

Rockaway Borough Board of Education

103 East Main Street, Rockaway, NJ 07866

2026 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, January 7, 2026, 6:30 PM

Meeting Location: Thomas Jefferson School Cafeteria
95 East Main Street, Rockaway, NJ 07866

1. Call to Order

Dr. Giovanni Cusmano, the Interim Board Secretary/Business Administrator, will call the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. and serve as Temporary Chair of the Board.

2. Public Notice Announcement and Flag Salute

“In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, the Rockaway Borough Board of Education has provided adequate notice of this meeting to the public by having the time, date, and location advertised in The Citizen Newspaper; posted on our website and at town hall. Official action will be taken.”

“Now, please join us for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America . . .”

3. Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to organize the Board for its 2025 term and to act on any other business before it as previously advertised to the general public.

4. Certified Results of the November 2025 Election

One- Three Year Term as a Member of the Board of Education:

Petition Candidate: Mr. Michael Dougherty 955 Votes = ELECTED

5. New Board Members’ Oath of Office

Dr. Cusmano will administer the Oath of Office to the certified winner of the election:

Mr. Dougherty

They will then take their seats on the Board.

6. First Roll Call for the 2025 Rockaway Borough Board of Education:

Board Member:	Present	Term Ends
Mr. Graf		December 31, 2026
Ms. Dahl		December 31, 2026
Mrs. Dorgilles		December 31, 2027
Mrs. Hernandez		December 31, 2027
Mr. Dougherty		December 31, 2028

7. Nominations for President & VP

A. Dr. Cusmano will now entertain nominations for the position of **President** for the Rockaway Borough Board of Education for the 2026term:

Nominee #1:	
Nominated By:	No 2 nd required

Nominee #2: (If necessary)	
Nominated By:	No 2 nd required

Nominee #1:			
Roll Call Vote:	Aye	Nay	Abstain

Nominee #2: (If necessary)			
Roll Call Vote:	Aye	Nay	Abstain

_____ has been elected **President** of the Board for 2025.

B. Dr. Cusmano will now entertain nominations for the position of **Vice-President** for the Rockaway Borough Board of Education for the 2026term:

Nominee #1:	
Nominated By:	No 2 nd required

Nominee #2: (If necessary)	
Nominated By:	No 2 nd required

Nominee #1:			
Roll Call Vote:	Aye	Nay	Abstain

Nominee #2: (If necessary)			
Roll Call Vote:	Aye	Nay	Abstain

_____ has been elected **Vice President** of the Board for 2026.

- C. Dr. Cusmano will lead a brief review/discussion of the New Jersey School Boards Association Code of Ethics for School Board Members & Annual Mandated Training Requirements:
- Governance I: New Board Members – Orientation (must be complete within 90 days of service)
 - Governance II: 1st Term, 2nd full year of service – Finance
 - Governance III: 1st Term, 3rd full year of service – Student Achievement
 - Governance IV: Re-elected/Reappointed Board Members in the first year of any succeeding term – Legal Update

**** The New Board President will now preside over the remainder of the meeting****

8. Committee Appointments (May be completed now, or at a later date.)

(Maximum of 2 Board members on each, please feel free to volunteer for any you are interested in.)

1. Policy/Curriculum/Special Education:
2. Safety/Security:
3. Athletic/Activities:
4. Finance/Facilities:
5. Technology:
6. Negotiations (Ad Hoc):

9. Representative/Liaison Appointments

A. President to make Representative/Liaison Appointments for 2026 now (or at a later date):

(Board Members: Please feel free to volunteer for any organization you're interested in.)

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Rep/Liaison</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
New Jersey School Boards Association:		
Morris County Education Services Commission Assembly:		
Morris County School Boards Association:		
Rockaway Borough Home and School Association:		
Rockaway Borough Education Foundation:		
Rockaway Borough Council:		
Rockaway Borough Recreation Committee:		

10. Consent Agenda: Reauthorizations for the Continued Operation of the School District:

- A. Be it resolved to adopt the New Jersey School Boards Association Code of Ethics for School Board Members pursuant to NJSA 18A:12-24.1, and
1. that a copy of the code has been received and discussed,
 2. that policies and procedures regarding the training of members have been adopted,
 3. that each member acknowledges receipt of the "Code of Ethics" and has become familiar with it.
 4. and that each member signs and returns the "Acknowledgement of Receipt" form to the Board Secretary.

- B. Be it resolved to adopt the Parliamentary Procedures of Robert's Rules of Order as the operating guide for Board of Education meetings.
- C. Be it resolved to accept and approve the adoption of the existing Board Policy Manual, with its current Policies and Regulations, All Curriculum, textbooks, job descriptions, and other rules and regulations consistent with Board practice in effect as of December 2025 until June 30, 2026, for the continuation of school operations, and that changes, corrections or additions thereto may be determined by subsequent Board actions.
- D. Be it resolved to establish the following Board Meeting Schedule for the period of January 1, 2026, to the 2027 Annual Organizational Meeting:

<u>Meeting Dates</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Time</u>
January 20th, Tuesday (Jan 21st, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
February 24th, Tuesday (Feb 25th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
March 17th, Tuesday (March 18th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
April 7th, Tuesday (April 8th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
May 5th, Tuesday (May 6th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
June 23rd, Tuesday (June 24th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
July 28th, Tuesday (July 29th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
August 25th, Tuesday (August 26th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
September 22nd, Tuesday (September 23rd, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
October 27th, Tuesday (October 28th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
November 17th, Tuesday (November 18th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
December 15th, Tuesday (December 16th, Wednesday)	Executive Session Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
January 5th, Tuesday (Jan 6th, Wednesday)	Annual Board Organizational Meeting & Any Other Business	7:30 p.m.

- E.** Be it resolved to name The Citizen (weekly) as the district's official newspaper, with The Daily Record and Star-Ledger (both dailies) as alternates, to be used for the advertisement of meetings and legal ads and all other necessary public notifications for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- F.** Be it resolved to accept and approve the President, Treasurer of School Monies, and School Business Administrator/Board Secretary as duly authorized signatories for all official Board documents, payrolls, warrants, contracts, etc., for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year, with the Vice-President authorized to sign in the absence of the President.
- G.** Be it resolved to formally adopt the NJ Department of Education's Chart of Accounts in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP) as promulgated by the Federal Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).
- H.** Be it resolved to authorize Dr. Anthony Grieco, Superintendent, and Dr. Giovanni Cusmano, Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, to continue the daily management and administration of the Rockaway Borough Public School District, a legal public entity, and its School District Budget for the remainder of the 2025-2026 fiscal year, on behalf of the Rockaway Borough Board of Education.
- I.** Be it resolved that the following agencies be named as the legal depositories for funds and short-term investments of the Rockaway Borough Board of Education.

 - Santander Bank
- J.** Be it resolved to appoint Dr. Giovanni Cusmano, Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, as the Qualified Purchasing Agent for the district, as he has completed the mandatory training and is in possession of a valid State of NJ issued QPA Certificate, according to the rules and regulations of P.L. 1999 c.440; and the Qualified Purchasing Agent is authorized to award contracts up to the bid threshold of \$53,000 and establish the quote threshold at \$7,950 as governed by the State of New Jersey pursuant to NJSA 18A:18A, et. seq., for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- K.** Be it resolved, in accordance with Policy 6700 – Investments, to authorize the School Business Administrator to invest idle, unencumbered funds, during the school year, to maximize interest yields for the district, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- L.** Be it resolved to authorize the Business Administrator and Superintendent of Schools to approve budgetary transfers between Board Meetings in accordance with Board Policy #6470 – Budget Transfers, with subsequent Board approval, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- M.** Be it resolved to authorize the School Business Administrator and Superintendent of Schools to make payments between Board of Education Meetings in accordance with Board Policy #6470 – Payment of Claims, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- N.** Be it resolved, in accordance with NJSA 18A:11-12, that the maximum travel expenditure amount be established at \$50,000 in such a pre-budget year, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- O.** Be it resolved, in accordance with the School District Accountability Regulations (NJAC 6A 23A-1, et seq.), as the only district personnel duly authorized to contact/communicate with our General Counsel's Legal Firm (Board Attorney) as Dr. Anthony Grieco, Superintendent, Dr. Giovanni Cusmano, Business Administrator, and the Board President, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.

P. Be it resolved to authorize the purchase of goods and services from approved New Jersey State Contract Vendors and state, county, and local Cooperatives if offered & when needed, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.

Q. Be it resolved to approve the following appointments from January 1, 2026, to June 30, 2026:

- Dr. Anthony Grieco: Title I Coordinator and Federal Grants Administrator
- Dr. Anthony Grieco: Homeless Liaison
- Dr. Anthony Grieco: Charter School Liaison
- Dr. Anthony Grieco: Educational Stability Liaison (DCPP)
- Dr. Anthony Grieco: Affirmative Action Officer/Coordinator
- Dr. Anthony Grieco: ADA Coordinator/Title IX Coordinator
- Dr. Anthony Grieco: School Safety Specialist
- Dr. Giovanni Cusmano: Secretary of the Board of Education
- Dr. Giovanni Cusmano: Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA)
- Dr. Giovanni Cusmano: Public Agency Compliance Officer for Goods/Services (EEO/AA)
- Dr. Giovanni Cusmano: Custodian of Record for All-District Documents (OPRA)
- Timothy Havlusch: Treasurer of School Monies
- Leon Samuels: School Chemical Hygiene Officer (TJ Lab)
- Leon Samuels: Special Education Supervisor
- Jamie Argenziano: District Test, Student Data (NJ SLEDs), & PD/Mentoring Coordinator
- Jennifer Skiomial: District 504 Coordinator
- Jennifer Skiomial: District Anti-Bullying/HIB Coordinator
- Bryanna Dennison: Anti-Bullying/HIB/504 Specialist for TJ
- Brianna Rigas: Anti-Bullying/HIB/504 Specialist for Lincoln
- Michael Klein: Health & Safety Designee
- Michael Klein: Certified Educational Facilities Manager (CEFM)
- Michael Klein: AHERA Manager & Designated Person
- Michael Klein: Right to Know Officer, Indoor Air Quality Designee
- Michael Klein: IPM Coordinator, NJ DEP Designee
- Michael Klein: Hazardous Waste Manager

R. Be it resolved to approve the following professional service appointments from January 1, 2026, to June 30, 2026, at dollar amounts not to exceed (NTE). These individuals/firms have been selected based on their professional experience and prior performance for the Board in accordance with NJSA 4-11 et. seq.:

- **Auditor of Record:**
Lerch, Vinci, & Bliss, LLC. NTE \$30,000
- **Architect of Record:**
Parette Somjen Architects NTE \$20,000.
- **School Physician of Record:**
Dr. Jean-Paul Bonnet, Skylands Medical Group. NTE \$10,000
- **Property & Casualty Insurance Agent/Health Bens Broker of Record & Risk Mgt Advisor:**
Balken Risk Management Services, of Flemington, NJ. NTE \$50,000
- **Residency/Truant Officer:**
Jeffrey A. Oster Private Investigators, of Mine Hill, NJ. NTE \$2,000

S. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendations of the Superintendent and Business Administrator, to approve, accept, and adopt the following Rockaway Borough Board of Education Plans, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year:

- Integrated Pest Management Plan
- Mold Management Plan
- Lead-Based Paint Response Plan (Under six square feet)
- TJ Chemical Hygiene Plan (TJ Lab)
- Food Service Bio-Security Management Plan

