

**NORTH ARLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
NORTH ARLINGTON, NEW JERSEY**

PUBLIC WORK SESSION

September 15, 2025

5:41 p.m.

Board of Education Office

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Dr. Hughes	Present
Mr. McDermott	Present – 5:59 p.m.
Mrs. Higgins	Present
Mr. Smith	Present
Mr. Dorsett	Present
Student Board Member	Present

III. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

IV. STATEMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

This Public Meeting of September 15, 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 Superintendent stated that there would be an SSDS and NJSLA/DLM presentation at the Public Meeting tonight. He stated that the presentations would highlight the reduction of suspensions due to restorative practices and the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS). He also stated that the NJSLA/DLM presentation would be highlighting some of the best growth results we have seen in recent years as well as cohorts increasing and exceeding the State.
2. The Superintendent passed out a multi-lingual Welcome Packet to all new families that addressed all known languages in our community based on the home language survey.
3. The Superintendent stated that the Trifold was still being updated. He stated that the High School Showcase which is usually in November/early December will potentially be in late October or early November. He said the showcase is to catch the attention of the 7th and 8th graders before they commit to private schools. The Superintendent asked the student board member if she could help to put something together. She said she would help and knew other students that would help as well. The Superintendent said that he would speak with Lauren Buckley, Supervisor of Guidance to find out when the entrance exams are and provide an update to 7th and 8th grade parents. Mr. Dorsett suggested doing the Showcase during the middle school back-to-school night. The Superintendent stated that since the back-to-school night was this week, he didn't think that would be enough time to coordinate. The Superintendent also stated that he didn't want to take away from the Veterans Middle School staff and activities that are being highlighted at back-to-school night. Mr. Smith asked approximately how many 8th graders we lose each year to private schools or the Academies. The Superintendent stated that he would get the numbers from Mrs. Buckley and report back to the Board. Mrs. Higgins reiterated that it would not be beneficial for us to offer specialized programs such as nursing, because the Academies already have these programs well established and students who want to go into these fields will still have to apply to the tech schools. Dr. Hughes proposed an idea to have former and current Early College students from BCC come to speak to these students at the Showcase. The Superintendent and Board all agreed that it would be great for these students to hear the benefits of this program.

4. The School Business Administrator said that the School Board Convention would take place October 20th to October 23rd. The Board discussed who would be attending.
5. The Superintendent thanked the Board for submitted their quotes for the Viking Academy article. He said that Kevin from the Observer would be covering the story. The Board discussed the date of Wednesday, September 24th to highlight the Viking Academy. The Superintendent stated that he would be inviting the students and their families to the event.
6. The Superintendent said the principal of Veterans Middle School reached out to the wife of Timothy J. Finnerty to discuss the dedication and has not heard back yet. The Superintendent stated that we are still hoping to hold the dedication at the October 15th Board Meeting.
7. The Superintendent welcomed and introduced our new non-voting student board member to the Board, who is also the president of the North Arlington High School Student Council.
8. The Superintendent stated that the multifactor authentication survey was submitted by all staff members. A large number of staff members replied that they would like to use their personal cell phones and a smaller number will be issued fobs to use. He said as soon as the fobs come in and the Director of Technology gets them all activated we will implement the process.
9. The Superintendent said that the Joint Committee of Public Schools cancelled the 18-21 graduation meeting in Trenton and said they would not have any meetings until after the election. The Superintendent told them he was going to go there and speak anyway publicly. The Committee decided to hold a separate Zoom meeting in October to discuss the matter. Additionally, a meeting in Trenton will take place on November 10th. On the Zoom will be Senator Joe Cryan and Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson. Rich Bozza, Melanie Schultz, and several superintendents will also be present.
10. Mrs. Higgins inquired about what type of dual enrollment classes at North Arlington High School classes are related to Stockton University. The Superintendent stated that each of the following schools are linked to specific classes at North Arlington High School; Ramapo (Future Teachers), St. Thomas Aquinas (Anatomy & Physiology) Stockton (Propaganda & Genocide)

Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento, Director of Curriculum and Instruction K-12 entered the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

11. Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento, discussed MTSS and its relation to the I&RS process. Mrs. Higgins asked if MTSS was replacing anything. Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento stated that nothing is being replaced and the only effect it will have on the I&RS process is that it will make it more set in stone. Mrs. Higgins also asked if the trainings would be tiered and Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento said, "yes, they would be." The Superintendent thanked Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento for her hard work and asked her to show the Board the well-structured PD schedule related to MTSS.

Mrs. Rodrigues-Torrento left the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

12. Dr. Hughes asked the School Business Administrator if there was anything regarding Recreation soccer pictures in the facility requests. The School Business Administrator stated yes. Dr. Hughes stated that he will abstain from voting on that resolution due to conflict of interest.
13. The Superintendent asked the student board member if there was anything that she wanted to share. She answered not right now.
14. Mr. Dorsett said that he spoke with the gym teacher at Jefferson and PTO parents. Mr. Dorsett said that they are requesting a 22'x22' level surface area to install a Gaga ball pit. The Superintendent suggested rubber mats and Dr. Hughes added getting interlocking mats. The Superintendent said that he would discuss with the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds.

Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento re-entered the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

15. There was further discussion regarding MTSS and I&RS. Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento passed out the color coated training schedule.

Mrs. Rodriguez-Torrento left the meeting at 6:09 p.m

16. Mr. McDermott requested having a truancy report at every meeting. The Superintendent stated that this would be provided to the Board.

The student board member left the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Motion to move to Executive Session at 6:15 p.m. made by Mrs. Higgins, second by Dr. Hughes. There was no discussion. On Roll Call all Board members present voted in the affirmative and none in the negative, it was so ordered.

Respectfully,

Samantha Dembowski
SD:at