

The business meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on October 16, 2025, at the New Providence High School/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, by Mrs. Cuccaro, Board President.

Present on the roll call were Laura Castellano, Bernadette Cuccaro, Dr. Kristen Empson Hayden, Stacey Gunderman, Amanda Marano, Joseph Walsh, and Donna Zane. Also present were Dr. Lauren Zirpoli, Superintendent of Schools, Joseph Ugliodoro, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Jonathan Keaney, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Supervision, James Testa, School Business Administrator/Board, and twenty-nine (29) members of the public.

Mrs. Cuccaro led the salute to the flag.

Mrs. Cuccaro read the following statement:

This is a public meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with PL 1975, Chapter 231, in that a notice was made in conformance with Section 13 of the Act.

Whenever the business of the Board requires it to convene in a Closed Session, the session will begin no later than 9:30 p.m. At the conclusion of the need for a Closed Session, the Board will reconvene for the public portion of the meeting. At that time, the Board will complete any other business that may be before it, and the public will then be given an opportunity to be heard before the meeting is adjourned.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Mr. Ugliodoro gave a summary of the current enrollment. Allen W. Roberts School has 594 students, Salt Brook School has 596 students, New Providence High School has 661 students, New Providence Middle School has 392 students, and lastly, 36 out-of-district students, to give us a total of 2,279 students.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

On October 1st, it was PSAT day for all Grade 10 and 11 students. For many, it was their first look at the SAT and the opportunity to prepare for future sittings.

From October 6th to October 10th, we had the week of respect with morning announcement quotes, sticky notes with inspirational quotes, and the reveal of our Character Ed. District Theme: Positivity Creates Possibilities. Very well received.

Week of Respect- October 6-10

- Morning announcement quotes
- Sticky notes- inspiration
- Character Education District Theme revealed on October 10th: Positivity Creates Possibilities.

On Thursday, October 9th, we had our fall homecoming dance from 7-9:30, a special thanks to the PTSA and all volunteers for putting it together.

Friday, October 10th- Class of 1975 Reunion. Over 20 of our NPHS Graduates from the Class of 1975 joined us as they were provided a tour and time with Mr. Henry, Mrs. Kelly, and Mr. Carangelo. The administration loved hearing the stories and experiences from the alumni, and most joined us for the Football game that evening, where they were honored before the game on the field.

On Monday, October 20th, and Wednesday, October 22nd, we will be having a Koshi Exchange visit of students from Fukui, Japan. Roughly 20 students will experience NPHS for two days, and we look forward to the visit!

Next Thursday, October 23rd, will be our high school open house for the parents and students of grades six through eight, in which they will be able to see all the wonderful programs, courses, and offerings available at New Providence High School.

In November, we will be having our fall play, "It's a Wonderful Life," on the 21st and 22nd. We eagerly look forward to seeing our students perform!

For the marching band, they had a competition at Pequannock High School on Saturday, October 4th, Band Night with the Middle School students and Senior Night both on Friday, October 10th, and they have an upcoming competition at MetLife Stadium this Saturday, October 18th. Best of luck to the Marching Band on Saturday evening!

Many clubs had their first meetings of the year! Students have reported a tremendous amount of club offerings and opportunities, especially our freshman students who are joining new clubs and meeting new people for the first time at NPHS.

Recently, we inducted a handful of new members to the national honors society, including Clarissa Adams, Dylan Barnett, Amy Marr, Jula DiMaggio, Jiselle Matteo, Michael Petses, Lucas Tallone, and Madison Virella. The academic spirit is alive and well at NPHS

Girls' Soccer- Girls' Soccer defeated Kent Place on Tuesday to improve to 9-7-1 on the season. This win was a part of the County Tournament and advanced the Lady Pioneers to a game today @ Governor Livingston. While the team had a tough loss today, they look to have a very successful state tournament run!

