

**MENDHAM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BROOKSIDE, NEW JERSEY
MIDDLE SCHOOL MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025, 7:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Flag Salute - Mrs. Mody led the flag salute.

III. Roll Call of the Board of Education

Mrs. Joan Mody	President	Present
Dr. Rekha Mandel	Vice President	Present
Mrs. Elisabeth Carrino-Tamasi		Present
Mrs. Natasha Crossan		Present
Mr. Peter Dumovic		Present
Mr. Thomas Keeling		Present
Mrs. Diana Orban Brown		Present

Eighteen (18) members of the public were in the audience.

IV. Sunshine Law – Mrs. Mody read the following statement

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, Mendham Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the Mendham Township Board of Education Office, sent to the Clerk of Mendham Township, and the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record. This is an official meeting.

V. Student Representative to the Board of Education

➤ Student Representative - Rohan Mody

Hi everyone, thank you for having me. I'm here again to inform you about what's been taking place at the middle school.

A few weeks ago, on the week of Halloween, Red Ribbon Week took place. This is an interactive spirit week that encourages students to value their health by having different themes for each day, like pajamas or jeans. Each day also has a slogan like "Be a JEAN-IUS! Don't do drugs!" in order to deter students from unhealthy substances.

As our Fall Sports teams ended their seasons, Mendham Township is proud to say that our Boys Soccer team won the County Championship, thanks to Coach Haggerty, our Girls Soccer team placed 3rd in the County Championship thanks to Coach Hooker, and our esports season, led by Coach Smith, wrapped up their first ever season and is excited to enter their winter season. Our Field Hockey team, coached by Mrs. Hueston and Mrs. Porter, and both our cross country teams, coached by Mr. Depue, placed second in the County Championship. Mendham had a great fall season in sports and is excited for more victories in the Winter.

Last Saturday, students were able to participate in an Art Trip to New York City, where they went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and were enriched by the variety of art and sculptures there.

Also, last week, students participated in the New Jersey NJSLA state testing program. We took part in a section of Math, Reading, and Writing, which were all fairly easy and quick.

Happening soon is the student and parent meeting regarding the spring play. Students and parents will be able to learn more about the play and its practices to see if their schedules are compatible with this fun after-school activity. Auditions for the play will begin on Monday and Wednesday, December 1st and 3rd, after school

That's a summary of recent events, and I hope you enjoyed the presentation. Thank you so much for having me, and I look forward to seeing you in December.

VI. Superintendent's Report

- District Updates, News, and Events
- MTES Student Group: Mr. Gallo, Grade 4 - AI
- Board Member Recognition - Mrs. Joan Mody

District Updates, News, and Events

- The Mendham Township Middle School recently completed its first-ever **esports season**
- The program, led by Coach Jonathan Smith, launched in September with six students and has already added three more students for the winter season
- The team competed in six matches in the Garden State Esports League
- The team meets twice a week, dedicating one practice day to strategy and team communication and one day to a match
- An **MTES Student Group** with Mr. Gallo, Grade 4, will be presenting on the topic of AI
- The **December 16 Regular Session** agenda items include a Student Rep, an MTMS Student Group on School Newspaper, a Pomptonian Dinner, and a training session

School Events

- *MTES Concert on 12/18*
- *MTMS Concert on 12/4, 12/10*

Student Enrollment and Staffing Updates

- The total District enrollment is **844** students for the 2025-2026 school year

- MTES enrollment is **456**
 - MTMS enrollment is **380**
 - Out of District (OOD) enrollment is **8**
- The Mendham Township Board of Education is resolving to officially participate in the **Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification Program** and pursue certification for schools in the district. **Mariah Clare Clark** is appointed as the MTMS liaison to Sustainable Jersey for Schools

Dr. Constantino made the following statement -

Joan, tonight we have the privilege of recognizing not just your years of service, but the spirit in which you served. Your leadership on this Board, whether as President, Vice President, or as Curriculum chair, committee member, has always been thoughtful, steady, and shaped by one core value: what is best for children.

You have helped guide important decisions, strengthen programs, and support innovation in ways that will impact students long after tonight. Your integrity, collaboration, and calm presence have earned deep respect from board members, administrators, staff, families, and the students we all serve.

On behalf of the Mendham Township School District, thank you for your commitment, your voice, and your belief in what our schools could become. We wish you health, happiness, and joy in this next chapter. You leave a legacy we are grateful for.

Proclamation Honoring Joan Mody on the Occasion of Her Retirement from the Mendham Township Board of Education

Whereas, Joan Mody has served with distinction as a dedicated member of the Mendham Township Board of Education for many years, demonstrating steadfast commitment to the students, families, and staff of the Mendham Township School District, and

Whereas, during her tenure, Joan Mody held leadership roles as both President and Vice President of the Board, providing steady guidance, clear vision, and thoughtful decision-making on behalf of the community, and

Whereas, she served as Chair of the Curriculum and School Programs Committee for many years, ensuring the district maintained strong academic foundations while advancing initiatives that foster innovation, student growth, and a supportive learning environment, and

Whereas her leadership has been marked by collaboration, integrity, and an unwavering focus on what is best for children, earning her the respect and admiration of her fellow Board members, district administrators, educators, parents, and students, and

Whereas her commitment played a vital role in strengthening educational programs, supporting forward-thinking curriculum work, and ensuring that students have the resources and opportunities necessary to succeed, and

Whereas, the Mendham Township Board of Education, administration, staff, and community wish to recognize and express their sincere appreciation for her extraordinary service, contributions, and dedication,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that we, the Mendham Township Board of Education, hereby honor and commend Joan Mody for her exceptional leadership, service, and devotion to the Mendham Township School District and its community, and

Be it further resolved that we extend to her our heartfelt gratitude and warmest wishes for health, happiness, and fulfillment in her retirement, with appreciation for the lasting impact she has made on generations of Mendham Township students.

Proclaimed this day, November 18, 2025, by the Mendham Township Board of Education

Dr. Mandel made the following statement -

Tonight, we honor a leader, a colleague, and a dear friend. After seven years on the Mendham Township Board of Education, our President, Joan Mody, is retiring — but her impact will be felt for a long time.

When I asked a few people how they would describe Joan's influence, I received this reflection:

"She worked so hard to make Mendham a safe and inclusive place for all students. Watching her lead was inspiring. She gives 100% to everything she believes in, and that's why the district improved so much under her leadership. She cares deeply about kids and their education, and I'm incredibly proud of everything she's done."

And the best part? That reflection wasn't written by a board member or a parent in the community — it was written by Joan's kids. Which makes it even more special, because teenagers aren't always quick to express how proud they are of their parents. So when they do, you know it's genuine.

"I met Joan right before COVID, and we truly got to know each other as we navigated one of the most unpredictable and frightening chapters schools have ever faced. Through it all, Joan brought steadiness, empathy, and an unwavering commitment to doing what was best for students. She championed diversity, SEL, and every effort that made kids feel safe, included, and supported.

Anyone who has served with Joan knows she leads with integrity, passion, and meticulous attention to detail. And what many may not know is that she's also a passionate immigration attorney, a voracious reader, unbelievably witty — and no one, truly no one, sings George Michael at karaoke better than Joan.

One of the things I admire most is the example she set for her children — and for all of ours — of what it looks like when a mother steps into leadership outside the home. Kids need to see that. And her children noticed.

Joan, thank you for your leadership, your integrity, your friendship, and your unwavering dedication to this district. We will miss you at this table, but we look forward to seeing you in the audience — though we fully understand if your Tuesday nights suddenly become very busy.

Mr. Dumovic made the following statement -

Joan was elected to the Mendham Township Board of Education in November 2018 — the same day I was elected. As I reflect on her seven years of dedicated service, I want to recognize a few of her contributions that have helped our schools and community continue to grow and thrive. While every success is a team effort, Joan's steady commitment and caring leadership have truly made a difference.

Developed and successfully implemented a \$19.9 million bond referendum to fund essential maintenance, building repairs, and renovations across both of our schools — including safety and security upgrades, and facility improvements that support greater student collaboration

Finalized a mutually beneficial five-year employment agreement with the Mendham Township Education Association, fostering collaboration, trust, and long-term stability between the school district and its teachers and staff

Championed student well-being by expanding social and emotional learning supports and embedding SEL competencies into classrooms across all grade levels

Strengthened the district's commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging by nurturing a school environment that welcomes diverse perspectives, stands firmly against discrimination, and ensures that every student feels valued, respected, and supported. This shared commitment was formally expressed in the district's DEIB Statement of Beliefs.

Advocated for an inclusive learning environment, ensuring that students with disabilities can be educated alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate

Invested in the professional growth and continuous learning of the board team, helping the Mendham Township Board of Education earn recognition as a Certified Board of Education by the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Promoted a culture of excellence in governance by adopting Board Operating Standards and Guidelines that emphasize honesty, transparency, trust, collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement

Expanded shared-service partnerships with neighboring school districts to increase student transportation revenues, thereby helping to reduce the local tax burden on Mendham Township residents for funding the education of our K-8 students

Established the district's first student representative position on the Board of Education, ensuring that student voices and perspectives are included in board discussions

Most importantly, Joan’s student-centered leadership truly distinguished her work. She consistently placed students at the heart of every decision, guided by an unwavering commitment to helping every child learn, grow, and thrive in both of our schools.

Without question, the Mendham Township community has greatly benefited from Joan’s seven years of dedicated service and meaningful contributions to the Board of Education.

VII. Board Secretary’s Report

- Kathi Mantel & Brian Gibbons, Nisivoccia, LLP - 06/30/25, ACFR Summary

VIII. Board President’s Report - None.

IX. Correspondence - None.

X. Committee Reports

- **Curriculum and School Programs** - Mr. Keeling delivered the report.
- **DEIB** - Mrs. Carrino-Tamasi delivered the report.
- **Operations and Finance** - Dr. Mandel delivered the report.
- **Personnel and Human Resources** - Mr. Dumovic delivered the report.
- **Policy** - Mrs. Orban Brown delivered the report.
- **Ad Hoc - Referendum/ROD Grant** - Mrs. Orban Brown delivered the report.

XI. Unofficial Results of Election - November 7, 2025

Unofficial results of the November 7, 2025, School Board Elections for three, three-year terms on the Mendham Township Board of Elections were as follows:

<u>Candidates (Four Candidates - 3 Seats - 3-Year Terms)</u>	<u>Total Votes</u>
Christina Klausner	1,239
Cynthia Brusco	1,164
Elisabeth Tamasi	1,262
Diana Orban Brown	973
Allison Barratt	1,017
Kathleen McCallum	1,033

XII. Action Items

Approval of Minutes

Work Session Minutes: October 14, 2025

Regular Session Minutes: October 28, 2025

Curriculum and School Programs

1. HIB School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades (Attachments)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the submission of the Mendham Township Elementary School's and the Mendham Township Middle School's Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act for the New Jersey Department of Education.

2. Participation in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification Program

Whereas the Mendham Township Board of Education seeks to participate in Sustainable Jersey for Schools to focus attention and efforts on matters of sustainability and pursue initiatives that will lead to Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification.

Whereas the Mendham Township Board of Education and District Superintendent seek to support and work with school staff and administrators, students, and parents to ensure a safe and healthy environment for students by encouraging our school community to implement sustainable, energy-smart, eco-friendly, and cost-effective solutions.

Whereas extensive opportunities exist to teach students about ecological, economic and social sustainability, environmental health, and nutrition; to integrate sustainability education into classroom learning; and to support students in becoming leaders in making their schools healthier and more sustainable places.

Whereas many options and choices exist for schools to use resources more efficiently; to reduce, reuse, and recycle; to follow Green Building Standards for construction and major renovations; to form school partnerships; to eliminate toxic chemicals; to purchase (or produce) clean energy; and to purchase recycled paper, energy-efficient equipment and other green products to protect our global environment.

Whereas sustainability means using resources wisely, saving money, and reducing our impact on the environment, all of which will ensure the future health, safety, and prosperity of our children.

Whereas the Mendham Township Board of Education commits to the formation of at least one Sustainability Leadership Team (also referred to as "Green Team"), based on the guidance of Sustainable Jersey for Schools.

Whereas Green Team members help schools adopt policies and practices addressing areas such as sustainability education and professional training, green purchasing, waste reduction, indoor air quality, energy-saving initiatives, and community partnerships.

Whereas the Mendham Township Board of Education will encourage Green Teams at all district schools by providing networking and educational opportunities.

Therefore, it is resolved that the Mendham Township Board of Education agrees to participate in Sustainable Jersey for Schools, and it is the board's intention to pursue certification for schools in the district.

We hereby appoint Mariah Clare Clark to be the district's liaison to Sustainable Jersey for Schools.

We do hereby recognize our School(s) as the agent(s) to carry out our commitment to building a sustainable school district through the implementation of Sustainable Jersey for Schools actions.

We agree to complete district actions and to support the district's schools in completing their actions.

3. **Field Trips (Attachments)**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the attached field trips for the 2025-2026 school year.

Operations and Finance

1. **Certification Reports**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education certify, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:19-4, that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the line item appropriation and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9 and N.J.S.A. 18A:17-36, after review of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's monthly financial reports for November 2025 that no major accounts and fund balances in the 2025/2026 budget have been over expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

2. **Board Secretary's Report**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the October 2025 Board Secretary's Reports.

3. **Treasurer's Report**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the October 2025 Treasurer's Reports.

4. **October 2025 Transfer Reports**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the October 2025 transfer report.

5. **November 2025 Bills List**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the November 2025 Bills List. This includes payroll checks N5665 through N5667 and N5668 through N5670.

Fund 10 - Treasurer Account	\$ 66,207.40
Fund 11 - Treasurer Account	\$1,786,675.49
Fund 12 - Capital Account	\$ 166,092.98
Fund 20 - Grant Account	\$ 3,000.00
Fund 30 - Referendum Account	\$ 677,346.78
Fund 60 - Cafeteria Account	\$ 68,705.52
Fund 80 - Unemployment Account	\$ 9,789.00
Fund 95 - Athletic Account	<u>\$ 805.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$2,778,622.17</u>

6. **District Travel** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Board of Education approves the attached travel events in agreement with Chapter 53, Public Law 2007, NJSA 18A:11-12, NJAC 6A:23A-1. All mileage will be reimbursed at the maximum NJ Circular 08-19-OMB rate (currently \$0.47 per mile).

7. **Use of District Facilities** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the attached use of facility applications for the 2025-2026 school year, with the right to cancel based on school events and needs.

8. **Acceptance of 2024/2025 Audit**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and Auditor's Management Report for the period July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, as prepared by Nisivoccia LLP, Certified Public Accountants & Advisors, inclusive of the following recommendations:

1. Administrative Practices and Procedures - None.
2. Financial Planning, Accounting, and Reporting - None.
3. School Purchasing Program - None.

4. School Food Service - None.
5. Student Body Activities - None.
6. Application for State School Aid - None.
7. Pupil Transportation - None.
8. Facilities and Capital Assets - None.
9. Status of Prior Year's Findings/Recommendations - None.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. Termination of Employment

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby terminates the employment of employee #15655269 effective October 31, 2025.

2. Staff Retirement: Margitt Trocha (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the letter of retirement from Margitt Trocha, Transportation Driver, dated October 20, 2025, effective February 1, 2026.

3. Leave of Absence REVISED – Christopher Vrabel

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Christopher Vrabel, Bus Driver, for a leave of absence commencing on October 10, 2025, utilizing 19 sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves Christopher Vrabel, per the doctor's clearance letter, with a return to work date of November 10, 2025.

4. Mentors for New Teachers

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves payment to the following to serve as mentors to teachers in their first year with Mendham Township Schools.

Mentor	New Teacher	Compensation
Alexandria Ferenc	Alexandra Otto	\$550.00
Charles Gallo	Zachary Kleiman	\$550.00

5. **Middle School Schedule B & C Stipend Positions for 2025-2026**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following 2025-2026 Co-Curricular Stipend positions for Middle School:

CO-CURRICULAR Activities (Schedule B & C)

Activities	2025-2026 Salary	Staff Member
Chorus Director/Middle School	\$3,058.00	Stephen Dodrv
ESports (winter session) Grades 5-8 (1 hour each) Zero Period	\$272.00 base + Max of 10 events @ \$70.00 each, not to exceed a total of \$972.00	Jonathan Smith

6. **Chaperones** (*Attachment*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves payment at the contractual rate for chaperones following the end of the contractual day.

7. **Substitute Transportation Driver: Sami Haile** (*Attachment*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Samil Haile as a Substitute Transportation Driver, at an hourly rate of \$30.00, effective November 19, 2025, for the 2025-2026 school year.

8. **Substitute Teacher: Nicholas Burbano**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Nicholas Burbano as a substitute teacher, pending completion of paperwork, at the current rate of \$125.00 per day for the 2025-2026 school year.

Policy and Planning

1. **First Readings** (*Attachment*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the first reading of the following policy and regulations:

- P 6230 Budget Hearing (M)
- P 6320 Purchases Subject to Bid
- R 6320 Purchases Subject to Bid
- P 6340 Multiple Year Contracts
- R 6340 Multiple Year Contracts
- R 6350 Competitive Contracting
- P 6362 Contributions to Board Members and Contract Awards (M)

- P 6421 Purchases Budgeted
- R 6421 Purchases Budgeted
- P 6422 Budget Transfers (M)
- R 6422 Budget Transfers (M)
- P 6423 Expenditures for Non-Employee Activities, Meals, and Refreshments
- P 6424 Emergency Contracts
- R 6424 Emergency Contracts
- P 6450 Choice of Vendor
- P 6470 Payment of Claims (M)
- R 6470 Payment of Claims
- P 6472 Tuition Assistance
- P 6480 Purchase of Food Supplies (M)
- P 6510 Payroll Authorization (M)

2. **Second Reading** (*Attachments*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Second reading and adoption of the following policies and regulations:

- P 5752 Marital Status and Pregnancy (M)
- P 5770 Student Right of Privacy
- P 5820 Student Government
- P 5830 Student Fundraising
- P 5850 Social Events and Class Trips
- R 5850 Social Events and Class Trips
- P 5880 Public Performances by Students
- P 6141 Tax Revenues
- P 6150 Tuition Income
- P 6160 Grants from Private Sources
- R 6160 Grants from Private Sources
- P 6162 Cooperate Sponsorships
- P 6163 Advertising on School Property
- P 6164 Advertising on School Buses
- P 6210 Fiscal Planning
- R 6210 Fiscal Planning
- P 6220 Budget Preparation (M)
- R 6220 Budget Preparation

Mrs. Orban Brown moved to strike P6220 from the vote for further discussion, seconded by Mr. Dumovic, and the motion was not CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mrs. Carrino Tamasi; no, Mrs. Crossan; no, Mr. Dumovic; no, Mr. Thomas Keeling; no, Dr. Mandel; no, Mrs. Orban Brown; no, and Mrs. Mody; no, – motion does not carry.

Dr. Mandel moved to approve the Committee Reports and the Consent Items for November 18, 2025; Approval of all Monthly Meeting minutes, Curriculum & Instruction items 1-3, Operations & Finance items 1-8, Personnel & Human Resources items 1-8, Policy and Planning items 1-2, seconded by Mrs. Crossan, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mrs. Crossan; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, Mr. Thomas Keeling; yes, Dr. Mandel; yes, Mrs. Orban Brown; yes, Mrs. Carrino Tamasi; yes, and Mrs. Mody; yes, – motions carry.

XIII. Discussion - None.

XIV. Verbal Communications from the Public - None.

XV. Adjournment

Moved by Dr. Mandel, seconded by Mrs. Carrino Tamasi, to adjourn the Regular Session Meeting of November 18, 2025. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Mosner
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary