

CEDAR GROVE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Cedar Grove, New Jersey
MINUTES

November 17, 2020

Cedar Grove High School Auditorium

Public Session

6:30 PM

Mrs. Dye, Board President, called the Regular Meeting of the Cedar Grove Board of Education to order at 6:30 pm

Roll Call:

- ✓ Mrs. DiChiara
- ✓ Mrs. Mega
- ✓ Mr. Splendoria
- ✓ Mr. Schoner
- ✓ Mrs. Dye

Mr. Anthony Grosso, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael DeVita, Board Secretary were also present.

The following motion was made by Mrs. Mega and seconded by Mr. Splendoria and unanimously carried.

E1. Motion to **adjourn to executive session to discuss the following items:**

- Student matter relative to **HIB**. Action is not expected to follow the discussion in executive session. Due to the confidentiality of student matters, public release of this discussion will probably never occur.
- Legal matter relative to a **pending litigation against the Board**. Action is not expected to follow the discussion in Executive Session. Public release of the discussion will occur upon completion of the matter.
- Personnel matter relative to **candidates for employment**. Action may follow the discussion in Executive Session. Public release of the discussion will occur upon completion of any contracts.
- Contract matter relative to **candidates for professional services**. Action is not expected to follow the discussion in Executive Session. Public release of the discussion will occur upon completion of any contracts.

The Board returned to Open Session at 7:40 pm and Mrs. Dye led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the following announcement:

Announcement: 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 meeting of, public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Cedar Grove Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be advertised, by having the date, time, and place thereof posted on bulletin boards in the District, published and/or transmitted to the *Verona-Cedar Grove Times* and *Star Ledger* newspapers, TAPinto online news, filed with the Township Clerk, and posted on the District's web site.

Roll Call:

- ✓ Mrs. DiChiara
- ✓ Mrs. Mega
- ✓ Mr. Splendoria
- ✓ Mr. Schoner
- ✓ Mrs. Dye

Mr. Anthony Grosso, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael DeVita, Board Secretary were also present.

The meeting was opened to the public for comment on items on the agenda. No one from the public wished to be heard.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. DiChiara attended the Recreation Board meeting and reported that on 12/4/20 at 6 pm there will be a virtual tree lighting, on 12/5/20 from 5-7 pm there will be a drive thru viewing of the tree and on 12/7/20 the township will give out candle bags to light on 12/19/20.

Mrs. DiChiara attended the North End FSA meeting and reported that they have a new web page, they are discussing ideas for fundraising, will be getting a new clothing bin and the North End staff donated some money back to the FSA.

Mr. Schoner spoke about how Music Matters honored music teacher Jennifer Foose for 20 years in the district. The boys' soccer team won their last game and will be playing in the state sectional finals.

Mrs. Dye attended the Middle School FSA meeting and reported about TREPS for this school year.

Mrs. Dye reported that the town council and board both had candy tables setup for Halloween outside of town hall, which was a lot of fun.

BOARD PRESENTATIONS

Lynn DiMatteo and Dana DeTruzio spoke about a new South End Yoga Program that was started this school year.

Lynn DiMatteo recognized South End student Caylee Matejicka, for being honored by the Bahamian Ministry of Education

SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

Mr. Grosso thanked the Junior Women's Club for their donation to all schools and reminded everyone to be aware of board policies and COVID regulations. A new Hallpass visitor management system is operational; the Panther Park Multipurpose Field turf project has begun. He congratulated the boys and girls soccer teams for qualifying for the NSIAA playoffs and the football team for winning its conference and thanked Rob Gogerty for all he has done.

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR and BOARD SECRETARY

A motion was made by Mr. Splendoria and seconded by Mrs. Mega and unanimously carried to approve items B1 through B3.

B1. Motion to **approve the Public and Executive minutes** of October 26, 2020.

B2. Motion to **approve the budgetary transfers** for the month of October 2020.

B3. Motion to **approve the Board Secretary's certification to the Cedar Grove Board of Education, pursuant to NJAC 6A:23-2.11(c)3, that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which, in total, exceed the line item appropriation in violation of NJAC 6A:23-2.11(a); and further pursuant to NJAC 6A:23-2.11(c)4, no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23-2.11(b).**

The following motion was made by Mrs. Mega and seconded by Mrs. DiChiara and unanimously approved.

B4. Motion to **pay the following List of Bills: \$3,619,041.78 for 10/28/2020-11/17/2020**

A motion was made by Mrs. DiChiara and seconded by Mr. Schoner and unanimously carried to approve items B5 through B9.

B5. Motion to **approve the Cooperative Contract for Ice Hockey with Passaic Valley Regional High School** for the 2020/2021 school year.

B6. Motion to **approve the below resolution** to oppose S-2843/A-1911:

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 2843 and Assembly Bill 1911, currently pending in the State Legislature, establish various measures to provide employment stability for high school coaches employed in school districts, and

WHEREAS, The job protections mandated by S-2843/A-1911 include three-year contracts for head coaches and two-year contracts for assistant coaches; and

WHEREAS, S-2843/A-1911 includes several other employment protections for coaches that would severely inhibit a board of education's authority to make prompt and decisive personnel actions; and

WHEREAS, The preferential treatment of, and granting of stronger protections, to coaches is inequitable and gives the impression that they are more valuable or important to the educational community than other school employees; and

WHEREAS, Existing laws and regulations, along with collective bargaining agreements, provide all employees with protection against unjust termination; and

WHEREAS, The intent of S-2843/A-1911 to provide protections from the arbitrary dismissal of high school coaches from their positions must be balanced with a board of education's obligation to make personnel decisions based on educational needs, financial capacity and operational considerations; and

WHEREAS, This bill constitutes an unnecessary and inappropriate overreach and, if enacted, will tie the hands of local school board members and administrators, preventing them from making sound personnel decisions that they deem to be in the best interest of students, parents and the overall school community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cedar Grove Board of Education urges the State Senate, General Assembly and the Governor to oppose S-2843/A-1911; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be delivered to Governor Phil Murphy, State Senate President Stephen M. Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin; and the 40th Legislative District's representatives in the state Senate and General Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

B7. Motion to **accept the generous donation from the Junior Women's Club of Cedar Grove in the amount of \$1,255.40** to be divided evenly to North End School, South End School, Memorial Middle School and Cedar Grove High School to be used to support efforts within each school that will build community or a targeted initiative that could use financial assistance.

B8. Motion to **approve Demographic Services for the district**:

WHEREAS, request for proposals were advertised in the Star Ledger on November 3, 2020 for Demographic Services, and

WHEREAS, proposals were publicly opened and read aloud on November 13, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. at the Board Offices, and

WHEREAS, the following proposals were received:

Statistical Forecasting	\$18,200
Ross Haber and Associates	\$ 8,500
ARCBridge Consulting	\$17,500

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cedar Grove Board of Education, based upon the recommendation of the Business Administrator/Board Secretary, hereby approves Ross Haber and Associates to provide Demographic Services to the district at their listed price of \$8,500.

B9. APPROVAL OF EMERGENCY CONTRACT

WHEREAS, on Friday November 13, 2020, Memorial Middle School was without heat due to a damaged heat exchanger on one of the boilers, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 18A:18A-7, any contract may be negotiated or awarded for a board of education without public advertising for bids and bidding when an emergency exists affecting the health and safety of occupants of school property and requires the immediate delivery of goods or the performance of services, and

WHEREAS, the damaged boiler has created an emergency that affects the health and safety of both students and staff at Memorial Middle School.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cedar Grove Board of Education approves the Business Administrator to submit the emergency request to the Essex County Superintendent of Schools and sign an emergency contract for a new boiler at Memorial Middle School upon their approval.

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

A motion was made by Mr. Schoner and seconded by Mr. Splendoria and unanimously carried to approve items S1 through S19.

**S1. HIB INVESTIGATION RESOLUTION FOR SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT –
Second Reading**

A. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation Involving SID# 202707601636 from 09/14/2020 for reason set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board and directs the Board Secretary/ School Business Administrator to transmit a copy of the Board's decision to the affected students' parents forthwith.

a. NON-HIB Conflict

S2. Motion to approve submission of the School Self-Assessments for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act for the period of July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020.

S3. Motion to retroactively approve Dean Straut, High School Math Teacher, from November 16, 2020 to June 30, 2021, at BA+15, step 4, \$54,224.

S4. Motion to retroactively approve Catherine Farley, NE paraprofessional, starting on November 9, 2020 to June 23, 2021 at a salary of \$20,021 prorated.

S5. Motion to **approve Samantha Nemeth, NE paraprofessional**, starting on November 23, 2020 to June 23, 2021 at a salary of \$20,021 prorated.

S6. Motion to **retroactively approve Maureen Hoehe, NE school aide**, at an hourly rate of \$12/hour, starting on October 26, 2020 through June 23, 2021.

S7. Motion to **approve Elia Russo, SE parent volunteer** for the 2020-21 school year.

S8. Motion to **rescind S14 on October 16, 2020 agenda** as this was previously approved on July 23, 2020 agenda.

S9. Motion to retroactively **approve the following Middle School morning assistance** at the rate of \$35 per hour for the 2020-2021.

·C. Varicchio ·A. Raddi ·M. Pantasa ·C. Ernst ·K. Asaro

S10. Motion to **approve Christina Licitra to provide supplemental instruction** for the 2020-2021 school year at the rate of \$35 per hour.

S11. Motion to **approve Mena Farinhas to provide home instruction** for the 2020-2021 school year at a rate of \$35 per hour.

S12. Motion to **approve the following Coaches for the 2020-2021** school year:

WHEREAS, the Cedar Grove School District seeks to appoint coaching staff for the 2020-2021 school year winter sports season; and

WHEREAS, the Cedar Grove School District will pay the full stipend associated with the coaching of a particular sport in the event that the sport's season is conducted in full; and

WHEREAS, the Cedar Grove School District will not pay the amount of the stipend or pay a prorated amount of the stipend associated with the coaching of a particular sport in the event that all or a portion of the sport is not conducted due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure or a directive from the appropriate representative of the New Jersey Department of Education or a directive from the Governor or designee or the New Jersey Legislature or designee or should the Cedar Grove School District adopt a permissible virtual or remote learning platform or that the school year itself might be modified; and

WHEREAS, in the event that a sports season is either cancelled or reduced or modified, the stipend will not be paid or will be prorated to commensurate with the percentage of the sports season that is actually conducted.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cedar Grove School District approves the following appointments, contingent on the sports season running and becoming operational, and

with the stipend not be paid if the sports session is cancelled or prorated should the sports season not be completed because of a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure or a directive from the appropriate representative of the New Jersey Department of Education or a directive from the Governor or designee or the New Jersey Legislature or designee:

Winter Coaches – 2020/2021

Boy’s Basketball

Thomas Jones	Head	5	\$ 10,149
Chris Romano	Asst/JV	5	\$ 6,638
Troy Spinetta	Fresh	2	\$ 5,592

Girl’s Basketball

Bill Scanlon	Head	5	\$10,149
Alyssa Lever	Asst/JV	1	\$ 5,861
Vincent LoProto	Asst/Fresh	4	\$ 5,967

Wrestling

Rami Ratel	Head	5	\$10,149
Michael Risimini	Asst	5	\$ 6,638
Omer Ersen	Asst	3	\$ 6,237

Indoor Track

Colleen Bulger	Head	Stp	\$ 2,972
Thomas Moogan	Asst	Stp	\$ 2,560

Winter Cheerleading

Nicolette McCarthy	Co-Head	1	\$ 4,898
Jacqueline Lasky	Co-Head	5	\$ 5,733

S13. Motion to **approve the following** leaves of absence:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Position / Location</i>	<i>Number of Employee Sick Days used for Leave</i>	<i>FMLA Start Date</i>	<i>NJ(FLA) Start Date</i>	<i>Return Date</i>	<i>Modifications / Updates</i>
Alexsandria Castillo	Mat’y	Speech Tchr NE	1/13-2/21/20 24 +4personal	2/24-5/22/20 60	9/3-11/25/20 60	11/30/20	Return to Work
Ariel DiBenedetto	Mat’y	Gr 3 Teacher NE	4/20-6/16/20 41	n/a	9/3-11/25/20 60	11/30/20	Return to Work

S14. Motion to **extend teaching employment for Theresa Ardo, contracted maternity leave coverage teacher for Alexandria Castillo**, to November 30, 2020 being the last work day.

S15. Motion to **extend teaching employment for Jennifer Walter, maternity leave coverage teacher for Ariel DiBenedetto**, to November 25, 2020 being the last work day.

S16. Motion to **approve the date change of the Travel Club Japan Trip** from this spring to next spring 2022. With some of the seniors not being able to go next year the company will reimburse them if the club finds replacements before year end 2020.

S17. Motion to **approve the following as a substitute teachers** starting on November 30, 2020 through June 23, 2020 at a rate of \$90/diem.

- Suzanne Marzouka
- Jennifer Walter

S18. Motion to **accept the resignation of Laura Sacks**, NE School Nurse for purposes of retirement as of June 30, 2020 (last work day).

S19. Motion to **accept the resignation of Vincent Parrotta**, HS Paraprofessional as of November 30, 2020 (last day of work).

Mr. DeVita summarized the bylaw that is on the agenda for a first reading.

The following motion was made by Mr. Splendoria and seconded by Mrs. Mega and unanimously carried.

S20. Motion to **approve the First Reading of the following Policy:**

Bylaw 0164.6 Remote Public Board Meeting During A Declared Emergency (M) (New)

The following motion was made by Mrs. Mega and seconded by Mrs. DiChiarria and unanimously carried.

S21. Motion to **approve the following contracts for special education students**, as recommended by the Director of Special Services, for the 2020-2021 school year:

Somerset County Vocational School

Student: 7956053591

Tuition 20-21 School year

\$5,675.00

YCS Sawtelle Learning Center

Student: 6497843121

Tuition 2020-2021 School year

Tuition: \$45,229.31 Personal Aide: \$27,343.47

Total: \$72,572.78

The meeting was opened to the public for comment on items on or off the agenda. No one from the public wished to be heard.

Announcement of future meetings:

December 15, 2020 CGHS Auditorium, 6:30 pm Exec Session; 7:30 pm Regular Mtg

January 5, 2021 (Reorg) CGHS Auditorium, 6:30 pm Exec Session; 7:30 pm Regular Mtg

Motion by Mrs. DiChiara and second by Mr. Schoner and unanimously carried to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Cedar Grove Board of Education at 8:37 pm.

Roll Call:

- ✓ Mrs. DiChiara
- ✓ Mrs. Mega
- ✓ Mr. Splendoria
- ✓ Mr. Schoner
- ✓ Mrs. Dye

Mr. Anthony Grosso, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael DeVita, Business Administrator were also present.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael DeVita
Board Secretary