



## LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTING MEETING MINUTES

January 20, 2026

Executive Session - Room A106 at Livingston High School - 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Public Session - Livingston High School Auditorium - 7:00 p.m.

A **Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date in the Livingston High School Auditorium and via a Facebook livestream. The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Parul Khemka, Board President, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 6, 2026 and posted at the Board of Education office and communicated to *The Star Ledger*, *West Essex Tribune*, *TAPinto Livingston* and the Livingston Township Clerk.

Members Present: Pamela Chirls, Seth Cohen, Fang Gong, Parul Khemka, Inna Yelisevich and Abe Klein

Also in Attendance: Dr. Daniel Fishbein, Jessica Rapp, Dr. Maura Tuite, Mark Stern, Susan Burman and Joann Goldberg

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

### **Executive Session**

**Whereas**, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits the Board of Education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters; now, therefore be it

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss:

- student and legal matters

Action may be taken upon return to the public session. The full length of the meeting is anticipated to be approximately 60 minutes; and be it

**Further Resolved**, the minutes of this closed session be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor.

At 7:04 p.m., Mrs. Khemka reconvened the public meeting.

Mrs. Khemka asked for a motion to move resolution 4.1 to the first item on tonight's agenda.

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

#### **4.1 Appointment of Superintendent of Schools**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of *Mark Stern* as Superintendent of Schools for the period beginning on July 1, 2026 and ending on June 30, 2031. Mr. Stern's contract is in accordance with current law, has been approved by the Essex County Executive Superintendent and is on file at the Board of Education office.

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

The board members each congratulated Mr. Stern.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Gong, Mrs. Yelisevich, Mrs. Khemka  
Nays - None

Mr. Stern's message to the community is attached to the minutes.

### **Superintendent's Report**

#### **Demographic Study**

Dr. Richard Grip from Statistical Forecasting provided a demographic study to project grade-by-grade enrollments from 2026-27 through 2030-31, a five year period. He analyzed community population trends, demographic characteristics and age structure, birth counts and fertility rates. He examined the district's historical enrollments by grade configuration and by school. He examined historical enrollments of Livingston resident students attending non-public schools, determined historical birth counts for each elementary attendance area, researched new housing starts and analyzed their impact on the school district and compared school building capacities to current and projected enrollments. He also geocoded students from 2019-20 and 2025-26 to show relative concentrations of where students live.

Dr. Grip summarized the presentation by predicting enrollments to steadily increase throughout the five-year projection period. Dr. Grip added that 1,062 new housing units are projected to come online, resulting in a projected enrollment gain of 195.5 students. Enrollment gain is due to inward migration, as 11 of the 13 grade projections are showing an influx of children moving into the district, not being born in Livingston. Enrollment gain is not projected to be uniform across the grade configurations with the largest gain projected to occur in the high school grades. Elementary and middle school enrollments are not projected to change significantly.

The full presentation is available on our website.

Due to the late hour and number of students in the audience waiting to speak, Mrs. Khemka moved public comment up in the meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Kelly Connell, parent of a MPMS student, requested the board and administration reconsider the newly implemented no-backpack policy at MPMS. Students are carrying heavy items from class to class which inhibits their ability to use handrails when going up and down the stairs and the recommended bag goes over one shoulder, which makes carrying it less stable for the students on the stairs and in the hallways, which create safety concerns. Mrs. Connell submitted a petition of over 240 signatures and asked that the policy be reviewed by a pediatric orthopedist.

Erin Meiner, parent of a MPMS student, asked everyone to look at the student in front of them who was struggling while holding classroom supplies for a little under three minutes, which is the same amount of time they walk in the hallways.

Ariel Velez, asked if they can go back to using string bags to carry school items so their hands are free to hold onto the handrail when going up and down the stairs. Miss Melez explained when students are rushing to get to class, others get bumped into, which causes the items in their hands to get knocked all over the floor.

Adele Sherkman, stated the new no-backpack policy is not safe. She has seen students fall on the stairs while trying to carry their supplies. Backpacks are safer as they carry weight evenly and allow students to have a free hand to hold the handrail while going up and down the stairs.

Julia Brauner, expressed that the no-backpack policy adds stress and anxiety to students to organize materials needed for the day and to not drop anything when going from class to class. Miss Brauner asked for string bags to be allowed.

Julian Meiner, expressed physical health problems with carrying too many heavy items at once, that it is difficult to stay organized without a backpack and advocated for neurodivergent students who are allowed to use their backpacks but might feel different from students who are not able to use them. Mr. Meiner asked that they go back to allowing backpacks to be used.

Brennan Connell added that his shoulder hurts using the single strap case that is permitted to be used and that case doesn't fit everything so he is also carrying items. He has seen many kids trip on the stairs and drop items because they are too heavy to carry.

Melissa DeAngelus, President of LEA, on behalf of LEA, congratulated Mark Stern on his appointment as our new superintendent and looks forward to working with him.

Michelle Auerbach, parent of a 7th grader at HMS, stated the no-backpack rule at Heritage has caused students to drop items they are carrying and trip over each other in the hallways. She advocated for students to be able to use backpacks for safety reasons.

### **LHS Report on Graduates/Assessment Report**

Mrs. Sinead Crews, Ms. Nicole Rothman and Mrs. Natalie Topylko provided this annual presentation which includes their mission and goal, key updates, highlights from last year, a review of comparative data, AP, SAT and ACT testing data, and their future goals.

There are links embedded in the presentation that parents are welcome to utilize for additional information. The full presentation is available on our website.

### **LPS Spotlight Video**

A video highlighting how the district observed the Week of Respect at the elementary schools in October of 2025 was shown.

### **Board Reports**

There were no board reports.

### **Student Representative's Report**

On behalf of the student body, Mr. Klein congratulated Mr. Stern on his appointment as our new superintendent.

Mr. Klein added that he had a conversation with Mr. Mohammed about students' concerns that their writing assignments are being flagged for AI. Mr. Mohammed clarified that they are properly looking at evidence through not only AI trackers but also by tracking a student's copy and pastes and key strokes to determine whether AI was used. Mr. Klein added he wanted to address this because AI trackers can be faulty, and he wanted to be sure that students were not being wrongfully accused of AI usage.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

1. Voting Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2025
2. Reorganization Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2026

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Gong, Mrs. Yelisevich, Mrs. Khemka  
Nayes - None

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL**

#### **PROGRAM/CURRICULUM**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

##### **1.1 Novels**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the novels as shown on **Attachment A**.

##### **1.2 Student Teacher/Educational Leadership**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the placements as shown on **Attachment B**.

##### **1.3 Professional Development Program: Contract for Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Professional Development**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the Strauss Esmay contract for the 2025-2026 school year for Professional Development on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying and the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act at a cost not to exceed \$3,000.

##### **1.4 Professional Development Program: Contract for Evaluations and Individualized Education Program Training Professional Development**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves a contract with David Antunes for professional development on Evaluations and Individualized Education Programs for the 2025-2026 school year, at a cost not to exceed \$300.

##### **1.5 Field Trip**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the field trip as shown on **Attachment C**.

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Gong, Mrs. Yelisevich, Mrs. Khemka  
Nayes - None

**STUDENT SERVICES**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

**2.1 Out of District Placements**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves placement for the academic year 2025-2026 for one (1) Livingston student with disabilities, as classified and recommended by the Child Study Team, in facilities with tuition costs to be determined within the limits established by the New Jersey Board of Education, as shown on **Attachment D**.

**2.2 Related Services/Medical Consultants**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following consultants that will be utilized to provide related services for the 2025-2026 school year:

**VISION THERAPY**

State of NJ, Commission of the Blind & Visually Impaired      \$3,963.00.00/Level-2 Service

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Gong, Mrs. Yelisevich, Mrs. Khemka  
Nayes - None

**BUSINESS**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

**3.1 Payment of Bills**

**Whereas**, the Board Secretary has audited certain vendor claims as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2 and Board Policy 6470 and presented them to the Livingston Board of Education with the recommendation they be paid, now therefore be it

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the payment of the following bills in the amounts listed and attach a complete copy of these bills to the minutes of this meeting.

<b><u>Fund</u></b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
10,11,12	Operating Budget (checks 114219-114625)	\$13,725,542.63
20	Operating Budget (checks 114219-114625)	\$346,656.79
60	Cafeteria (checks 60178-60182)	\$215,093.23
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$14,287,292.65

**3.2 Board Secretary Report – November 2025**

**Whereas**, the Livingston Board of Education has received the Report of the Board Secretary for November 28, 2025, consisting of:

- 1) Interim Balance Sheets  
January 20, 2026

- 2) Interim Statements Comparing Budgeted Revenue with Actual to Date and Appropriations with Expenditures and Encumbrances to Date
- 3) Schedule of Revenues - Actual Compared with Estimated
- 4) Statement of Appropriations Compared with Expenditures and encumbrances, and

**Whereas**, the Livingston Board of Education has received the report of the Treasurer for November 28, 2025, which report is in agreement with the Report of the Board Secretary, and

**Whereas**, these reports show the following balances on the date indicated:

	Cash Balance	Appropriation Balance	Fund Balance
(10) General Current Exp. Fund	\$12,946,641.67	\$104,023,272.36	\$6,176,789.58
(11) Current Expense			
(12) Capital Outlay			
(20) Special Revenue Fund	\$225,108.36	\$2,919,681.00	\$4,523.88
(30) Capital Projects Fund	\$1,006,099.98	\$2,270,800.00	\$952,828.81
(40) Debt Service Fund	(\$3,828,074.37)	\$7,344,550.00	(\$915,106.20)
Total:	\$10,349,775.64	\$116,558,303.36	\$6,219,036.07

**Whereas**, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c3), the Board Secretary has certified that as of November 28, 2025, no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments contractual orders which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8, 18A:22-8.1, now therefore be it

**Resolved**, the Livingston Board of Education accepts the above referenced reports and certification and directs that they be made part of this resolution by reference, and be it

**Further Resolved**, the Livingston Board of Education certifies that, after review of the Secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of its knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c4) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

### **3.3 Board Secretary Report – December 2025**

**Whereas**, the Livingston Board of Education has received the Report of the Board Secretary for December 31, 2025, consisting of:

- 1) Interim Balance Sheets
- 2) Interim Statements Comparing Budgeted Revenue with Actual to Date and Appropriations with Expenditures and Encumbrances to Date
- 3) Schedule of Revenues - Actual Compared with Estimated
- 4) Statement of Appropriations Compared with Expenditures and encumbrances, and

**Whereas**, the Livingston Board of Education has received the report of the Treasurer for December 31, 2025, which report is in agreement with the Report of the Board Secretary, and

**Whereas**, these reports show the following balances on the date indicated:

	Cash Balance	Appropriation Balance	Fund Balance
(10) General Current Exp. Fund	\$7,579,733.15	\$147,754,817.52	\$6,176,789.58
(11) Current Expense			
(12) Capital Outlay			
(20) Special Revenue Fund	\$348,215.49	\$2,919,681.00	\$4,523.88
(30) Capital Projects Fund	\$1,013,305.82	\$2,270,800.00	\$952,828.81
(40) Debt Service Fund	(\$968,148.87)	\$7,344,550.00	(\$915,106.20)
Total:	\$7,973,105.59	\$160,289,848.52	\$6,219,036.07

**Whereas**, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c3), the Board Secretary has certified that as of December 31, 2025, no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments contractual orders which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8, 18A:22-8.1, now therefore be it

**Resolved**, the Livingston Board of Education accepts the above referenced reports and certification and directs that they be made part of this resolution by reference, and be it

**Further Resolved**, the Livingston Board of Education certifies that, after review of the Secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of its knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c4) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

### **3.4 Transfers**

**Whereas**, the Superintendent of Schools recommends certain transfers among accounts in the 2025-2026 budget for November and December pursuant to Board of Education Policy 6422, now therefore be it

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education ratify transfers pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8.1 and N.J.A.C. 6:20-2A.10 as shown on **Attachments E and F**.

### **3.5 Conferences and Overnight Trips**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the conferences and overnight trips as shown on **Attachment G**.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves *Daniel Quackenbush, Dan Gonzalez* and *Teresa Fannell* to chaperone approximately 100 students participating in the DECA State Competition in Atlantic City, New Jersey, from March 3 to 5, 2026.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves *Hal Mordkoff, Tom Garzon, Sam Helwani, Stacy Strumeyer* and *Amy Meyer* to chaperone approximately 85 students participating in the FBLA NJ State Championship in Atlantic City, New Jersey, from March 9 to 11, 2026.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves *Valery Desamours* and *Michael Buonomo* to chaperone approximately 20 students participating in the NJ Key Club District Educational Convention (DECON 2026) in Asbury Park, New Jersey, from March 26-28, 2026.

**3.6 ParentSquare**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the agreement with ParentSquare to provide website and communication services for the 2026-2027 school year. The agreement includes a one-time upfront cost of \$8,350.02 and an annual cost of \$40,300.

**3.7 Rivalry Sports Medicine**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the agreement between Livingston High School and Rivalry Sports Medicine to provide sports substitute/per diem (PRN) athletic trainer services to support the high school’s athletic department for the 2025-2026 school year.

**3.8 Settlement Agreement**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the Settlement Agreement for Case #01-2026 which is on file at the Board of Education office.

**3.9 Settlement Agreement**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the Settlement Agreement for Case #02-2026 which is on file at the Board of Education office.

**3.10 Change Orders**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following change orders that are inclusive of labor and materials:

<b>Ecological Systems by Water Wizard, LLC (Solar Project at HMS, RH and MP Complex)</b>		
<b>Original contract</b>		<b>\$119,050.00</b>
Previously approved change orders		\$49,500.00
Contract sum prior to additional change orders		<b>\$168,550.00</b>
Addendum #1 - One additional inverter at HMS		\$14,600.00
Addendum #4 - Two additional inverters at RH		\$16,450.00
Addendum #5 - Additional inverter at MP Complex		\$8,300.00
<b>Revised contract</b>		<b>\$207,900.00</b>

**3.11 Bylaws, Policies and Regulations**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following policies and regulations for first reading:

Policy #2361 - Acceptable Use of Computer Networks/Computers and Resources (M)(with revisions)

Policy #3321 - Acceptable Use of Computer Networks/Computers and Resources by Teaching Staff Members (new to district)

Policy #4321 - Acceptable Use of Computer Networks/Computers and Resources by Support Staff Members (new to district)

Policy #7522 - School District Technology Devices Provided to Staff Members (new to district)

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following policies for second reading and adoption:

- Policy #2310 - Student Grouping (new to district)
- Policy #2330 - Homework (new to district)
- Policy #2415.02 - Title I - Fiscal Responsibilities (M) (with revisions)
- Policy #2421 - Career and Technical Education (new to district)
- Policy #2435 - NJSIAA Random Testing For Interscholastic Athletics (new to district)
- Policy #2436 - Activity Participation Fee Program (new to district)
- Policy #3233 - Political Activities (with revisions)
- Policy #3324 - Right of Privacy (new to district)
- Policy #4125 - Employment of Support Staff Members (with revisions)
- Policy #4324 - Right of Privacy (new to district)
- Policy #5320 - Immunization (with revisions)

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Gong, Mrs. Yelisevich, Mrs. Khemka  
 Nays - None

**PERSONNEL**

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

**4.2 Resignations & Retirements**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the resignations of:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Last Day of Employment</b>
<i>Gina Covello</i>	First Secretary	Retirement	MPMS	February 28, 2026
<i>Gail Witt</i>	First Secretary	Retirement	MPE	June 30, 2026
<i>Christine Zambrio</i>	Intervention/ Enrichment Specialist	Retirement	MPE/BHE	June 30, 2026
<i>Jean Peslak</i>	Elementary School Teacher	Retirement	BHE	June 30, 2026
<i>Shari Kane</i>	Instructional Aide	Retirement	Hillside	June 30, 2026
<i>Jamie Geltzeiler</i>	TOSD	Resignation	HMS	January 9, 2026
<i>Sophia Foster</i>	Instructional Aide	Resignation	LHS	January 2, 2026
<i>Veronica Terrana</i>	Teacher of Italian	Resignation	LHS	February 3, 2026
<i>Laura Larrazabal</i>	Teacher of Math	Resignation	HMS	February 20, 2026

*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

### 4.3 Leaves of Absences

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the leaves of absences of:

Name	Location	Position	LOA w/pay and benefits	LOA w/o pay, but with benefits (if applicable)	Extended LOA w/o pay or benefits	Return Date
Nidhi Benjamin	RHE	Teacher of Art	3/9/2026-4/30/2026	5/1/2026-6/30/2026**	NA	8/26/2026
Nidhi Benjamin	RHE	Teacher of Art	9/22/2026-10/9/2026**	NA	NA	10/12/2026
Antonio Matheus	LHS/HMS	Supervisor of Math (7-12)	1/5/2026-4/3/2026**	NA	NA	4/6/2026
Marjorie Duffy*	LHS	School Counselor	12/1/2025-1/30/2026 & 2/2/2026-2/12/2026**	2/13/2026-5/25/2026**	NA	5/26/2026
Michael Mongioj	CO	IT Support Specialist	NA	2/3/2026-4/24/2026**	NA	4/27/2026
Michael Coleman	LHS	Teacher of Science	1/9/2026-1/14/2026	NA	1/15/2026-1/23/2026	1/26/2026
Stephanie Crosby*	Collins	Reading Interventionist	4/27/2026-6/5/2026	6/8/2026-6/30/2026 & 8/26/2026-9/4/2026**	NA	9/7/2026
Sean Cruz	LHS	Teacher of Business Education	3/23/2026-4/17/2026**	NA	NA	4/20/2026
Lila Alfaro	LHS	TOSD	1/20/2026-3/2/2026**	NA	NA	3/2/2026
Jamal Chavis	BHE	ABA Discrete Trial TA	NA	NA	1/5/2026 - 5/1/2026	5/4/2026
Sejal Mehta		Instructional Aide	1/2/2026-1/8/2026	NA	1/9/2026-1/23/2026	1/26/2026

\*as amended from a previous agenda

\*\*Designates time counted toward NJFLA/FMLA

### 4.4 Appointments

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the applications indicated below (\*) for emergent hiring for the following appointments under the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1 et. seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39.17 et. seq.; N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. All appointments are contingent upon reference checks in accordance with P.L. 2018, c.5.

Name	Location	Title	Tenure Track/LOA or LT Replacement	Replacing	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Date
Sydney Nigro*	LHS	Teacher of English	Leave Replacement	D. Wojdyga	BA	1	\$56,568 (prorated)	8/25/2025-1/5/2026
Sydney Nigro	HMS	TOSD	Leave Replacement	D. Cohen	BA	1	\$56,568 (prorated)	1/6/2026-6/30/2026
Kierstyn Castillo	LHS	Teacher of Business Ed	Leave Replacement	J. Lee	MA	1	\$64,568 (prorated)	3/9/2026-6/30/2026

<i>Julia Cuppari*</i>	RHE	TOSD	Leave Replacement	C. Clark	MA	1	\$64,568 (prorated)	1/2/2026
<i>Carroll Alston*</i>	HMS	TOSD	First Year Tenure Track	J. Geltzeiler	BA	2	\$57,568 (prorated)	1/12/2026
<i>Ilyssa Chanin*</i>	RHE	TOSD	Leave Replacement	C. Clark	MA	1	\$64,568 (prorated)	8/25/2025-1/1/2026
<i>Ilyssa Chanin*</i>	HMS	TOSD	Leave Replacement	S. Stoddard	MA	1	\$64,568 (prorated)	1/2/2026-6/30/2026
<i>Andrea Vaccariello</i>	LHS	Teacher of Italian	First Year Tenure Track	V. Terrana	BA	11	\$75,200 (prorated)	1/21/2026
<i>Nicole Tierney</i>	RHE	First Secretary - 10 months	First Year Tenure Track	D. Paoella	FS-10	9	\$58,361, plus \$1,200 degree (prorated)	1/21/2026
<i>James Soutar</i>	MPE	Playground Aide	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$20/hour	1/12/2025
<i>Greville Honore</i>	B&G	Maintenance	NA	O. Ajeti	Maintenance	11	\$69,952, plus \$625 black seal (prorated)	1/5/2026***
<i>Gino Gutti</i>	B&G	Maintenance	NA	D. DiGeronimo	Maintenance	11	\$69,952 (prorated)	upon release from current district

*\*as amended from a previous agenda  
 \*\*salary will remain the same for the 2025-26 SY  
 \*\*\*subject to a 60-day probationary period*

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the ABA Discrete Trial TAs and Instructional Aides as listed on **Attachment H**.

**4.5 Substitutes**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the appointment of the individuals listed below to serve as substitutes on an as-needed basis for the 2025-2026 school year:

**Teachers**  
*Kierstyn Castillo*  
*Gabriella Grill*  
*David Boerger*  
*Michael Leao*

**Athletic Trainer**  
*Paul Ehrenfeld (\$50/hour)*

**Resolved**, the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals listed on **Attachment I** as certified substitutes. These individuals are currently employed by the District. In the event these individuals are called upon to serve as a substitute, they will be compensated an additional \$50/day (\$10/period) for that assignment.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approve the appointment of the individual(s) listed below to serve as long-term substitutes as reflected below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Leave Replacement or Long Term Sub</b>	<b>Replacing</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
<i>Heidi Slurzberg</i>	COL/BHE	TOSD	Long Term Sub	New	\$68/day*	1/5/2026 - 6/30/2026
<i>Susan Spadafina**</i>	LHS	Teacher of Chemistry	Long Term Sub	W. Fu	\$263/day	12/22/2025-1/8/2026 &

						1/24/2026-6/18/2026
<i>Susan Spadafina</i>	LHS	Teacher of Chemistry	Long Term Sub	W. Fu/M. Coleman	\$351/day	1/9/2026-1/23/2026
<i>Robin Altomare**</i>	HMS	Teacher of Math	Long Term Sub	L. Larrazabal (.2)	\$65/day	3/16/2026-6/18/2026

*\*this amount is the difference between her daily rate as an instructional aide and long-term sub rate*

*\*\*amended from previous agenda*

#### **4.6 Extra Period Assignments**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the extra period assignments as listed on **Attachment J**.

#### **4.7 Contract Adjustments**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the contract adjustments as listed on **Attachment K**.

#### **4.8 Stipends**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment L** for co-curricular stipends at Livingston High School for the 2025-2026 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment M** for athletic stipends at Livingston High School for the 2025-2026 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment N** for co-curricular stipends at Heritage Middle School for the 2025-2026 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment O** for athletic stipends at Heritage Middle School for the 2025-2026 school year in accordance with the contract between the LBOE and the LEA.

#### **4.9 Extra Work**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves *Dana Triana* to update the documentation for the Livingston Lens Repository at the curriculum writing hourly rate, not to exceed \$2,000. These funds will be charged to account #11-000-221-104-5063-19

**Resolved**, the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals listed on **Attachment P** to be paid for work performed for the MLL After School Math Support Program from January 22 through June 4, 2026, at the rate of \$49.92 per 45-minute session, not to exceed 16 weeks. These funds will be paid through Title III (Account number: 20-242-100-100-1033-12).

**Resolved**, the Livingston Board of Education amends the individuals listed on **Attachment Q** to be paid for work performed for the MLL After School Math Support Program from December 9, 2025, through March 6, 2026, at the rate of \$66.56 per hour, not to exceed 10 hours each. These funds will be paid through Title III (Account number: 20-242-100-100-1033-12).

#### **4.10 Curriculum Writing**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment R** to participate in mid-year curriculum writing during the 2025-26 school year, at \$54.23/hour (Acct #11-000-221-104-5063-19)

#### **4.11 Longevity**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the individuals on **Attachment S** for longevity effective February 1, 2026.

#### **4.12 Memorandum of Understanding**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the Memorandum of Understanding between itself and the Livingston Education Association (LEA) regarding Heritage Middle School Sports.

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

Mrs. Burman congratulated all of the retirees for their years of service to the district.

Mrs. Khemka wished all of them a happy retirement.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Gong, Mrs. Yelisevich, Mrs. Khemka  
Nayes - None

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Mr. Cohen moved the following:

#### **5.1 HIB Report**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the findings of HIB cases.

Mrs. Chirls seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Mrs. Gong, Mrs. Yelisevich, Mrs. Khemka  
Nayes - None

#### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

#### **New Business**

There was no new business.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:08 p.m., Mrs. Khemka asked for a motion to adjourn into Executive Session adding that no action will be taken and the board will not be coming back into public session.

Mrs. Chirls moved the following:

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Whereas**, N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 et seq., also known as the "Sunshine Law," authorizes a public body to meet in executive or private session under certain limited circumstances, and

**Whereas**, said law requires the Board to adopt a resolution at a public hearing before it can meet in such an executive or private session, now, therefore, be it


**Resolved**, by the Livingston Board of Education that:

- (A) It does hereby determine that it is necessary to meet in executive session on January 20, 2026 to discuss the matters stipulated, in conformance with the subsections of said act which are indicated.
  - 1. Matter rendered confidential by federal law, state statute or rule of court.
  - 2. Matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive federal funds.
  - 3. Matter, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy unless the individual concerned shall request in writing that the same be disclosed publicly.
  - 4. Collective bargaining matters.
  - 5. Matter involving the purchase, lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of banking rates, etc. where it would adversely affect the public interest if discussion were disclosed.
  - 6. Tactics and techniques utilized in protecting public property where disclosure could impair protection.
  - 7. Investigation of violations or possible violations of law.
  - 8. Pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation other than collective bargaining agreement.
  - 9. Personnel matters unless the individual employees or appointees affected requested that such matter be discussed at a public meeting.
  - 10. Deliberations occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty.
- (B) The matters discussed will be made public when confidentiality is no longer required and formal action pursuant to said discussion shall take place only at a meeting to which the public has been invited.
- (C) No action will be taken.

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

Vote all in favor.

**Respectfully submitted,**



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Jessica Rapp**  
**Board Secretary**

## **Mr. Stern's Message to the Community**

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

It hit me recently that this May I will turn 52, which means I have spent exactly half of my life serving our district. For 26 years, Livingston has been my second home, and in many ways, it has been my first. I haven't just worked here; I have grown up in these hallways, both as an educator and as a person. While my title is changing, my heart is still very much in the LHS auditorium where I started my career as an English teacher, directing high school musicals, losing paper airplane challenges during Lunch Olympics, and learning what it means to be part of a community that truly cares.

At my core, I am still a judge's son. For better or worse, that has shaped me into a lifelong "rule follower," someone who believes that honesty and integrity are the only ways to live. I often think back to working with our former superintendent, Jim O'Neill, who would tell me he had "never met a principal who told on himself as much as you do." I took that as a high compliment then, and I carry that same need for unfiltered clarity and thoughtful communication with me today. My intention is for our work together to remain informed and deeply collaborative. When a decision is unpopular, which is inevitable in a district as engaged as ours, we may not always agree, but I promise that you will always know the "why" behind it.

It has been said that if you are the smartest person in the room, you should find a different room. I suspect that is why I have been in the right place for a quarter-century. I am constantly learning from the experts I work with every day. Our district thrives because of the dedicated and talented teaching and support staff who are the heartbeat of our mission of "empowering all to learn, create, contribute, and grow" by cultivating safe, caring, and brave classrooms. It wasn't until I left daily classroom life that I understood what great teaching looks like, which is why I value instructional rounds. We truly have experts in the field. I am lucky to work with creative administrators and supervisors who seek the balcony view to push the boundaries of what is possible in our increasingly adaptive schools. Our secretarial, custodial, and tech teams are often the unsung heroes of Livingston who make the "school experience" possible, mastering the logistics and the heavy lifting, both figurative and literal, that keep us moving forward. I appreciate our parents and the Board of Education for supporting, promoting, and championing our schools' learning and culture. And most of all, I am grateful for the students of Livingston, the motivated learners and conscientious friends, who make these buildings come alive with their curiosity and desire to make sense of the world around them. This is why we all do what we do.

As we look toward the 2026-2027 school year, I am incredibly grateful for the months of transition ahead under Dan Fishbein's leadership. We have important work ahead: between an expanding town, a growing student population, and the critical need for space. These are challenges, yes; however, we must also approach them as signs of a thriving, vibrant community that people want to be a part of. Thank you for your trust and for the opportunity to continue serving alongside you. I am eager for the next 26 years of growth, adapting to meet the needs of our students while remaining fiercely true to who we are as a district.

With deep respect and gratitude,  
Mark