

**HARRISON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
120 N. MAIN STREET
MULLICA HILL, NEW JERSEY**

**REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 18, 2026
7:00 PM**

Mrs. Shannon Williams, Board President, called the meeting of the Harrison Township Board of Education to order in the music room at Pleasant Valley School at 7:00 p.m. It was announced that the Board might adjourn into Executive Session during the meeting to discuss personnel, student issues, property, or any other matter appropriate for this session, the results of which would be made public at a later date.

- I. Call to Order:** The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act of 1975 was enacted to ensure the rights of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of the public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, Harrison Township Board of Education has caused notice of the meetings to be published by having the dates, time, and place thereof posted on the Harrison Township School District website, at the Harrison Township School Building, and mailed to the Township Municipal Clerk.

II. Roll Call:

Mr. Todd Baron	Mrs. Janette Coslop (<i>absent</i>)
Mr. Tim Bast	Mrs. Colleen Kendrick
Mrs. Jennifer Bowen	Ms. Alexis Rubino
Mr. Walter Bright	Mrs. Shannon Williams
Mr. John Cavanaugh	

Attendance:

Dr. Missy Peretti, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Christopher DeSanto, Business Administrator /Board Secretary.

III. Flag Salute:

Led by Shannon Williams, Board President of the Harrison Township Board of Education.

IV. President's Welcome:

Presentation and discussion of Resolution 2026-27#4 "November 2026 Referendum Project"

Dr. Peretti utilized a PowerPoint to present information for the November 2026 Referendum Project. (See attachment A)

V. Audience Participation I:

None

VI. Approval of Minutes:

Motion: For the Board of Education to approve the following action items:

1. Approval of the minutes of the July 20, 2026 Regular Session Board of Education meeting (**Attachment: Min. #1**) and the minutes of the July 20, 2026 Executive Session Board of Education meeting (**Attachment: Min. #2**).

Motion: Mr. Bright
Roll Call: (8-0)

Second: Ms. Rubino
Carried: Yes

VII. Committee Reports:

1. Standing Committees
 - a. Finance – Walter Bright (No report at this time.)
 - b. Curriculum – Shannon Williams (No report at this time.)
 - c. Personnel – Tim Bast (No report at this time.)
 - d. Negotiations – Jennifer Bowen
Mrs. Bowen reported that the Board will discuss the Superintendent contract in Executive Session.
 - e. Board Development – Todd Baron (No report at this time.)
2. Ad Hoc Committees
 - f. Public Relations – Janette Coslop (*absent*)
 - g. School Safety – Alexis Rubino (No report at this time.)
 - h. Shared Services – Colleen Kendrick (No report at this time.)
 - i. Transportation – John Cavanaugh (No report at this time.)
3. Delegate/Representative Reports (No report at this time.)

VIII. Correspondence: (*Copies of Correspondence are included in backup materials*)

1. Letter from MaryJane Page received August 3, 2026 re: leave of absence.
2. Email from Sara Amanto received August 10, 2026 re: resignation.

IX. Business Administrator's Report:

A. Finance

Motion: For the Board of Education to approve the following action items:

1. Budget Transfer List for July 2026 – Business Administrator certifies that pursuant to NJAC 6A:23A-13.3 et. seq., no cumulative transfers exceed 10 percent of the amount of the accounts that were included in the school district's budget as certified for taxes. (**Attachment: Fin. #1**)
2. Cash Reconciliation Report in accordance with 18A:17-36 and 18A:17-9 for the month of July 2026. (**Attachment: Fin. #2**) The Cash Reconciliation Report and Secretary's Reports are in agreement for the month of July 2026.
3. Board Secretary's Report in accordance with 18A:17-36 and 18A:17-9 for the month of July 2026. (**Attachment: Fin. #3**) The Board Secretary certifies that no line item has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c) 3 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

4. Board Secretary in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c) 2 certifies that there are no changes in anticipated revenue amounts or revenue sources.
5. Board of Education Certification – pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c) 4. We certify that after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, that to the best of our knowledge no major accounts or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-16.10 (b) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.
6. Payment of Bills:
 - a. July 2026 Ratified Bill List \$862,655.82 (**Attachment: Fin. #6a**)
 - b. August 2026 Bill List \$250,369.46 (**Attachment: Fin. #6b**)
7. Approval of the updated 26-27 Purchasing Manual for Harrison Township School District.
8. Authorize the renewal of services as Broker of Record for Health Benefit Insurance to Integrity Consulting Group for the 2026-2027 school year with compensation being paid through the insurance carriers for Medical/Rx and Dental.
9. Authorize the renewal of services as Broker of Record for Liability Insurance to Conner Strong & Buckelew Co., Inc. for the 2026-2027 school year at the standard commission rates applied to the area of coverage.

Q. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about how insurance brokers are selected. Do we go to RFP?

Items 1-9:

Motion: Mrs. Bowen

Second: Mr. Baron

Vote Items 1-8:

Roll Call: (8-0)

Carried: Yes

Vote Item 9:

Roll Call: (5-3)

Carried: Yes

No: Mr. Bast, Mr. Cavanaugh, Ms. Rubino

X. Resolutions

1. Approve Resolution 2026-27#3: Authorize submission of the ESEA and IDEA Grant Applications and accept the funds awarded pursuant to the same. (**Attachment: Res. #1**)

Item 1:

Motion: Mrs. Kendrick

Second: Mr. Bright

Roll Call: (8-0)

Carried: Yes

2. Approve Resolution 2026-27#4: Authorize submission of a Bond Proposal Question to the School District Voters at the Annual School District Election to be held on November 3, 2026. (**Attachment: Res. #2**)

The Board engaged in discussion regarding the proposed referendum, including the overall project scope, anticipated tax impact, timing, project costs, and potential alternatives.

Mr. *Tim Bast* expressed concern regarding the overall cost of the proposed referendum and its potential impact on taxpayers. Mr. Bast discussed anticipated maintenance costs associated with the existing HVAC systems, noting an estimate of approximately two percent of the replacement cost. He expressed concern regarding the size of the referendum and the resulting increase in taxes. Mr. Bast suggested that the Board consider delaying the project and potentially dividing the proposed work into smaller projects or phases in an effort to reduce the financial impact on taxpayers at any one time.

Mrs. *Colleen Kendrick* expressed concern regarding the likelihood of the referendum receiving voter approval if placed on the November ballot. She stated that individuals with whom she had discussed the referendum had expressed concern regarding an estimated annual tax increase of approximately \$600 for the average assessed home. Mrs. Kendrick inquired about the proposed use of a metal roof versus a shingle roof at Pleasant Valley School (PVS). She also questioned whether the existing electrical infrastructure would be sufficient to support the proposed HVAC improvements and whether additional electrical work could result in unanticipated project costs. Mrs. Kendrick further inquired about the potential cost of conducting a special election outside of the November general election and expressed a preference for considering a smaller referendum with a reduced scope and financial impact.

Ms. *Alexis Rubino* expressed agreement with Mrs. Kendrick and the concerns she raised regarding the proposed referendum and its potential tax impact. Mrs. Rubino stated that she would prefer consideration of a smaller and more financially manageable project plan.

Mrs. *Jennifer Bowen* requested clarification from Superintendent Dr. Margaret “Missy” Quinn Peretti regarding the action before the Board. Dr. Peretti clarified that the Board was not voting to approve the referendum expenditure itself, but rather considering action necessary to place the referendum before the community for voter consideration in November.

Mr. *John Cavanaugh* expressed concern regarding the potential tax impact of the referendum and raised questions regarding the Township’s projected residential growth and the possibility that additional educational space could be required in the near future. Mr. Cavanaugh suggested that the Board consider whether investing approximately \$56 million in the District’s existing facilities should also be evaluated in the context of any future need to increase the District’s overall building capacity.

Dr. *Peretti* responded that the District does not own the property surrounding PVS, which limits the potential for expansion at that site, and stated that the existing PVS building was not constructed to accommodate the addition of a second floor. Dr. Peretti provided historical context regarding previous facilities planning, noting that in 2008 the District’s planning for construction of a third school had progressed to the point that parent focus groups were discussing potential grade-level configurations. She stated that, prior to the downturn in the housing market, the facilities discussions at that time focused on construction of a third school rather than expansion of either PVS or Harrison Township School (HTS). Dr. Peretti further stated that, based upon the District’s prior facilities planning experience, she would

not anticipate that the District's architect or other professional consultants would recommend expanding the existing buildings rather than constructing an additional facility if future enrollment growth ultimately created the need for additional educational space. She noted, however, that any future recommendation regarding expansion or new construction would require evaluation by the District's appropriate professional consultants based upon enrollment, facility conditions, site limitations, educational needs, and other relevant considerations at that time.

Item 2:

Motion: Mrs. Kendrick

Second: Mr. Baron

Roll Call: (4-4)

Carried: No

No: Mr. Bast, Mr. Cavanaugh, Mrs. Kendrick, Ms. Rubino

XI. Superintendent's Report:

A. Personnel

The personnel section was tabled until after Executive Session.

Motion: For the Board of Education to approve the following action items:

1. When necessary, the Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to hire personnel to directly replace a staff vacancy occurring between Board of Education meeting dates to ensure uninterrupted operation of the school district. As always, employment is contingent upon criminal history review clearance and issuance of appropriate certification.
2. Approval of a leave of absence for MaryJane Page, Transportation Aide, effective September 1, 2026 utilizing accumulated sick time concurrent with FMLA with an anticipated return date of October 1, 2026.
3. Acceptance of the resignation of Sara Amanto, Special Education Aide at Harrison Township School, effective August 10, 2026.
4. Approval of the employment withdraw of Heather Lontz as Long-term Substitute Teacher at Pleasant Valley School during the absence of Angela Dubrow.
5. Approval of the employment of Michelle Abel, as Long-term Substitute Teacher at Pleasant Valley School during the absence of Angela Dubrow for the period of September 1, 2026 through December 23, 2026, with salary established at the daily substitute rate for the first 20 days of service in this role, in accordance with State Statute, followed by a salary established at MA, Step 1 (pro-rated) in accordance with the 2025-2028 contract between H.T.E.A. and H.T.B.O.E, pending receipt of required clearances. **(Attachment: Pers. #5)**
6. Approval of the employment of the following individuals as substitute teachers, nurses, general aides, bus drivers, bus aides and custodians for the district on an as-needed basis, effective September 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, at the currently-approved hourly and daily rates, pending receipt of required clearances.

Mary Holliday - Teacher

Avry Hawthorne - Teacher

Jackie Marchesano - Teacher

Michelle Abel - Teacher

Melody DeTullio – General Aide

7. Approval of the 2027-2032 employment contract of Dr. Missy Peretti, Superintendent.

Items 1-7:

Motion: Ms. Rubino

Second: Mrs. Bowen

Roll Call: (8-0)

Carried: Yes

B. Education

Motion: For the Board of Education to approve the following action items:

1. Approval of the homeschooling of student #33121 for the 2026-2027 school year per parent request received August 3, 2026.
2. Approve the contract with GCSSSD for Student #27000.
 - a. ESY Tuition: \$4,870.00 (20 days x \$243.50/day)
 - b. ESY 1:1 Aide: \$3,980.00 (20 days x \$199.00/day)
3. Approve the contract with GCSSSD for Student #29014.
 - a. Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (Direct Service): \$48,026.00 (407 hours x \$118.00/hour) for the regular school year.
4. Approve the contract with GCSSSD for Student #34002.
 - a. Educational Consultant Deaf Services: \$846.00 (6 hours x \$141.00/hour) during the regular school year.

Items 1-4:

Motion: Ms. Rubino

Second: Mrs. Bowen

Roll Call: (8-0)

Carried: Yes

C. Administration

Motion: For the Board of Education to approve the following action items:

1. Approve the contract with the Township of Harrison for the provision of School Resource Officers (SROs) for the 2026-2027 school year. (**Attachment: Admin. #1**)
2. Approval of the 2026-2027 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Programs and submission of the same to the County Office. (**Attachment: Admin. #2**)
3. Approval of the 2026-2027 Position Control Roster. (**Attachment: Admin. #3**)
4. Approval of the 2026-2027 Pleasant Valley School Student Behavior Point System as part of the District Code of Conduct. (**Attachment: Admin. #4**)
5. Correct a typographical error from the April 27, 2026 board agenda: the adult breakfast price will stay at \$3.00 for the 2026-2027 school year.
6. Approve hours for Summer 2026 for the nursing staff in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in an email sent by the Business Administrator dated August 4, 2026. (**Attachment: Admin. #6**)

7. Approve the contract with Inverso & Stewart, LLC for audit services during the 2026-2027 school year and the completion of the FY2026 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and Audit Management Report in the amount of \$19,900.00.
(Attachment: Admin. #7)
8. Acknowledgement of Fire Prevention Week October 5-9, 2026.
9. Acknowledgement of Respect and Anti-Violence Week October 5-9, 2026.
10. Acknowledgement of Red Ribbon Week October 19-23, 2026.
11. Approval of the updated Special Education (Full-time) Aide Job Description.
(Attachment: Admin. #11)
12. Approval of the updated Special Education (Part-time) Aide Job Description.
(Attachment: Admin. #12)
13. Approval of Kristi McKenna to attend *All In for Inclusive Education – Inclusive by Design: Elevating in Physical Education. & Related Arts Webinar* on September 22, 2026 at a cost of \$85.00.
14. Approval of Kaitlyn Sosnoski to attend *WRS Level I Certification* virtually on September 28, 2026 at a cost of \$2,930.00.
15. Approval of the following to attend *Handle with Care Instructor Re-Certification* in Vineland, NJ on October 8, 2026 at a cost of \$625.00 per person, plus mileage reimbursement:
 - a. Adrienne McGovern
 - b. Chelsea Nelson
 - c. Matthew Simmermon
16. Approval of Danielle Nemeth to attend *All In For Inclusive Education – Helping without Hovering: Smart Strategies for Providing Student Support and How to Fade It Webinar* on October 9, 2026 at a cost of \$85.00.
17. Approval of the following to attend *Handle with Care Instructor Re-Certification* in Vineland, NJ on October 9, 2026 at a cost of \$625.00 per person, plus mileage reimbursement:
 - a. Jean Marie Sutton
 - b. Heather Schank
18. Approval of the following to attend *All In for Inclusive Education – Mastering the IEP: Strategies for Effective Writing Webinar* on December 8, 2026 at a cost of \$85.00 per person:
 - a. Tina Heil
 - b. Danielle Nemeth
 - c. Laura Richardson
19. Approval of the following to attend *Handle With Care Instructor Re-Certification* in Philadelphia, PA on December 11, 2026 at a cost of \$625.00 per person, plus mileage reimbursement:
 - a. John Trussell
 - b. Kayleigh Edwards

20. Approval of the reimbursement of graduate tuition cost to Meghan Hack following successful completion of the following course through Thomas Edison State University, according to terms in the negotiated agreement, requested amounts stated, with reimbursement June 2027:
 - a. Curriculum Development PreK-12 – August 31, 2026 through October 25, 2026 - \$1,980.75
21. Approval of the 2026-2027 Harrison Township School District Goals.
22. Acknowledgement of safety drills conducted in the district schools:
 - a. Hold Drill
 - 1) Pleasant Valley School – July 20, 2026 (AM)
 - b. Fire Drill
 - 1) Pleasant Valley School – July 21, 2026 (PM)
 - 2) Harrison Township School – August 3, 2026 (PM)
 - c. Security Drill
 - 1) Harrison Township School – August 5, 2026 (PM)

Items 1-22:

Motion: Mrs. Kendrick
Roll Call: (8-0)

Second: Mr. Bright
Carried: Yes

- D. Policy

None
- E. Transportation

None
- F. Buildings & Grounds

Motion: For the Board of Education to approve the following action items:

1. Approval of the following groups to utilize the facilities for the 2026-2027 fiscal years as outlined below:

<u>Name/Organization</u>	<u>Location/Date</u>	<u>Type of Use</u>
Atene/Raw Basketball, LLC	HTS K-2 Gym 9/1/26-11/19/26 (Thur. only) 6:00pm-7:00pm	Basketball Practices
C. Heitman	PVS Room #A110 9/29/26-11/17/26 (Tues. only) 2:30pm-3:30pm	Math Club
C. Heitman	PVS Gym 9/28/26-11/9/26 (Mon. only) 2:30pm-4:00pm	Basketball Clinics
Coakley/OKKA Karate	PVS Gym 12/19/26 7:30am-12:00pm	Black Belt Graduation Ceremony

Robotics Club

PVS Library
9/14/26-2/8/27 (Mon. only)

Robotics Club

Severs/Girl Scouts

PVS Library
10/8/26-5/20/27 (Thur. only)

Meetings

Twp. Of Harrison/ Rec
Committee

PVS Cafeteria
9/17/26-12/10/26 and
2/4/27-5/27/27
(Thur. only)

Theatre Club
Rehearsals &
Performance

Tiger Organization

PVS Gym
9/14/26-10/26/26 (Mon. only)
6:30pm-7:30pm

Basketball

Item 1:

Motion: Mr. Baron
Roll Call: (8-0)

Second: Mrs. Kendrick
Carried: Yes

XII. New Business:

None

XIII. Old Business:

None

XIV. Audience Participation II:

Mr. Brett Lightner asked, "What was done to prepare for a new referendum? The district should have saved like \$20 million towards these projects."

Mr. Henderson indicated that district budgets are so tight today. They are dealing with decreasing State aid and increases in healthcare. They don't have the ability to "save" money for projects when all of it goes towards operating expenses.

XV. Recess into Executive Session:

RESOLUTION: To enter into Executive Session at 7:43 p.m.

Motion: Mrs. Bowen
Roll Call: Voice

Second: Mr. Baron
Carried: Yes

XVI. Out of Executive Session:

RESOLUTION: To return to Regular Session at 7:58 p.m.

Motion: Mr. Bright
Roll Call: Voice

Second: Mr. Baron
Carried: Yes

XVII. Adjournment:

There was no further business. A motion was made to adjourn at 7:59 p.m.

Motion: Mrs. Bowen

Second: Ms. Rubino

Roll Call: Voice

Carried: Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher C. DeSanto

Board Secretary