- T. Be it resolved to approve the continuation of the following evaluation models for certificated instructional and administrative staff, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year:
- The Danielson Framework Evaluation Model
 - The New Jersey Principal Evaluation for Professional Learning Instrument (NJPEPL)
- U. Be it resolved to approve the following 403(b) and 457(b) Tax Shelter Annuities providers for employees to voluntarily enroll in at no cost to the Board, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year:
- | | |
|--|--|
| 403 (b) | 457 (b) |
| Equitable (AXA) | Equitable (AXA) |
| Lincoln National Investment Planning, Inc. | Lincoln National Investment Planning, Inc. |
| Lincoln National Life Insurance Co. | |
| National Life Co. | |
| AIG/Valic | |
| Metropolitan Life (Met Life) | |
| Steffens & Steffens, LLC. | |
- V. It is resolved that PenServ Plan Services, Inc. be approved as the third-party administrator for all 403(b) and 457(b) retirement plans available to Rockaway Borough Board of Education employees. There will be no charge to the district or to the employees for this service, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- W. Be it resolved, based upon the recommendations of the Supt & BA, to increase the minimum hourly rate to \$15.92, in accordance with NJ State law, effective January 1, 2026.
- X. Be it resolved to approve the following Substitute daily/hourly rates for the following positions, effective January 1, 2026:
- 1) "Floating" Sub Teacher: \$125 daily rate, guaranteed to work a minimum of three days per school week.
 - 2) Regular Sub Teacher: \$115 daily rate.
 - 3) Substitute Nurse: \$250 per day/\$34.48 per hour.
 - 4) Substitute Paraprofessional (Aide): \$15.92 per hour minimum.
 - 5) Substitute Secretary: \$15.92 per hour minimum.
 - 6) Substitute Custodian: \$15.92 per hour minimum.
 - 7) Substitute Bus/Van Driver: \$18.00 per hour minimum.
 - 8) Substitute Bus/Van Aide: \$15.92 per hour min. (If an existing para (aide) works, s/he shall be paid their regular hourly rate.)
 - 9) Summer Custodian/Technology Helpers: \$15.92 per hour minimum.
 - 10) Sport Officials' Rates (Game Referees) Per Game:
 - Soccer, Baseball & Softball: \$65(2)/\$97.50 (if 1)
 - Basketball: \$70(2)/\$105 (if 1).

Consent Agenda:

Be it resolved to approve **all** recommended resolutions as listed in one motion:

<u>Roll Call Vote:</u>	<u>Moved & Seconded By:</u>	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Recuse</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Ms. Dahl						
Mrs. Dorgilles						
Mr. Graf						
Mrs. Hernandez						
Mr. Dougherty						

11. Other Business Before the Board:

- A.** Be it resolved to approve the Board of Education **Meeting Minutes** from December 9, 2025, for the Regular, Executive Session I and Executive Session II meetings. (New Board members to abstain.)
- B.** Be it resolved to approve the **Student Field Trip** requests listed at the end of this agenda.
- C.** Be it resolved to approve the **Professional Development** requests listed at the end of this agenda.
- D.** Be it resolved to approve the **District Events** requests listed at the end of this agenda.
- E.** Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the joint transportation agreement between the Rockaway Borough Board of Education and the Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative, for the 2025-2026 school year, as submitted.
- F.** Be it resolved, based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept and approve the resignation of **Bindu Amos**, paraprofessional, effective January 15, 2026.
- G.** Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve Elizabeth Blake to provide ESL services to students, not to exceed 4.5 hours per week, at a rate of \$40.31/hr. (ESEA funds).
- H.** Be it resolved, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to rescind the approval of Noreen Abed-Rabbo, General Music Teacher, as previously approved on December 9, 2025.

H. RESOLUTION REGARDING THE DOCTRINE OF NECESSITY

BE IT RESOLVED, all members of the **Rockaway Borough Board of Education** (“Board”) are subject to the School Ethics Act as codified at N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the School Ethics Act requires Board members to alert the Board in the event they feel they have a conflict that would prohibit them from participating in discussions regarding a certain matter; and

WHEREAS, the Doctrine of Necessity may be invoked by a Board of Education under certain circumstances which, when properly invoked, permits conflicted Board members to participate in specific items; and

WHEREAS, the Board is currently engaged in collective bargaining and negotiations with the Rockaway Borough Education Association (“Association”); and

WHEREAS, four (4) of five (5) Board members are conflicted under the School Ethics Act and thereby prohibited from participating in negotiations; and

WHEREAS, the four (4) Board Members are employed as teachers in other districts, have immediate family members employed as a teacher in another district, or are employed in this district; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b) and Advisory Opinion A19-15, the four (4) conflicted members cannot participate in collective bargaining and negotiations because they are members of or their immediate family member is a member of the same state-wide union as the representative of the Association; and

WHEREAS, due to the conflicts identified herein, the Board cannot form a committee for collective bargaining and negotiations; and

WHEREAS, the Board seeks to invoke the Doctrine of Necessity to establish a committee for collective bargaining and negotiations with the Association; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board hereby invokes the Doctrine of Necessity to form a committee for collective bargaining and negotiations with the Association, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board shall post the above resolution on the District website and in the areas commonly used to post notice of the Board’s regularly scheduled meeting for a period of thirty (30) days.

Move and Vote on all Other Business Resolutions & Recommendations in One Motion:

<u>Roll Call Vote:</u>	<u>Moved & Seconded By:</u>	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Recuse</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Ms. Dahl						
Mrs. Dorgilles						
Mr. Graf						
Mrs. Hernandez						
Mr. Dougherty						

12. Public Comment - Please state your name and address

13. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, January 20th @ 7:30 pm in the TJ Cafeteria.

14. Executive Session

Be it Resolved, that the Board enter into Executive Session (Private) for the purpose of discussing _____, the nature of which will be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

**THE BOARD ANTICIPATES BEING IN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES.
BOARD ACTION WILL NOT BE TAKEN AFTER THIS SESSION CONCLUDES.**

Motion to Enter Exec Session: *Moved by:* *Seconded by:* *Voice Vote:*
Motion to Adjourn Exec Session: *Moved by:* *Seconded by:* *Voice Vote:*

15. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

There being no other business before the Board, the meeting is hereby adjourned at ____ pm.

Moved By:* *Seconded By:* *Voice Vote:

Professional Development/Travel Expenditure Requests:

Staff Member	Workshop Title/Dest.	Dates	Reg & Fees	Justification for the Trip
Laurie McGill Lauren Mitofsky	Language Arts Resource Observation/ Morris Hills High School	1/16/26	No Fee	Improved articulation with the high school will help determine modifications, assessments, and placements of outgoing 8th graders.
Amy DeFelice	Social Studies Articulation Teacher Exchange/ Morris Hills High School	1/29/26	No Fee	Observing high school courses will allow me to figure out what students are expected to know when they transfer up to the high school.
Michael Klein	2026 NJSBGA Expo./ Harrahs, Atlantic City	3/22-25/26	Fee: \$350 Hotel 3 nights: \$300 Mileage & Tolls: \$146.30	Required CEU's Vendor Intro training classes.

Casey Layne	NJIP Professional Learning Academies 25/26 Empowering Inclusive Practices Across Roles / Virtual	12/18/25	No Fee	Practical strategies tailored to high-traffic and high-energy spaces to support behavior proactively and build student ownership.
Jennifer Skomial	Morris Area Curriculum Network / Morris Cty. School of Technology	1/22/26	\$125	The workshop is about developing and building district/school culture to elevate the learning community and champion student success.

Student Field Trip Requests: N/A

GRADE	TEACHERS	DATE	TIME: DEPART/ RETURN	DESTINATION	# of Pupils	# OF ADULTS	COST PP	JUSTIFICATION FOR TRIP

District Events:

School Activity	Loc./School	Date/Time	Participants	Adm./ Teacher/ Coach/ Advisor
TJ Spring Concert - Date Change (previously approved on 9/23/25)	Rockaway Assembly of God	5/19/26 - 7:00pm 5/21/26 - 9:00am	Grades 6-8 Grades 4-5	Nicolas Bova / Noreen Abed-Rabbo