

**MENDHAM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BROOKSIDE, NEW JERSEY
MIDDLE SCHOOL MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026, 7:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 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	Absent
Mrs. Cynthia Brusco		Present
Mrs. Natasha Crossan		Present
Mr. Peter Dumovic		Present
Mr. Thomas Keeling		Present
Dr. Christina Klausner		Present

Eleven (11) 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. Like always, I've returned to inform you about what's been happening at the middle school.

On March 2nd, we had a schoolwide laser show assembly to teach us kids about Black History Month and its significance. It was a really cool experience, and Dr. Ciccone said he will definitely rehire the company next October to address antibullying.

Last week, the boys' volleyball team won MTMS's first county championship in over 10 years, thanks to Coach Clausen, after a very close game. The girls' team also reached the semi-finals with a 9-2 record, thanks to Coach Racz.

Last week, our annual play ran on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, with a record 1,100 tickets sold. Everyone partaking in the play was very happy with how it turned out, and the majority of the non-graduating students will continue participating next year.

Recently, 8th graders received their recommendations for different classes, and we got to pick our electives for the Freshman year at the high school. Meetings with our counselors took place during school, but lasted only about 5 minutes.

Over the past few weeks, Mrs. Bray and Mrs. Clark have been running an after-school PTO STEM Challenge class for 5th graders. I haven't gone, since I'm not in fifth grade, but I have heard very good things about it, including its high attendance.

VI. Superintendent's Report

- District Updates, News, and Events
- Assistant Principals - Mrs. Arielle Rementilla and Mr. Scott Byers
- MTMS Students

- District Recognition

I am excited to share that Mendham Township School District has been selected for potential inclusion in *Empowering Futures: Outstanding U.S. School Districts of 2026*, a national publication produced by The Education Magazine. The district was recognized for its strong instructional framework, high academic standards, student-centered approach, and commitment to providing a well-rounded educational experience. We have been invited to participate in a featured cover story, which will highlight our programs, leadership, and future initiatives. This recognition reflects the outstanding work of our students, staff, and community, and I look forward to sharing more as this process continues.

- MTMS Spring Musical

Congratulations to the cast, crew, and staff of this year's MTMS Spring Musical, *The Wizard of Oz*. We had sold-out shows and were able to showcase an exceptional performance by our students.

- Instructional Highlights, Science and STEM

- Students in Mrs. Slater's 6th-grade science class recently engaged in a hands-on engineering activity focused on water filtration. Working collaboratively, students designed and tested filtration systems using everyday materials, applying scientific concepts as they explored real-world challenges related to clean water.

- At ES, students across nearly all grade levels participated in this year's STEM Expo, demonstrating creativity, problem-solving, and innovation through a wide range of student-designed projects.
- Thursday, I will be hosting a meet-up at Starbucks in Mendham for community members who are interested in discussing any topic. I will have budget information available for those interested in reviewing. Please spread the word - all are welcome.

VII. Assistant Superintendent's Report

At our most recent Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG) meeting on March 20, we reviewed several key topics, including Extended School Year (ESY) dates and times, upcoming annual review meetings, and preparations for NJSLA-A testing.

Ongoing discussions across our recent meetings have focused on student transitions at critical points in their educational journey, including Preschool to Elementary School, Grade 4 to Grade 5, and Grade 8 to Grade 9. These conversations have provided valuable insight into how we can continue to strengthen support for students and families during these transition periods.

In response to this feedback, planning is currently underway for a summer transition program to support students with IEPs moving from Elementary School to Middle School.

Additionally, our SEAG "Coffee Chats" have been very well attended, providing meaningful opportunities for connection and collaboration with families. We look forward to our next meeting on May 22 at 9:30 a.m.

VIII. Board President's Report - No report

IX. Correspondence - None.

X. Committee Reports

XI. Consent Items

Approval of Minutes

Regular Session Minutes: February 17, 2026

Curriculum and School Programs

1. 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 February 2026, 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 February 2026 Board Secretary's Reports.

