

The business meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 19, 2026, at the New Providence High School/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, by Mrs. Marano, Board President.

Present on the roll call were Laura Castellano, Dr. Kristen Empson Hayden, Stacey Gunderman, Rupa Kale, Amanda Marano, and Donna Zane. Also present were Dr. Lauren Zirpoli, Superintendent of Schools, Joseph Ugialoro, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Jonathan Keaney, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Supervision, James Testa, School Business Administrator/Board, and one member of the public.

Mrs. Marano in the salute to the flag.

Mrs. Marano read the following statement:

This is a public meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of New Providence. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with PL 1975, Chapter 231, in that a notice was made in conformance with Section 13 of the Act.

Whenever the business of the Board requires it to convene to a Closed Session, the session will begin no later than 9:30 p.m. At the conclusion of the need for a Closed Session, the Board will reconvene for the public portion of the meeting. At that time the Board will complete any other business that may be before it and the public will then be given an opportunity to be heard before the meeting is adjourned.

The following change notice was posted on March 2, 2026:

The New Providence Board of Education Regular Meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the New Providence High/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, has been cancelled and rescheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. Marano opened the meeting to the public at 7:02 p.m.

There being no comments from the public. Mrs. Marano declared the public portion of the meeting closed at 7:02 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

FINANCE ACTIONS

2026/2027 TENTATIVE BUDGET APPROVED

Ms. Gunderman, Finance Chairperson, moved to approve Items 1 through 7 as listed below:

1. Approve the tentative budget for the 2026/2027 school year using the 2026/2027 state aid figures and authorize the Board Secretary to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-5 and 18A:7F-6:

<u>2026/2027 School Year</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Revenues</u>	<u>Debt Service</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total Expenditures	\$53,516,890.00	\$1,055,673.00	\$2,902,467.00	\$57,475,030.00

Less:

<u>Anticipated Revenues</u>	<u>\$ 6,058,180.00</u>	<u>\$1,055,673.00</u>	<u>\$ 894,560.00</u>	<u>\$ 8,008,413.00</u>
Taxes to be Raised	\$47,458,710.00	\$0.00	\$2,007,907.00	\$49,466,617.00

After approval by the Executive County Superintendent of Schools, advertise said tentative budget in the Courier News and TAPinto New Providence in accordance with the form suggested by the New Jersey Department of Education and according to law. A public hearing will be held at New Providence High/Middle School Media Center, New Providence, New Jersey, on April 30, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2026/2027 School Year.

2026/2027 TENTATIVE BUDGET ADJUSTMENT APPROVED

2. Approve that the following adjustments are included in the tentative 2026/2027 annual school budget, which will be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for technical review:

- Adjustment for enrollment: \$0.00
- Adjustment for health care costs: \$1,362,819.00

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$1,362,819.00. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

- Adjustment for deferred PERS pension contribution: \$0.00
- Adjustment for responsibility transferred: \$0.00
- Adjustment for banked cap: \$0.00

TRAVEL EXPENSES RESOLUTION APPROVED

3. Approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the New Providence 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, Policy #6471, School District Travel Procedures covers the reimbursement process for travel expenses in accordance with New Jersey Statutes;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with Policy #6471.

2026/2027 MAXIMUM TRAVEL EXPENDITURES APPROVED

4. Approve the following resolution:

The Board of Education approves establishing a maximum travel expenditure amount of \$74,300.00 for the 2026/2027 school year. The maximum travel expenditure amount for the 2025/2026 school year is \$70,200.00, of which \$36,584.49 has been spent and \$10,055.35 encumbered to date.

ANNUAL MAXIMUM EXPENDITURE FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES APPROVED

5. Approve an annual maximum expenditure for the professional services for the 2026/2027 school year. As defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.2(a)1, upon notification if it becomes necessary to exceed the maximum amount, as indicated below, the Board of Education may adopt an increase in said dollar amount through formal Board action.

Account /Auditing Services:	\$42,500.00
Architectural/Engineering:	\$ 5,000.00
Legal Services:	\$50,000.00
Public Relations Services:	\$58,706.00
School Physician Services:	\$38,000.00

APPROPRIATION OF SURPLUS IN 2026/2027 TENTATIVE SCHOOL BUDGET APPROVED

6. Approve the appropriation of surplus in the amount of \$2,063,000.00 in the 2026/2027 tentative school budget.

AUTHORIZATION TO PUBLISH 2026/2027 TENTATIVE SCHOOL BUDGET APPROVED

7. After the Board and Executive County Superintendent of Schools' approval of the tentative 2026/2027 budget, authorize the Board Secretary to publish said budget.

Mrs. Zane seconded the motion. It was carried on the following vote.

Ms. Gunderman discussed the following details regarding the budget:

The spending plan reflects a 4.28% increase from the 2025/2026 school year budget. The district plans to utilize the health benefits cap adjustment, as allowed by law.

State aid decreased by 3%, which represents a reduction of \$94,127 from the 2025/2026 budget.

The tax increase for an average household is 3.34%, or approximately \$328 per year.

Approval tonight allows this proposed budget to be submitted to the Department of Education County Office for review and approval.

The full budget presentation, public hearing, and adoption will take place on Thursday, April 30, 2026.

Roll call vote:

<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Castellano
<u>Yea</u>	Dr. Empson Hayden
<u>Yea</u>	Ms. Gunderman
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Kale
<u>Absent</u>	Mrs. Lepre
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Marano
<u>Yea</u>	Mrs. Zane

FACILITIES ACTIONS

No facilities items for approval.

EDUCATION ACTIONS

No education items for approval.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

No personnel items for approval.

BOARD POLICY

No board policy items for approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. Marano opened the meeting to the public at 7:04 p.m.

There being no comments from the public. Mrs. Marano declared the public portion of the meeting closed at 7:04 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Gunderman moved to adopt the following resolution:

This body shall on March 19, 2026, in the New Providence High/Middle School Media Center, 35 Pioneer Drive, discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, specific matters which may generally be described as follows:

- Student Matters related to HIB

The minutes of the discussion in closed session of the aforementioned matters may be disclosed to the public after the final determination of action has been reached.

Mrs. Kale seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board reconvened to public session at 7:20 p.m.

Mrs. Marano called the Board to order. Board members present were Mrs. Castellano, Dr. Empson Hayden, Ms. Gunderman, Mrs. Kale, Mrs. Marano, and Mrs. Zane.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business before the Board, on a motion by Dr. Empson Hayden, seconded by Mrs. Marano, and carried unanimously, Mrs. Marano declared the meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.



James Testa, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary