Ms. Arnette, Mrs. Chirls, Mrs. Khanna, Ms. Messer, Mr. Cohen
Nayes - None

Public Comment ~ up to 15 minutes

Rachel Kemelman, 29 Norman Court, asked what our plans are with the lifting of the mask mandate and Mr. Cohen explained our process will remain the same, we will consult with our local health leaders and when the time is right, Dr. Block will make an announcement to the community.

Old Business

Mr. Cohen asked the board if they have any feedback on the revised letter to the Department of Education that is advocating for emergency use of up to three remote school days, if warranted.

Everyone was in support of the letter except Ms. Messer, who expressed she does not support the concept of reducing the 180 day in-person requirement. Since the majority of the board was in support, Dr. Block will send the letter.

New Business

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:45 p.m., Ms. Messer made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mrs. Khanna seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor

Respectfully submitted,



**Michael Davison
Board Secretary**