3. Treasurer's Report

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the February 2026 Treasurer's Reports.

4. February 2026 Transfer Reports

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the February 2026 transfer report.

5. March 2026 Bills List

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the March 2026 Bills List. This includes payroll checks N5690 through N5693 and N5694 through N5698.

Fund 10 - Treasurer Account	\$ 70,313.64
Fund 11 - Treasurer Account	\$2,559,693.98
Fund 30 - Referendum Account	\$ 248.75
Fund 60 - Cafeteria Account	\$ 53,024.54
Fund 95 - Athletic Account	<u>\$ 1,350.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$2,684,630.91</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.

8. **Preschool Tuition for the 2026-2027 School Year**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Preschool Tuition rate for the 2026-2027 school year:

Monthly Preschool Tuition: \$1,475.00 (September - June)

9. **Adoption of the Tentative Budget 2026-2027**

A. **BUDGET AND PUBLIC HEARING**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves and authorizes the Board Secretary to the Board of Education to submit the tentative budget for the 2026-2027 School Year using the 2026-2027 state aid figures to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-5 and 18A:7F-6 to comply with the statutory deadline:

	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUES FUNDS	DEBT SERVICE FUND	TOTAL
2026-27 Total Expenditures	\$ 27,292,000	\$ 157,500	\$1,348,488	\$ 28,797,988
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$ 6,785,000	\$ 157,500	\$ 425,609	\$ 7,368,109
Taxes to be Raised	\$ 20,507,000	\$ 0	\$ 922,879	\$21,429,879

And to post said tentative budget on the district's website and to advertise said tentative budget in the Daily Record in accordance with the forms suggested by the New Jersey Department of Education, and according to law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a public hearing be held at the Mendham Township Middle School in the Multi-purpose room (MPR) located at 16 Washington Valley Road, Brookside, New Jersey, on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2026-2027 School Year.

B. USE OF ADJUSTMENTS - 2026-2027

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for enrollment in the amount of \$225,234. The district intends to utilize this adjustment for supplies and materials necessary for the additional students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education include in the tentative budget the weighted adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$111,231. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-10.3(b), the district has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority. The adjustment will be used to cover additional increases in staff health benefit premiums. The Board of Education will complete this by June 30, 2027, and acknowledges that it cannot be deferred or completed incrementally over a longer period.

C. TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT – 2026-2027

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education includes in the tentative budget for the 2026-2027 school year a maximum travel expenditure in the amount of \$25,000. The establishment of this maximum travel expenditure is pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 and is defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education also set a maximum travel expenditure amount of \$25,000 for the 2025-2026 school year, of which \$12,230 has been spent, and \$3,659 is encumbered to date.

WHEREAS, the Mendham Township Board of Education recognizes that 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:23A Subchapter 7 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, a Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member, where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable

as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 to a maximum expenditure of \$25,000 for all staff and board members for the 2026-2027 school year, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

D. CAPITAL RESERVE WITHDRAWAL – 2026-2027

WHEREAS, the Mendham Township Board of Education maintains a Capital Reserve Account in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-31 and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.1 for the purpose of funding capital projects included in the district's approved Long-Range Facilities Plan (LRFP); and

WHEREAS, the Board has identified the need to allocate funds from the Capital Reserve Account to support the costs associated with the referendum project, as outlined in the district's Long-Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) and

WHEREAS, the withdrawal of these funds is in compliance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.1, which stipulates that funds from the Capital Reserve Account may only be used for capital projects formally approved in the district's LRFP;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby authorizes the withdrawal of \$900,000 from the Capital Reserve Account to be appropriated for the purpose of completing projects for the district during the 2026-2027 school year. To include, but are not limited to, the replacement of HVAC equipment at both the Mendham Township Elementary School and the Mendham Township Middle School, and furniture, supplies/materials for both schools that are needed for the referendum project that were removed to keep the project cost of the bonding down; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this appropriation shall be reflected in the district's budget in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.1(c) and that all expenditures from these funds shall be in strict compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

E. MAINTENANCE RESERVE WITHDRAWAL – 2026-2027

WHEREAS, the Mendham Township Board of Education maintains a Maintenance Reserve Account in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-31 and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2 for the purpose of funding required maintenance projects as outlined in the district's Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP); and

WHEREAS, the Board has identified the need to allocate funds from the Maintenance Reserve Account to support the costs associated with required maintenance activities for a school facility, as outlined in the district's Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP) pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-20.5 and

WHEREAS, the withdrawal of these funds is in compliance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2, which stipulates that funds from the Maintenance Reserve Account may only be used for required maintenance activities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:26A-1.2;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby authorizes the withdrawal of \$400,000 from the Maintenance Reserve Account to be appropriated for the purpose of completing projects for the district during the 2026-2027 school year. To include, but not limited to, the repair of roofs, the boilers, and the upgrade and replacement of HVAC equipment at both the Mendham Township Elementary School and the Mendham Township Middle School; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this appropriation shall be reflected in the district's budget in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2(e) and that all expenditures from these funds shall be in strict compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. New Hire - Marie Fenelus, Transportation Driver (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Marie Fenelus, pending completion of paperwork, as a substitute transportation driver effective March 25, 2026, at an hourly rate of \$30.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Marie Fenelus as a full-time Transportation Driver, pending completion of paperwork, effective April 6, 2026, at an hourly rate of \$33.07 for the 2025-2026 school year.

2. Termination of Employment from Part-Time Position

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the termination of employee #4926 from their part-time position effective February 26, 2026.

3. **Leave of Absence - Kristen O'Dowd**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Kristen O'Dowd, Elementary School Teacher, for a leave of absence, having received a doctor's certification, commencing August 27, 2026, under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), ending after Twelve (12) weeks on November 20, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Twelve (12) weeks under the NJ Family Leave Act (FLA) for Kristen O'Dowd, commencing on August 27, 2026, through November 20, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Kristen O'Dowd with an extended unpaid leave of absence (not covered under FMLA or NJ FLA) beginning November 23, 2026, through June 15, 2027.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Kristen O'Dowd with an anticipated return to work for the 2027-2028 school year.

4. **Leave of Absence - Sharon Romero**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Sharon Romero, Transportation Driver, for a leave of absence commencing on February 25, 2026, utilizing accumulated sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

5. **Leave of Absence - Russell Nordmark**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Russell Nordmark, Transportation Driver, for a leave of absence commencing on March 28, 2026, utilizing 9 Sick days.

6. **Leave of Absence - Jeremy Conover**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Jeremy Conover, Transportation Driver, for a leave of absence commencing on March 23, 2026, utilizing 5 sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves Jeremy Conover with a return to work date of April 6, 2026.

7. **Middle School Schedule B Stipend Position for 2025-2026**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following 2025-2026 Co-Curricular Stipend position for Middle School:

CO-CURRICULAR Activity (Schedule B)

Activities	2025-2026 Salary	Staff Member
ESports (spring session) Grades 5-8 (1 hour each)	\$272.00 base + Max of 10 events	Jonathan Smith

Zero Period	@ \$70.00 each, not to exceed a total of \$972.00	
-------------	---	--

8. **Extra Hours - Karina Chacon**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves extra hours, at an hourly rate of \$42.42, for Karina Chacon to provide support for student #13506812 and the student's participation in the Middle School Play for Friday, March 20, 2026.

9. **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.

10. **Substitute Teachers**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves Janelle Campos and Jacqueline Mayers as substitute teachers, pending completion of paperwork, at the current rate of \$125.00 per day for the 2025-2026 school year.

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

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

Transportation Supervisor
 Administrative Assistant to the Transportation Supervisor
 Transportation Administrative Assistant - Part-Time
 Bus Dispatcher
 Transportation Driver
 Bus Aide - Part-Time
 Head Custodian
 Custodian

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 8660 Transportation By Private Vehicle (M)
 R 8660 Privately Owned Vehicles
 P 8710 Property Insurance
 P 8740 Bonding

- P 8750 Employee Indemnification
- P 8760 Pupil Accident Insurance
- P 8770 School Board Insurance Group
- P 9130 Public Complaints and Grievances
- R 9130 Public Complaints and Grievances
- P 9150 School Visitors
- R 9150 School Visitors
- P 9160 Public Attendance at School Events
- P 9180 School Volunteers
- R 9180 School Volunteers
- P 9190 Community Organizations
- R 9190 Community Organizations
- P 9200 Cooperation Between Parent and School

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 8311 Managing Electronic Mail
- P 8335 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- R 8420 Emergency and Non-Fire Evacuation Plan (M)
- R 8420.3 Natural Disasters and Man-Made Catastrophes (M)
- R 8420.4 Kidnapping (M)
- R 8420.5 Asbestos Release (M)
- R 8420.6 Accidents To and From School (M)
- P 8431 Preparedness for Toxic Hazard
- R 8431 Toxic Hazard Preparedness
- R 8442 Reporting Accidents
- P 8451 Control of Communicable Disease (M)
- R 8451 Control of Communicable Disease (M)
- P 8453 HIV/AIDS
- P 8468 Crisis Response
- R 8468 Crisis Response
- P 8506 School Lunch Program Biosecurity Plan (M)
- P 8601 Student Supervision After School Dismissal (M)
- P 8613 Waiver of Student Transportation
- P 8635 Student Transportation Vehicles and School Buses
- P 8651 Community Use of Transportation (M)
- R 8651 Non-Use of District Vehicles

Mr. Dumovic moved to approve the Committee Reports, and the Consent Items for March 24, 2026; Approval of all Monthly Meeting minutes, Curriculum & Instruction item 1,

Operations & Finance items 1-9, Personnel & Human Resources items 1-11, Policy and Planning items 1-2, seconded by Mr. Keeling, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mrs. Brusco; yes, Mrs. Crossan; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, Mr. Keeling; yes, Dr. Klausner; yes, Dr. Mandel; yes, and Mrs. Carrino Tamasi; yes, – motions carry.

XII. ACTION ITEMS

Curriculum and School Programs

1. Field Trip (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the attached field trip for the 2025-2026 school year.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. Leave of Absence – Julia Coyne (REVISED)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Julia Coyne, Assistant to the Business Administrator for Finance, for a leave of absence commencing on March 23, 2026, utilizing 10 sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves Julia Coyne with a return to work date of April 13, 2026.

2. Leave of Absence – Yoslin Lopez

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Yoslin Lopez, Transportation Driver, for a leave of absence commencing on March 13, 2026, utilizing 35 Sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves Yoslin Lopez with a return to work date of May 8, 2026.

3. 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.

Mrs. Crossan moved to approve the Action Items for March 24, 2026; Approval Curriculum & Instruction item 1, Personnel & Human Resources items 1-3, seconded by Mr. Keeling, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mrs. Crossan; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, Mr. Keeling; yes, Dr. Klausner; yes, Dr. Mandel; yes, Mrs. Brusco; yes, and Mrs. Carrino Tamasi; yes, – motions carry.

XIII. Discussion - None.

XIV. Verbal Communications from the Public

Mrs Orban Brown - Ironia Road - talked about functional taxes - school budget is a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30 each year, but the Township is January 1 to December 31 - she has taken her bills and calculated the amount of changes in each category over the last 10 years. There are separate categories for municipalities, county, regional school, etc. 2016 - MTSD tax is 30% over a 10-year period, Municipal is 17% over 10 years, County is 24% over 10 years, Regional school district increase is less than it was 10 years ago, which she found very interesting. She has offered to be available to discuss this information. Can reach out to her directly.

XV. Adjournment

Moved by Mr. Dumovic, seconded by Dr. Klausner, to adjourn the Regular Session Meeting of March 24, 2026. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Mosner
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary