

**FORT LEE BOARD OF EDUCATION
FORT LEE, NEW JERSEY**

MINUTES

**PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING
March 9, 2020
Elementary School #1 – All Purpose Room
6:45 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER BY THE PRESIDENT

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m. by Mrs. Han Silver.

FLAG SALUTE

The Flag Salute was led by Ms. Cho.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice 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 the Act, the Fort Lee Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published on January 15, 2020 and 5posted in the entrance hall of the Board Office, 2175 Lemoine Avenue; published in the Board's designated online media outlet/newspaper: The Record; filed with the Clerk of the Borough of Fort Lee; and mailed to all persons, if any, who have requested said notice. Please be advised that this meeting is being taped and will be broadcasted on local TV and the district's website at a future date.

ROLL CALL

Present: Ms. Elisa Cho, Ms. Paula K. Colbath, Mrs. Kristen Richter, Mrs. Candace Romba, Mr. Michael Rubino, Mrs. Luran Tuck, Mrs. Esther Han Silver.

Also Present: Mr. Kenneth Rota, Ms. Haquisha Q. Taylor, Dr. Sharon Amato, Dennis McKeever, Board Attorney

Absent: Mr. Ralph DiMeglio, Mrs. Holly Morell

EXECUTIVE SESSION #1

MOTION by Mrs. Tuck, seconded by Mr. Rubino, at 6:51 p.m., to move into Executive Session.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

The Board reconvened into the Public Meeting at 7:34 p.m.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Mr. Rota shared that there were seven (7) HIB investigations. Six (6) were founded.

Mr. Rota shared the aggressive sanitizing precautionary measures being conducted throughout the school district. Mr. Rota further shared that he is in constant contact with Jill Scarpa, local health official, and the Mayor for continued updates. Mr. Rota shared that home instruction through virtual and/or alternative means may be used to satisfy the 180-day requirement if Fort Lee Board of Education receives a written directive to institute a public health-related closure from either the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) or the local health officer of the jurisdiction. Mr. Rota further shared that without this type of directive, a closure will not count towards the 180-day requirement.

Mr. Rota introduced Principal Rosemary Giacomelli who introduced the School #1 Drumming Program. Mrs. Giacomelli further shared that the buckets utilized in the Drumming Program were generously donated by Home Depot.

Mr. Rota shared NJQSAC (New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum) finalized scores and that Fort Lee Public Schools is rated as High Performing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Mrs. Romba shared that the Finance Committee met on March 3rd. She shared topics discussed.

Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Tuck shared that the Curriculum Committee met on March 9th. She shared topics discussed.

Building and Grounds Committee

Ms. Cho shared that the Building and Grounds Committee met on March 9th. She shared that the meeting consisted of a walkthrough of Elementary School #1 discussing the HVAC.

PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Ms. Cho inquired about 1POL – Mayor & Council Advisory regarding what constitutes a full committee designating three (3) liaisons, which represent a quorum. Board discussion ensued with the consensus being to vote to approve the Policy for first reading and make recommendations for changes for second reading approval.

HEARING OF CITIZENS - QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS LISTED ON TONIGHT'S AGENDA AND ANY OTHER TOPIC OF CONCERN

MOTION by Ms. Cho, seconded by Mrs. Romba, to open the floor to the public, 8:33 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

Several parents attended the Board meeting to express their concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus. Concerns/Questions presented are as follows.

- The precautionary measures being taken for the safety of the students and families.
- How is proper sanitation of the schools being conducted and monitored?
- Alternate bathroom faucets being considered for the students?
- What policies are established in the event a student exhibits COVID-19 symptoms?
- Consider changing the playground flooring to solid rubber as it is more sanitary and safer than the woodchips.
- Recommendations that instructional information should be disseminated to parents and/or visitors who are not practicing self-quarantine because they may not be sure how to go about doing so. Conversation ensued regarding families traveling to countries of outbreak concerns and what is the school district plans to quarantine returning students and/or parents who may contract the virus during their travels.
- Suggested to develop a community-based protocol and form an alliance with the Chinese community to provide quarantined community members with essential needs. Mr. Rota agreed and understands parents' concerns.
- Can parents opt out now for online schooling or possible home schooling for their child(ren)? Mr. Rota explained that all parents can withdraw their child(ren) from the school district and home school their child(ren) if they choose to do so with no restrictions.
- Will the nurse be the first line of defense and how will he/she bring it to local official's attention that have the authority to act accordingly in a very expeditious and safe manner.

A parent expressed the district is doing a great job following the CDC's recommendations.

Various Parents Concerns/Recommendations:

- Inquiring who is responsible to ensure the stability and safety of the playground equipment at all the schools in the district. Parents expressed that the playgrounds are outdated. Mr. Rota shared that it is a school requirement to have a 3rd party company perform thorough inspections to ensure the equipment is stable and safe for the children's use. A parent shared that Mr. Bendul had conversed with Principle Giacomelli addressing the necessary repairs to the slide at School #1.
- A parent brought to the Board's attention that there was no mention of black history in the new curriculum during the budget presentation. Dr. Amato addressed her issue. In addition she referenced the Board Agenda Resolution HIB #2-B suggesting that teachers and administrators should be included in the statues. She also expressed her displeasure again that a HIB investigation was never completed in her daughter's case as the FLBOE Regulation requires.

- A parent recommended she would like to see more African American teachers because she feels it's important the students are exposed to different perspectives and cultures.

MOTION by Mrs. Romba, seconded by Mrs. Richter, to close the floor to the public, 9:12 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

RESOLUTIONS

BOARD

- 1B** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, approves the following **minutes**:

Private Executive Meeting Minutes	February 3, 2020
Public Business Meeting Minutes	February 19, 2020
Private Executive Meeting Minutes	February 19, 2020

- 2B** **WHEREAS**, the Fort Lee Board of Education has received the Superintendent's report of **incident(s) of Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying ("HIB")** within the District; and

WHEREAS, the Board has had the opportunity to review the Superintendent's recommendations with respect to the incident(s) of HIB.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board accepts the Superintendent's recommendations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(d), the Superintendent of Schools shall inform the applicable parents/guardians of the students involved in these incidents with the following information within five school (5) days of this Board meeting:

1. The nature of the investigation;
2. Whether the District found evidence of HIB;
3. Whether discipline was imposed;
4. Whether services were provided to address the incident of HIB.

- 3B** **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves to extend the appointment of the law firm of **Sciarrillo, Cornell, Merlino, McKeever & Osborne, LLC** as **Board Attorneys** through June 30, 2020.

4B THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, approves the attendance of Board Members at the following workshops:

<u>WORKSHOP</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>AMOUNT PER PERSON</u>
NJSBA GPS for Visionary Leadership Weekend	Friday, 4/24/20 – Sunday, 4/26/20	Esther Han Silver	Princeton Marriott Hotel and Conference Center	\$205.30

MOTION by Mrs. Romba, seconded by Mrs. Tuck, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approve items #1B through #4B.

MOTION carried upon roll call vote, 7-0, with exceptions Mrs. Tuck abstained on item #1B and Mrs. Han Silver abstained on #4B.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

1B&G THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, at the recommendation of the superintendent, approve the **submission of the 2019 Long Range Facility Plan Major Amendment to the New Jersey State Department of Education for approval.** *See Appendix Page 44*

MOTION by Mrs. Richter, seconded by Mrs. Romba, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves item #1B&G.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 7-0.

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

1CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **class trips** listed in the attached summary. *See Appendix Page 12*

2CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **program for Summer 2020**:

- **Summer 2020 Math Advancement Program** for students from Monday, July 6, 2020 through Friday, August 7, 2020 to be held at Lewis F. Cole Middle School.

3CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **program for Summer 2020**:

- **Extended School Year (ESY) 2020 Program for Special Education** students from Monday, July 6, 2020 through Wednesday, July 29, 2020 at School No. 4 for elementary students and Lewis F. Cole Middle School for intermediate and secondary students, to be funded by the general education fund.

MOTION by Mrs. Richter, seconded by Mrs. Tuck, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1CUR through #3CUR.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 7-0.

FINANCE

- 1F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the payment of the claims on the current **bills list in the amount of \$1,181,725.98 for March 2020 checks.** [See Appendix Page 13](#)
- 2F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the payment of the claims on the current **Cafeteria bills list in the amount of \$178,798.12 for March 2020 checks.** [See Appendix Page 34](#)
- 3F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the **Board of Education**, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the following **donations**:

Item	Amount/ Estimated Value	Donor	On Behalf Of
Check	\$25.00	Steven Thompson Central Office	FLHS Marching Band Washington, DC Trip
Check	\$500.00	George and Anne Wagner 4 Horizon Road, Apt. 1015 Fort Lee, NJ	FLHS Marching Band Washington, DC Trip
Check	\$250.00	Fort Lee Volunteer Ambulance Corps	FLHS Marching Band Washington, DC Trip

