

Palisades Park Board of Education
Work Session/Special Business Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 17, 2025 – at 6:30 p.m., Early Childhood Center

A. CALL TO ORDER: Board President

B. FLAG SALUTE

C. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Ms. Soo Chung	☒	☐
Mr. William Kim	☒	☐
Mr. Anthony Kim	☒	☐
Ms. Rebekah Lee	☒	☐
Ms. Sookyung Park	☒	☐
Ms. Boyoung Yu	☒	☐
Mr. Aaron Pak	☒	☐
Mr. Jun Yim	☒	☐
Mr. Sergio Calle	☐	☒
Dr. Joseph Cirillo	☒	☐
Busch Law Group	☒	☐
Tyler Jung-Student Rep	☐	☒

D. STATEMENT OF PRESIDING OFFICER

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975), I hereby state that notice of this **Special Meeting** has been provided to the public by a written notice dated June 13, 2025 (date of published notice)

The Meeting Notice has been:

1. Emailed to all staff members at the district's 3 school locations.
2. Communicated to The Record.
3. Filed with the Borough Clerk of Palisades Park.

E. REVIEW AND DISCUSS RESOLUTIONS TO BE VOTED ON AT THE SPECIAL MEETING

Board Minutes - Ms. Soo Chung requested that a paragraph be added to the April 30th meeting minutes under the President's Report. She will provide the paragraph for inclusion.

Buildings and Grounds - Mr. Aaron Pak requested that proper documentation and required forms be submitted for KAA's use of the high school gym. Dr. Cirillo confirmed that without the appropriate paperwork, the group would not be permitted to use school facilities and assured the matter would be followed up.

Finance item #8 - A question was raised regarding the number of classrooms at New Christian Academy and the certification of the teachers. Dr. Cirillo stated that four classrooms are proposed, and the teachers are certified by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Finance item #10 - Mr. Aaron Pak inquired about extraordinary aid not being appropriated in fiscal years 2023 and 2024. Mr. Aleks Kondovski explained that extraordinary aid supports districts with classified students whose expenses exceed certain thresholds. Since this aid is not required to be budgeted, it was not included and will go into surplus for future use. For FY 2024-25, budgeting for this aid is necessary to maintain sufficient account balances. Dr. Cirillo added that this

funding serves as a financial buffer, which had not been needed previously but is now being used as a precaution. Ms. Soo Chung asked if the funds could have prevented a position cut in the special education program. Dr. Cirillo clarified that the eliminated position pertains to the upcoming school year, while the current funds address needs for the present year and beyond, as some accounts have already exceeded their limits.

Negotiations - Mr. William Kim reported that a memorandum of agreement has been reached between the Board of Education and the Education Association. The agreement was signed at the end of last month and is expected to lead to a finalized contract for board approval in the near future.

Ms. Soo Chung addressed inquiries from parents regarding the absence of a summer program for lower elementary grades this year. Dr. Cirillo explained that insufficient funding, the expiration of federal aid, and the pending arrival of Title funds limited offerings. Currently, the district can only provide special education services per students' IEPs and remediation for grades 5 through 8.

F. ADJOURN WORK SESSION: OPEN REGULAR MEETING

Motion to close work session and open regular meeting.

Moved by: Jun Yim

Seconded by: Aaron Pak

All in favor – aye

G. REPORT OF THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Ms. Soo Chung thanked the community members and parents and guardians for survey responses that will aid in the search for the new superintendent.

H. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Valedictorian!

Dr. Cirillo congratulated the Kindergarten students on their graduation. He noted that graduation ceremonies for Lindbergh and the high school were scheduled for the following day; however, due to the forecast of inclement weather, a final decision regarding alternative plans would be made by 11:00 a.m.

Dr. Cirillo announced that this year's valedictorian is Jamie Lee.

Additionally, Thiara Nunez Beltre, a student in the Italian National Honor Society, was awarded a scholarship by the Italian government.

Regarding the Italian program, Dr. Cirillo shared that there is a strong possibility of offering four levels of Italian next year, although no final decision has been made.

He concluded by recognizing the faculty, staff, and administrators for their hard work and dedication throughout what has been a challenging year, and expressed his appreciation for their efforts.

I. REPORT OF THE BOARD ATTORNEY

J. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

1. Approval of Minutes

Special Business Meeting – April 11 2025, April 30, 2025

Move that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon recommendation of the Superintendent approves the minutes of the following meetings;

- April 11, 2025 Special Business Meeting Minutes
- April 11, 2025 Executive Meeting Minutes
- April 30, 2025 Regular Business Meeting Minutes
- April 30, 2025 Executive Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve meeting minutes.

Moved by: Jun Yim

Seconded by: Soo Chung

All in favor – aye

COMMITTEE REPORTS

K. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS – Aaron Pak

L. COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS REP/ALTERNATE - Anthony Kim

M. EDUCATION

Consent agenda for Item 1 – Sookyung Park

1. FIELD TRIPS

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent approves the following Field Trips:

- Destination: Orlando, Florida
- Date: February 5th thru 10th, 2026
- Time: 7:00 a.m. departure (February 5th)
- Group: Dance Team/Various Grade Levels
- Cost per Student: \$900 (before fundraising)

Motion to approve.

Moved by: Jun Yim

Seconded by: Boyoung Yu

All in favor – aye

N. EVALUATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE – William Kim

O. FINANCE

Consent Agenda for Items 1-10 – Boyoung Yu

1. FOOD SERVICE VOUCHERS

BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon recommendation of the Superintendent approves Food Service Payment(s) as follows:

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	COST
Pomptonian, Inc.	05/16/25 – PAL637051625	\$39,665.00
Pomptonian, Inc.	05/23/25 – PAL637052325	\$10,516.26
Pomptonian, Inc.	05/30/25 – PAL637053025	\$33,688.90
Jay Hill Repairs	Walk-in Freezer – Lindbergh	\$480.00
Jay Hill Repairs	Walk-in Freezer – PPHS	\$3,836.34
Bug Tech Inc.	Lindbergh/PPHS Cafeteria Invoices	\$416.00

2. APPROVAL OF PAYROLL – 05/30/2025, 06/13/2025

BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent approves the following payroll amount:

Payroll Date	Amount
05/30/25	\$900,109.09
06/13/25	\$972,183.32

3. APPROVAL OF THE BILL LIST – JUNE

BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent approves the May 2025 bill list in the amount of **\$1,465,771.14**:

- Fund 10 (General/Current Expenses) \$1,150,648.13
- Fund 20 (Special Revenue) \$226,520.51
- Fund 30 (Capital Projects Fund) \$0
- Fund 60 (Food Service) \$88,602.50

4. STUDENT ACTIVITIES ACCOUNTS

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent accepts the financial reports for the High School and the Lindbergh School Activities Accounts, for the month ending 05/31/2025. (on file in BOE Office)

5. CERTIFICATE OF IMPLEMENTATION – AUDIT FY 2024

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the submission of the Certification of Implementation for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2024; this document certifies that the Board has implemented all 2024 audit recommendations.

6. APPROVAL OF PURCHASING MANUAL AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the Purchasing Manual and Standard Operating Procedures for the Year 2025.

7. HOME CARE THERAPIES – CLINICAL STAFFING – AGREEMENT

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, renews a services agreement between the Board of Education and “Home Care Therapies, LLC” to provide a full range of staffing services on an as-needed basis. The Agreement will be effective 07/01/2025 – 06/30/2026 at a rate contingent on type of service.

8. NEW CHRISTIAN ACADEMY – AGREEMENT – 25-26 SY

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent approves New Christian Academy, 430 Commercial Avenue, Palisades Park, as a preschool private provider as per the contract, effective 09/01/2025 – 06/30/2026.

9. NJSIAA – NJ STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the membership in the NJ State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) for the 2025-2026 school year. Palisades Park High School is authorized to participate in the approved athletic activities sponsored by the NJSIAA. The BOE agrees to be governed by the Rules and Regulations of the NJSIAA. Annual membership dues: \$2,500.00

10. EXTRAORDINARY AID APPROPRIATION

ACCEPTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF 2023-24 EXTRAORDINARY AID Motion is necessary for the acceptance and implementation of the 2023-24 Extraordinary Aid in the amount of \$540,674.

