

**MENDHAM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BROOKSIDE, NEW JERSEY
MIDDLE SCHOOL MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026, 7:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m.

II. Flag Salute - Mrs. Carrino-Tamasi led the flag salute.

III. Roll Call of the Board of Education

Mrs. Elisabeth Carrino-Tamasi	President	Present
Dr. Rekha Mandel	Vice President	Present
Mrs. Cynthia Brusco		Present
Mrs. Natasha Crossan		Present
Mr. Peter Dumovic		Absent
Mr. Thomas Keeling		Present
Dr. Christina Klausner		Present

Sixteen (16) members of the public were in the audience.

IV. Sunshine Law – Mrs. Carrino-Tamasi 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, thanks so much for having me here again. As always, I've returned to update you on what's been happening at the middle school.

Play practice for the Wizard of Oz started on January 6th and has been taking place twice a week since then. Everyone who tried out got a part and are very dedicated to making this year the best play yet.

Some of our 8th-grade teachers were excited to spend part of their day last week at the high school to learn about various educational programs and make recommendations for the graduating class. Luckily, they all said we are completely overprepared and freshman year will be a breeze for us due to the great instruction we get here at MTMS

After a thrilling basketball season, both the boys' and girls' teams are headed to the playoffs, where they will each hopefully earn the school yet another trophy to add to our giant collection. Sadly, however, these games won't take place at MTMS because our student section is too intimidating, and we want other teams to at least have a chance at beating us. Which they won't.

Today, we held an emergency lockdown drill in coordination with the emergency department to ensure our safety and well-being in the event of an actual emergency. Our school is very grateful that the emergency team takes time to practice with us and values our safety.

On February 6th, Heritage Day is happening, where 5th graders get the opportunity to share more about their cultures and enjoy foods and drinks from all around the world. I loved Heritage Day as a 5th grader because not only did everyone get to miss class for a day, but they also got to try delicious foods they had never seen before.

That's a summary of events happening at the middle school, and I look forward to our next meeting. Thank you so much for having me.

VI. Superintendent's Report

➤ District Updates, News, and Events

Cell Phone Policy

I want to take a moment to update the Board on Governor Murphy's recently enacted phone-free schools initiative and how it relates to our existing district policy.

After reviewing the new state requirements and the accompanying guidance, I am pleased to report that Mendham Township's current Policy and Regulation 5516 are already strongly aligned with both the intent and the day-to-day expectations of the new program. Our policy already limits personal use of cell phones and other electronic communication devices during the school day, requires devices to be powered off and stored unless authorized for instructional purposes, and applies not only during the instructional day but also on school buses and during school-sponsored activities.

Our policy also clearly protects student and staff privacy by prohibiting recording in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, and it includes a defined, progressive enforcement process. Just as importantly, it preserves required accommodations for students with IEPs, 504 plans, and documented health needs, which is a key component of the state's framework.

The new state initiative largely formalizes what is often described as a "bell-to-bell" approach, requiring districts to clearly prohibit non-academic cell phone use, with limited exceptions for instructional purposes, emergencies, and documented accommodations. In practice, this aligns with how our policy currently operates.

Any future updates we may consider would be modest and largely clarifying in nature, such as explicitly mirroring state language around non-academic use and emergencies. These would not represent a shift in philosophy or practice, but rather a tightening of language to ensure full alignment with statewide expectations.

At this time, our district is well-positioned, and we are already operating in a manner that is consistent with the goals and structure of the state's phone-free schools program.

Committee minute procedures - editing rights and making copies

Maintain the integrity of the original agenda vs. minutes

Dr. Koroski shared the following on the Teacher of the Year winners from each building

MTMS - Mr. Branch: Mr. Branch is a student-centered educator and a long-standing, highly respected member of our MTMS teaching staff. Known throughout the district and beyond for his professionalism and passion, Mr. Branch consistently brings unprecedented opportunities and activities to his students. As an exceptional music teacher, Mr Branch sets high expectations while nurturing a learning environment where every student can thrive. His commitment to growth is evident in his continuous efforts to elevate and improve the bands, ensuring that the MTMS music program remains vibrant, innovative, and strong.

MTES - Mrs. Couto: Mrs. Couto's enthusiasm for teaching is matched by her professionalism and dedication to continuous growth. Jessica communicates clearly and effectively with colleagues, students, and families. She regularly seeks feedback, reflects on her practice, and takes initiative to expand her expertise. Her pursuit of a Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at Rutgers University further demonstrates her deep commitment to advancing both her own learning and the field of education.

VII. Board Secretary's Report

2026-2027 Budget Calendar Revised

01/20/2026	Regular Monthly BOE meeting – budget update
02/10/2026	2026-2027 Budget options to the finance committee
02/24/2026	2026-2027 Budget option at Regular Meeting
02/25/2026	Governor's State of the State Address (tentative)
02/27/2026	Release of state aid figures (tentative)
03/17/2026	Budget preliminary adoption for DOE review
03/19/2026	Preliminary 2026-2027 budget submission to NJDOE for review
04/22/2026	Advertise for Public Hearing on 2026-2027 Budget
04/23/2026	Post Advertised 2026-2027 Budget
04/28/2026	Public Hearing on 26-27 Budget/Regular Monthly Meeting
04/29/2026	Post User-Friendly Budget on website
05/14/2026	Certification of 2026-2027 budget & A4F taxes to municipalities, county, and state

VIII. Board President's Report

The NJSBA Women's Leadership Conference is coming up. Please email me if anyone is interested in attending

MCSBA - Wed Feb 4 - positive school culture program

Any topics for BOE meeting discussion - email me by the end of business the day before the meeting

Reschedule February 24 - can combine worksession and regular session or move dates, whichever is best for everyone. After some discussion, the majority of the BOE decided to combine the two meetings for the month into one on February 17, 2026

IX. Correspondence - None.

X. Committee Reports

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

XI. Consent Items

Approval of Minutes

Regular Session Minutes: December 16, 2025
Reorganization Meeting Minutes: January 6, 2026

Curriculum and School Programs

1. Student Safety Data System (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the submission of the Student Safety Data System for Period 1 (September 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025) to the New Jersey Department of Education.

2. Biannual Statement of Assurance Paraprofessional Staff (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the submission of the Biannual Statement of Assurance for the 2025-2026 Use of Paraprofessional Staff to the New Jersey Department of Education.

3. Field Trips & Events (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the attached field trips and events 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 December 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 December 2025 Board Secretary's Reports.

3. **Treasurer's Report**

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

4. **December 2025 Transfer Reports**

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

5. **January 2026 Bills List**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the January 2026 Bills List. This includes payroll checks N5677 through N5679 and N5680 through N5682.

Fund 10 - Treasurer Account	\$ 67,403.08
Fund 11 - Treasurer Account	\$ 2,200,750.32
Fund 12 - Capital Projects	\$ 35,253.00
Fund 20 - Grant Account	\$ 6,500.00
Fund 30 - Referendum Account	\$ 244,061.62
Fund 60 - Cafeteria Account	\$ 81,316.37
Fund 80 - Unemployment	\$ 8.05
Fund 95 - Athletic Account	<u>\$ 1,700.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$ 2,636,992.44</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.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. **Termination of Employment**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby terminates the employment of employee #57827073 effective December 18, 2025.

2. **Staff Retirement: Jean Sosna** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the letter of retirement from Jean Sosna, Elementary Teacher, dated December 5, 2025, effective June 30, 2026.

3. **Leave of Absence – Jeanne Brown**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Jeanne Brown, Preschool Teacher, for a leave of absence commencing on January 26, 2026, utilizing 15 Sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves Jeanne Brown with a return to work date of February 17, 2026.

4. **Leave Replacement - Alexandra Krishnamoorthy, Middle School Math Teacher** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment, pending completion of paperwork, of Alexandra Krishnamoorthy as a full-time (category A) Leave Replacement Middle School Math Teacher, effective March 9, 2026, through June 19, 2026, at a prorated salary of \$67,070.00, MA, Step 8.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Alexandra Krishnamoorthy as a substitute teacher, pending completion of paperwork, at the current rate of \$125.00 per day, effective January 21, 2026, for the 2025-2026 school year.

5. **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.

6. **Job Description Review** *(Attachments)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following job descriptions:

Business Administrator
Director of Special Services
Assistant Principal
Elementary School Principal
Middle School Principal
Director of Buildings and Grounds
Assistant Superintendent
Superintendent

Policy and Planning

1. First Readings (Attachments)

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

- P 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices (ECD) (M)
- R 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices
- P 7421 Indoor Air Quality Standards
- R 7421 Indoor Air Quality Standards
- P 7422 School Integrated Pest Management Plan (M)
- R 7422 School Integrated Pest Management Plan (M)
- P 7433 Hazardous Substances
- P 7434 Smoking in School Buildings and on School Grounds (M)
- P 7435 Alcoholic Beverages on School Premises
- P 7436 Drug Free Workplace (M)
- P 7460 Energy Conservation
- P 7480 Motor Vehicles on School Property
- P 7490 Animals on School Property
- P 7513 Recreational Use of Playgrounds
- P 7520 Loan of School Equipment
- P 7522 School District Provided Technology Devices to Staff Members
- P 7650 School Vehicle Assignment, Use, Tracking, Maintenance, and Accounting (M)
- R 7650 School Vehicle Assignment, Use, Tracking, Maintenance, and Accounting (M)
- P 8130 School Organization (M)
- P 8310 Public Records
- R 8310 Public Records

Policy Alert No. 236

- P 0142.1 Nepotism (M) (Revised)
- P 1220 Employment of Chief School Administrator (M) (Revised)
- P 1552 Sexual Harassment - Staff (M) (New)
- R 1552 Sexual Harassment - Staff (M) (New)
- P 2530 Resource Materials (Revised)
- R 2530 Resource Materials (Revised)
- P 2535 Library Material (M) (New)
- R 2535 Library Material (M) (New)
- P 3362 Sexual Harassment (M) (Abolished)
- R 3362 Sexual Harassment of Teaching Staff Members Complaint Procedure (Abolished)
- P 4352 Sexual Harassment (M) (Abolished)
- R 4352 Sexual Harassment of Support Staff Members Complaint (Abolished)

- P 9130 Public Complaints (Revised)
- R 9130 Public Complaints (Revised)

2. **Second Readings** (*Attachments*)

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

- P 6520 Payroll Deductions
- P 6620 Petty Cash (M)
- R 6620 Petty Cash
- P 6640 Cafeteria Fund
- P 6660 Student Activity Fund (M)
- P 6700 Investments
- P 6740 Reserve Accounts
- R 6740 Reserve Accounts
- P 6810 Financial Objectives (M)
- R 6810 Financial Objectives (M)
- P 6820 Financial Reports (M)
- P 6830 Audit and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (M)
- P 6831 Withholding or Recovering State Aid
- P 6832 Conditions of Receiving State Aid
- P 7230 Gifts, Grants, and Donations
- R 7230 Gifts, Grants, and Donations
- P 7420 Hygienic Management (M)
- R 7420 Handling and Disposal of Body Wastes and Fluids (M)
- R 7420.1 Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan (M)
- R 7420.2 Chemical Hygiene (M)

Mrs. Crossan moved to approve the Committee Reports, and the Consent Items for January 20, 2026; Approval of all Monthly Meeting minutes, Curriculum & Instruction items 1-3, Operations & Finance items 1-7, Personnel & Human Resources items 1-6, Policy and Planning items 1-2, seconded by Dr. Mandel, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mrs. Brusco; yes, Mrs. Crossan; yes, Mr. Thomas Keeling; yes, Dr. Klausner; yes, Dr. Mandel; yes, and Mrs. Carrino Tamasi; yes, – motions carry.

XIII. Discussion - None.

XIV. Verbal Communications from the Public

Mrs. Laurie Weinberg, Magnolia Court, addressed the Board regarding concerns related to her removal from the PTO and the governance of the organization. She stated that she has volunteered for many years and is motivated by a desire to serve students. She asserted

that actions taken by the PTO were not consistent with its bylaws, including concerns about notice, transparency, due process, and opportunities to be heard. She further expressed that certain statements and representations made within the PTO community have been false and harmful, and that several co-directors and parents have resigned. Mrs. Weinberg stated that she wishes to continue serving but has been denied the opportunity to do so. She requested that the Board review Policy 9210 and conduct an independent review of the PTO's conduct in this matter.

XV. Adjournment

Moved by Dr. Mandel, seconded by Mr. Keeling, to adjourn the Regular Session Meeting of January 20, 2026. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Mosner
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary