

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
AUDUBON HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026
7:00 P.M.
MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order:** In accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act of 1975, the Audubon Board of Education transmitted notice of the meeting, scheduled at 7:00 pm in the Audubon Junior-Senior High School Media Center to the Retrospect newspaper and the Borough Clerk and by postings on the Audubon Public School District website and at the Main and the Pine Street entrances of the Junior-Senior High School.

II. **Roll Call**

SY 2024-2026

X Alison Lipsky

X Mark Gatti

X Bill Wilson

SY 2025-2027

A Danielle DiFrancesco
(Absent with notice)

X Allison Cox

X Andrea Robinson

SY 2026-2028

A Ammie Davis
(Absent with notice)

A Stephen Wilson
(Absent with notice)

X Sara Kuhlen

SY 2026 Mt. Ephraim Representative

X Michelle Cannaday

Student Representative to the Board

Apprentice Student Representative

A Helena Kuchmek

A Ryan Wynn

III. **Call Meeting to Order**

IV. **Flag Salute**

V. **Presentations:**

Tentative Budget Presentation, presented by Sandra Allen and Deborah Roncace

VI. **Participation:** (Agenda Items Only)

A resident of Audubon, requested a more detailed budget of the items being presented. Mrs. Roncace directed him to the Audubon Schools's website to view the past user-friendly budgets.

Pat Green, resident, questioned the average assessed home in Audubon being low. Mrs. Roncace stated the average assessed home comes from the tax assessor of the town.

Lori Cassidy, resident, offered suggestions to the Board to look at outside revenue sources and grant opportunities to help fund the budget.

The Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board has set aside two portions of this Board meeting for public comment on any school or school district issue that a member of the public feels may be of interest to the residents of the school district.

For the first portion, public comments are invited on matters pertaining only to the agenda for tonight's meeting. For the second portion, public comments are invited on all matters pertaining to the school district.

Participants should announce their name, address, and any group they may represent, if applicable. The Board reserves the right to limit public discussion. Public discussion of a topic will be limited to fifteen (15) minutes, and individual speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic until all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard. Reference bylaws #0167 of the Audubon Public Schools Board of Education Manual.

The Board uses the public comment period as an opportunity to listen to citizens. Not all issues brought to a Board meeting will be resolved at that particular meeting. Complaints stated or actions requested by the public may be taken under advisement by the Board for investigation, discussion, action, or disposition at a later date or time. The public comment sessions are an opportunity for citizens to share their opinions and remarks with the Board; it is not a question and answer session. The Board may or may not respond to public comments at the time they are made and is under no obligation to do so.

The Board does not endorse public comments nor will the Board be held liable for comments made by members of the public. Any individuals who may be the subject of public comments, including district employees, shall retain all rights against defamation and slander according to the laws of New Jersey.

All motions are voted on by all members unless otherwise marked with a +.

Board of Education Goals

Through oversight and advocacy in committee meetings, regular monthly meetings, and through a close review of Superintendent recommendations, the Board will

- ❖ continue to provide equitable access to a rigorous curriculum while focusing on improving student achievement and decreasing achievement gaps.
- ❖ work to maintain a cost-effective budget that provides for educational resources, supports a preventative maintenance program, and encourages & facilitates long-range facility improvements while remaining fiscally responsible.
- ❖ foster a safe and positive school climate and culture in order to positively impact student motivation, engagement, and achievement.
- ❖ conduct a monthly review of the Superintendent's goals.
- ❖ develop a Policy review Calendar.

VII. GOVERNANCE: Chairperson – Alison Lipsky; Committee Members – Danielle DiFrancesco, Sara Kuhlen, MBOE; and Alternate – Andrea Robinson

No Motions at this time

VIII. OPERATIONS: Chairperson – Mark Gatti; Committee Members – Allison Cox, Alison Lipsky, Stephen Wilson; and Alternate – Ammie Davis

MOTION TO APPROVE ITEM 1

Motion by Mr. Gatti and seconded by Ms. Lipsky

1. Motion to approve the following resolution for the submission of the 2026-2027 Tentative Budget to the County Office with authorization of the Business Administrator to make changes based on County office review:

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2026/2027 School Year using the 2026/2027 state aid figures and the Secretary to the Board of Education be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for the approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	2026/2027 Budget	Audubon Borough Tax Levy	Audubon Park Tax Levy
General Fund	31,140,006	16,207,667	301,363
Special Revenue Fund	2,635,127		
Debt Service Fund	1,834,250	1,214,764	22,587
Total	35,609,383	17,422,431	323,950

WHEREAS, the Audubon Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1,1 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, that the Audubon Board of Education established \$ 52,900.00 as the maximum travel amount for the current school year and has expended \$ 33,197.86 as of this date; now

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Audubon Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursement in accordance with N.J.A.C 6A: 23A-7.3, to a maximum expenditure of \$ 50,300.00 for the 2026-2027 school year.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Audubon Board of Education includes in the proposed budget a Health Care Costs adjustment as calculated in the budget software and pursuant to NJSA 18A:7f-38 subsection (d) in the amount of \$ 858,219.00. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

BE IT RESOLVED, that included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve - Other Capital Projects in the amount of \$250,000.00 for other capital project costs of APS Toilet Room/Security entrance renovations and AHS window, Masonry, and flooring renovations and repairs. The total cost of these projects are \$250,000.00 which represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held on Wednesday, April 29, 2026 in the Audubon Jr./Sr. High School Media Center at 7:00 pm for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2026/2027 school year.

Motion to Approve Item(s) 1 through 1: M. Gatti Second: A. Lipsky

Roll Call

A Ammie Davis A Stephen Wilson X Sara Kuhlen X Michelle Cannaday
X Alison Lipsky X Mark Gatti X Bill Wilson
A Danielle DiFrancesco X Allison Cox X Andrea Robinson

VOTE FOR ITEM 1

Motion approved by unanimous roll call (7-0) Members Davis, S. Wilson, & DiFrancesco were absent.

MOTION TO APPROVE ITEM 2

Motion by Ms. Lipsky and seconded by Mr. Gatti

2. Motion to authorize the Business Administrator to submit the Preschool Expansion Aid Budget Narrative and the Preschool Expansion Aid Budget Workbook for the 2026-2027 school year.

Preschool Budget Summary

Motion to Approve Item(s) 2 through 2: A. Lipsky Second: M. Gatti

Roll Call

<u>A</u> Ammie Davis	<u>A</u> Stephen Wilson	<u>X</u> Sara Kuhlen	<u>*</u> Michelle Cannaday (Abstained)
<u>X</u> Alison Lipsky	<u>X</u> Mark Gatti	<u>X</u> Bill Wilson	
<u>A</u> Danielle DiFrancesco	<u>X</u> Allison Cox	<u>X</u> Andrea Robinson	

VOTE FOR ITEM 2

Motion approved by unanimous roll call (6-0) Member Cannaday abstained. Members Davis, Wilson, & DiFrancesco were absent.

- IX. EDUCATION: Chairperson – Andrea Robinson;** Committee Members – Bill Wilson, Danielle DiFrancesco, Sara Kuhlen and Alternate – Michelle Cannaday

No Motions at this time

- X. HUMAN RESOURCES: Chairperson – Stephen Wilson;** Committee Members – Allison Cox, Ammie Davis, Mark Gatti and Alternate - Bill Wilson

No Motions at this time

Board Comments:

Various Board members thanked the administration for tightening the budget and not lose any instructional programs for the 26/27 school year.

Board member Gatti asked the public to contact their local congressmen or representative regarding the tax increases being put back on the community.

Public Comments:

Robert, resident, questioned the increase in healthcare.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

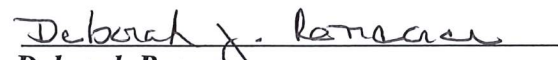
1. The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at 6:30 pm in the Audubon Junior-Senior High School Media Center.
2. Motion by Mr. Gatti and seconded by Mrs. Cannaday to adjourn meeting at approximately 8:03pm.
Motion was approved by unanimous roll call (7-0) Members Davis, S. Wilson, & DiFrancesco were absent.

Motion to Approve: M. Gatti Second: M. Cannaday

Roll Call

A Ammie Davis A Stephen Wilson X Sara Kuhlen X Michelle Cannaday
X Alison Lipsky X Mark Gatti X Bill Wilson
A Danielle DiFrancesco X Allison Cox X Andrea Robinson

The Audubon Board of Education reserves the right to add and/or delete motions or make changes to motions in this agenda up to the time of the meeting and during the actual meeting.


Deborah Roncase
Business Administrator/Board Secretary