REGULAR MEETING
December 9, 2025
Minutes

1. **Call to Order**
Sarah Schultz, Board President, called the meeting to order at **7:00 p.m.** at the Chester Borough Courtroom, 50 North Road, Chester, NJ 07930.

2. **Sunshine Announcement**
Sarah Schultz, Board President, announced that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 P.L. 1975 (Sunshine Law) and that adequate notice of the date, time and location has been sent to the Daily Record and has been posted and filed with the Chester Township and Chester Borough Clerks. The annual meeting calendar has also been sent to each District school and the Chester Post Office. Additionally, the agenda has been posted on the District website prior to the Board meeting.

3. **Roll Call**

Erick Arostegui	Yes	Suzanne Dundon	Yes
John Barounis	Yes*	Melissa Mauro-Duffy	Yes
Amy Buck Faundez	Yes	Sarah Schultz	Yes
Carolyn Byszewski	Absent	Adam Sorchini	Yes
Adam Colicchio	Yes	**Quorum**	Yes

**Arrived 7:05 PM*

4. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Sara Schultz, Board President, led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. **Presentations/Celebrations:**
- Dickerson Elementary School
  - Teacher of the Year
  - Educational Services Professional of the Year
- Bragg Elementary School
  - Teacher of the Year
  - Educational Services Professional of the Year
- Black River Middle School
  - Teacher of the Year
  - Educational Services Professional of the Year
- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and Auditor's Management Report (AMR)- by Nisivoccia, LLP - Man Lee

6. **Administration**
- Superintendent - Dr. William Kochis
- Assistant Superintendent - Mr. Brad Currie
- Business Administrator/Board Secretary - Mr. Peter Frascella

6a. Superintendent's Report
Dr Kochis spoke about the winter concerts at Bragg & Black River Middle School

6b. Business Administrator's Report
Mr. Frascella stated the January 6, 2026 Reorganization meeting will be at the Black River Middle School Cafeteria.

7. President's Comments
Sarah thanked Melissa Mauro Duffy and Carolyn Byszewski for Teacher of the Year/ESP involvement. Also spoke about Morris County meeting on AI was very interesting. She discussed Board Certification.

8. Public Commentary
None

9. Approval of Minutes

9a. Approves Minutes from November 19, 2025
RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Regular meeting minutes of the meeting held on November 19, 2025

9b. Approves Executive Meeting Minutes from November 19, 2025
RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Executive meeting minutes of the meeting held on November 19, 2025.

Motion by Adam Colicchio Seconded by John Barounis

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

10. Committee of the Whole– *All.*
None

11. Buildings, Grounds, Transportation/Finance– *Adam Colicchio (Chair), Adam Sorchini, Carolyn Byszewski, and John Barounis*
Adam Colicchio discussed entering into an Energy Audit, Lunch Program and Solar Contract.

11a. Approves Bills List
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the School Business Administrator, the Chester Board of Education approves payment of the bills list as approved by the Finance Committee.

Bills List	Totals
Payroll 11/26/25	$712,714.38
Bills List 12/09/2025	$624,819.37

11b. Approves Travel Requests

RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 and N.J.A.C.6A:23A and Board Policy 9250 and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Educa-tion approves the following travel requests:

Date	Employee Conference/Workshop	Registration / Tuition	Travel / Misc.	Estimated Total Expense
01/22 2026	Anne Pape Best Practices for Managing School Medical Emergencies Virtual	$295	$0	$295
1/28 - 1/30 2026	Brad Currie NJASA Techspo '26 Atlantic City, NJ	$610	$533.84	$1143.84
1/28 - 1/30 2026	Kathryn Nieves Licwinko NJASA Techspo '26 Atlantic City, NJ	$610	$533.84	$1143.84

11c. Approves Home Instruction by LearnWell

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves LearnWell to provide home instruction for student # 21414 for 5 hours a week at a cost of $61.70 per hour from 11/14/25 - 11/21/25.

11d. Accepts Comprehensive Annual Financial Report FY 2023-2024

Whereas, the Chester Board of Education in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:23-1 must have a certified External Audit of the district's accounts and financial transactions; and

Whereas, the Board of Education received the audit performed by Nisivoccia LLP, CPAs, and discussed said audit at its public meeting held on December 10, 2024; now

Be It Resolved, that the Chester Board of Education accepts the audit for the 2023-2024 school year, FY ended June 30, 2024.

11e. Approves ABA Therapist

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves The Stepping Stones Group to provide an ABA (Applied Behavior Analyst) therapist to provide services for 20 hours a week at $65.00 an hour for the 2025-2026 school year.

Motion by Erick Arostigui Seconded by Adam Sorchini

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

12. Curriculum/Governance/Personnel– *Melissa Mauro Duffy (Chair), Erick Arostegui, Suzanne Dundon, and Amy Buck Faundez*
Melissa discussed the PreK Program, Personnel and Science Fair Committee.

12a. Accepts Retirement (Parasugo)
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education accepts the retirement of Mary Parasugo, Custodian of School Monies, effective December 31, 2025 with much gratitude for 39 years of service to the Chester Board of Education.

12b. Accepts Resignation (Wadleigh)
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of theSuperintendent, the Chester Board of Education accepts the resignation of paraprofessional, Anne Wedleigh, effective December 19, 2025

12c. Revises Bragg 2025-2026 Club Advisor (Pickleball Club)
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education revises the Chester School District Staff member as Club Advisor for the 2025-2026 school year with stipend as determined by Schedule "B" of the Agreement between The Chester Board of Education and The Chester Education Association:

From:

Pickleball Club	Bragg	$1,864.00	Russell Schilp

To:

Pickleball Club	Bragg	$1,864.00	Dana Militante

12d. Approves Leave of Absence (Employee #1623)
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves the following leave of absence for employee #1623:

Sick Leave Start Date	10/15/2025
Sick Days Used	10
Unpaid Leave Start Date	10/29/2025
Anticipated Return to Work Date	01/05/2026

12e. Approves School Social Worker(.6 FTE) Sciancalepore
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Erika Sciancalepore as School Social Worker with projected start date of January 26, 2026 for the 2025-26 school year to be paid MA Step 1, $65,055 adjusted to .6 FTE $39,033 prorated with benefits pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L. 2018, c5.

12f. Approves Professional Work (Pre-School Open House)
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following staff members to attend the Pre-School Open House on January 20, 2026 for 2 hours each at the contracted professional hourly rate of $62.00.

Christal, Jennifer	Tracey, Josephine
Colicchio, Andrea	Twynam, Jessica
Nealon, Courtney	

12g. Approves 6th Grade Science Teacher (Baldassari)
RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Chester Board of Education approves Dennis Baldassari as 6th Grade Science Teacher with projected start date of February 2, 2026 for the 2025-26 school year to be paid a salary of $62,060 at BA Step 9 prorated with benefits pending approval of criminal history background check for school employees and compliance with NJ P.L. 2018, c5.

12h. Approves Memorandum of Agreement with CEA (Paraprofessionals)
RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Memorandum of Agreement with the Chester Education Association to commence on July 1, 2025 and will expire on June 30, 2026 (1 year).

Motion by Melissa Mauro Duffy Seconded by John Barounis

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7-0-1 (**12f.**)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

13. Policy– *Adam Sorchini (Chair), Adam Colicchio, John Barounis, and Melissa Mauro Duffy*
Adam stated Social Media Policy is going to be used to amend existing Policy so it's streamlined.

14. Executive Session
RESOLVED, that pursuant to NJS.A. 10:4-12 and 10:4-13 the Chester Board of Education held a closed session on December 9, 2025 at **7:50 p.m.** to discuss HIB, personnel and items falling under attorney client privilege. It is expected that the minutes will be made public as soon as official action is taken.

Motion by Suzanne Dundon Seconded by Adam Colicchio

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

15. Return to Public

*Upon the motion of Amy Buck Faudez and seconded by Suzanne Dundon, the Board returned to Public Session at **8:45 p.m.***

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

16. Committee of the Whole

16a. Approves Superintendent's Recommendation for HIB Case # 1

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation for HIB Case # 1

Motion by John Barounis Seconded by Adam Sorchini

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

16b. Approves Memorandum of Agreement with CAA (Administrators)

RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the Memorandum of Agreement with the Chester Administrator Association to commence on July 1, 2025 and will expire on June 30, 2029 (4 years).

Motion by John Barounis Seconded by Amy Buck Faudez

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

16c. Approves Revised 2026-2027 Chester School District Calendar
RESOLVED, that the Chester Board of Education approves the revised 2026-2027 Chester School District calendar with an end of year school date of June 11, 2027 (Option D).

Motion by Adam Sorchini Seconded by Amy Buck Faudez

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
7-1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

17. Unfinished Business
None

18. New Business
None

19. Adjournment
There being no further business to discuss, upon the motion of John Barounis and seconded by Amy Buck Faudez, the Board considered a motion to adjourn at ***8:51 P.M.***

Roll Call Vote	EA	JB	ABF	CB	AC	SD	MMD	SS	AS
8-0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Frascella

Board Secretary