Boys' Soccer- Boys' Soccer continues to have an amazing season with a record of 10-2-1 and played this afternoon in the County tournament home against Governor Livingston, holding on for a 3-1 win and now advances to play Westfield.

Cross Country- Had a conference on Tuesday and placed fourth, being 11 points away from getting 3rd. They are overall very excited for the future.

Football/Cheer- The football team remains undefeated after a big win against Verona. They are now 6-0 with another home game this Friday evening against Bound Brook. The student sections have been electric at every game as New Providence continues to dominate.

Girls Volleyball- 12-5. Had their annual Dig Pink game this past Monday evening with a win over Oak Knoll. Reportedly, they raised over \$8,000. Big pat on the back for the volleyball team.

Girls Tennis- The Girls' Tennis team won the NJSIAA Central Jersey Group 1 Sectional Championship this past Tuesday by defeating the number 1 seed Metuchen! NP competed today for a Group 1 State Championship, and while they had a tough loss to the #1 seed Glen Rock, the girls had an incredible season!

Overall, NPHS has been thriving both athletically and academically, and I commend the board for consistently prioritizing students' needs. Thank you.

CERTIFICATES OF EXCELLENCE

Mrs. Zane recognized students' achievements:

We are delighted to honor the TSA National Award recipients with the prestigious STEM Certificate of Excellence, a symbol of our profound respect for their outstanding achievements during the 2024-25 academic year.

The Technology Student Association (TSA) offers over 40 competitions for middle and high school students to apply their knowledge and skills in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). TSA competitions help students explore topics that interest them and develop leadership skills. There are currently over 300,000 students enrolled in TSA worldwide.

Ram Panchacharam and Lucas Lazarus earned 2nd Place in Animatronics. Students were challenged to create an animatronic exhibit for a public library to excite young readers. The team created an interactive children's book with rotating, acted-out scenes. Trevor Fornuff and Sebastian Mercado earned 3rd Place in Virtual Reality Simulation. Students were challenged to create a virtual reality (VR) visualization of a family vacation destination that incorporates experiences and activities appealing to both young children and teenagers. Trevor and Sebastian wowed the judges with their incredibly detailed scuba simulator.

The New Providence School District is immensely proud of these students' achievements and encourages them to continue exploring their passions in STEM. A heartfelt thank you to the dedicated STEM educators, from elementary through high school, who have guided and supported our students throughout their journeys and during these competitions, and especially to their advisors Rachel Fintz, Dan Barletta, Sue Rembetsy, Kathleen French, Mike Makmur, and Jennifer Pasuit.

ASSESSMENT REPORT PRESENTATION

Mr. Keaney presented the second district assessment report of the year, focusing on:

- NJSLA (state testing in ELA, Math, and Science)
- PSAT & SAT results
- Project Lead the Way (STEM program)
- I-Ready data for K–6

Mr. Keaney mentioned that the goal is to show student growth, performance trends, and how data guides programming and resource allocation.

General Performance Trends:

- Overall Scores: Combined ELA and Math scores rose steadily over four years (77 → 78 → 81 → 82.5).
- Both the individual ELA and Math scores have shown consistent improvement over the last four years, indicating that rigor is being maintained through our programs..

ELA (English Language Arts):

- Cohort Growth: Students show steady year-to-year improvement (example: 81 → 89 → 92). Areas of Concern: Transition years—particularly grade 6→7 and grade 8→9—show slight performance drops.
- Actions Taken:
 - Summer “boot camps” and executive functioning workshops.
 - Middle school “Pioneer Pathways” program to support student transitions.
- Mobility Data: Most students show upward or stable movement from one year to the next; focus remains on those who move down, especially during the transition years.

Math:

- Steady Growth: Overall math scores continue to rise across grades.
- Eighth Grade Focus: Historically an area of concern, now showing the largest improvement after targeted teacher collaboration and data analysis.
- Advanced Learners: Plans to better challenge top performers, not only support those below grade level.
- Key Concern Areas: Grade 6→7 math and grade 7→Algebra 1 transitions.

Science:

- Strong Performance: Students in grades 5, 8, and 11 continue to outperform state averages.

- Challenge: 11th graders show reduced motivation since the test holds no personal stakes; the district is developing strategies to improve engagement.

I-Ready Data (K–6)

- ELA:
 - Students at or above grade level rose from 58% to 89% by year's end.
 - Below-grade-level students decreased from 42% to 11%.
- Math:
 - Similar gains—students meeting or exceeding grade level increased substantially.
 - Identified geometry as a weaker domain; the district is looking at how best to re-sequence the math curriculum to address this.
- Outcome: Confirms programs are driving growth and helping teachers target specific skill areas.

Comparisons with Other Districts:

- Performance: Scores in both ELA and Math are comparable to high-performing neighboring districts (e.g., Livingston and Millburn).
- Growth:
 - Tied for first in ELA growth and first in Math growth among peer districts.
 - Reflects focused middle school improvement efforts.

Demographic Analysis:

- Gender: No significant performance gap in ELA or Math.
- Ethnicity: All ethnic groups improved in ELA; most improved in Math.
- Economically Disadvantaged Students: Some concerns in Math despite overall gains.
- Students with Disabilities: Notable improvement in both ELA and Math.
- Multilingual Learners:
 - Former ELL students show strong growth after exiting the program.
 - Current ELL performance fluctuates due to small numbers and the transient nature of some students, but progress is evident.

PSAT, SAT, and National Merit Results:

- PSAT: Scores remain steady and above state and national averages.
- National Merit Scholars:
 - The highest number of Commended Scholars since 2017.
- SAT:
 - 42-point average increase this year; upward overall trend.
 - Students testing at outside venues scored slightly higher than those testing at school—an area for review.

Project Lead the Way (STEM):

- Introduced in 2016–17; now expanded through middle and high school.
- Strong performance and growth across courses like Introduction to Engineering, Environmental Sustainability, and Aerospace Engineering.
- Notable improvement in Environmental Sustainability scores.
- New skill-cluster reporting allows for more detailed program adjustments.

Post-Graduation Outcomes:

- 96% of 2023 graduates entered college
- 93% remained enrolled 16 months later, suggesting strong college and career readiness.

To end his presentation, Mr. Keaney highlighted that the district's data-driven approach is yielding measurable academic growth and more targeted resource use. The results reflect strong progress toward the district's five-year plan goals—academic excellence, social-emotional well-being, and mental health support.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mrs. Cuccaro declared the Public Hearing on the 2024/2025 School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act open.

Mr. Ugliarolo reported the following: The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act requires each school in the district to complete an annual self-assessment on how well it implemented the various components of the mandate. The Anti-Bullying Specialists at each school convened their School Safety/Climate Team members to complete the self-assessment process for their school using the HIB Self-Assessment rubric issued by the State.

The self-assessment contains the following eight Core Elements:

- Core Element #1: HIB Programs, Approaches, and Other Initiatives
- Core Element #2: Training on the BOE-approved HIB Policy & procedures
- Core Element #3: Other Staff Instructions and Training Programs
- Core Element #4: Curriculum and Instruction on HIB and Related Information and Skills
- Core Element #5: HIB Personnel
- Core Element #6: School-Level HIB Incident Reporting Procedure
- Core Element #7: HIB Investigation Procedures
- Core Element #8: HIB Reporting

Each Core Element contains several specific indicators for which each School Safety/Climate Team determines a ranking. The total possible points each school could earn on the assessment is 78.

The 2024-2025 self-assessment scores for each of our schools and our district average were as follows:

High School:	70	Salt Brook:	71
Middle School:	75	AWR:	76
District Average:		73	

After the public has had the opportunity to comment and the Board of Education has approved the scores, the results will be submitted to the NJDOE. The NJDOE will issue an individual school grade as well as an overall District grade for the 2024-2025 school year. HIB grades issued by the NJDOE must be posted on each school’s homepage as well as the district’s homepage of the website.

Individual school summary reports, as well as the Statement of Assurance, are kept on file in the office of the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services.

Mrs. Cuccaro declared the Public Hearing on the 2024/2025 School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act closed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. Cuccaro opened the meeting to the public. There were no public comments. Mrs. Cuccaro declared the public portion of the meeting closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Gunderman moved to approve the minutes for:

- Business Meeting: September 25, 2025
- Closed Meeting: September 25, 2025

Mrs. Zane seconded the motion, with the following change.

Mrs. Zane commented that there needed to be a date change in the minutes regarding the Anxious Generation meeting, changing the date from November 12th to November 13th.

Mr. Testa thanked Mrs. Zane and let her know the date would be changed.

It was carried out on the following vote:

Roll call vote:

<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Castellano
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Cuccaro
<u>Yea</u>	Dr. Empson Hayden
<u>Yea</u>	Ms. Gunderman
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Marano
<u>Yea</u>	Mr. Walsh
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Zane

ACTION ITEMS

FINANCE ACTIONS

Mr. Walsh, the Finance Chairperson, moved to approve items 1 through 3 as listed below:

BOARD SECRETARY AND TREASURER REPORT APPROVED

1. After review, we hereby accept the Board Secretary and Treasurer reports for September 2025. No major account or fund has been over expended in violation of financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

BILL LIST APPROVED

2. Approve the payment of bills for October 2025, in the amount of \$5,636,766.28.

CAPITAL RESERVE MAXIMUM AMOUNT APPROVED

3. The New Providence School District (LEA 3560) has seventy-seven (77) projects identified in its Five Year Long Range Facility Plan. The seventy-seven (77) projects have an estimated total cost of \$37,724,577.00. Twenty-six (26) projects have been completed, initiated or advanced. Fifty-one (51) remaining projects, with a total cost of \$23,023,618.00, are currently identified in the plan for initiation. The local share would be funded from bond proceeds and/or annual school budget appropriations (based on needs and dictated by the availability of funds). The District may be eligible for state debt service or EDA grant funds for the identified projects in the amount of \$9,209,447.00. The local share amount of \$13,814,171.00 for the identified projects represents the maximum amount the New Providence School District may deposit in its capital reserve fund for the 2025-2026 school year.

Mrs. Marano seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote:

Roll call vote:

<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Castellano
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Cuccaro
<u>Yea</u>	Dr. Empson Hayden
<u>Yea</u>	Ms. Gunderman
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Marano
<u>Yea</u>	Mr. Walsh
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Zane

FACILITIES ACTION

Mr. Walsh, the Facilities Chairperson, moved to approve item 1 as listed below:

COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE PLAN APPROVED

- 1. Adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Department of Education requires New Jersey School Districts to submit three-year maintenance plans documenting “required” maintenance activities for each of its public school facilities, and

WHEREAS, the required maintenance activities listed in the plan for the various school facilities of the New Providence School District are consistent with these requirements, and

WHEREAS, all past and planned activities are reasonable to keep school facilities open and safe for use or in their original condition and to keep their system warranties valid,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the New Providence School District hereby authorizes the School Business Administrator to submit the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan for the New Providence School District in compliance with the Department of Education requirements.

