

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
Special Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 4, 2026 7:30 PM Regular Session
Jefferson Township High School Media Center

District Vision Statement

The district will be a leader in academic excellence while developing healthy, well-rounded, resourceful students who are positive, contributing members of local and global communities.

A. Mr. Brown, called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM, and read the Open Meeting Statement, below:

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, the Jefferson Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof, posted on the Jefferson Township Board of Education website (www.Jefftwp.org) and a copy of said notice delivered to the Municipal Clerk of the Township of Jefferson and the Jefferson Township Library.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. **ROLL CALL:**

Aye Mr. Camacho

Aye Mrs. Poulas

Aye Mrs. Small

Aye Mr. Natale

Aye Mrs. Ruggiero

Aye Mrs. Mallimo-Orna, *Vice President*

Aye Mrs. Perez

Aye Ms. Seugling

Aye Mr. Brown, *President*

D. **CLOSED SESSION**

The Board did not convene to Closed Session at this time.

E. **PRESENTATIONS**

- Mr. Brown provided an overview of the meeting with the Department of Education Commissioner and her team. Mrs. Ruggiero reported the Milton Building lease discussion from the June 1, 2026 Building Needs and Finance Committee meeting. Significant discussion took place regarding options available to balance the budget. As noted in previous public meetings, the board's options to balance the budget are band-aids that will not provide a sustainable path forward. Additionally, the Department of Education's recommendation to include one-time revenue to support the operating budget is short-sighted, as it creates a larger gap to address in future years' budgets. Ultimately, the board reached consensus that the best approach to balance the budget was to include estimated revenue of \$200,000 from the lease of the Milton School, to include estimated revenue of approximately \$2.6 million from the anticipated sale of the Central Office building, to reduce various salary accounts by \$90,000 related to personnel changes that occurred after the creation of the preliminary budget, and to reduce the budgeted expenditure for Workers' Compensation Insurance by \$24, 576 based on the actual premium notice.

F. **COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

- An audience member opined about the Milton School Building lease.
- An audience member inquired about necessary capital improvements, the need for an assistant superintendent, and the sale of the central office building.
- An audience member agreed with the Board on the need to "buy time", asked how estimates are created, and requested data on administrative duties and/or job descriptions.
- An audience member asked about the contract for the new superintendent and the sale of the central office building.

- An audience member inquired about what would happen if any highlands impact aid is received.
- Several audience members suggested reducing the number of administrative positions.
- An audience member suggested using a shared principal for the high school and intermediate facilities.
- The Board received inquiries regarding the finalization of the sale, how capital reserve funds can be used or transferred, and if bus routes are as efficient as possible.

Mr. Brown, Mrs. Howe, and Mrs. Oroho Giacchi answered questions that could be immediately addressed, and some topics were referred to committees for further discussion. Mr. Brown announced the Board would be taking a short recess to prepare the budget motions based on the Board’s discussion.

Motion by Mr. Natale, seconded by Mrs. Poulas to recess at 9:10PM.

<u>Aye</u> Mr. Camacho	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Poulas	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Small
<u>Aye</u> Mr. Natale	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Ruggiero	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Mallimo-Orna, <i>Vice President</i>
<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Perez	<u>Aye</u> Ms. Seugling	<u>Aye</u> Mr. Brown, <i>President</i>

Motion by Ms. Seugling, seconded by Mrs. Small to adjourn to public session at 9:23PM.

<u>Aye</u> Mr. Camacho	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Poulas	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Small
<u>Aye</u> Mr. Natale	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Ruggiero	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Mallimo-Orna, <i>Vice President</i>
<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Perez	<u>Aye</u> Ms. Seugling	<u>Aye</u> Mr. Brown, <i>President</i>

G. FINANCE AND BUILDING NEEDS

Motion by Ms. Seugling, seconded by Mrs. Mallimo-Orna, to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve and adopt motion G.1 through G.4, as described below:

<u>Aye</u> Mr. Camacho	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Poulas	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Small
<u>Aye</u> Mr. Natale	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Ruggiero	<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Mallimo-Orna, <i>Vice President</i>
<u>Aye</u> Mrs. Perez	<u>Aye</u> Ms. Seugling	<u>Aye</u> Mr. Brown, <i>President</i>

G.1 Motion to approve lease agreement with Sparta Board of Education, as described below:

WHEREAS, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Jefferson Township Board of Education hereby enters into a lease agreement with the Sparta Township Board of Education for the Milton Elementary School (“Premises”), located at 52 Schoolhouse Road, Oak Ridge, New Jersey;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the terms of the lease, the lease shall commence on July 1, 2026 and conclude on June 30, 2031, with annual rent as follows; and

2026-2027	\$200,000.00
2027-2028	\$258,280.44
2028-2029	\$263,370.80
2029-2030	\$268,682.48
2030-2031	\$273,994.16

WHEREAS, pursuant to the lease, the Premises shall be utilized by Sparta for its pre-school program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Board hereby approves the lease agreement with the Sparta Township Board of Education for the term and annual rent as set forth above.

G.2 Motion to approve the adoption of the Budget for School Year 2026-2027.

The Superintendent recommends approval to adopt the Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027:

WHEREAS, for the second year in a row, Jefferson is being denied formula-based aid in the amount of \$1,166,583, due to arbitrary caps on categorical aid;

WHEREAS, this follows a loss of \$1,190,088 for the 2025-2026 school year;

WHEREAS, there has been an absence of funding to compensate for the restrictive provisions of the Highlands Act and the provision of clean drinking water to millions of New Jerseyans;

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has been put in an untenable position that cannot continue to be solved by overburdening the local community or offering a subpar program for our students;

WHEREAS, the Jefferson Township Board of Education first adopted a tentative budget on March 23, 2026, and submitted it to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval;

WHEREAS, the Jefferson Township Board of Education reconvened on April 9, 2026, to consider the request from the Executive County Superintendent to revise the 2026-2027 budget to reflect a balanced budget;

WHEREAS, the Jefferson Township Board of Education carefully reconsidered the impact of the measures necessary to balance the budget on the district's taxpayers and students, and voted to proceed with submitting the budget in its current, unbalanced form;

WHEREAS, the tentative budget, approved by the Board at the April 9, 2026 Special Meeting, was posted on the district's website on April 22, 2026;

WHEREAS, the final budget was presented to the public during a hearing held in the Media Center of the Jefferson Township High School, 1010 Weldon Road, Oak Ridge, NJ at 7:30 p.m., on April 27, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Board convened an additional Special Meeting on June 4, 2026, to discuss and consider feedback and recommendations provided by the Commissioner of Education and other representatives of the Department of Education;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Jefferson Township Board of Education hereby adopts the following final budget for SY 2026-2027:

	General Fund	Special Revenues	Debt Service	Total
2026-2027 Total Expenditures	\$63,676,084	\$5,780,382	\$2,393,886	\$71,850,352
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$10,925,849	\$5,780,382	\$214,155	\$16,920,386
Taxes to be Raised	\$52,750,235	\$0	\$2,179,731	\$54,929,966

G.3 *WHEREAS*, school district policy and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3(a) provides the Jefferson Township Board of Education shall establish in the annual school budget a maximum expenditure amount that may be allotted for such travel and expense reimbursement for the 2026-2027 school year;

WHEREAS, the maximum expenditure amount allotted for travel and expense reimbursement for the 2025-2026 school year was \$86,393, and

WHEREAS, travel and expense reimbursement has reached a total amount of \$32,036.16 as of March 20, 2026;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Jefferson Township Board of Education, in the County of Morris, New Jersey, hereby establishes the school district travel maximum for the 2026-2027 at the sum of \$88,471, and

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

G.4 *WHEREAS*, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A:5.2(a) mandates boards to establish annually prior to budget preparation, for public relations and each type of professional service, a maximum level of spending for the ensuing school year;

WHEREAS, the budget includes the following appropriations:

Account Code	Description	\$
11-000-213-300	Health Services Purchased Professional Services	\$31,800
11-000-216-320	Purchased Student-Related Support Services	\$5,082
11-000-217-320	Purchased Professional Extraordinary Services	\$54,924
11-000-218-320-390	Student Guidance Services - Medical Screenings	\$15,950
11-000-219-320	Purchased Prof-Ed Services - Educational/Medical Services Provided to Students	\$24,715
11-000-219-390	Other Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Student Evaluations	\$12,000
11-000-223-320	Purchased Professional Development Services - Speakers	\$16,288
11-000-230-331	Legal Services	\$80,000
11-000-230-332	Auditor Fees	\$56,100
11-000-230-334	Architect/Engineer Services	\$50,000
11-000-230-339	Other Professional Services	\$10,800
11-150-100-320	Hospital-Based Homebound Instruction	\$20,000
	Total	\$377,659

WHEREAS, the Administration needs to notify the Board if there arises a need to exceed said maximums, upon which the Board may adopt a dollar increase in the maximum amount through formal Board action, and

WHEREAS, the Board and Administration wishes to minimize the amount of paperwork involved in this area;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Jefferson Township Board of Education, in the County of Morris, New Jersey establishes maximums for professional services in the areas listed above at a level of 120% of the amounts listed for the 2026-2027 school year.

H. COMMUNICATIONS

None

I. OLD BUSINESS

None

J. NEW BUSINESS

None

K. CLOSED SESSION

The Board did not convene to Closed Session at this time.

L. ADJOURN

Motion by Mr. Natale, seconded by Mrs. Mallimo-Orna, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 PM.

Aye Mr. Camacho

Aye Mrs. Poulas

Aye Mrs. Small

Aye Mr. Natale

Aye Mrs. Ruggiero

Aye Mrs. Mallimo-Orna, *Vice President*

Aye Mrs. Perez

Aye Ms. Seugling

Aye Mr. Brown, *President*