

**MENDHAM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BROOKSIDE, NEW JERSEY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2026, 7:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Flag Salute - Dr. Mandel led the flag salute.

III. Roll Call of the Board of Education

Mrs. Elisabeth Carrino-Tamasi	President	Absent
Dr. Rekha Mandel	Vice President	Present
Mrs. Cynthia Brusco		Present
Mrs. Natasha Crossan		Present
Mr. Peter Dumovic		Present
Mr. Thomas Keeling		Present
Dr. Christina Klausner		Present

Zero (0) members of the public were in the audience.

IV. Sunshine Law – Dr. Mandel 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, the 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. Superintendent's Report

- District Updates, News, and Events
- Goals for the 2026 - 2027 school year - Board of Education goals, District goals, and the Vision 2030 District Strategic Plan

Good evening. As we begin a new school year, I want to provide the Board and community with an update on the work that has taken place over the summer and highlight several priorities that will guide us in the months ahead.

First, I want to welcome our staff back to the Mendham Township School District. The start of a school year always brings a renewed sense of energy and purpose. Our administrators, teachers, support staff, office personnel, custodians, technology team, transportation staff, and many others have been working diligently to prepare our schools, classrooms, programs, and facilities for the return of our students. I am grateful for their efforts and excited about the year ahead.

We are also pleased to welcome several new staff members to the district. Every hiring decision has been made with a focus on finding talented educators and professionals who share our commitment to knowing, challenging, supporting, and inspiring every child. Our administrative teams will work closely with our new employees to ensure they feel welcomed, prepared, and connected to the Mendham Township community.

Our summer facilities and construction projects have continued to progress. These projects represent an important investment by our community in safe, modern, and effective learning environments for our students. As we approach the opening of school, our administrative and facilities teams are working closely with our architects, contractors, and construction professionals to complete the remaining work, address punch-list items, and minimize any disruption to students and staff. We will continue to provide the Board and community with updates as this work moves forward.

Tonight, the Board will also continue its consideration of our district and Board goals for the 2026–2027 school year, along with our Vision 2030 strategic plan. Together, these documents establish a thoughtful roadmap for the district’s future. They reflect our commitment to academic excellence and innovation, a broad and meaningful student experience, climate and wellness, and responsible operations and facilities planning. At the center of this work is a simple but important promise: every child should be known, challenged, and inspired.

During the coming year, we will begin translating Vision 2030 into specific actions, timelines, and measures of progress. This will include continued attention to strong core instruction, student support systems, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, student agency, and meaningful opportunities in academics, the arts, athletics, leadership, and service. We will also continue strengthening communication and engagement with parents and the broader community.

Student wellness and belonging will remain central to our work. We will continue strengthening our systems of academic, behavioral, social, and emotional support and ensuring that students have trusted adults and appropriate resources available to them. Our goal is not only to provide excellent instruction, but also to create schools where every student feels safe, valued, connected, and ready to learn.

We are also completing several important policy and operational updates before the start of school. These revisions help ensure that district practices remain aligned with current legal requirements and reflect the expectations we have established for safe, respectful, and productive learning environments. Staff and families will receive clear communication

regarding any changes that directly affect students or school procedures.

As an additional staff wellness initiative, the district will host an on-site vaccine clinic at Mendham Township Middle School on Monday, October 5, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Additional information will be shared with staff, including registration details and a reminder that participants must bring their insurance cards.

Finally, I want to thank our Board of Education for its support and thoughtful leadership, our families for their continued partnership, and our staff for everything they have done to prepare for the new year. The opening of school is always an exciting time, but it is also an important reminder of the trust our community places in us. I am confident that the work completed this summer, together with the goals and strategic direction we are establishing, will position the district for a successful 2026–2027 school year.

I look forward to welcoming our students and families back and to sharing their accomplishments, experiences, and stories with the Board throughout the year.

VI. Assistant Superintendent's Report

At the end of July, we wrapped up a very successful ESY program, with one of the highlights being the new edition of our 4th to 5th grade transition program. We will be continuing with this program next summer, and I look forward to connecting with staff, students, and parents on how we can improve upon that program for next year.

August work has centered around the Opening of the 2026–2027 School Year. Two focus areas have been the support of new staff, where we have held some sessions around IEPs and student needs, and our ongoing professional development work with All In. This year we will continue our work together in the co-teach classrooms with the co-teaching pairs, but will also be doing some additional PD for our classroom paraprofessionals and special areas teachers.

I am looking forward to the start of the school year and welcoming back our staff, students, and families.

VII. Board President's Report - None.

VIII. Correspondence - None

IX. Committee Reports

- **Curriculum and School Programs** - Mr. Keeling delivered the report.
- **DEIB** - Dr. Mande delivered the report.
- **Operations and Finance** - Mrs. Crossan delivered the report.
- **Personnel and Human Resources** - Mr. Dumovic delivered the report.

- **Policy** - Dr. Mandel delivered the report.
- **Ad Hoc - Referendum/ROD Grant** - Mr. Keeling delivered the report.

X. Consent Items

Approval of Minutes

Regular Session Minutes: July 21, 2026

Curriculum and School Programs

1. **Mendham Township School District: District Goals** *(Attachment)*
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education adopts the District Goals for the 2026-2027 school year.
2. **Mendham Township School District: Board Goals** *(Attachment)*
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education adopts the Board Goals for the 2026-2027 school year.
3. **Tuition Contracts with Mt. Arlington Board of Education** *(Attachments)*
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education, receiving district, approves the Tuition Contract with the Mt. Arlington Board of Education, sending district, for the 2026 ESY program in the amount of \$3,886.00 and the 2026-2027 School Year 08/31/2026 to 06/15/2027 for one (1) student (ID#11531) at a tuition receipt of \$86,470.00.
4. **Tuition Contracts for the 2026-2027 School Year with Banyan School** *(Attachment)*
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Tuition Contract with Banyan School for the 2026 - 2027 school year effective September 2, 2026, to June 18, 2027, for one (1) student (15360329) as per IEP at a tuition cost of \$63,019.80.

Operations and Finance

1. **Certification Reports**
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education certify, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(a), that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the line item appropriation

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9, N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8, and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(B), after review of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's monthly financial reports for July 2026 that no major accounts and fund balances in the 2026/2027

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 July 2026 Board Secretary's Reports.

3. **Treasurer's Report**

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

4. **July 2026 Transfer Reports**

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

5. **August 2026 Bills List**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the August 2026 Bills List. This includes payroll checks N5638 through N5640.

Fund 10 - Treasurer Account	\$
Fund 11 - Treasurer Account	\$
Fund 12 - Treasurer Account	\$
Fund 95 - Athletic Account	\$
Total:	\$

6. **Use of District Facilities** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the attached use of facility applications for the 2026-2027 school year, with the right to cancel based on school events and needs.

7. **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).

Personnel and Human Resources

1. **New Hire - Vanessa Giarrusso, Transportation Driver** *(Attachment)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Vanessa Giarrusso, pending completion of paperwork, as a Transportation Driver, at an hourly rate of \$34.23, effective August 26, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

2. **New Hire - Nicholas Monaghan, Transportation Driver (Attachment)**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Nicholas Monaghan, pending completion of paperwork, as a Transportation Driver, at an hourly rate of \$34.23, effective August 26, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

3. **New Hire - Karen Sorto, Bus Aide**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Karen Sorto, pending completion of paperwork, as a Bus Aide, at an hourly rate of \$23.00, effective August 26, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

4. **New Hire - Alison McGreevey, Elementary School Library Media Specialist (Attachment)**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Alison McGreevey, pending completion of paperwork, as the Elementary School Library Media Specialist, at an annual salary of \$70,070.00, MA/BA+45, Step 9, effective August 26, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

5. **Leave of Absence - Nancy Hammer, Instructional Aide**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Nancy Hammer, Instructional Aide, for a leave of absence commencing on August 26, 2026, utilizing 39 sick days under the Federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) & New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA), ending after eight (8) weeks on October 23, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves paid leave commencing October 26, 2026, utilizing 22 sick days, ending November 30, 2026.

6. **Staff Retirement - Nancy Hammer, Instructional Aide**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the letter of retirement from Nancy Hammer, Instructional Aide, dated August 4, 2026, effective December 1, 2026.

7. **Staff Resignation - Danielle Donato, Bus Aide (Attachment)**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the letter of resignation from Danielle Donato, Bus Aide, dated and effective August 11, 2026.

8. **Mentors for New Teachers**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves payment to the following to serve as mentors to teachers in their first year with Mendham Township Schools.

Mentor	New Teacher	Compensation
Corrine Butler	Melissa Pierce	\$550.00
Amanda Porter	Megan Hogsukpant	\$550.00
Perry Hooker	Meaghan Costello	\$550.00
Elyse Greenbaum	Bridget Garvey	\$550.00
Laura Porrovecchio	Julia Wilder	\$550.00
Jillian Glander	Kelly Gyselman	\$550.00
Kelly Johnson	Abigail Angelini	\$500.00
Tracy Newton	Alison McGreevey	\$500.00

9. **Movement on the Guide**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves movement on the salary guide for the following certificated staff member upon receipt of official transcripts:

Staff	From		To	
	Placement	Salary	Placement	Salary
Jessica Couto	M/BA+45, Step 16	\$85,045	MA+30, Step 16	\$87,945
Alexandra Gonzalez	BA+15, Step 18	\$80,095	BA+30, Step 18	\$84,495
Lisa Lombardo	MA+30, Step 13	\$81,445	MA+60, Step 13	\$83,145

10. **Appointment of Transportation Drivers with Annual Salary**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the annual salaries of the following Transportation Drivers for the 2026-2027 school year:

Name	Job Title	Salary
Dumar Beltran	Transportation Driver	
Amy Bond	Transportation Driver	
Maria Elena Brito	Transportation Driver	
James Castiglione	Transportation Driver	
Jeremy Conover	Transportation Driver	
Sandra Echeverry	Transportation Driver	
Yvonne Fullerton	Transportation Driver	
Olga Garcia	Transportation Driver	
Robert Gessling	Transportation Driver	
Erna Hauswald	Transportation Driver	
Brenda Helbig	Transportation Driver	
Gina Laitano	Transportation Driver	
Susie Lebron Vega	Transportation Driver	
Yoslin Lopez	Transportation Driver	
John McKeown	Transportation Driver	
Deborah Mercurio	Transportation Driver	
Joann Meyler	Transportation Driver	
Ana Miller-Pappas	Transportation Driver	
Nicholas Muscatella	Transportation Driver	
Ana Nolasco DeSantana	Transportation Driver	
Russell Nordmark	Transportation Driver	
Mark Ottoson	Transportation Driver	

Emily Perez	Transportation Driver	
Michele Petrillo	Transportation Driver	
Edita Puntiel	Transportation Driver	
Renee Ranucci	Transportation Driver	
Jackeline Rivera	Transportation Driver	
Nada Slaveska	Transportation Driver	
Jesse Smith	Transportation Driver	
Deborah Templin	Transportation Driver	
Robert Terpstra	Transportation Driver	
Nelson Villalta	Transportation Driver	
Christopher Vrabel	Transportation Driver	
Yvonne Zarnitz	Transportation Driver	

11. **Appointment of Transportation Bus Aides with Annual Salary**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the annual salaries of the following Transportation Bus Aides for the 2026-2027 school year:

Name	Job Title	Salary
Carolyn Allen	Transportation Bus Aide	
Diane Erlemann	Transportation Bus Aide	
Emily Franco	Transportation Bus Aide	
Kyonghee Kim	Transportation Bus Aide	
Laurie Oswald	Transportation Bus Aide	
Marguerite Oswald	Transportation Bus Aide	
Susan Reuter	Transportation Bus Aide	

Beth Smith	Transportation Bus Aide	
Cynthia Villalta	Transportation Bus Aide	
Debra Webster	Transportation Bus Aide	
Peggy White	Transportation Bus Aide	
Therese Yacenda	Transportation Bus Aide	

12. **Substitute Teachers – Reappointments**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education reappoints the following substitute teachers for the 2025-2026 school year at the current rate of \$125.00 per full day and \$62.50 per half day:

Janelle Campos	Peter Lee	Eileen Scanlon
Glaricel Caminero	Stephanie Manson	Michelle Scaramellino
Paige Durnan	Silvana Martirano	Jeorgi Smith
Christine Fillipini	Jacqueline Mayers	Theresa Solano
Luis Freire	Aziz Niazi	Christina Sun
Margaret George	Purpa Pal	Ava Weil
Erica Gibbons	Joe Pedalino	Christopher Welch
Patricia Handzus	Karen Perry	Monica Whitmore
Antoinette Hernandez	Alexandra Reardon	

13. **New Substitute Lunch Aide, Laurie Oswald**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Laurie Oswald as a substitute lunch aide, at an hourly rate of \$16.00, effective August 31, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

14. **Tyler Spellmon, Middle School Co-Head Custodian**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby approves Tyler Spellmon, Middle School Co-Head Custodian, at a salary of (\$55,786 + \$5,000) \$60,786.00, effective September 1, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

15. **Dr. Julianne Kotcho, Elementary School Principal**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby approves Dr. Julianne Kotcho, Elementary School Principal, at a salary of \$188,223.00, effective September 1, 2026, for the 2026-2027 school year.

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

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

School Board Attorney/Special Counsel
School Physician/Medical Inspector
Treasurer of School Moneys
School Board Auditor

Policy and Planning

1. **First Reading** (*Attachments*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the first reading of the following policies and regulations:

P 1240 Evaluation of Superintendent (M)
R 1240 Evaluation of Superintendent (M)
P 1510 Americans with Disabilities Act (M)
R 1510 Americans with Disabilities Act (M)

2. **Second Reading** (*Attachments*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the second reading and adoption of the following policies and regulations:

P 2363 Student Use of Privately-Owned Technology (Abolished)
P 5516 Student Use of Internet-Enabled Devices (M)
R 5516 Student Use of Internet-Enabled Devices (M)
P 8660 Transportation by Private Vehicles - To and From School-Related Activities (M)
P 8662 Transportation by Private or District-Owned Vehicles - To and From School (M)

XI. ACTION ITEMS

Operations and Finance

1. **Professional Services Agreement – 50 Stars Staffing, LLC** (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Professional Services Agreement between the Mendham Township Board of Education and 50 Stars Staffing, LLC for the provision of special education staffing services, including but not limited to paraprofessionals and other educational support personnel, for the 2026-2027 school year, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Professional Services Agreement.

2. **Resolution – Rising Health Care Costs**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby approves the attached resolution concerning the rising cost of health benefits and the need for immediate fiscal relief and meaningful long-term reform of New Jersey's public employee health benefits system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board Secretary is authorized and directed to transmit a certified copy of the resolution to the following:

- Governor Mikie Sherrill;
- New Jersey Commissioner of Education Dr. Lily Laux;
- Morris County Interim Executive County Superintendent Dr. Nancy Gartenberg;
- Senate President Nicholas P. Scutari;
- Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin;
- State Senator Anthony M. Bucco;
- Assemblywoman Aura K. Dunn;
- Assemblywoman Marisa Sweeney;
- State Treasurer Aaron Binder; and
- The New Jersey School Boards Association.

Mrs. Crossan moved to approve the Action Item for August 18, 2026; Operations and Finance 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, and Dr. Mandel; yes – motion carries.

XII. Adjourn to Closed EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Chapter 231 P.L. 1975, also known as the Sunshine Law, authorizes a public body to meet in executive session under certain limited circumstances; and

WHEREAS, said law requires the board to adopt a resolution at a public meeting before it can meet in such an executive or private session.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of Mendham Township

that it does hereby determine that it is necessary to meet in executive session at this time to discuss personnel matters. The matters discussed will be made public if and when confidentiality is no longer required, and action pursuant to said discussion shall take place only at a public meeting.

Moved by Mrs. Crossan, seconded by Mrs. Klausner, to move to Closed Executive Session. The Board adjourned to Closed Executive Session at 8:01 pm.

XIII. Reconvene Open Work Session Meeting

Moved by Mr. Keeling, seconded by Mrs. Klausner, to reconvene the Work Session Meeting at 8:14 pm., unanimously carried in a voice vote.

XIV. Discussion

Mr. Dumovic spoke about the Carole E. Larsen Master Board Certification award the BOE will receive on September 23, 2026, from NJSBA. This will take place at Montville Township High School, and all board members are encouraged to attend.

XV. Verbal Communications from the Public - None.

XVI. Adjournment

Moved by Mrs. Klausner, seconded by Mrs. Crossan, to adjourn the Work Session Meeting of August 18, 2026. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Mosner
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary