



## **LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP/VOTING MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Executive Session - HMS Faculty Room - 6:30 p.m.

Public Session - Hybrid Meeting in Heritage Middle School Cafeteria - 7:15 p.m.

A **Workshop/Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date in the Heritage Middle School Cafeteria and via Zoom and Facebook Live. The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by Vineeta Khanna, Board President, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 3, 2023 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, Parul Khemka and Jake Ferrans

Also in Attendance: Dr. Matthew Block, Thomas Lambe, Lisa Capone-Steiger, Mark Stern, Susan Burman, Attorney Matthew Giacobbe and Joann Goldberg

Mr. Cohen 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:

- legal and student matters

Action may be taken upon return to the public session. The full length of the meeting is anticipated to be approximately 45 minutes and be it

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

Mrs. Khemka seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor.

At 7:15 p.m., Mrs. Khanna reconvened the public meeting. There were approximately 100 members of the public and staff watching in person and through the webinar and Facebook Live Stream.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### **1. Opening of School**

Dr. Block reported that over 6,000 students returned to school last Tuesday and that we also welcomed about 60 new educators into the district this school year.

Dr. Block announced that Back to School nights begin tomorrow and go through the first week of October.

Dr. Block announced that he attended the community's 9-11 Memorial Ceremony.

Dr. Block explained in order to assist with our growing enrollment, the district purchased annexes to be placed at Burnet Hill and Hillside Schools. Hillside's annex was assembled today, is waiting to have electric and plumbing hooked up and should be open in the next week or so. Burnet Hill's annex is a little further behind. Dr. Block added that offices and one-to-one rooms where professionals work with students will be housed in the annexes.

Dr. Block continued that a few people have contacted him about the amount of space the annex is taking up at Burnet Hill and he explained that while it is a construction site, a larger section is fenced off for delivery of the annex and equipment and to allow space for contractors to work. Dr. Block continued that the footprint of the annex will be much smaller than what is fenced off and assured parents that there will be plenty of field space for the kids to run and play once installation is complete.

## **Board Reports**

Mr. Cohen acknowledged Mrs. Khanna for running a productive 5:5 meeting with the Township last week.

Mrs. Khanna read the following statement, "Subsequent to our last meeting on August 8, some of us on the Board, along with some staff members at the office, have been the target of hateful phone calls and messages from people who are not part of the Livingston community and have no understanding of the culture or climate of our town, nor are they invested in anything Livingston related. I, myself, have received several emails reeking of hatred, xenophobia and gender bias. These messages contained extremely disturbing and denigrating verbiage. I, myself, and on behalf of my Board colleagues, and the district staff who work here, would like to take this opportunity to thank the community for reaching out with your comforting words, for checking in on our physical safety, and above all, checking in on our mental well-being. Thank you, that is all we need to keep us focused and committed in service to the Livingston community. "

Mrs. Khemka asked for a motion to move 3.2 up in the agenda for voting.

Mrs. Khemka moved the following:

### **3.2 Bylaws, Policies & Regulations**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education suspends Bylaw #0131 for this meeting for the purposes of approving Bylaw #0167 and #0168, effective September 12, 2023.

Bylaw #0167 - Public Participation in Board Meetings  
Bylaw #0168 - Recording Board Meetings

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

Attorney Matthew Giacobbe explained Bylaws #0167 and #0168 have been updated to be in full compliance with the law as it is right now. Under Bylaw #0167, Public Participation in Board Meetings, changes include that the length of public participation is at the sole discretion of the presiding officer, participants no longer need to state their home address, participants may speak only once and are limited to three minutes' duration, there shall be no cross dialogue between participants and the Board or Administration, and upon conclusion of the participant's remarks, the presiding officer may respond and/or direct the Administration to respond. The presiding officer may also request an individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.

Under Bylaw #0168, Recording Board Meetings, members of the public can record the meetings; however, recordings by the public must not distract the meeting in any manner, notice to record should be given to the Board Secretary prior to commencement of the meeting and if a recording device interferes with the conduct of a meeting, the presiding officer may order that the interfering device be removed and/or request that the individual conducting the records leave the meeting.

The Bylaws will be implemented tonight and be reaffirmed at the September 26 meeting.

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

### **Student Representative's Report**

Mr. Ferrans reported that Seniors had breakfast provided by the HSA in the Madonna parking lot on what is their last, first day of school, Juniors are enjoying their open campus privileges, the SGA has announced they will host a homecoming dance and that fall sports teams have been doing well. Girls tennis is currently top 15 in the State and recently won their Invitational Tournament, boys cross country won the Lancer Invitational and boy soccer recently won their game at Newark Academy.

### **Public Comment**

Attorney Giacobbe read the following statement, which will be included in all LBOE agendas:

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. To protect the privacy of all students and staff, concerns regarding individual students and staff members should generally be addressed by first meeting with the appropriate administrative staff.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public comment at every meeting of the Board.

Public participation shall be permitted only as indicated in accordance with Board Bylaw No. 0167.

Public participation shall be extended to residents of this district, persons having a legitimate interest in the actions of this Board, persons representing groups in the community or school district, representatives of firms eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board, and employees and pupils of this district, except when the issue addressed by the participant is subject to remediation by an alternate method provided for in policies or contracts of the Board.

Public participation is not an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the Board and 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 appropriate;
2. A participant is limited to three (3) minutes' duration; elapsed time will be determined through the use of a timing device operated by the Board Secretary;
3. No participant may speak more than once and there shall be no yielding of time among speakers;
4. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually;
5. There shall be no cross dialogue between the participant and the Board and/or Administration;

6. Upon conclusion of a participant's remarks, the presiding officer will acknowledge the individual's remarks and may respond and/or direct a member of the Administration to respond to an inquiry following the participant's remarks or at the conclusion of the public participation session.

The presiding officer may:

- a. Interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;
- b. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum
- c. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;
- d. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action; and
- e. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or the efficient administration of the Board's business.

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8

N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

Erica Lipman, Livingston, expressed concern that the Burnet Hill annex is taking up valuable field space, suggested altering other areas for students to play in front of the school, asked what is being done to strategically handle the growth in town, asked if any existing buildings could be repurposed, and asked what is being done to handle the increase in traffic around the school.

Alexa Sherry, Livingston, expressed concern about overcrowding at Burnet Hill and requested the annex at Burnet Hill be moved to a different location on the property.

David Lipsic, Livingston, advocated having police officers in our school buildings to keep the schools safe.

Berry Chu, Livingston, thanked the Board for instituting the equity audit to gain an understanding of where we can do better for all of our children in the community.

Cindy Goldstein, Livingston, named a number of issues she has with courses and scheduling at the high school and will email them to the Board and Administration.

Michelle Lemieux, Livingston, requested that a painted crosswalk be put where students walk to and from Burnet Hill, that potholes in the road be repaired and asked if we could assist in fixing the sidewalks on Byron.

Shyella Mayk, Livingston, expressed concern about the location of the annex at Burnet Hill and requested it be moved to a different location on the property.

Melissa Gourvitz, Livingston, expressed concern over the high turnover in special education case managers for her child.

Tom FitzPatrick, Livingston, expressed concern over the larger class sizes and is worried we are behind in planning for the future if it takes three to four years for construction to occur.

Fran Frederick, Livingston, thanked everyone for taking time to review our policies; however, she thinks they need to be more welcoming and include protection for participants.

Dr. Lembeck, Livingston, suggested following the evidence based on research that shows having officers in schools with guns doesn't make them more safe.

Gurinder Khaira, asked what is being done to fix the larger class size problem in the long term.

Depika Kotari, stated her child at HMS is continuing to wait an extended period of time for the bus, both being picked up and dropped off.

Mrs. Khanna explained that the Board has been proactive in addressing the increase in enrollment for the short term by purchasing the annexes and have set up a Long Range Facilities Planning Committee that includes members of the community, our administrators, staff and a representative from the Town Council, to look at long term solutions that could include expansion or construction to create space for our students.

Dr. Block added that we are taking a look at the district as a whole when thinking about our future needs. For Burnet Hill and Hillside, by moving some of the offices outside, we were able to open up additional classroom space inside the school buildings. We have already set up the first meeting of the Long Range Facilities Planning Committee to begin to work on long term solutions.

Dr. Block explained students should not be waiting half an hour for a bus now that we are in the second week of school and to contact us with any transportation issues.

Dr. Block explained crosswalks are a town issue but that we will advocate for this when we have our next meeting with the Police Department and that he will also speak with them about the traffic concerns at Burnet Hill.

Ms. Rozensweig responded that parents who are interested in having their child add or drop a course should reach out to her or their child's assistant principal.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL**

### **PROGRAM/CURRICULUM**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

#### **1.1 New Jersey Institute of Technology**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education authorizes the Options for Advanced Academic Achievement Secondary School Partnership Program Agreement between the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Livingston Public Schools for three consecutive school years: 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025. The program provides qualified high school students with the opportunity to take college credit courses at Livingston High School during the regular academic year.

Ms. Arnette seconded the motion.

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

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

#### **2.1 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 2023-2024 school year:

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education	\$2,000.00/day
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Ms. Arnette seconded the motion.

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

**BUSINESS**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

**3.1 Settlement Agreement**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the Settlement Agreement for Case #09-2023 which is on file at the Board of Education office.

Ms. Arnette seconded the motion.

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

**PERSONNEL**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

**4.1 Resignations & Retirements**

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

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Last Day of Employment</b>
<i>Maria Lekhrajmal</i>	Custodian	Retirement	RHE	September 30, 2023
<i>James Page*</i>	Teacher of Math	Retirement	LHS	November 30, 2023
<i>Salvatore Lazzara</i>	Assistant Manager of B&G	Resignation	CO	October 20, 2023, or earlier if a replacement can be found
<i>Jordan Montgomery</i>	Teacher of Art	Resignation	BHE	June 30, 2023
<i>Maryann D'Alessandro</i>	LDT-C	Resignation	BHE	October 5, 2023, unless a replacement is secured earlier.
<i>Kristin Mahoney</i>	Reading Interventionist (LOA)	Resignation	Hillside	October 20, 2023, or earlier if a replacement can be found
<i>Laura Colantoni</i>	Teacher of Science	Resignation	HMS	October 27, 2023, or earlier if a replacement can be found
<i>Krista Fitzgerald</i>	Teacher of Art (LOA)	Resignation	BHE	June 30, 2023
<i>Bonnie Platek</i>	Instructional Aide	Resignation	Collins	June 30, 2023
<i>Dzvenymyra Pryhoda</i>	Instructional Aide	Resignation	Harrison	June 30, 2023

<i>Pankhuri Khandelwal</i>	Instructional Aide	Resignation	MPMS	June 30, 2023
<i>Keelin O'Connor</i>	ABA Discrete Trial TA	Resignation	BHE	June 30, 2023
<i>Laurenza Theodore</i>	ABA Discrete Trial TA	Resignation	BHE	June 30, 2023
<i>Mary Grace Schiavone</i>	ABA Discrete Trial TA	Resignation	BHE	June 30, 2023
<i>Shirley Osco Garrido</i>	Kindergarten Aide	Resignation	Hillside	September 22, 2023
<i>Maria Teresa Agnello</i>	Playground Aide	Resignation	MPE	June 30, 2023

*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

#### **4.2 Leaves of Absences**

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

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>LOA w/pay and benefits</b>	<b>LOA w/o pay, but with benefits (if applicable)</b>	<b>Extended LOA w/o pay or benefits</b>	<b>Return Date</b>
<i>Arbena Asani</i>	MPE	Custodian	NA	8/28/2023-10/6/2023**	NA	10/9/2023
<i>Stephanie Crosby</i>	Collins	Reading Interventionist	1/29/2024-3/4/2024	3/5/2024-6/4/2024**	6/5/2024-6/7/2024	6/10/2024
<i>Sofia Haskell</i>	BHE/HAR	Teacher of Spanish	2/19/2024-3/15/2024 & 3/18/2024-4/5/2024**	4/8/2024-6/14/2024**	6/17/2024-6/20/2024	8/29/2024
<i>Sara Kiene*</i>	Harrison	TOSD	9/11/2023-10/31/2023	11/1/2023-11/24/2023 & 11/27/2023-3/1/2024**	3/4/2024-6/30/2024	8/29/2024
<i>Alan Predestin</i>	Transportation	Bus Driver	9/11/2023-10/9/2023**	10/10/2023-11/3/2023** & 3/11/2024-4/5/2024**	NA	4/8/2024

*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

*\*\*Designates time counted toward NJFLA/FMLA*

#### **4.3 Transfers**

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

#### 4.4 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>Harris Goldman</i>	LHS	Teacher of Business Ed	Leave Replacement	S. Rembecky	MA	1	\$63,075 (prorated)	8/30/2023-11/30/2023
<i>Anthony Cassie</i>	MPE	Teacher of Health & PE	Leave Replacement	R. Blau	BA	1	\$55,075 (prorated)	8/30/2023-12/8/2023
<i>Emily Sanchez</i>	BHE/MPE	Teacher of Art	First Year Tenure Track	J. Montgomery	BA	9	\$65,525 (prorated)	10/23/2023 or earlier if released by current district
<i>Pietrina Daly</i>	LHS	School Nurse	NA	C. Ross (transfer)	NCSN	7	\$70,499, plus 2 summer days at per diem rate	8/30/2023
<i>Kelsey Bunker</i>	Hillside	Elementary School Teacher	First Year Tenure Track	K. Murray (transfer)	MA	3/4	\$64,475	8/30/2023
<i>Khayani Reese</i>	MPMS	School Social Worker	First Year Tenure Track	J. Weiss	MA	8	\$69,625 (prorated)	11/13/2023 or earlier if released by current district
<i>Karina Vazquez</i>	BHE	School Social Worker	First Year Tenure Track	M. D'Alessandro	MA	10	\$77,525 (prorated)	11/7/2023 or earlier if released by current district
<i>Rosanna Forgione*</i>	HMS	Teacher of Italian	Leave Replacement	V. Belcastro	BA	1	\$55,075 (prorated)	8/30/2023-11/30/2023
<i>Pamela Volpe*</i>	Harrison	Instructional Aide (.83)	NA	NA	IA	6	\$25,833	8/30/2023
<i>Pamela Volpe*</i>	Harrison	TOSD (.17)	First Year Tenure Track	new	MA	3/4	\$10,961	8/30/2023
<i>Shelly Lipka</i>	HMS/MPM/LHS	Occupational Therapist (.8)	Tenured	NA	MA	15	\$77,740, plus \$3,690 longevity	8/30/2023
<i>Matthew Ojeda*</i>	Elementary	Teacher of Music	First Year Tenure Track	J. DiBiasse	BA	10	\$69,525 prorated	8/31/2023

\*as amended from a previous agenda

\*\*will stay at same step for 2023-2024 school year

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

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individual(s) on **Attachment C** for reappointment as Playground, Cafeteria and Media Aides for the 2023-2024 school year at the rates listed.

#### 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 2023-2024 school year:



**Teachers**

Deborah Griffel  
Nancy Koppel  
Annette Norvell  
Rachel Serviss

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the individual(s) listed below to serve as long-term substitutes as reflected below:

Name	Location	Title	Leave Replacement or Long Term Sub	Replacing	Salary	Effective Date
Catherine Bitar*	RHE	Elementary School Teacher	Long-Term Substitute	T. Lockwood	\$275/day	8/30/2023-10/13/2023
Rina Haleva	Harrison	School Counselor	Long-Term Substitute	C. Siti	\$315/day	8/30/2023-11/8/2023

*\*to be paid the difference between \$275/day and the individual's current per diem rate.*

**4.6 Lateral Moves**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the lateral moves as listed on **Attachment D**.

**4.7 Extra Period Assignments**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the extra period assignments as listed on **Attachment E**.

**4.8 Summer Work**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the team leaders on **Attachment F** to work up to six hours over the summer of 2023. Individuals will be compensated at the hourly rate approved for curriculum writing.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment G** to participate in summer curriculum writing during the summer of 2023 at the approved rate.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment H** to participate in summer curriculum writing during the summer of 2023 at the approved rate and be paid in accordance with the ESSER grant.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment I** to work up to three (3) days over the summer of 2023 in the LHS Media Center at their per diem rate.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals listed on **Attachment J** to be paid for up to 3 days over the summer of 2023 for work performed in conjunction with the OSE grant at the rate of \$200 for each day worked. These individuals will also receive a \$222 stipend for remote hours worked during the Fall of 2023 (by 12/30/23) and a \$222 stipend for remote hours worked during the Spring of 2024 (by 5/30/24).

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the Technology Coaches listed on **Attachment K** for summer work as indicated.

#### **4.9 Stipends**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment L** for athletic stipends at Livingston High School for the 2023-2024 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 Livingston High School for the 2023-2024 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 N** for co curricular stipends at the elementary schools for the 2023-2024 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education rescinds the appointment of *Audrey Giordano* for the Student Equity Advisor stipend at Mt. Pleasant Middle School for the 2023-2024 school year.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education rescinds the appointment of *Ellen Papazian* for the Newspaper stipend at Mt. Pleasant Middle School for the 2023-2024 school year.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education rescinds the appointment of *Eileen Saladino* for the Assistant to the Principal stipend at Harrison Elementary School for the 2023-2024 school year.

#### **4.10 Contract Adjustments**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the contract adjustments as listed on **Attachment O**.

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

#### **PREVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 VOTING MEETING AGENDA**

The board reviewed the upcoming items that are on the September 26 agenda.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

1. Voting Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2023
2. Public Portion of Executive Session Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2023

#### **PROGRAM/CURRICULUM**

**1.1 Textbooks and DVDs**

**1.2 Student Teachers**

**1.3 Field Trips**

#### **BUSINESS**

**3.1 Conferences and Overnight Trips**

**3.2 Update to Financial Depositories and Signatures**

**3.3 Bylaws, Policies & Regulations**

#### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

#### **New Business**

September 12, 2023

Dr. Block announced those who are new to the community are invited to the Welcome to Livingston Event next Tuesday, September 19 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Livingston Community Center.

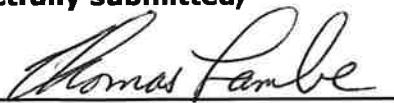
**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:25 p.m., Mr. Cohen made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Arnette seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor.

**Respectfully submitted,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas Lambe". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

**Thomas Lambe**  
**Board Secretary**

September 12, 2023