March 19, 2026

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUMMIT, NEW JERSEY

The Board of Education held a Meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2026 beginning at 6:00 PM in the Summit H.S. Library/Media Center. Those present: Ms. Kelly, presiding, Mr. Cho, Ms. Cohn (virtual), Mr. Gundersen, Mr. Hanley, Ms. Justice, and Mr. Mahecha. There was one member of the public in attendance.

Also present were Mr. Hough, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Sarno, Assistant Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Mr. Gardella, Director of Human Resources, Mr. Margolis, Director of Special Services, and Ms. Rocco, Director of Curriculum & Instruction.

NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION

The following notice was presented:

Let the minutes reflect that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the regulations of the Open Public Meetings Act.

PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSIONS

A. Student Safety Data System - Reporting Period 1 - September 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025 - Scott Hough
B. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying ~ Self-Assessment ~ Investigation, Trainings, and Programs System - Laura Kaplan

PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Cohn spoke about the following:

- Feedback from the Coffee & Conversation, including budget, PSATs, possible additional shared services with the City, heavy student backpacks, immigration, and impact of AI on students

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Hough spoke about the following:

- Celebratory events throughout the district for Reading Across America
- NJGPA testing at the HS
- Performances of Big Fish at the HS; Matilda at the MS
- District Arts Festival next week

Mr. Mahecha moved approval of the following item listed under Superintendent's Report:

RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent:

A. Resolve to review the Superintendent's recommendation of the suspensions for the period of 2/1/2026 - 2/28/2026 as outlined in the confidential reports shared with the Board of Education members and on file in the Superintendent's office.

B. Resolve to affirm the Superintendent's recommendation of the HIB investigation(s) for the period of 12/19/2025 - 1/30/2026 and review the Superintendent's recommendation of the HIB investigation(s) for the period of 2/5/2026 - 3/9/2026. These report summaries are outlined in the confidential reports shared with the Board of Education members and on file in the Superintendent's office.

Motion seconded by Ms. Justice. The roll was called, and all voted, "Aye". The motion was declared adopted.

STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – Hadley Taylor

The report included fundraising for the prom, gearing up for the spring sports season, looking forward to spring break, student tour of Colombia, success of the Speech & Debate team.

ADDITIONS/REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Sarno announced the additions/revisions to the agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Education and Student Activities/Services Committee – Mr. Cho reported on the following: impact of snow days on the school calendar; state examinations; Recruitment Fair; Wellness Symposium on April 12th; disproportionality status report
B. Operations Committee – Mr. Hanley reported on the following: consolidation of services with the City; surveys of property owned by the City; budget update
C. Policy Committee – Ms. Justice reported on the following: review of the policies related to nepotism, appointment of the CSA; gifts, grants and donations
D. Communications Committee – Mr. Mahecha reported the committee did not meet
E. Negotiations and Personnel Committee – Ms. Cohn reported that the committee did not meet
F. Liaison Reports – Mr. Cho reported SEF Spring for Excellence was held on March 14th; spring cycle grants deadline was March 14th

PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Public Comment on Items on the Agenda - none

B. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

A resident suggested a revenue stream involving rental of our facilities, specifically the gyms.

Mr. Mahecha thanked the resident for her thoughts, and added a short statement thanking Superintendent Hough and the Operations Committee for their work on the budget.

Motion by Mr. Hanley, seconded by Mr. Gundersen unanimously approved by voice vote to close public comment.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Mr. Hanley moved approval of the following items listed under Approval of Board Minutes:

RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent:

A. Approval of Minutes of the following meeting:

1. February 19, 2026 Regular Meeting & (2) Executive Sessions

Motion seconded by Ms. Justice, unanimously approved by voice vote.

CURRICULUM / INSTRUCTION / PROGRAM

Ms. Justice moved approval of the following items listed under Curriculum/Instruction/Program:

RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent:

A. Approval of School Psychology Professional Diploma Program Affiliation Agreement with Kean University to provide field work and practicum school psychology experience in our district for qualified graduate students during the 2026-2027 school year

B. Approval of the *revised* 2025-2026 District Calendar (attached)

Motion seconded by Mr. Mahecha. The roll was called, Mr. Hanley abstained, and all others voted, "Aye". The motion was declared adopted.

FINANCE

Mr. Mahecha moved the following items under Finance:

RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent:

A. Approval of the March Bills List as listed below:

1.	Regular Bills	Fund 10	$2,040,485.78
2.	Special Revenue	Fund 20	$ 112,902.34
3.	Capital Projects	Fund 30	$1,774,547.77
4.	Enterprise Fund	Fund 60	$ - 0 -
	Sub Total All Funds		$3,927,935.89
5.	Food Service Fund 61		$ 172,632.65
	Total All Funds		$4,100,568.54

B. Approval of the monthly payroll for February 2026 - $5,611,489.16

C. Approval of budget adjustments and line-item transfers for January 2025

D. Approval of Secretary and Treasurer's Report for January 2025

E. Monthly Budgetary Line-item Status Certification:

Resolved, that the Board Secretary for the Summit Board of Education certifies that pursuant to NJAC 6A:23A-16.10 (c) 3, as of January 2026 that no line-item account has encumbrances and expenditures, which in total exceed the line-item appropriation in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(a); and

Further Be It Resolved, that the Summit Board of Education certifies that pursuant to NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(c) 4 that after review of the board secretary's and treasurer's monthly financial reports and the advice of district officials, no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10 (b).

F. Approval of travel for staff members (as per attached)

G. Approval of Settlement Agreement and General Release between Summit Board of Education and parents of student #7708482989 as per attorney recommendation

H. Approval of *revised* Tuition Contract end date for student #8943833292 as per Settlement Agreement approved January 2026

I. Approval of the Nonpublic School Technology Initiative Program spending plan for the participating school located within this district as follows:
1. Kent Place School $32,301.00

J. Approval for the following school year transportation arrangements with Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative (SCRTC) for the 2025-2026 School Year, effective 03/03/26:

Student ID	School	Route	Contractor
#4582048155	ECLC	TBD	Ziyad Transport

Approval for the school year transportation contract with Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative (SCRTC) in accordance and subject to the CPI increase of 3.57% as listed below:

Contractor	Route #	Aide Per Diem Rate	Cost Per Diem
Ziyad Transport	TBD	$250.00	$249.00

K. Approval for the following transportation arrangements with Union County Educational Services Commission for the 2025-2026 School Year, effective 02/11/26:

Student ID	School	Route	Contractor
1493062854	**Summit Speech School**	**CS-31**	**Best Trans**

Approval for the renewal of transportation contracts with Union County Educational Services Commission for the 2025-2026 School Year in accordance and subject to the CPI increase of 3.57% as listed below:

Contractor	Route #	Aide Per Diem	Per Diem Rate
Best Trans	**CS-31**	**$35.00**	**$117.50**

L. Approval accept the proposal submitted by Shoop SBA, LLC, 12 Henning Drive, Fairfield, NJ 07004-1706 to provide consulting services to oversee all phases of the preparation of the professional development and training proprietary services bid, at a cost of $130/hour, not to exceed $1,950

M. Approval to accept the donation of a bench to Franklin School by Arielle Densen, in memory of Barbara Densen, valued at $1,129

Motion was seconded by Ms. Justice. The roll was called, and all present voted, "Aye". The motion was declared adopted.

SCHOOL BOARD OPERATION

Mr. Hanley moved the following items under School Board Operation:

RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent:

A. Approval for Dora E. Zeno, Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, to be designated as follows:
   1. Public Agency Compliance Officer
   2. Qualified Purchasing Officer
   3. Custodian of Records

B. Approval of the Special Education Medicaid (SEMI) Corrective Action Plan for the 2025-2026 school year

Motion was seconded by Ms. Justice. The roll was called, and all present voted, "Aye". The motion was declared adopted.

PERSONNEL

Ms. Cohn moved the following items under Personnel:

RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent:

A. Approval to appoint the following Long-Term or Leave Replacement staff, pending criminal history review, background checks are required by law, and ability to obtain appropriate NJ certification:

Name	Position	School	Step/Salary	Effective	Replacing
Isabella Venezio	Special Education Teacher - LTS	JPC	$265/day with 2 overlap days at $125/day	March 16, 2026, end date tbd	Thea Amiel
Kara Richardson Whitely	Communications Officer - LTS	District	$300/day - in addition, hourly rate of $75/hour for unanticipated, required work outside of the work schedule	March 2, 2026 for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year	Laurene Dickinson
Curtis Holtgrefe	Band Teacher - LTS	BES, LHES, WES	$265/day	March 27, 2026, or sooner, end date tbd	Michael Gleason

B. Approval of the following Changes of Assignment:
   1. Nicole Allen, from Special Education Supervisor, Special Education Services, to add LDTC coverage at an additional $265/day, effective March 4, 2026 covering Christine Sara
   2. Raab Supatra, from Inclusion Aide, Washington Elementary School, to Inclusion Aide, Lincoln-Hubbard Elementary School, effective March 4, 2026 for the 2025-2026 school year
   3. Dania Mejia, from Long-Term Inclusion Aide Substitute, Jefferson Elementary School, for Dale Yelner to Long-Term Inclusion Aide Substitute covering Michele Hauryluke, $200/day, effective February 19, 2026, end date tbd
   4. Jillian Waring, from Substitute Teacher, District, to Long-Term Teacher Substitute, Lincoln-Hubbard Elementary School, $265/day, effective March 16, 2026, end date tbd, covering Carrie Odgers Lax

C. Approval of maternity leave/family leave for the following staff:
   1. DeAnna Nelson, Physical Education Teacher, Jefferson Elementary School, paid leave effective February 9, 2026 through March 10, 2026, (3/10/2026: ½ day paid a.m.), unpaid medical leave effective March 10, 2026 (½ day p.m.) through March

17, 2026, unpaid leave effective March 18, 2026 through June 18, 2026 (revised from the November 13, 2025 Agenda)

2. Rupa Ruffin, Behavior Analyst, Jefferson Elementary School, paid leave effective January 23, 2026 through March 11, 2026, unpaid leave effective March 12, 2026 through June 12, 2026 (revised from the October 9, 2025, January 15, 2026, and the February 19, 2026 Agendas)
3. Victoria Stevens, Grade 4 Teacher, Franklin Elementary School, paid leave effective June 6, 2025 through June 17, 2025, unpaid leave effective August 27, 2025 through November 26, 2025, unpaid child care leave effective December 1, 2025 through November 30, 2026 (revised from the February 13, 2025 and August 21, 2025 Agendas)
4. Michelle Keane, Math Teacher, Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School, paid leave effective August 27, 2025 through September 26, 2025, unpaid leave effective September 27, 2025 through January 7, 2026, unpaid child care leave effective January 8, 2026 through January 6, 2027 (revised from the April 24, 2025 and September 11, 2025 Agendas)
5. Caitlin Dasti, Inclusion Aide, Wilson Primary Center, unpaid leave effective December 2, 2025 through March 12, 2026, unpaid medical leave effective March 13, 2026 through March 27, 2026 (revised from the November 13, 2025 Agenda)
6. Jennifer Marder, English Teacher, Summit High School, paid leave effective May 19, 2025 through June 17,2025, unpaid leave effective August 27, 2025 through November 26, 2025, unpaid child care leave effective December 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 (revised from the March 20, 2025 and May 13, 2025 Agendas)
7. Laurene Dickinson, Communications Officer, paid leave effective March 2, 2026 through April 9, 2026, vacation days effective April 10, 2026 through May 1, 2026 and December 9, 2026 through December 31, 2026, unpaid leave effective May 4, 2026 through July 29, 2026, unpaid child care leave effective July 31, 2026 through December 8, 2026
8. Melissa Brause, ELA Teacher, Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School, paid leave effective March 2, 2026 through March 20, 2026, unpaid leave effective March 23, 2026 through June 18, 2026 (revised from the November 13, 2025 Agenda)

D. Approval to appoint the following support staff, pending criminal history review and background checks as required by law:

Name	Position	School	Step	Salary	Effective	Replacing
Richard Hauer	Inclusion Aide	WPC	Aide-Step-1	$41,390 (prorated)	February 25, 2026, for the 2025-2026 school year	Scott Sinclair
Noelle Acierto	Cafeteria/Playground Aide	BES	n/a	$38/hour	March 31, 2026, or sooner	Dawn Coyle
Soledad Rodriguez	Part-Time Custodian	WPC	Custodian-1, Step-1	$26,405.63 (prorated)	March 13, 2026 or sooner, for the 2025-2026 school year	Michael Salerno
Bahar Arifkhan	Inclusion Aide	LCJSMS	Aide-Step-1	$41,390 (prorated)	April 16, 2026 or sooner, for the 2025-2026 school year	Avanti Shukla

E. Approval to accept the resignation for the reason of retirement of the following staff:

Name	Position	School	Effective
Anna Nascimento	Inclusion Aide	LCJSMS	July 1, 2026
Colleen Manion	Inclusion Aide	JPC	July 1, 2026

F. Approval to accept the resignation of the following staff:

Name	Position	School	Effective
Brenda Horetsky	LDTC	Special Services	March 2, 2026

G. Approval to appoint the following substitute teachers, pending criminal history review, background checks as required by law, and the ability to obtain NJ substitute teacher credentials:

Name	Pay Rate	Effective Date
Milena Serrano Melendez	$125/day	February 20, 2026
Samad Hamilton	$125/day	March 9, 2026

H. Approval to appoint Steven Zagorski, as a residency investigator, as needed, at the rate of $125/hour

I. Approval to pay Wilberth Sequeira $2,121.88 for 10 unused vacation days

J. Approval to pay Emilio Torres $9,508.88 for 27 unused vacation days

K. Approval of Employment Contract between Summit Board of Education and Dora E. Zeno, Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary as properly reviewed and approved by the Union County Executive Superintendent of Schools in accordance with P.L.2007 C-53, effective March 5, 2026 for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year at a compensation rate of $800/per diem

L. Approval to pay the following Volunteer Coaches for Winter Track 2025-2026 (Paid by FAST ACT):
1. Gina Baker - $1,000
2. Evan White - $3,000
3. Matthew DeFonzo - $6,000

M. Approval to pay the following Washington Elementary School staff for their participation in the spring play, at the curriculum rate of $50/hour (paid through the WES PTO)
1. Louis Steel, up to 81.5 hours - $4,075
2. Bridget Pietrantuono, up to 36.5 hours - $1,825

N. Approval to pay the following Summit High School staff for teaching an extra 6th period, effective March 10, 2026 through June 30, 2026, covering Elizabeth Mongno:
1. Angelique Bender - Pre-Calculus Essentials - $89.66/class

2. Katherine Gallaway - Geometry - $64.71/class
3. Cheryl Adair - Financial Literacy and Personal Finance - $94.75/class
4. Nicolette Aloia - Pre-Calculus Essentials - $64.79/class
5. Jacqueline Mattoon - Geometry - $67.50/class

O. Approval of Vanessa Hernandez to teach Gottesman Adult ESL, up to 60 hours, at the curriculum rate of $50/hour, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year (funded by the Gottesman Fund)

P. Approval of Paola Acosta as a substitute teacher for the Gottesman Adult ESL class, as needed, at the curriculum rate of $50/hour, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year (funded by the Gottesman Fund)

Q. Approval of a Sidebar Agreement dated March 12, 2026 between the Summit Board of Education and the Summit Education Association and Summit Principals Association (as per attached)

R. Approval of a Sidebar Agreement dated March 12, 2026 between the Summit Board of Education and the Summit Education Association (as per attached)

S. Approval of Greta Teixeira to assist with child care for Latino Literacy programs for the 2025-2026 school year, up to 40 hours, at the rate of $22/hour (funded by the Gottesman Fund)

T. Approval to pay the following Jefferson Elementary School staff for the Jefferson Afterschool Enrichment classes, from April 6, 2026 through May 28, 2026, up to 8 hours each, at the curriculum rate of $50/hour (funded by the Jefferson PTO)

1. Arthur Rodgers - Origami
2. Lauren Nawrotzki - Field Hockey
3. Christopher Brandon - Drawing
4. Heidi Pilla (Orlando) - Bracelet Making

U. Approval to pay Elizabeth Berberich, Summit High School, to teach an extra 6th class, $76.83/class, effective April 13, 2026 through May 1, 2026, covering David Howarth

V. Approval of the revised 2026 spring coaches list (list attached) (revised from the February 19, 2026 Agenda)

W. Approval to pay the following Franklin Elementary School staff to Spring Afterschool Enrichment Classes, at the curriculum rate of $50/hour, up to 1hour/week, effective April 13, 2026 through May 18, 2026 (paid by the FES PTO):

1. Angeline Fletcher - Happy Scrappers
2. Elizabeth Gallagher - Happy Scrappers
3. Ashley McMahon - Charm Lab
4. Jill Mills - Stop Motion Animation
5. Kaitlyn Ng - Bracelet Making

X. The Board of Education, during the period beginning February 4, 2026 and ending March 4, 2026, designates the Assistant School Business Administrator to assume and discharge all duties, responsibilities, and authority of the School Business Administrator (revised from the February 19, 2026 Agenda)

Y. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Summit Board of Education hereby approves the Separation Agreement between the Summit Board of Education and Employee ID No. 9973, and

further authorizes the Board President, Board Attorney, Superintendent, and Interim Business Administrator to take all actions necessary to effectuate the terms of this Resolution.

Z. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Summit Board of Education hereby approves a medical leave of absence for Derek Jess through June 30, 2026.

Motion was seconded by Ms. Justice. The roll was called, and all present voted, "Aye". The motion was declared adopted.

POLICIES & REGULATIONS

RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent:

Mr. Hanley moved the following items under Policies & Regulations:

First Reading
0142.1 - Bylaw - Nepotism (M) Revised
P 1220 - Employment of Chief School Administrator (M) Revised

Second Reading
P & R 1552 - Sexual Harassment - Staff (M) New
P 2422 - Statutory Curricular Requirements - (M) Revised
P 3362 - Sexual Harassment (M) Abolish
R 3362 - Sexual Harassment of Teaching Staff Members Complaint Procedure - Abolish
P 4352 - Sexual Harassment (M) Abolish
R 4352 - Sexual Harassment of Support Staff Members Complaint Procedure - Abolish
P 5111 - Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students (M) Revised

Motion was seconded by Mr. Gundersen. The roll was called, and all present voted, "Aye". The motion was declared adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Hanley, seconded by Mr. Gundersen, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Sarno
Asst. School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Summit Public Schools