WHEREAS, the Palisades Park Board of Education has received Special Education Extraordinary Aid for FY 2023-2024 in the amount of \$540,674; and

WHEREAS, \$540,674 was not appropriated during FY 2023-2024; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.3(d)6 that allows a district board of education to appropriate

surplus generated from any Federal and/or State revenue excluded from the excess surplus calculation in the pre-budget year in accordance with the annual audit program;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education approve the transfer of \$500,000 of Other State Aid Revenue to the district's General Fund account, and appropriate to the following:

\$500,000 to 11-000-291-270-01 Employee Benefits

Moved by: Boyoung Yu Seconded By: Sookyung Park
VOTE

Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	N/P	Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	N/P
Soo Chung	☒	☐	☐	☐	Boyoung Yu	☒	☐	☐	☐
Sergio Calle	☐	☐	☐	☒	Sookyung Park	☒	☐	☐	☐
Rebekah Lee	☒	☐	☐	☐	William Kim	☒	☐	☐	☐
Anthony Kim	☒	☐	☐	☐	Aaron Pak	☒	☐	☐	☐
Jun Yim	☒	☐	☐	☐					

P. NEGOTIATIONS – William Kim

Q. NJ SCHOOL BOARDS LIAISON/ALTERNATE – Anthony Kim

R. PERSONNEL

Consent agenda for Items 1-5 – Jun Yim

1. SALARY ADJUSTMENT REQUESTS

BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves a salary adjustment request as follows:

Ive Pavin

Present Step/Salary:

Step 8-9 BA - \$63,600

Adjustment:

Step 8-9 BA+15 – \$64,270

Effective: 09/01/2025

Based on current salary guide. Salary may change due to negotiations

Joowon Yim

Present Step/Salary:

Step 15 MA+15 - \$87,400

Adjustment:

Step 15 6 Yr – \$92,025

Effective: 09/01/2025

Based on current salary guide. Salary may change due to negotiations

2. REQUEST FOR LEAVE

BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent approve the following leave requests:

Staff ID No.	Effective	Return Date
6161 (leave extension)	09/01/2025	09/01/2026
0066	05/28/2025	10/31/2025
234010	10/07/2025	09/01/2026

3. RESIGNATIONS OF STAFF

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palisades Park Board of Education accepts the following resignations:

Employee Name	Position	Account #	Effective
Andrew Garcia	Principal – High School	11-000-240-103-01	Pending – 60 days
Luis Penalillo	Behaviorist	20-218-200-176-04	06/30/2025
Paula Gonzalez	Secretary	20-218-200-105-04	7/20/2025
Jessenia Camilo	Teacher Aide	11-000-262-107-01	07/30/2025
Grace Lee	Speech-Language Specialist	11-000-216-101-01	6/30/2025

4. SUMMER SCHOOL PERSONNEL

BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent approves the appointment of the following staff for Summer School Staff:

Name	Position	Rate	Account Number
Lisa Panchi	Special Education ESY	\$35 per hour	11-422-100-101-01
Jodi Burrows	Special Education ESY	\$35 per hour	11-422-100-101-01
William Hutchinson	Special Education ESY	\$35 per hour	11-422-100-101-01
Sheila Nastasi	Special Education ESY	\$35 per hour	11-422-100-101-01
Rachel Morgese	Special Education ESY	\$35 per hour	11-422-100-101-01
Jessica Colon	Special Education ESY	\$35 per hour	11-422-100-101-01

Up to 3 hours per day for 15 days

5. APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

BE IT RESOLVED that the Palisades Park Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent approves the appointment of the following personnel for the 2025-2026 school year:

Employee Name	Position	Salary/Stipend	Start Date	Account #	Building
Carol Sanango	Kindergarten Special Education	*\$58,650* BA Step 1	09/01/2025	11-213-100-101-01	ECC
Marly Goldring	Preschool Teacher	*\$61,765* MA Step 1	09/01/2025	20-218-100-101-04	ECC
Cheryl Fuqua (Salary Adjustment)	Leave Replacement – 2 nd Grade	*\$59,800* BA+15 Step 2	09/01/2025	11-120-100-101-02	Lindbergh
Peter McCormack	High School Social Studies Teacher	*\$61,765* MA Step 1	09/01/2025	11-140-100-101-03	PPHS
Teresa Pipito	Elementary School Special Education Teacher	*\$70,400* MA Step 10-11	09/01/2025	11-213-100-101-01	Lindbergh
Susan Paladino Cohen	Elementary School Nurse	*\$71,000* MA Step 15	09/01/2025	11-000-213-101-01	Lindbergh

pending negotiations

Moved by: Jun Yim

Seconded By: Anthony Kim

VOTE

Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	N/P	Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	N/P
Soo Chung	☒	☐	☐	☐	Boyoung Yu	☒	☐	☐	☐
Sergio Calle	☐	☐	☐	☒	Sookyung Park	☒	☐	☐	☐
Rebekah Lee	☒	☐	☐	☐	William Kim	☒	☐	☐	☐
Anthony Kim	☒	☐	☐	☐	Aaron Pak	☒	☐	☐	☐
Jun Yim	☒	☐	☐	☐					

S. POLICY – Boyoung Yu

T. SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE – Rebekah Lee**U. UNFINISHED BUSINESS****V. NEW BUSINESS****W. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Motion to close regular session and open to the public.

Moved by: Anthony Kim

Seconded by: Sookyung Park

All in favor – aye

Frank Donahue - Expressed hope that the Hall of Fame event can continue under the new superintendent's leadership, allowing alumni to return and providing an opportunity to honor student-athletes and coaches. Appreciation and well wishes were extended to Dr. Cirillo, thanking him for his service and leadership.

Anthony Rotundo - Asked how the new superintendent will be chosen. Under Finance item #10, it was noted that there is a discrepancy between the amount being appropriated—\$500,000—and a separate figure of approximately \$540,000. A question was asked about the \$40,000 difference and what accounts for that delta.

Mayor Kim - addressed rumors circulating in the community, including one suggesting that he, Mayor Kim, controls the Board of Education. He denied this, offering his support and clarifying that the individuals who attended the meeting did so of their own accord, not at his request. He expressed gratitude to the Board of Education for helping to designate nine graduating students to receive \$1,000 scholarships. Mayor Kim also extended thanks and congratulations to Dr. Cirillo for his hard work and dedication. In closing, he delivered a speech to the Board and members of the public, encouraging all stakeholders to move forward collaboratively in order to build a stronger and safer school system.

Italian Honor Society Students - Requested to reinstate the Italian program, specifically Italian I, to ensure the continuity of the program for future students. It was noted that students in the program have performed well on a national level, highlighting the value and success of the curriculum.

Charlie Shin - Past board member and current councilman. Addressed the importance of education in the community, emphasizing that the quality of education in the district falls short compared to neighboring communities and the standards expected by the town. He expressed concern over recent tensions among various groups and stressed the need for unity, stating that progress cannot be made by any one group alone. He reminded the Board that its members joined to invest in the future of the town and recognized teachers for their role in nurturing and guiding students. He voiced hope that the community can overcome current challenges and viewed the situation as an opportunity to improve the schools. He assured the Board that the town council stands ready to support the district in any way it can. He concluded by offering special thanks to Dr. Cirillo for his dedicated service to the town.

Rose Lanis - Board is a disgrace along with what has been done to this school system

Peter Longo - Emphasized that filling high-level administrative positions is of critical importance, and a recommendation was made to include a broad range of stakeholders—such as supervisors, principals, parents, PTA members, students, and a representative sample of various community groups—in the interview and selection process. Concerns were also raised about overcrowding in the schools. While there have been discussions about building expansion, it was noted that progress has not yet occurred to the extent necessary to address the issue.

Karen Halle - The graduation ceremony was a wonderful and meaningful event, but it was disheartening that no members of the Board of Education attended, despite having been invited.

Parent - expressed concern over recent staff resignations, stating that the situation is alarming and has shaken her confidence in the district. She emphasized that the Board must work to rebuild the trust of the community. Having lived in the town for 25 years, she shared that, for the first time, she is considering withdrawing her children from the school system due to a loss of faith in the school district.

Speaking on behalf of the district behaviorist position - Reported that as of April 30th, there had been 293 crisis calls. A significant increase in calls has occurred since April 30th. The speaker emphasized the urgent need for the district to function effectively as a team and reiterated the critical importance of this position in addressing these issues and supporting student well-being.

Student - Emphasized the importance of having a Board of Education that genuinely prioritizes the well-being of students. She shared that she personally knows many younger children with mental disabilities who will not have access to the same critical resources, such as behavioral analysis services and an athletic trainer. She urged the board to take action and work toward improving the school system to ensure all students receive the support they need.

Crystal Tong - graduated from Palisades Park High School in 2007. Recalled a previous period of administrative transition when the district was searching for a new vice principal and principal, and noted that the community was ultimately able to identify and hire qualified candidates. The speaker urged the Board to exercise careful consideration in the selection of new applicants and encouraged efforts to meet the community halfway during this process.

Jennifer Alvarez - Noted that there are fewer than 75 days remaining to hire both a high school principal, a vice principal, and a new superintendent, emphasizing the urgency of these critical appointments. While acknowledging that Dr. Cirillo and others have been actively discussing the potential return of the Italian program, the speaker raised concerns about the program's future once those individuals depart, questioning the continuity and long-term commitment to such initiatives.

Maureen Tansey - Acknowledged the significant amount of work required to successfully open and operate schools, emphasizing that without clear leadership to follow, staff cannot effectively carry out their responsibilities. The speaker expressed hope that the vacant positions will be filled promptly and that no additional departures will occur. Best wishes were extended to Dr. Cirillo and Mr. Aleksander Kondovski as they transition out of their roles.

Motion to close audience participation.

Moved by: Jun Yim

Seconded by: William Kim

All in favor – aye

Dr. Cirillo addressed the community, acknowledging that his decision to leave has not been an easy one. He clarified that his departure will not occur until September 1st at the earliest, and that he has recently been participating in multiple interviews. He assured the public that he will remain involved over the summer to support a smooth leadership transition. Dr. Cirillo urged everyone to be patient and reassured the community that the Honor Society program is not being eliminated. He noted that while aspects of the program are still being determined, his recommendations have consistently been supported by the Board.

In response to Mr. Rotundo's question about the delta in appropriation under Finance item #10, Mr. Aleksander Kondovski explained that he selected a flat appropriation amount to provide the incoming Business Administrator with a workable foundation. He clarified that there are no plans to expend the full \$500,000.

Ms. Soo Chung expressed appreciation to Mayor Kim for attending the meeting and for supporting the student scholarships. She also thanked Mr. William Kim for establishing the application process, which led to the selection of nine student recipients. She announced that all nine awardees will be honored at the upcoming Mayor and Council meeting on June 23rd at 6:00 p.m. in the courtroom. Ms. Chung also thanked the Mayor for addressing and dispelling rumors, stating that she chooses to ignore such distractions and remains confident in the Board's work.

Responding to a comment from Ms. Lanis, Ms. Chung requested that courtesy be shown to themselves and to the public during discussions.

Regarding the superintendent search process, Ms. Chung noted that the Board is currently collecting data from surveys and emphasized that all Board members are encouraged to actively participate in the process alongside the Personnel Committee.

Addressing concerns about graduation attendance, Ms. Chung explained that while she had spent many of her personal days this past year on board-related responsibilities, she regretted being unable to attend the recent ceremony. However, she confirmed her plans to attend the upcoming graduation ceremonies for Lindbergh and the high school.

On the topic of staff resignations, Ms. Chung clarified that such decisions are made by individual employees and should not be attributed to the Board. She emphasized that the Board is doing its best to fulfill its responsibilities and uphold its ethical duties. She also pointed out that the annual superintendent evaluation—mandated by the state—had not been conducted for at least the past 12 years, and this year marks the first time it has been completed. She concluded by stating that the Board is investing significant time and energy into its voluntary service and does not deserve to be unfairly criticized.

X. CLOSED SESSION

- BOE Attorney Matters
- HIB

Motion to go to closed session.

Moved by: Aaron Pak

Seconded by: William Kim

All in favor – aye

Y. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



Grace Lee
Board Secretary