

NORTH ARLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
NORTH ARLINGTON, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC WORK SESSION
August 26, 2025

5:34 p.m.

Board of Education Office

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Dr. Hughes	<u>Absent</u>
Mr. McDermott	<u>Present</u>
Mrs. Higgins	<u>Present</u>
Mr. Smith	<u>Present</u>
Mr. Dorsett	<u>Present</u>

III. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

IV. STATEMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

This Public Meeting of July 14, 2025, of the Board of Education of the Borough of North Arlington, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, is called pursuant to a schedule of meetings adopted on January 6, 2025, as amended, and of notice given to the Clerk of the Borough of North Arlington and to the Librarian of the Free Public Library of North Arlington for posting therein as election notices are posted and of notice given to the Editor of the following newspapers: the Bergen RECORD of Hackensack and the Newark Star Ledger.

1. The NAEA President, Mr. William Coughlin requested to meet with the Superintendent and Board to state that he learned a lot from his first year as president and is learning from his mistakes. Mr. Farinola, NAEA past president, was present. The Superintendent stated that he was misguided and misled by his own unit and the most absurd action was the frivolous PERC Complaint, which PERC even questioned, and was then dropped by the NAEA. The Superintendent stated that all of this could have been avoided if he took the advice of the NJEA representative and the NAEA past president. Mr. Farinola stated that based on his previous experience as the NAEA President, he would have handled a lot of things differently. Mr. Coughlin stated that he can see and understands. Mr. Coughlin then brought up a contractual item that moved into executive session.

Motion to move to Executive Session at 5:34 p.m. made by Mr. McDermott, second by Mrs. Higgins. There was no discussion. On Roll Call all Board members present voted in the affirmative and none in the negative, it was so ordered.

Open Session reconvened at 7:04 p.m.

2. Mr. Dorsett stated that the branding at Jefferson school looked very nice. The Superintendent said that all of the elementary schools are in the same process of completing the branding.
3. The Superintendent stated that the Veterans Middle School rededication committee decided not to rename the gymnasium at this time. The Board was supportive of this decision.
4. The Superintendent said that the painted framed Jersey for Timothy J. Finnerty, Queen of Peace graduate, has been preserved and is awaiting the dedication. Everyone agreed to move forward with the dedication process. The Superintendent will ask for the Veterans Middle School Principal to contact the family.

5. The Superintendent asked that the public minutes be amended regarding the updated Emergency Virtual Remote Distribution Plan (2025-2026).
6. The Superintendent said that he will be speaking before the Joint Committee of Public Schools on September 16th in Trenton to discuss the 18-21 graduation rates with the NJDOE since they are currently dismissing these special education high school graduates from the official graduation rates. Several Superintendents and NJASA members plan to attend.
7. The Superintendent and Director of Research, Planning, and Development ran a comparison of NJSLA scores for Grade 3 with standards-based scores received on their report cards. The Superintendent passed out a chart for the Board to review, which highlighted a strong correlation between the two sets of data.
8. The Superintendent discussed curriculum revisions with the Board, which included more robust standards-based report cards, updated benchmarks, detailed pacing guides, and the inclusion of NJSLA related items.
9. The Superintendent showed the Board an updated copy of the tri-fold pamphlet they requested outlining academic programming and career pathways at North Arlington High School. The Board asked for a few modifications. The Superintendent will provide an updated copy.
10. The Superintendent and Board discussed the multi-factor authentication process and the options for the upcoming school year as it relates to staff. The Board asked for there to be a hard deadline on the survey going out to staff and its implementation. The Superintendent agreed.
11. The Superintendent discussed school policies with the Board, specifically related to sunscreen. Everyone agreed that a written permission from a parent must be provided and that it will not be at the discretion of the principal.
12. The Superintendent discussed a new State Adaptive Field Test and new State assessment in the Spring; however, this information was never shared with the districts prior to being implemented. The Superintendent stated that he was disappointed in the NJDOE and Governor Murphy for releasing this major initiative with any prior discussion or notice.
13. Mrs. Higgins inquired about the Science Wing repairs. The Superintendent explained that the cabinets were being broken. The repair was to seal them up, because they were not being used and would then no longer be damaged.
14. The Board discussed updating the committees. Dr. Hughes suggested adding him to whichever committee was vacant or needed a co-chair.
15. The Board discussed the marching band program comments made regarding instruments posted online. The Superintendent stated that these issues were addressed proactively, well before a complaint was made on social media. He also stated that the athletic director addressed these issues with the students and parents weeks ago.

Rob Lorfink, Esq. left the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully,

Samantha Dembowski
SD:at