



GREEN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 29, 2026

3:30 p.m.

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- Present:** Pamela Cassidy (chair), Beth Fiore, Richard Pieros, David Rizza, Board Members; Dr. Jonathan Hart, Superintendent; Jason M. Bohm, SBA/Board Secretary; Don Race, Facilities Manager; Dr. Ann DeRosa, Principal; Dr. Kristen Higgins, Principal; Dr. Jonathan Moss, Principal; Betsy Freeman, Teacher; Gargi Adhikari, Teacher; Dr. Neil Hendrickson, Readington Township; Steve Foster, Readington Township; Eric Zwerling, Readington Township; Jodi Bettermann, Readington Township
- Absent:** Timothy Charleston, Principal; Sarah Pauch, Supervisor of Math, Science and Technology; Denise Birmingham, Teacher; Blair Alber, Teacher; Marlene Orlandi, Readington Township; David Livingston, Readington Township; Christina Albrecht, Readington Township; Robert Becker, Readington Township

1. Strategic Focus for 2026-2027 School Year

The committee reviewed the [2026-2027 Green Committee Strategic Focus](#) developed at the July 29 planning meeting, as well as the subsequent [Action Plan Tracking Document](#). Mr Zwerling complimented the strategic focus, particularly monitoring baseline energy data, as moving the district forward. Mr Foster thanked the committee for their continued focus on real and achievable stewardship as part of our community responsibility.

2. Pillar I: Reduce environmental impact and costs (FS)

Strategic Focus: The focus will be to gather baseline data for energy usage, identifying costs and energy consumption to establish savings associated with referendum projects.

Mr Bohm previewed referendum projects which will contribute to a reduction in energy consumption, including new lighting, window treatments, a new electrical service panel and HVAC replacement. Mr Race will gather baseline energy consumption data at the end of the 2026-2027 school year through district software. Additionally, solar panel installation is in progress and will influence energy savings.

3. Pillar II: Improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff (HC&B)

Strategic Focus: The focus will include gathering baseline data for outdoor air quality monitoring, promoting staff and student wellness actions through grants and other avenues, and partnering with local community sustainability initiatives, like well water testing, tree giveaways, and scout projects.

Mr Bohm highlighted the playground installations at TBS and WHS, completed this summer, and the upcoming expansion of recess space as part of the referendum projects which contribute to physical activity during the school day. Additionally, Dr Tumolo is leading wellness activities for staff, Maschios has made adjustments to cafeteria menus, ensuring swap out options are available, and is holding special events with cultural and earth themes, teachers are incorporating outdoor classroom space, the new cell phone policy has reduced student screen time, and multiple grants have been accepted, including \$30,000 Wellness Grant through School Health Insurance Fund and a

\$2,139.80 School Lead Filter Grant. The district partnered with the township and Girl Scouts to share well water testing information at each school's Back to School Night. Upcoming classroom initiatives will include air quality monitoring using GO Hunterdon's free air monitors; students will assemble baseline outdoor air quality data, such as near idling buses. Ms. Bettermann suggested partnering with the HSA to show the latest Screenagers film called Generation AI, and communicating green initiatives through the Readington Rundown; classes have already produced videos for the HBS biodiversity audit and RMS tiny forest.

4. Pillar III: Provide environmental education (STEM, civic skills, green career pathways) (AR, FP)

Strategic Focus: The focus will be to align district goals with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainable Jersey actions, where possible, and continue the biodiversity audit at the remaining schools (RMS, WHS, TBS).

The Green Committee Strategic Focus goals have been embedded in the District's [5 year strategic plan](#), as part of the financial stewardship and academic rigor action plans. Dr. Moss and Mrs. Adhikari are hosting a [Weather Bus tour](#) on October 14th at HBS. Dr. Higgins shared that the grant for the open space behind TBS has been rejected. The remainder of the biodiversity audit will be conducted at RMS, TBS or WHS in the spring over two days: students review the Sustainable Jersey checklists and three weeks later split into groups researching the grounds, documenting observed biodiversity, and recording a video of their experiences. The staff involved in the pilot audit at HBS described it as one of the best science experiments for students, and the Green Committee would like to thank Mrs. Bettermann, Mrs. Fiore, Mrs. Orlandi, Mr. Foster, and Mr. Becker for their active support, Mrs. Adhikari and Dr. Moss for their leadership, and Dr. McGibbon and the HBS news crew for creating a video. Mrs. Freeman gave an update on RMS's tiny forest progress, through the generosity of \$70,000 worth of grants obtained to date. An irrigation system is in progress, building is ongoing, and ribbon cutting is planned for the spring. Eco Ambassadors are driving the project, supported by RMS G&T students, who produced a [video](#) through the use of drones and professional videography equipment. Mrs Freeman plans to have 7th graders share the Tiny Forest project with the elementary schools.

5. New Business

Mrs Betterman notified the committee that Sustainability Jersey grant programs are open but the program is on hold while it is being refreshed this year. Surveys are available for community or Green Cmte input.

6. Our next Green Committee meeting will be January 6, 2027, at 3:30 p.m.

Strategic Plan: Academic Rigor (AR), Human Connection & Belonging (HC&B), Future Preparedness (FP), Fiscal Stewardship (FS)