



WEST ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Public Board Meeting December 15, 2025
5:30 P.M. Executive Session
6:30 P.M. Public Session
West Orange High School
51 Conforti Avenue

Minutes

I. ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS

Present: President Rock, Vice President Ivker, Dr. Bryant, Mr. Stevenson and Ms. Vera.
Absent: None.

II. NOTICE OF MEETING:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests are discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of the Act:

- A written notice was sent from the Office of the Secretary of the Board on January 7, 2025.
- That said notice was sent by regular mail to the West Orange Township Clerk and the Editors of the West Orange Chronicle and by email to the Star-Ledger.
- That said notice was posted in the lobby of the Administration Building of the Board of Education and posted on the district website at www.woboe.org
- Please be advised that this meeting is being recorded and may be broadcasted on local TV and the district's website at a future date.

III. 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: The Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss personnel, legal and miscellaneous confidential matters. Be it further

RESOLVED: The minutes of this closed session will be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

IV. PUBLIC SESSION AT 6:30 P.M.

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

VI. CONSIDERATION OF THE CLOSED AND PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES OF November 10, 2025 (Att. #1)

MOTION: Vice President Ivker

SECOND: Mr. Stevenson

VOTE: 5-0 (RC)

Yes
Bryant

Yes
Stevenson

Yes
Vera

Yes
Ivker

Yes
Rock



VII. STUDENT LIAISON REPORT

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Dr. Patrick Lamy, Executive Director, New Jersey State Amistad Commission
- B. NJCTA Community Partnership Award - World Languages/ESL Supervisor Felix Plata
- C. NJCTA Youth Leadership Award - Chloe Chong
- D. Perfect Score PSAT-Theodore Wickham
- E. NJ K-12 State Scholastic Tournament Champions WOHS Chess Team
- F. NJSIAA Group 4 State Champions WOHS Boys Soccer
- G. HIB Report

IX. BOARD POLICY(IES)

- A. First Reading: Policy #2365 - Acceptable Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Att. #2)
- B. Abolishment of the following Policy(ies) and Regulation(s):

Policy	Regulation
P 0164.6 - Remote Public Board Meetings During A Declared Emergency (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)	–
P 1648 - Restart and Recovery Plan (M) - District Adoption Date (9/10/20)	–
P 1648.02 - Remote Learning Options for Families (M) - District Adoption Date (9/10/20)	–
P 1648.11 - The Road Forward COVID-19 - Health and Safety (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)	–
P 1648.14 - Safety Plan for Healthcare Settings in School Building - COVID-19 (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)	–
P 3432 - Sick Leave - District Adoption Date (9/21/20)	R 3432 - Sick Leave - District Adoption Date (9/21/20)
P 4432 - Sick Leave - District Adoption Date (4/19/21)	R 4432 - Sick Leave - District Adoption Date (4/19/21)
P 5460.02 - Bridge Year Pilot Program (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)	R 5460.02 - Bridge Year Pilot Program (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)
P 5755 - Equity in Educational Programs and Services (M) - District Adoption Date (6/22/20)	–
P 7430 - School Safety (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)	R 7430 - School Safety (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)
P 8540 - School Nutrition Programs (M) - District Adoption Date (12/20/21)	–
P 8550 - Meal Changes/Outstanding Food Service Bill	–



(M) - District Adoption Date (10/18/21)	
P 9100 - Public Relations - District Adoption Date (9/21/20)	–

X. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

XI. REPORTS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. PERSONNEL

1. Resignations / Retirements / Terminations

- a. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following certificated staff resignation(s) / retirement(s):

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Effective Date
Michele DeMatteo	Liberty	CompApps/STEM	Retirement 9 years	7/1/2026
Filipe Santiago	Central Office Technology	Director	Retirement 30 years	3/1/2026

- b. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following non-certificated staff resignation(s) / retirement(s):

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Effective Date
Luz Cubero	WOHS	Paraprofessional	Retirement 6 years	1/2/2026
Ashley Kuglin	BMELC	Paraprofessional	Resignation	11/26/2025
Isabel Olivi-Balebona	Transportation	Bus Driver	Retirement 13 years	1/1/2026
Carlos Salazar	WOHS	Custodian	Retirement 19 years	1/1/2026
Melissa Zeppieri	Gregory	Paraprofessional	Resignation	11/28/25

- c. Superintendent recommends approval to the Board of Education for the following staff termination(s):

Employee #	Effective Date
9592	12/1/2025

2. Rescissions

- a. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following rescission(s):



Name	Location	Position	Effective Date
Molly Eisen	Edison	Drama	10/1/2025
Bard Goodrich	WOHS	Fall Drama: Stagecraft	2025-2026

3. Appointments

- a. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following certificated staff appointment(s).

Name	Location	Position	Replacement / New	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Dates
Amy Butcher	St. Cloud	Grade 2 Leave Replacement	Moran	MA	N/A	\$384.50 Per Diem	12/16/2025 3/26/2026
Suzanne Forgione	Washington	Academic Support Ext Assign Sub	Costantino	N/A	N/A	\$200.00 Per Diem Title 1 Grant Funded	12/4/2025 12/23/2025
Sarah Gathright	Gregory	School Psychologist Leave Replacement	Flannelly	MA	5	\$70,363	9/1/2025 3/27/2026 Amended End Date from 12/31/2025
Lisa Hannah	Edison	Special Education Leave Replacement	Accardi	MA	5	\$70,363.00 Prorated	12/9/2025- 6/30/2026
Molly Livingston	Kelly	Grade 5 Soc/Sci Leave Replacement	Gleason	N/A	N/A	\$360.07 Per Diem	12/1/2025- 1/31/2026 Amended End Date From 12/23/25
Julia Maraviglia	.8 Roosevelt .2 Mt Pleasant	School Social Worker	Caplette	MA	16	\$88,994.00 prorated	2/16/2026* 6/30/2026

*start date pending release from current district.

- b. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following non-certificated staff appointment(s).

Name	Location	Position	Replacement / New	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Dates
Timothy Allen	B&G	Utility Forman	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$7,000 Stipend	2025-2026
Jake Cohen	Liberty	Paraprofessional	Mary Corvelli	Non Deg	4	\$32,945.00	1/6/2026- 6/30/2026
Jewel Dash	Redwood	Lunch Aide	Gayle Palieri	N/A	1	10,000.90	12/12/2025- 6/30/2026
George Ellenberg	Central Office	Maintenance	Jonathan Nelson	N/A	5	\$50,500.00	11/17/2025- 6/30/2026
Louis Lugo	WOHS	Paraprofessional	Luz Cubero	Non Deg	4	\$32,945.00	1/5/2026- 6/30/2026
Nicholas McCormick	B&G	Operations Forman	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$7,000 Stipend	2025-2026



Laura Volpe	St. Cloud	Paraprofessional	Kiara Munoz	Non Deg	6	\$33,411.00	1/5/2025-6/30/2026
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- c. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to the Board of Education for 2025-2026 revised rate for hourly and per diem employees/assignments: (Att.#3)
- d. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following additional teaching assignment(s):

Name	Location	Position	Effective Dates
Kim Covington	Edison	Leave Replacement - Crownover	12/1/2025 - 4/24/2026
William Fatica	Edison	Leave Replacement - Crownover	12/1/2005 - 4/24/2026
Kim Jackson	Edison	Leave Replacement - Accardi	12/1/2025 - 12/10/2025
Joanne Mace	Edison	Leave Replacement - Crownover	12/1/2025 - 4/24/2026
Francis Rocco	Edison	Leave Replacement - Accardi	12/1/2025 - 6/17/2026
Hillary Rubenstein	Edison	Leave Replacement - Crownover	12/1/2025 - 4/24/2026
Nicole Shipitofsky	Edison	Leave Replacement - Accardi	12/1/2025 - 6/17/2026
Gina Ethe	Liberty	Leave Replacement - Rimassa	11/13/2025 - 1/4/2026
Alexa Guzman	Liberty	Leave Replacement - Rimassa	11/13/2025 - 1/4/2026
Lorin Hannah	Liberty	Leave Replacement - Rimassa	11/13/2025 - 1/4/2026
Daniel McManus	Liberty	Leave Replacement - Rimassa	11/13/2025 - 1/4/2026
Maryann Solimo	Liberty	Leave Replacement - Rimassa	11/13/2025 - 1/4/2026
Emily Blum	Roosevelt	Special Education Vacancy - Cowan	11/13/2025 - 1/4/2026
Nicole Eoon	Roosevelt	Special Education Vacancy - Cowan	11/13/2025 - TBD
Sean McCrudden	Roosevelt	Special Education Vacancy - Cowan	11/13/2025 - TBD
Monika Mocarski	Roosevelt	Special Education Vacancy - Cowan	11/13/2025 - TBD
Cecily Robinson	Roosevelt	Special Education Vacancy - Cowan	11/13/2025 - TBD
Anthony Edelstein	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Bastiao	12/17/2025 - 1/19/2026
Christiopher Evans	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Bastiao	12/17/2025 - 1/19/2026
Andrew Lamberson	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Bastiao	12/17/2025 - 1/19/2026
Bree MacNett	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Bastiao	12/17/2025 - 1/19/2026
David Perez	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Bastiao	12/17/2025 - 1/19/2026
Katelyn Antico	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Delaney	1/5/2026 - 6/12/2026
Michael Denburg	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Delaney	1/5/2026 - 6/12/2026
Young Kim	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Delaney	1/5/2026 - 6/12/2026



Name	Location	Position	Effective Dates
Nicole Massoud	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Delaney	1/5/2026 - 6/12/2026
Allan Norville	WOHS	Leave Replacement - Delaney	1/5/2026 - 6/12/2026

- e. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following negotiated Co-Curricular Assignments:

Name	Location	Position	Stipend / Rate of Pay	Effective Dates
Mercedes Asqui	Hazel	Spanish Club	\$550	12/1/2025
Francesco Composto	Hazel	Strings Club	\$500	12/1/2025
Mazen Dahroug (OOD)	WOHS	Fall Drama: Sound	\$1,662	2025-2026
Mazen Dahroug (OOD)	WOHS	Spring Musical: Sound	\$1,662	2025-2026
Althea Farella	Edison	GSA (The Voice)	\$1,673	10/1/2025
Max Grossman	WOHS	Fall Drama: Stagecraft	\$1,166	2025-2026
Lorin Hannah	Liberty	Drama: Set Design/Construction	\$1,607	2025-2026
Boris Ioshpa	Hazel	Chess Club	\$550	12/1/2025
Michelle Ledesma	Hazel	Painting Club	\$500	12/1/2025
Sandra Marmelejos	Liberty	Best Buddies	\$1,500	2025 - 2026
Mariam Obeidallah	Edison	Art Club	\$1,673	10/27/2025
Marybeth Sabates	Hazel	STEM Club	\$500	12/1/2025 Ma
Joyce Soto	Hazel	Kindness Club	\$500	12/1/2025

*amended

- f. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following additional assignment(s): (Att. #4)
- g. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following substitute appointment(s) at the appropriate substitute rates for 2025-2026:

Name	Certification Code	Administrator	Administrative Assistant	Lunch Aide	Nurse	Custodian
Tatyania Byrd						x
Amneli Cartagena						x
Isaac Diaz						x
Consuelo Diaz Herrera						x
Roseanne Gaglioti				x		

- h. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education for the following Buildings and Grounds stipend(s) to be paid in December 2025 and June 2026; Clothing Allowance to be disbursed in one payment: (Att. #5)



4. Leaves of Absence:

- a. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following leaves of absence for certificated staff:

Employee #	Type	Location	Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave with Benefits	Unpaid Leave without Benefits	Anticipated Return Date
4572	Medical	Kelly	9/18/2025-3/27/2025 Amended from 9/18/2025-12/1/2025 (.5AM Only)	N/A Amended from 12/1/2025 (.5PM only)-2/4/2026	N/A	4/6/2026
5149	Medical	Gregory/ Mt. Pleasant/ Kelly	12/1/2025-3/2/2026	N/A	N/A	3/3/2026
4919	Medical	Roosevelt	N/A	12/8/2025 .5 PM-12/12/2025	N/A	12/15/2025
8506			4/30/2025-5/16/2025	9/1/2025-11/21/2025 FMLA	5/19/2025-6/30/2025 LOA 11/24/2025-3/27/2026 LOA Amended from 11/24/2025-12/31/2025 LOA	4/6/2026 amended from 1/2/2026
9237	Maternity	Kelly	2/2/2026-3/09/2026	3/10/2026-6/5/2026 FMLA	N/A	6/8/2026
8517	Maternity	Gregory	9/2/2025 - 10/24/2025	10/27/25-1/23/26 FMLA amended from 10/27/2025 - 1/16/2026	1/26/2026-6/30/2026	9/1/2026
8224	Maternity	Roosevelt	3/6/2026-4/16/2026	4/17/2026-6/30/2026 FMLA	N/A	9/1/2026
8995	Maternity	WOHS	5/7/2026-5/29/2026	6/1/2026-11/6/2026 FMLA	N/A	11/9/2026
9466	Maternity	BMELC	2/17/2026-3/9/2026(.5AM)	4/21/2026-6/30/2026 FMLA	3/9/2026 (.5 PM)-4/20/2026	9/1/2026
8871	Maternity	BMELC	2/5/2026-3/6/2026 amended from 2/2/2026-3/6/2026	4/13/2026- 6/30/2026 FMLA	3/9/2026-4/10/2026	9/1/2026

- b. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following leaves of absence or non-certificated staff:

Employee #	Type	Location	Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave with Benefits	Unpaid Leave without Benefits	Anticipated Return Date
4370	Medical	WOHS	11/10/2025-12/22/2025 (.5AM)	12/22/2025 (.5PM) -1/12/2026	N/A	1/13/2026



Employee #	Type	Location	Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave with Benefits	Unpaid Leave without Benefits	Anticipated Return Date
4598	Medical	ECLC	3/17/2025-4/21/2025 (.5 AM) 7/1/2025-8/20/2025	4/21/2025 (.5 PM)-6/30/2025 FMLA 8/21/2025-9/5/2025 FMLA	09/08/2025-2/13/2026 LOA	2/17/2026
4461	Personal	Hazel	N/A	N/A	11/12/2025-11/17/2025	11/18/2025
9086	Medical	Redwood	10/29/2025-11/12/2025 (.5AM only)	N/A	11/12/2025 (.5 PM Only)-11/21/2025 amended from 11/12/2025 (.5 PM Only)-11/14/2025	11/24/2025
7806	Medical	Transportation	12/4/2025-12/18/2025	N/A	12/19/2025-12/23/2025	1/5//2025
8783	Family Medical	ECLC	10/23/2025-11/13/2025* amended from 10/23/2025-2/5/2026 Thursdays only	N/A	N/A	N/A

*amended

MOTION: Mr. Stevenson

SECOND: Dr. Bryant

VOTE: 5-0 (RC)

Yes
Bryant

Yes
Stevenson

Yes
Vera

Yes
Ivker

Yes
Rock

B. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the Applications for School Business requests. (Att. #6)
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of Field Trip Destinations for the 2025-2026 school year. (Att. #7)
3. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trips for the 2025-2026 school year. (Att. #8)
4. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the Memorandum of Understanding between Montclair State University (“University”) and West Orange Public Schools to provide practical learning experience for students enrolled in the University’s teacher education degree program.
5. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the CTE Career Education four-day Summer Camp running June 22-June 25, 2026 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at West Orange High School for rising 6th-9th Grade students. Cost for staff funded through the Carl D. Perkins Grant in the amount of \$8,397.00.
6. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the 2026 Summer Enrichment Program. (Att. #9)



7. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approved by the Board of Education for the following 2025-2026 Student Teacher assignments:

Student Teacher/Intern Candidate	Affiliate University	Assigned School	Effective Dates
Burke, Liam	Caldwell University	WOHS	1/20/2026 - 5/8/2026
Lampart, Matthew	Caldwell University	WOHS	1/20/2026 - 5/8/2026
O'Dell, Ethan	Montclair State University	Liberty / St. Cloud	1/26/2026 - 5/8/2026 8/24/2026 - 12/18/2026
O'Shea, Kevin	Montclair State University	Kelly / WOHS	1/26/2026 - 5/8/2026 8/24/2026 - 12/18/2026
Rox, Michael	Montclair State University	Edison	1/5/2026 - 5/8/2026
Zherka, Valdete	Kean University	Mt. Pleasant	1/5/2026 - 5/8/2026

MOTION: Mr. Stevenson

SECOND: Vice President Ivker

VOTE: 5-0 (RC)

Yes
Bryant

Yes
Stevenson

Yes
Vera

Yes
Ivker

Yes
Rock

C. FINANCE

a.) Special Services

1. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the following out of district placements for the 2025 - 2026 school year:

Student #	Placement	Tuition
2211021	Windsor Prep High School	Tuition: \$44,800.37 137 days @ \$327.01/day 11/10/2025 - 6/19/26

b.) Business Office

1. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the December 15, 2025 Bills List in the amount of \$35,876,128.20.
2. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval of proposed Non Public Technology Aid Program expenditures funded through the Office of State Aid Entitlements and Payments to Non Public Schools (not local funds).

School	Description	Amount
Seton Hall Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Samsung TV's for classroom and cafeteria/TV Mounts Apple iPads for Science 	\$3,356.95 \$9,312.00



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anker Docking stations and cables 	\$4,861.48
Golda Och Lower School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lenovo Chromebooks 	\$7,056.80
Golda Och Upper School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ScreenBeam Receivers Lenovo Chromebooks 	\$5,375.00 \$3,077.80

- Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the Amendment to Settlement Agreement and Release between the parents of Student #2008063 and the West Orange Board of Education.
- Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the Lease Agreement between The Life Christian Church and the West Orange Board of Education from January 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026.
- Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the following district projects procured through the use of cooperative purchasing agreements, the cost of which exceeded the bid threshold:

Co-op bid Number	Vendor	Location	Description of Project	Amount not to exceed
ESCNJ 20/21-43	Mobilelease Modular Space, Inc	Mt. Pleasant E.S.	New Modular Building (West Orange ELC 6-Classroom ELC)	\$3,870,537.00
ESCNJ 23/24-02	Generations	Kelly E.S. St Cloud E.S. Washington E.S.	Electrical upgrades Architect Project # 4338	\$147,499.00

- Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education to allow for the transfer of fiscal year 2025 surplus to subsidize the Food Service Fund to cover the deficit in the amount of \$350,000 for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education for extended settlement authority up to 30% partial total or \$64,650.00 plus legal fees of approximately \$7,500.00 to counsel to move this file for employee #5955 to closure.
- Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, acceptance by the Board of Education of the following donation(s):

Donor	Recipient	Donation
RWJ Barnabas	Student Support Services Department	4-iPAD minis, 6-iPADs (19.2 inch) 10 Otterbox protective cases 10 screen protectors 6 keyguards - total estimated value of \$6,500



9. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, rejection of all bids for bid #25-08 Snow Removal Services Districtwide, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-22(b) the lowest bid substantially exceeds the Board of Education's appropriation for the goods or services.

MOTION: Mr. Stevenson

SECOND: Ms. Vera

VOTE: 5-0 (RC)

Yes
Bryant

Yes
Stevenson

Yes
Vera

Yes
Ivker

Yes
Rock

D. REPORTS

1. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the acceptance of the HIB Report ending December 15, 2025.

2. **Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying**

“**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Board Policy and the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17(b)(6)(c), at its meeting on November 10, 2025, the Superintendent reported HIB Incident Number(s) 005, 006, 007, 008 to the Board; and

WHEREAS, on November 14, 2025 the parents and/or guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation received information about the investigation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17(b)(6)(d); and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board affirms the decision of the Superintendent concerning HIB Incident Number(s) 005, 006, 007, 008 for the 2025-2026 school year for the reasons conveyed to the Board.”

3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the 2026-2027 Three-year Preschool Program Plan and Annual Update Report.
4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approval by the Board of Education of the 2026-2027 Preschool Projected Enrollment Report.
5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the fiscal year 2027 Budget Calendar. (Att. #10)
6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the 2026-2027 Budget goals. (Att. #11)
7. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the revised 2025-2026 Academic calendar. (Att. #12)

MOTION: Dr. Bryant

SECOND: Mr. Stevenson

VOTE: 5-0 (RC)

Yes
Bryant

Yes
Stevenson

Yes
Vera

Yes
Ivker

Yes
Rock



E. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approval by the Board of Education of the Supporting Transparency, Fairness, and Predictability in the School Funding Formula resolution:

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of New Jersey states that the Legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of free public schools,

WHEREAS, the Legislature passed the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 to provide this maintenance and support,

WHEREAS, the West Orange Board of Education relies on substantial funding from the state to meet its obligation to provide a thorough and efficient education to the children of West Orange,

WHEREAS, the School Funding Reform Act is built on the promise that if a school district raises its fair share through their local tax levy the state will fill the gap, and the West Orange Board of Education has consistently raised its local fair share,

WHEREAS, the district's local fair share has increased 36% since 2022-23, resulting in the district's calculated equalization aid declining 37% since in the same time period,

WHEREAS, our total state aid, inclusive of equalization aid and categorical aid, has declined two years in row, and it is impossible for the district to replace this revenue via increases to its local tax levy,

WHEREAS, gross income is used to calculate the district's local fair share, and an increase in gross income among West Orange residents leads to a reduction in equalization aid,

WHEREAS, the revenue from that income is collected through a state income tax, which is required under the Constitution of the State of New Jersey to be used exclusively for the purpose of reducing or offsetting property taxes,

WHEREAS, the inclusion of gross income in the calculation of local fair share reduced the district's equalization aid by approximately \$25 million in the 2025-26 school year,

WHEREAS, the gross income figure used in the state funding formula is not publicly available until state aid notices are released in late February,

WHEREAS, the calculation of a district's local fair share is also dependent on two multipliers which vary from year to year and which are not publicly available until state aid notices are released in late February,

WHEREAS, the district cannot reasonably forecast its anticipated revenues until the release of state aid notices in late February, which makes it difficult to construct a balanced budget,

WHEREAS, the district received \$3.9 million of categorical transportation aid and budgeted for \$17.3 million in transportation expenses in the 2025-26 school year, yielding a funding rate of only 22.5%,



WHEREAS, the School Funding Reform Act provides categorical aid for special education using a census-based method, in which each district is treated as having a fixed percent of the total student population that requires special education services,

WHEREAS, the district is reimbursed for certain special education costs in the form of extraordinary special education aid, but in recent years the State's appropriation for extraordinary aid has covered only a portion of eligible costs,

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 5966 and Senate Bill 4855, currently pending in the Legislature, would place reasonable limits on annual increases to a district's local fair share, require the Commissioner of Education to release preliminary aid notices in December, and require the Department of Education to provide greater transparency in how the funding formula operates,

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 5310 and Senate Bill 3917, currently pending in the Legislature, would require that categorical funding for special education be based on the actual number of special education students enrolled in the district, require the State to increase its appropriation for extraordinary aid from year to year, and places limits on reductions that can be made to a district's state aid,

WHEREAS, the West Orange Board of Education believes that this legislation would improve the School Funding Reform Act and better enable it to provide a thorough and efficient education to its students,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the West Orange Board of Education urges the State Assembly, the State Senate, and the Governor to support A-5966 / S-4855 and A-5310 / S-3917; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Orange Board of Education urges the State Assembly, the State Senate, and the Governor to consider additional reforms to reduce the use of a district's gross income in the calculation of its local fair share; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the West Orange Board of Education urges the State Assembly, State Senate, and the Governor to consider additional reforms to increase the percentage of a district's transportation costs that are funded through categorical transportation aid, and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be delivered to Governor Phil Murphy, State Senate President Nicholas Scutari, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, and the 27th Legislative District's representatives in the State Senate and General Assembly.

MOTION: Mr. Stevenson

SECOND: Vice President Ivker

VOTE: 5-0 (RC)

Yes
Bryant

Yes
Stevenson

Yes
Vera

Yes
Ivker

Yes
Rock

XII. PETITIONS AND HEARINGS OF CITIZENS

XIII. NEXT BOARD MEETING for Reorganization to be held at 5:30 p.m. on January 6, 2026 at West Orange High School.



XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION (as deemed necessary)

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: The Board of Education adjourns to closed session to personnel, legal and miscellaneous confidential matters. Be it further

RESOLVED: The minutes of this closed session will be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

XV. ADJOURNMENT at 8:30 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Stevenson

SECOND: Ms. Vera

VOTE: 5-0 (VV)

Yes
Bryant

Yes
Stevenson

Yes
Vera

Yes
Ivker

Yes
Rock

Respectfully submitted,

Tonya M. Flowers

Tonya M. Flowers, Board Secretary