

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

**MINUTES**

**SPECIAL PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING  
August 20, 2020  
Zoom Meeting  
7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER BY THE PRESIDENT**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by, Board President, Mrs. Han Silver.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The Flag Salute was led by Ms. Cho.

**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Public Announcement was read by Mrs. Han Silver.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Ms. Elisa Cho, Ms. Paula K. Colbath, Mrs. Holly Morell, Mrs. Kristen Richter, Mrs. Candace Romba, Mr. Michael Rubino, Mrs. Lauran Tuck, Mrs. Han Silver

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

**Absent:** Mr. Ralph DiMeglio

Mrs. Han Silver shared key dates including the 6/26 announcement of the State's guidance on reopening schools (the Road Back), the 8/10 formal adoption of the FLBOE Reopening plan, the 8/12 State announcement that districts may apply to reopen fully remotely, and the 8/13 State Health Department's recommendations for schools. Mrs. Han Silver further shared that the purpose of this Special Meeting, given the Governor's most recent announcement of allowing schools the option to reopen fully remotely, is to learn the status of the district's preparation and review the direction the district should go.

**REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Mr. Rota thanked families, parents, and friends for their collective patience as the district responds to this challenge.

Ms. Colbath shared with the Board the difficulty community members were having logging onto the Zoom link [for the Special Meeting] citing a 500-person maximum limit. Ms. Colbath further recommended adjourning the meeting. Mr. McKeever suggested adjourning for thirty (30) minutes to allow time to purchase a Zoom upgrade. Board conversation ensued about how to address the demand for public participation given the current Zoom subscription 500-person limitation.

MOTION to adjourn to 8:00 pm until the Board can accommodate the public.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mr. Rubino, to adjourn, 7:36 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 8-0.

The Board reconvened into the Public Meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Mrs. Han Silver thanked the public for their collective patience as the Board upgraded its Zoom subscription to accommodate public demand [over 800 participants].

### **REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Mr. Rota shared that Reopening Plan is being revised based on the feedback received from the County office. Mr. Rota shared specifics on how September online instruction will differ from the March through June online instruction. Mr. Rota further summarized protocols to be followed in the event of suspected COVID-19 cases in compliance with most recent NJ Department of Health published guidelines which can be found on the FLBOE website.

### **PUBLIC WORK SESSION**

MOTION to conduct virtual/remote instruction through the end of the first marking period [November 12].

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, the motion was not seconded. MOTION failed.

MOTION to reopen schools 100% remotely until October 1<sup>st</sup>.

MOTION by Ms. Cho, seconded by Mrs. Morell. Board discussion and debate ensued on the MOTION on the floor.

MOTION to reopen schools 100% remotely until October 1<sup>st</sup> is amended to MOTION to reopen schools 100% remotely until October 16<sup>th</sup>.

MOTION by Ms. Cho, seconded by Mrs. Morell. Further Board discussion and debate ensued on the amended MOTION on the floor.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mrs. Tuck shared that the Curriculum Committee met yesterday where they were able to see actual demo virtual lessons including 1<sup>st</sup> grade reading through biology lessons at the High School. Mrs. Tuck remarked that all of the demo virtual lessons were impressive and was encouraged to see the teacher collaboration and professional development that has taken place. Finally, Mrs. Tuck shared that the Committee reviewed grading, cohorts, pre-recorded specials, special services would be provided virtually,

Ms. Colbath shared that the Policy Committee met at the beginning of the week to review a dozen policies. Ms. Colbath highlighted the four policies that relate to the current discussion on school reopening including Policy 1648 addressing mandatory masks, transportation, PPE, and professional development, Policy 1648.02 addressing accommodation for parents who wish to go 100% remote learning, Policy 1649 addressing Federal and State leaves [of absence] available to teachers and the procedures for requesting and taking those leaves, and Policy 8420 addressing

emergency and crisis situations including fire drills and shelter in place.

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

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Ms. Tuck, to open the floor to the public, 9:29 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 8-0.

Dozens of members of the public for four and a half (4.5) hours shared questions and concerns on the Reopening plan as well as the Motion on the floor [to go 100% remote until October 16<sup>th</sup>]. Mr. Rota and Mrs. Han Silver and other board members responded to public questions and concerns.

MOTION to relax the 3-minute limit per person for public comment.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mr. Rubino, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves relaxing the 3-minute limit.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 8-0.

MOTION to reinstitute the 3-minute limit per person for public comment.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mrs. Morell, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves reinstating the 3-minute limit.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 8-0.

MOTION by Mr. Rubino, seconded by Mrs. Morell, to close the floor to the public, 2:02 a.m.

MOTION carried upon voice vote, 7-1. Ms. Colbath abstained.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**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 2020-08-20 #1POL Back-up](#)

Policy/Reg No.	Topic
P1648	Restart And Recovery Plan (M) (New)
P1648.02	Remote Learning Options For Families (M) (New)
P1649	Federal Families First Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Act (FFCRA) (M) (New)
P2270	Religion In Schools (Revised)
P2431.3	Heat Participation Policy For Student-Athlete Safety (M) (Revised)
P2622	Student Assessment (M) (Revised)
P&R 5111	Eligibility Of Resident/Nonresident Students (M) (Revised)
P&R 5320	Immunization (Revised)
P&R 5330.04	Administering An Opioid Antidote (M) (Revised)
R5610	Suspension (M) (Revised)
R5610	Suspension Procedures (M) (Revised)
P5620	Expulsion (M) (Revised)
P&R 8320	Personnel Records (M) (Revised)
P8420	Emergency And Crisis Situations (M) (Revised)

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

MOTION carried upon roll call vote, 7-1. Mrs. Morell dissented. Ms. Cho dissented on Policy 1648 only.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 8-0.

PENDING MOTION to reopen schools 100% remotely until Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup>.

MOTION failed upon roll call vote, 4-2-2. Ms. Colbath and Mr. Rubino dissented. Mrs. Richter and Mrs. Tuck abstained.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mr. Rubino, to adjourn, 2:12 a.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 8-0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

*Haquisha Q. Taylor*

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**HAQUISHA Q. TAYLOR**  
SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

HQT/toc 08/21/2020