

MINUTES
PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
REORGANIZATION MEETING
January 7, 2026
7:00 p.m. Anticipated Public Session
NEW EGYPT HIGH SCHOOL

Vision Statement

“Unleashing Unlimited Opportunities . . . Empowering One Warrior At A Time!”

Mission Statement

The Plumsted Township School District shall inspire all students to realize their personal potential. A rich and challenging learning environment, in partnership with the community, will develop critical thinkers, lifelong learners and productive citizens in an emerging global society.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Gately, Board Secretary, presided and voiced the call to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT

In compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act, this is to announce that adequate notice of this meeting has been given in the form of an Annual Notice contained in Resolution No. 2024-1, which Resolution was immediately thereafter posted upon the bulletin board in the main office of all four schools and the Board Secretary’s office and disseminated within seven (7) days of passage to the Asbury Park Press and The Trenton Times, and a copy of such resolution was filed with the Plumsted Township Clerk. No advance written notice of this meeting was requested and paid for by any person according to the record of the Secretary of the Board. I direct the Secretary of the Board to enter into the minutes of this meeting this public announcement.

III. FLAG SALUTE

IV. REORGANIZATION

A. Election Results

Mr. Gately, Board Secretary, presented the election results of the 2025 Official School Election held on November 4, 2025.

Kevin Dreher - (write-in) 168
Lyndsey Gill - (write-in) 340
Earl Meroney - 2,515
Thomas Semko - 2,117

Two (2) Board of Education members were elected to fill two (2) expired three (3) year terms as follows:

Lyndsey Gill - 340
Earl Meroney- 2,515

One (1) Board of Education member was elected to fill one (1) unexpired two (2) year term as follows:

Thomas Semko - 2,117

B. Administer the Oath of Office

V. ROLL CALL/REORGANIZATION

Roll Call

Dr. Giardina	Present
Mrs. Gill	Present
Mrs. Kovacs	Present
Mr. Meroney	Present
Mrs. Raywood	Present
Dr. Semko	Present
Mr. Stepnowski	Absent

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Ytreboe, Superintendent
Mr. Gately, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Mr. Supsie, Board Attorney

A. Election of President

Mr. Gately called for the nomination of President of the Board of Education.

A motion was made by Mr. Meroney to nominate Mrs. Raywood as the Board President.
Seconded by Mrs. Gill.

B. Close nominations for the Office of the President of the Board

A motion was made by Mrs. Kovacs to close nominations for the election of the Board President.
Seconded by Dr. Semko.

Roll Call

Yes	Mrs. Kovacs, Dr. Semko, Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Gill, Mr. Meroney, Mrs. Raywood,
No	None
Absent	Mr. Stepnowski

The following roll call vote was taken for the motion to nominate Mrs. Raywood as Board President.

Roll Call

Yes	Mr. Meroney, Mrs. Gill Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Kovacs,
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No
Absent

Mrs. Raywood, Dr. Semko
None
Mr. Stepnowski

C. Election of the Vice-President

Mr. Gately called for the nomination of Vice President of the Board of Education.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kovacs to nominate Mr. Meroney as the Board Vice President.
Seconded by Mrs. Raywood.

D. Close nominations for the Office of the Vice President of the Board

A motion was made by Mrs. Raywood to close the nominations for the election of the Board Vice President.
Seconded by Mrs. Gill.

Roll Call

Yes

Mrs. Raywood, Mrs. Gill,
Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Kovacs,
Mr. Meroney, Dr. Semko

No

None

Absent

Mr. Stepnowski

The following roll call vote was taken for the motion to nominate Mr. Meroney as Board Vice President.

Roll Call

Yes

Mrs. Kovacs, Mrs. Raywood,
Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Gill,
Mr. Meroney, Dr. Semko

No

None

Absent

Mr. Stepnowski

Mrs. Raywood presided over the remainder of the meeting.

VI. REORGANIZATION MOTIONS

A. Code of Ethics

Mr. Meroney moved with a second by Mrs. Kovacs that VI.A.1 be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

The Board of Education Members had the required Board of Ethics Training session as required under N.J.A.C. 6:3-1.3 and N.J.A.C.6A:30.

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey School Boards Association "Code of Ethics" shall be considered the official Code of Ethics of the Plumsted Township Board of Education:

- a. I will uphold and enforce all laws, state board rules and regulations, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes should be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.
- b. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools which meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex or social standing.
- c. I will confine my Board action to policy-making, planning, and appraisal and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the Board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
- d. I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow Board members, to see that they are well run.
- e. I will recognize that authority rests with the Board of Education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action which may compromise the Board.
- f. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
- g. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. But in all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow Board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its schools.
- h. I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
- i. I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.
- j. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on such complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

Roll Call

Yes

Mr. Meroney, Mrs. Kovacs,
Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Gill,
Mrs. Raywood, Dr. Semko

No

None

Absent

Mr. Stepnowski

B. Adoption of Official Newspapers

Dr. Giardina moved with a second by Dr. Semko that VI.B.1 be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

To authorize the Asbury Park Press and The Trenton Times be adopted as the official newspapers to be used for the advertisement of meetings and legal ads and all other necessary public notifications for the 2025 - 2026 school year.

Roll Call

Yes

Dr. Giardina, Dr. Semko,
Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Kovacs,

No
Absent

Mr. Meroney, Mrs. Raywood
None
Mr. Stepnowski

C. Parliamentary Procedures

Dr. Giardina moved with a second by Mr. Meroney that VI.C.1 be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

To adopt Roberts Rules of Order as the official parliamentary procedure manual to be used to conduct meetings and appoint the Board Secretary and Board Attorney to act as the parliamentarians for the 2025 - 2026 school year.

Roll Call

Yes

Dr. Giardina, Mr. Meroney,
Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Kovacs,
Mrs. Raywood, Dr. Semko

No

None

Absent

Mr. Stepnowski

D. Board Policies/Regulations

Dr. Giardina moved with a second by Dr. Semko that VI.D.1 be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

The adoption of all existing Board Policies and Regulations.

Roll Call

Yes

Dr. Giardina, Dr. Semko,
Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Kovacs,
Mr. Meroney, Mrs. Raywood
Mrs. Gill (P. 0143)
Mr. Stepnowski

No

Absent

E. Doctrine of Necessity

Dr. Giardina moved with a second by Mrs. Gill that VI.E.1 be approved:

1. Recommend the Board approve the following item:

WHEREAS, the School Ethics Act, N.J.S.A. 18AA:12-21 et seq. was enacted by the New Jersey State Legislature to ensure and preserve public confidence in school Board members and school administrators, and to provide specific ethical standards to guide their conduct; and

WHEREAS, questions have arisen regarding how a Board should invoke the Doctrine of Necessity when a quorum of a Board of Education has conflicts of interest on a matter required to be voted upon; and

WHEREAS, the School Ethics Commission has provided some guidance in Public Advisory Opinion A03-98 (April 1, 1998), but finds that there is a need to repeat and clarify its opinion; and

WHEREAS, the opinion set forth that, when it is necessary for a Board to invoke the Doctrine of Necessity, the Board should state publicly that it is doing so, the reason that such action is necessary, and the specific nature of the conflicts of interest; and

WHEREAS, the opinion further provided that if the Board must invoke the Doctrine of Necessity not just to vote, but also to form a negotiations committee because it is without even three members to serve as a committee, then the Board must determine whether to act as a committee of the whole or to choose a smaller negotiations committee from among its members after stating publicly its reason for doing so as set forth above; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with the Legislative purpose as set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:12-22(a) the School Ethics Commission views public disclosure of conflicts of interest to be paramount when it is necessary to invoke the Doctrine of Necessity;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the School Ethics Commission hereby requires Boards of Education and Charter School Boards of Trustees that must invoke the Doctrine of Necessity to adopt a resolution setting forth that they are invoking the Doctrine, the reason for doing so, and the specific nature of the conflicts of interest; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Boards of Education and Charter School Boards of Trustees that invoke the Doctrine are directed to read the resolution at a regularly scheduled public meeting, post it where it posts public notices for 30 days, and provide the Commission with a copy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission shall distribute this Resolution to the county superintendents for distribution to the school districts and charter schools, the New Jersey School Boards Association, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials, and the New Jersey Education Association.

Roll Call

Yes	Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Meroney, Mrs. Raywood, Dr. Semko
No	None
Absent	Mr. Stepnowski

VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr. Giardina moved with a second by Mr. Meroney that VII.A. be approved:

- A. Recommend that the Board approve the reorganization meeting agenda for January 7, 2026.

Roll Call

Yes	Dr. Giardina, Mr. Meroney, Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Kovacs, Mrs. Raywood, Dr. Semko
No	None
Absent	Mr. Stepnowski

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None

IX. DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

A. Board Meeting dates:

The remaining Board of Education meetings will be held: (pending the vote on motion XI A.1)

X. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - Opened at 7:13 p.m. and closed at 7:13 p.m.
None

XI. SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA

Dr. Giardina made a motion, with a second by Mrs. Gill that A.1. be approved:

A. Other Motions

1. Recommend approval of [resolution 2025-2026 No. 1](#), Open Public Meeting Act.

Roll Call

Yes

Dr. Giardina, Mrs. Gill
Mrs. Kovacs, Mr. Meroney,
Mrs. Raywood, Dr. Semko

No

None

Absent

Mr. Stepnowski

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY SCHOOL-RELATED TOPIC - Opened at 7:14 p.m. - Closed at 7:19 p.m.
Bernard Bahnam, 370 East Millstream Road, Cream Ridge, NJ 08514 - Congratulated Dr. Giardina for his service and congratulated the rest of the board of education members.

Lynn Pryzbylowski, teacher, mentioned that a student was in attendance for their heroic assistance with rendering aid to another student during a medical situation at school. Mr. Ytreboe praised the student for their actions and invited them to the next board meeting for a formal recognition.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

XIV. OLD BUSINESS

XV. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Request resolution for Executive Session at this point in the meeting of the Plumsted Township Board of Education on _____ for the purpose of discussing _____.

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meeting Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq.) permits bodies to discuss certain matters in closed sessions, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq.), such a meeting may be held in private;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that:

1. The Board shall meet in closed session on these matters; and
2. The matters to be discussed in private may be shared with the public at such other time as the Board may determine that there is no longer any requirement for confidentiality.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Giardina made a motion to adjourn at 7:20 p.m.
Seconded by Mr. Meroney passed unanimously.

Sean Gately
Business Administrator/Board Secretary