- 4F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, authorizes the School Business Administrator to renew a **Transportation Contract with South Bergen Jointure Commission** for the 2020-2021 school year. [See Appendix Page 36](#)

5F THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **use of the Enrollment Adjustment in the amount of \$788,372** pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-38 in the **Preliminary 2020-2021 School District Budget**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the **inclusion in the Preliminary 2020-2021 School District Budget of a withdrawal from Capital Reserves in the amount of \$1,820,000. Budgeted Fund Balance in the amount of \$912,000 will combine with a withdrawal from Capital Reserves to total \$2,732,000** as follows:

Capital Reserve Projects	
School #3 Security Vestibule Completion	\$100,000
Fort Lee High School Window Replacements	\$800,000
School #1 Window Replacement	\$300,000
Fort Lee High School Locker Replacements	\$300,000
Fort Lee High School Cafeteria/Office A/C Installation	\$412,000
Lewis F. Cole Middle School Cafeteria A/C Installation	\$320,000
School #1 Field Renovation	\$125,000
School #4 Field Renovation	\$375,000
Total Capital Reserve Projects	\$2,732,000

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves the **Preliminary 2020-2021 School District Budget** as follows:

	Budget	Local Tax Levy
General Fund	\$76,332,507	\$68,211,586
Special Revenue Fund	1,348,092	-0-
Debt Service Fund	4,273,338	3,863,731
Total Base Budget	\$81,953,937	\$72,075,317

6F WHEREAS, Policy No. 6471 “School District Travel” and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 provide that the Fort Lee Board of Education shall establish in the annual school budget a maximum expenditure amount that may be allotted for travel and expense reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Lee Board of Education appropriated \$100,000 for travel during the 2019-2020 school year and has spent \$43,935 as of March 5, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education hereby establishes the school district travel maximum for the 2020-2021 school year at \$100,000.

MOTION by Mrs. Romba, seconded by Ms. Cho, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1F through #6F.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 7-0, with exception, Ms. Colbath and Mrs. Tuck abstained on own name on item #1F.

PERSONNEL

- 1P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the attendance of staff members at the **staff trips/conferences** listed on the attached summary. [See Appendix Page 41](#)
- 2P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **termination of Employee #6748**, effective February 25, 2020.
- 3P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **resignations**:

<u>RESIGNATIONS</u>			
Employee	Position	Location	Effective Date
Dana Amato	Assistant Softball Coach	HS	2/19/20

- 4P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **appointments for the 2019-2020 school year**, pending verification of employment:

<u>APPOINTMENTS</u>						
First Name	Last Name	Position	Loc	Position Control #	Annual Salary Prorated Pending Negotiations	Effective Date
Terese	Pette	Instructional Aide Physical Education (.83)	LFCIS	05-9101-123	\$21,019.00 Step 1/ Degree	3/10/20
Illeana	Valerio	Instructional Aide Grades 9-12 Resource (.83)	FLHS	07-9101-59	\$21,019.00 Step 1/ Degree	Amended 2/21/20

5P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **staff transfers** during the 2019-2020 school year.

TRANSFERS						
Name	From Location	From Position	To Location	To Position	Salary Change	Effective Date
Ceneida Ramirez	S3	Custodian 03-9400-05	FLHS	Custodian 07-9400-09	N/A	3/16/20
Roberto Yan	FLHS	Custodian 07-9400-09	S2	Custodian 02-9400-04	N/A	3/16/20
Roberto Reyes	LFCMS	Custodian 06-9400-12	S3	Custodian 03-9400-05	N/A	3/16/20
Yordanis Morales Cruz	S4	Custodian 04-9400-08	IS	Custodian 05-9400-17	N/A	3/16/20
Pablo Rancier	S2	Custodian 02-9400-04	LFCMS	Custodian 06-9400-12	N/A	At conclusion of leave replacement assignment
Jose Ramos	IS	Custodian 05-9400-17	S4	Custodian 04-9400-08	N/A	3/16/20

6P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **leaves**:

LEAVES								
Name	Position	Loc	Type	New or Amended	Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave with benefits	Unpaid Leave No Benefits	Return Date
Eleni Despotakis	Art Teacher	IS	Maternity	Amended	2/27/20 - 3/29/20	3/30/20 - 6/30/20	N/A	9/01/20
Gerald Conway	School Security Officer	CO	Medical	New	3/9/20 - 4/19/20	N/A	N/A	4/20/20
Sally Macaluso	Teacher Special Ed Preschool	S2	Maternity	Amended	3/6/20 - 5/4/20	5/5/20 - 1/31/21	2/1/21 - 6/30/21	9/1/21

7P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of **leave replacements** during the 2019-2020 school year, as outlined below:

LEAVE REPLACEMENTS					
Name	Grade/Subject	Loc	Salary	Effective Dates	Reason for opening
Lucy Moulton	Teacher Math	HS	Sub pay for the first 10 days \$100 per day, day 11-60 \$110 per day, day 61+ at the daily rate equal to a BA, Step 1; No Benefits	3/10/20 to 4/21/20	Yvette Longobardi (Medical)
Jennifer Cella	Teacher Special Ed Pre-K	S2	Continue para salary through day 60, day 61+ at the daily rate equal to a BA, Step 1; No Benefits	Amended 3/9/20 to 6/30/20	Sally Macaluso (Maternity)

8P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **as Substitutes** for the 2019-2020 school year:

SUBSTITUTES
Eunyoung Oh Giuseppina Erica Ragusa Lucy Moulton

9P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **the appointment of additional Certificated Home Instructors for the 2019-2020 school year**, at the hourly rate of \$45.00 per hour for teaching staff and \$30.00 per hour for certified paraprofessionals.

HOME INSTRUCTORS	
Name	Content Areas
Howard Lipoff	General and Special Education K-8
Jacy Macias	General and Special Education K-6

10P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves to **create Position Control # 00-9404-05** School Security Officer to be charged to Account #11-000-266-100-00-000 for the 2019-2020 school year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves to **reclassify Position Control numbers** for the 2019-2020 school year as outlined below:

Position Control Changes	
From	To
PC 06-9101-78 Personal Aide Grade 8 1:1 @ MS Account #11-000-217-100-00-000	PC 02-9101-78 Personal Aide Grades K-1 ASD 1:1 @ S2 Account #11-000-217-100-00-000

11P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **Susie Lee for an additional 40 hours of Braille translation** at \$30 per hour for student ID ##31070368 during the 2019-2020 school year.

12P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves additional staff members to be added to the **list of certificated staff members as ESL Tutors**, during the 2019-2020 school year to be paid a stipend of \$45.00 per hour, to be funded by the Title III grant not to exceed \$13,500, to be charged against Account #20-241-100-101-00-000, as outlined below. This resolution supersedes Resolution No. 30099 dated February 19, 2020:

Name	Location	Title III Funding Not to Exceed
Josephine Giandomenico	School 1	\$13,500
Myung Chung	LFCIS	

13P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of additional **Middle School Coaches** for the 2019-2020 school year, as follows. All appointments are subject to completion of all personnel documentation and fingerprinting process, prior to starting of said activities.

Middle School Coaches				
Coach	Sport	Position	Season	Stipend
Renee Mattesich Michael Raccioppi	Track	Co-Coaches	Spring	\$2,000.00 split \$1,000.00 each

14P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of additional **Spring Coaches** for the 2019-2020 school year, as follows. All appointments are subject to completion of all personnel documentation and fingerprinting process, prior to starting of said activities.

Coach	Sport	Position	Season	Class	Step	Stipend
Jennifer Cella	Softball	Assistant Coach	Spring	II	1	\$5,955.00

15P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, authorizes the execution of the **Standard Residency Agreement**, based upon the terms and conditions provided herein, between the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials (NJASBO) and Fort Lee Public Schools to provide a program of training and supervision as required by N.J.A.C. 6A:9-12.7 for the mentoring of Belgica Polanco Gomez as Assistant Business Administrator, [See Appendix Page 42](#)

16P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of additional **Curriculum Writers** for 2019-2020, for services to be performed outside the contractual day, to be paid a stipend at an hourly rate of \$45.00 per hour, for an aggregate total not to exceed \$30,000 to be charged against account # 11-000-221-104-00-000, for the teaching staff members listed below:

CONTENT AREA	CERTIFICATED STAFF MEMBERS
Business	Robert Gehres

MOTION by Mrs. Richter, seconded by Ms. Cho, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves item #1P through #16P.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 7-0.

POLICY

1POL THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the first reading of the following policy/regulation updates listed below: [Click here for 2020-03-09 #1POL Back-up](#)

Policy/Reg No.	Topic
P 0155	BOARD COMMITTEES

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mrs. Tuck, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves item #1POL.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Rota shared that he received feedback on Board retreat dates and is currently researching dates in late Spring.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Han Silver congratulated the Girls Varsity Basketball team on their achievement in advancing into the State Sectional Finals.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Ms. Cho, to adjourn, 9:16 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Haquisha Q. Taylor

HAQUISHA Q. TAYLOR
SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

HQT/toc
02/25/2020