(EXHIBIT A)

Ms. Gunderman seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote:

Roll call vote:

<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Castellano
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Cuccaro
<u>Yea</u>	Dr. Empson Hayden
<u>Yea</u>	Ms. Gunderman
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Marano
<u>Yea</u>	Mr. Walsh
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Zane

EDUCATION ACTION

Dr. Empson Hayden, the Education Chairperson, moved to approve Items 1 through 3 as listed below:

2025/2026 SUPERINTENDENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING APPROVED

- 1. Per the 2011 Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, approve the recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools regarding the following 2025/2026 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying investigations:

<u>School</u>	<u>Incident Report Number(s)</u>
High School:	1

2025/2026 ADDITIONAL FIELD TRIP DESTINATION APPROVED

- 2. Approve the following additional field trip destination for the 2025/2026 school year in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8:
 - a. Lincoln Tech- Paramus, Mahwah, and South Plainfield, NJ campuses

STUDENT #13787 ENROLLMENT AT CENTRAL AVENUE SCHOOL

- 3. Approve the enrollment of Student #13787 at the Central Avenue School (Madison Board of Education), for the 2025/2026 school year, at a tuition cost of \$81,214.17, effective 10/6/25.

Mrs. Zane seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote:

Roll call vote:

- Yea Mrs. Castellano
- Yea Mrs. Cuccaro
- Yea Dr. Empson Hayden
- Yea Ms. Gunderman
- Yea Mrs. Marano
- Yea Mr. Walsh
- Yea Mrs. Zane

PERSONNEL ACTION

Ms. Gunderman, the Personnel Chairperson, moved to approve Items 1 through 6 as listed below.

2025/2026 APPOINTMENTS APPROVED

1. Approve the appointment of the following people with the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools subject to the requirements of Chapter 116 of P.L. 1986 for the 2025/2026 school year:
 - a. Arthur Cattano, HS fitness center monitor, \$22.00/hr.
 - b. Andrea Wright, nurse, \$75,824.00 (base \$94,780.00), effective 11/1/25
 - c. Joseph Route, LDT/C, \$88,535.00 (base \$110,669.00), effective 11/1/25
 - d. Kaely Sturges, HS advisor, freshman class, \$926.00
 - e. Samantha Cram, HS, for teaching eighteen (18) periods per four (4) day rotation, full year, \$3,600.00 (base \$4,000.00), effective 10/6/25
 - f. Emma Keneally, substitute teacher, teacher aide, and secretary
 - g. Catherine Reddington, substitute teacher, teacher aide, and secretary
 - h. Cleo Trumbull, substitute teacher, teacher aide, and secretary
 - i. Michael Lazzari, substitute teacher, teacher aide, and secretary (subject to issuance of certification)
 - j. Anthony Delia, substitute teacher, teacher aide, and secretary
 - k. Christopher Calveley, teacher, \$41,311.00 (base \$68,851.00), effective 1/1/26
 - l. Kimberly Barletta, volleyball (fall), girls, head coach, \$2,471.00 (base \$7,413.00), effective 10/20/25
 - m. Christopher Calveley, substitute teacher, teacher aide, and secretary

RESIGNATION APPROVED

2. Accept the resignation of the following employee:
 - a. Jennifer Florencio, teacher, effective 12/31/25

2025/2026 REVISION APPROVED

3. Approve the following revisions for the 2025/2026 school year:
 - a. Michael Sudberg, teacher, from Step 9, Column I (\$65,079.00), to Step 9, Column II (\$66,796.00), effective 9/1/25, due to course credits
 - b. Alessandra Finis, volleyball (fall), girls, head coach, \$4,942.00 (base \$7,413.00), effective 8/18/25-10/17/25
 - c. Margaret Gilroy, long-term substitute teacher, effective 10/14/25, to be paid on a per diem basis of \$293.77 (prorated Step 1, Column I, base of \$58,754.00) (subject to issuance of certification)

REQUEST FOR UNPAID MATERNITY LEAVE APPROVED

- 4. Approve the request for unpaid maternity leave for Jorden Neilson, athletic trainer, under the federal Family Leave Act for a period of twelve weeks commencing 3/30/26 and ending 6/6/26, with continued health insurance benefits pursuant to law. (Based on 2/28/26 due date. Dates subject to adjustment by actual birth.)

REQUEST FOR UNPAID MATERNITY LEAVE APPROVED

- 5. Approve the request for unpaid maternity leave for Elizabeth Stuart, teacher, under the state Family Leave Act for a period of twelve weeks commencing 3/9/26 and ending 6/9/26, with continued health insurance benefits pursuant to law. Approve an extended leave pursuant to Article X of the Agreement between the Board and the NPEA, from 6/10/26 through and including 6/30/26. (Based on a 2/5/26 due date. Dates subject to adjustment by actual birth.)

SEPARATION OF SERVICE AGREEMENT RESOLUTION APPROVED

- 6. Approve the following resolution:

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, the New Providence Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves a Separation of Service Agreement regarding employee #2457.

Dr. Empson Hayden seconded the motion. It was carried on the following vote:

Roll call vote:

- Yea Mrs. Castellano
- Yea Mrs. Cuccaro
- Yea Dr. Empson Hayden
- Yea Ms. Gunderman
- Yea Mrs. Marano
- Yea Mr. Walsh
- Yea Mrs. Zane

BOARD POLICY

Mr. Walsh, the Board Policy Chairperson, moved to approve the following Policies and Regulations on first reading:

FIRST READING APPROVED

- 1. Approve the following Policies and Regulations on first reading:

Bylaws and Policies:

Policy 5751 (Mandated)	Sexual Harassment of Students (Walsh)	Revised
Policy 7102 (Mandated)	Site Selection and Acquisition (Walsh)	New

Administrative Regulations:

Regulation 5751 (Mandated)	Sexual Harassment of Students (Walsh)	Revised
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Regulation 7102 (Mandated)	Site Selection and Acquisition (Walsh)	New
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Mrs. Marano seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote:

Roll call vote:

<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Castellano
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Cuccaro
<u>Yea</u>	Dr. Empson Hayden
<u>Yea</u>	Ms. Gunderman
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Marano
<u>Yea</u>	Mr. Walsh
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Zane

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology: Dr. Empson Hayden reported that the committee has met to go over the strategic plan and the specific committee goals.
2. Finance, Facilities, and Safety/Security: Mr. Walsh reported that the committee will be meeting tomorrow to also discuss the strategic plan and specific committee goals.
3. Personnel, Management, and Communication: Ms. Gunderman reported that the committee will be meeting on Monday to discuss the strategic plan and specific committee goals.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. Cuccaro opened the meeting to the public at 7:48 p.m.

Kathryn Biber, 9 The Arbors

Mrs. Biber commented that all four of the schools' PTAs got together along with the League of Women Voters to sponsor a Board of Education candidate forum, Wednesday, October 22nd, at 7 p.m. in the high school cafeteria. Tomorrow is the last day for the community or the school district to submit questions. You can find the Google form on the High School PTSA's Facebook page in the announcement. And we invite the entire New Providence community to hear what our writing candidates have to say for the upcoming election.

Mrs. Cuccaro declared the public portion of the meeting closed at 7:53 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Walsh moved to adopt the following resolution:

This body shall, on October 16, 2025, in the New Providence High/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, specific matters which may generally be described as follows:

- Student Matters

The minutes of the discussion in closed session of the aforementioned matters may be disclosed to the public after the final determination of action has been reached.

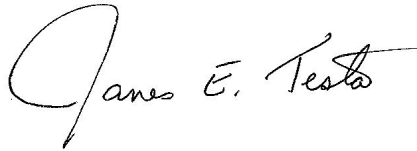
Dr. Empson Hayden seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board reconvened to public session at 8:17 p.m. Mrs. Cuccaro called the Board to order. Board members present were Mrs. Castellano, Mrs. Cuccaro, Dr. Empson Hayden, Ms. Gunderman, Mrs. Marano, Mr. Walsh, and Mrs. Zane.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business before the Board, on a motion by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Dr. Empson Hayden, and carried unanimously, Mrs. Cuccaro declared the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.



James Testa, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary