FORT LEE BOARD OF EDUCATION FORT LEE, NEW JERSEY

MINUTES

PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING February 1, 2021 Zoom Meeting

CALL TO ORDER BY THE PRESIDENT

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by, Board President, Ms. Colbath.

FLAG SALUTE

The Flag Salute was led by Mr. Rubino.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The Public Announcement was read by Ms. Colbath.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mrs. Byers-Kang, Ms. Elisa Cho, Mrs. Esther Han Silver, Mrs. Holly

Morell, Mrs. Kristen Richter, Mrs. Candace Romba, Mr. Michael Rubino,

Ms. Julene Stassou, Ms. Paula K. Colbath

Also Present: Mr. Kenneth Rota, Ms. Hagquisha Q. Taylor, Mrs. Diane Collazo-Baker,

Dennis McKeever, Board Attorney

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mr. Rubino, at 6:34 p.m., to move into Executive Session.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

The Board reconvened into the Public Meeting at 7:37 p.m.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Mr. Rota shared that there was one (1) HIB investigation that was unfounded.

Mr. Rota shared that the Fire & Security Drills for December 2020 were conducted, and have been posted for the Board's review.

Mr. Rota shared the District is participating in the Bridge Year Pilot Program which provides current high school sophomores and juniors an optional "bridge year" to participate in high school extracurricular programs while remaining enrolled in high school and having the opportunity to take certain college level credits.

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Mr. Rota introduced David Gannon, Partner at PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP accounting firm. Ms. Taylor shared a synopsis of the 2019 – 2020 Audit Report and reintroduced Mr. Gannon. Mr. Gannon presented the Annual Audit Report for period ending June 30, 2020 sharing healthy surplus and reserve accounts, no findings requiring corrective action, and suggesting the District be mindful of payments to vendors in a given year for current and prior year purchase orders that may exceed bid thresholds.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Han Silver shared that there was a Finance Committee meeting held February 1st and shared the topics discussed including the 2019-2020 audit report, preliminary budget, and the impact of COVID-19 on Miscellaneous Revenues.

PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Ms. Colbath thanked Mrs. Han Silver and Mrs. Romba for attending the Garden State Coalition of Schools meeting.

Ms. Colbath asked about the revisions to the Budget Development Calendar. Ms. Taylor explained that the changes primarily are driven by the newly distributed election calendar.

Ms. Colbath and Mrs. Richter recognized Mr. Rota, Mrs. Collazo-Baker, Mrs. Lauren Glynn, and Lauren Carrubbav for a well-done comprehensive presentation on challenges facing social emotional learning presented at the January 25th Bergen County School Boards Association (BCSBA) meeting.

Mrs. Byers-Kang thanked Mr. Rota for providing the Board with the cohort numbers to further evaluate the feasibility of combining cohorts. Mr. Rota shared that it has been determined that twelve (12) individuals are permitted in a classroom in order to maintain the safety of the students and teachers.

Board conversation ensued regarding combining cohorts, eliminating virtual Wednesdays and adding it as an in-person instruction day, accommodations for special education students, athletics, extending the school day, and mindfulness breaks for the students.

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mr. Rubino to table one (1) name on item 5P.

MOTION failed upon roll call vote, 4-4-1 with Ms. Cho, Mrs. Romba, Mrs. Stassou, and Mrs. Han Silver dissenting and with Mrs. Byers-Kang abstaining.

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. Richter, seconded by Mrs. Morell, to open the floor to the public, 8:41 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

Public attendees voiced their views of the importance of bringing more students back for in-person instruction, and their concerns if the students do not get back into the buildings in the near future.

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Cean Spahn, President of Fort Lee Education Association (FLEA), expressed her concern regarding the new variant of the virus, and believes now is not a safe time to bring students back to in-person instruction.

Mrs. Amy Kotang, Co-President of School No. 3 PTA, thanked the Board Members for all their dedicated efforts. Mrs. Kotang shared at the January 19th Board meeting she issued a certificate of recognition to each Board Member on behalf of the NJSBA, and is reiterating this to the community just in case they did not hear her presentation at the last Board meeting due to technical difficulties.

Mr. Rota responded to the community members' comments.

MOTION by Mr. Rubino, seconded by Mrs. Morell, to close the floor to the public, 9:36 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mr. Rubino to combine cohorts, increase the daily school hours, eliminate virtual Wednesdays, and any other strategic method that will increase in-person instruction by February 17, 2021. Mr. McKeever, Board Attorney, shared his concerns about leaving discretion to the administrators and that the Board should be mindful not to administer the schools, and the potential impact on the Board Members if the Motion passes. After Board discussion, Ms. Colbath withdrew the Motion based on Mr. McKeever's concerns. Mr. McKeever suggested the Board form an Ad Hoc Committee for a Health and Safety Advisory Committee.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mr. Rubino to reconsider the earlier MOTION to table one (1) name on item 5P.

MOTION carried upon roll call vote, 6-3 with Mrs. Han Silver, Mrs. Romba, and Ms. Cho dissenting.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mr. Rubino to table one (1) name on item 5P.

MOTION failed upon roll call vote, 4-4-1 with Ms. Cho, Mrs. Romba, Mrs. Stassou, and Mrs. Han Silver dissenting and with Mrs. Byers-Kang abstaining.

RESOLUTIONS

BOARD

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

Public Business Meeting Minutes
Private Executive Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2021 January 19, 2021 **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.
- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, approves the participation of Board Members at the Bergen County School Boards Association Meetings and New Jersey School Board Association Board Mandated Training as outlined below:

WORKSHOP	BOARD MEMBER	<u>DATE</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	AMOUNT PER PERSON
Bergen County SBA	Tanya Byers-Kang Elisa Cho Paula Colbath Esther Han Silver Holly Morell Kristen Richter Candace Romba Michael Rubino Julene Stassou	Monday, 4/21/2021 and Wednesday, 6/2/2021	Virtual	-0-
NJSBA GOVERNANCE TRAINING	BOARD MEMBER	<u>DATE</u>	PLACE	AMOUNT PER PERSON
Governance I	Tanya Byers-Kang Julene Stassou	Thursday, 3/4/2021	Live Virtual	-0-
Governance III	Kristen Richter	To be completed by 12/31/2021	Online	-0-
Governance IV	Elisa Cho	To be completed by 12/31/2021	Online	-0-

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mrs. Han Silver, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1B through #3B.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 9-0, with all Board Members abstaining on their respective names on item #3B.

CURRICULUM

- **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 **Patricia Vitale-Reilly Consulting to provide professional development** support during the 2020-2021 school year, based upon the attached proposal. **See Appendix Page 13**

Professional Development Training	Total Not to Exceed	Account
To provide four (4) days of professional development to elementary classroom teachers with continued support for the implementation of the Reading and Writing Workshop model and virtual instruction.	\$6,800.00	# 20-270-200-320-30-000

MOTION by Mrs. Richter, seconded by Mrs. Romba, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1CUR through #2CUR.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 9-0.

FINANCE

- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, has received and accepts the financial reports of the Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies for the month ending December 2020 and certifies that the reports indicate that no major account or fund is over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the school year. See Appendix Page 44
- **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, confirms the **line item transfers for the month of December 2020**. In order to accomplish the aforesaid purpose, the Business Administrator was authorized to transfer the amount of money into and out of the line items set forth on the attached schedule. **See Appendix Page 75**
- 3F 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 \$1,629,499.47 for February 2021 checks. See Appendix Page 14
- 4F 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 Athletic bills list in the amount of \$342.00 for February 2021 checks. See Appendix Page 33
- **5F THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **2021-2022 Revised Budget**

Development Calendar as per the attached. **See Appendix Page 35**

6F THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the following **donations**:

	<u>DONATIONS</u>						
Item	Amount/ Estimated Value	Donor	On Behalf Of				
Check	\$1,000.00	Global Children Foundation 2340 Inwood Avenue, #4F Fort Lee, NJ 07024	FLHS				
Check	\$1,000.00	Seo & Hwang Foundation 610 Grand Avenue Ridgefield, NJ 07657	FLHS Academy of Finance Student Scholarship and Career Preparedness Activities				

7F THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the New Jersey Department of Agriculture 2020-2021 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant award of \$24,890.00.

NSLP EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT 2020-2021					
School	Equipment	<u>Amount</u>			
School #2	(2) Mobile Heated Cabinets	\$5,990.00			
Fort Lee High School	(2) Milk Coolers	\$4,320.00			
School #1	(2) Mobile Heated Cabinets	\$5,990.00			
Lewis F. Cole Middle School	Double Deck Combi Oven	\$8,590.00			
TOTAL AWARD		\$24,890.00			

- **8F** THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby accepts the **Audit Report** for the year ending June 30, 2020 as prepared by PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP, Certified Public Accountants. See Appendix Page 37
- **9F WHEREAS**, the South Bergen Jointure Commission ("SBJC") and the Fort Lee Board of Education ("the Board") are parties to a 2020-2021 agreement for SBJC, an approved Coordinated Transportation Service Agency, to coordinate transportation services for the Board's students; and

WHEREAS, due to the current public health emergency, a number of school districts were required to close for health-related reasons, with several of those school districts continuing to remain closed until further notice; and

WHEREAS, under N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, if a school district is subject to a health-related closure for a period longer than three consecutive school days as a result of the current public health emergency, a jointure commission shall continue to make payments

under the terms of a contract with a contracted service provider as if the school facilities remained open, and

WHEREAS, because of school closures as a result of the public health emergency, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, the SBJC is obligated to continue payments to its transportation service providers during the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, SBJC's commitment to continue payment to those contracted transportation service providers is contingent upon the Board's continued payment to SBJC; and

WHEREAS, SBJC's commitment to continue payment to those contracted transportation service providers is contingent upon the Board's continued payment to SBJC; and

WHEREAS, the SBJC is desirous of amending the terms of the Agreement to memorialize the Board's responsibility to continue its payment obligations to the SBJC to ensure full compliance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.

NOW, WHEREFORE, THE PARTIES AGREE as follows:

- 1. For the term of the 2020-2021 school year, if schools are closed and/or operating under virtual or remote instruction as a result of the current public health emergency, thereby not requiring transportation services for the Boards students, the Board shall continue to make payments under its Agreement with SBJC, as if the school facilities remained open, for SBJC to pay its contracted transportation service providers in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.
- **2.** All other terms and conditions of the Agreement not addressed herein shall remain in full force and effect.

MOTION by Mrs. Romba, seconded by Mr. Rubino, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1F through #9F.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 9-0, with exception Ms. Cho abstained on item #6F.

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 42
- **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of **Lauren Carrubba as the Bridge Year Liaison for the 2020-2021 school year** to serve as the school's central point of contact for students interested in pursuing a Bridge Year.
- **3P** THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts, with regret, the retirement of

Josephine Giandomenico, as a Bilingual/ESL Spanish Teacher for the Elementary Schools, after dedicating 19 years of service to the district, effective July 1, 2021.

4P 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				
Payal Gandhi	PT Paraprofessional	MS	Declined Position				
GianKarlo Guirao	Health Care Assistant	HS	1/21/2021				
Teresa Pette	PT Paraprofessional	IS	1/29/2021				
Christopher Lodati	PT Paraprofessional	HS	Declined Position				

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **appointments** for the 2020-2021 school year, pending verification of employment:

<u>APPOINTMENTS</u>							
First Last Position Salary Effective Name Name Position Loc Control # Prorated Date							
Jennifer	Sinisi	Health Care Assistant PT .72 (25 hours/week)	S1	01-3115-01	\$20.00/hour	2/1/21	
Irene	Gray	Assistant Business Administrator	со	00-0122-01	\$105,000.00	TBD	

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following additional **staff transfers** during the 2020-2021 school year.

<u>TRANSFERS</u>								
Name From Location From Position Location To Position Change Date								
Lesley Alfaro	S1	Health Care Assistant 01-3115-01	HS	Health Care Assistant 07-3115-07	N/A	2/1/21		

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

	<u>LEAVES</u>									
Name	Position	_100	Туре	New or Amend	Paid Leave	Paid FFCRA Leave Full Salary up to \$511.00/day	Paid FFCRA Leave ¾ Salary up to \$200.00/day	Unpaid Leave with benefits	Unpaid Leave No Benefits	Return Date
Sandy Kim- Namkung	Teacher Grade 4	S 4	Maternity	Amend	9/1/20 to 9/16/20	N/A	N/A	9/17/20 to 5/2/21	N/A	5/3/21
Randy Schwartz	Teacher Grade 1	S 4	Medical	Amend	1/4/21 to 2/28/21	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3/1/21
Ashley Rice	Teacher English	ΗS	Maternity	Amend	12/1/20 to 2/4/21	N/A	N/A	2/5/21 to 5/2/21	N/A	5/3/21
Michele Avella	Teacher Kindergarten	S 1	Maternity	Amend	1/27/21 to 3/3/21	N/A	N/A	3/4/21 to 6/30/21	N/A	9/1/21
Alicyn Liquori	Teacher Kindergarten	S 4	Maternity	New	3/1/21 to 5/3/21	N/A	N/A	5/4/21 to 9/30/21	N/A	10/1/21
Melanie Catalano	Teacher Graphic Design	Ιο	Maternity	New	4/26/21 to 5/23/21	N/A	N/A	5/24/21 to 6/30/21	N/A	9/1/21
Megan Guerrero	Teacher Grade 5	- s	Maternity	New	4/15/21 to 6/10/21	N/A	N/A	6/11/21 to 2/28/22	3/1/22 to 6/30/22	9/1/22
Employee #6519	-		Suspend	New	1/25/21 to TBD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	TBD
Helene Azizo	PT Paraprofessional	MS	FFCRA/ Medical	Amend	1/1/21 to 2/2/21	9/1/20 to 12/31/20	N/A	N/A	2/3/21 to 6/30/21	9/1/21

8P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of **leave** replacements during the 2020-2021 school year, as outlined below:

	LEAVE REPLACEMENTS							
Name	Grade/ Subject	Loc	Salary	Effective Dates	Reason for opening			
Elisa Murphy	Social Worker - CST	S3/ S4	Bring to full-time salary no benefits	2/1/21 to 4/30/21	Sarah Levy (Maternity)			
Laudan Asharian	Teacher Grade 4	S4	Sub pay for the first 10 days \$100 per day, day 11-26 \$110 per day, day 27-60 \$150 per day, day 61+ at the daily rate equal to a BA, Step 1; No Benefits	9/1/20 to 5/4/21 Plus 3 days NTO Amended	Sandy Kim- Namkung (Maternity)			
Laudan Asharian	Teacher Grade 3	S4	Continuous assignment	5/5/21 to 6/30/21	Melanie Markarian (Maternity)			
Dawn Hoth	Teacher Kindergarten	S1	Continuous assignment	1/4/21 to 6/30/21	Michele Avella (Maternity)			
Ethan Goya	Teacher Grade 5			3/10/21 to 6/30/21	Megan Guerrero (Maternity)			
Andrea Pinckney	Teacher Kindergarten	S4	Sub pay day 1-60 \$150 per day, day 61+ at the daily rate equal to a BA, Step 1; No Benefits	2/25/21 to 6/30/21	Alicyn Liquori (Maternity)			

9P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of the following **Substitutes** for the 2020-2021 school year:

SUBSTITUTES

Anita Pepaj Noelle Dadon Suzette Rivera **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following additional **District translators for 2020-2021 school year**, at the rate of \$30.00 per hour, on an as needed basis:

DISTRICT TRANSLATORS 2020-2021					
Name	Language				
Ludmila Basin	Russian				

11P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves a pensionable stipend of \$6,500, for each teaching **staff member assigned to teach a sixth period** for the 2020-2021 school year as outlined below:

6 th Period Stipends					
Fort Lee High School					
Name	Subject	Duration			
Miranda Jang	Art	Prorated from 1/1/21 to 6/30/21			

- **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **Lisa Novello for 200 hours of Braille translation** at \$30 per hour for student ID #25070080 during the 2020-2021 school year.
- 13P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves allocation of sick day payout for retiree Dr. Sharon Amato, as per the attached. See Appendix Page 43
- 14P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the placement of the following Internships, Student Teachers or Practicum Candidates during the 2020-2021 school year:

INT	INTERNSHIPS/STUDENT TEACHERS/PRACTICUM CANDIDATES							
Referring University	Student Name	Type of Placement	Subject Area	# Hours	Months From-To	School Placed	Cooperating Staff Member	
Caldwell University	DejaMarie Rodriguez	Field Work	School Counseling	100 Hrs.	2/2/2021 - 5/18/2021	S3	Aimee DeSheplo	
Seton Hall University	Jacklyn Morgentaler	Clinical Experience	Social Studies	60 Hrs.	2/2/2021 - 5/7/2021	HS	April Coniglio	

Fort Lee Board of Education Public Business Meeting

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mrs. Romba, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1P through #14P.

MOTION carried unanimously for items #1P through #4P and items #6P through #14P.

MOTION carried for item #5P upon roll call vote, 6-3 with Ms. Colbath, Mrs. Morell, and Mrs. Richter dissenting.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Colbath shared a big thank you to the Global Children's Foundation for its donation. Ms. Cho recognized the gracious donations received from the Global Children Foundation and Seo & Hwang Foundation.

Mr. Rubino reminded the Board Members that the Mayor and Council meeting will be held Thursday, February 4th at 7:00 pm to recognize the Board Members on behalf of the NJSBA Appreciation month. Ms. Colbath further shared that an invitation has been extended to Mrs. Lauran Tuck and Mr. Ralph DiMeglio.

Mrs. Romba inquired if the Central Office will be mailing 2021 Liaison letters to the Fort Lee community organizations informing them of who will be their liaison. Ms. Colbath shared that Ms. Taylor is working on the letters and targeting Monday, February 8th to distribute.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mr. Rubino, to adjourn, 10:30 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Haqquisha Q. Taylor

HAQQUISHA Q. TAYLOR

SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

HQT/toc 02/19/2021