

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

**MINUTES**

**PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING  
January 17, 2023  
Lewis F. Cole Intermediate School Cafetorium  
and Zoom Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER BY THE PRESIDENT**

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by Board President, Ms. Colbath.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The Flag Salute was led by Mr. Knight.

**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Public Announcement was read by Ms. Colbath.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Mrs. Kim Curry, Mr. Kacy Knight, Mrs. Holly Morell, Mrs. Kristen Richter, Mr. Michael Rubino, Ms. Julene Stassou, Ms. Paula K. Colbath

**Also Present:** Mr. Robert L. Kravitz, Ms. Haquisha Q. Taylor, Mrs. Diane Collazo-Baker, Mr. Lester E. Taylor III, Board Attorney, Ms. Celeste Williams, Director of Human Resources

**Absent:** Ms. Elisa Cho, Dr. Catherine Golfopoulos

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mr. Rubino at 6:38 p.m., to move into Executive Session.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

The Board reconvened into the Public Meeting at 7:26 p.m.

**REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Mr. Kravitz congratulated Kevin Sun on his recent appointment to West Point, the Boy's indoor track team for winning the Big North American League championship and the girls for placing second. Mr. Kravitz also congratulated Jordana Marcus and Diana Valentini, Fort Lee's newest record holders in the Long Jump and the 800 meter run. Mr. Kravitz then shared that Jah'Nel Lewis was named last week's Bergen Record athlete of the week in Girls basketball.

Mr. Kravitz shared that there is a Korean Parents Advisory Council (KPAC) lunar new year celebration Saturday, January 21st in the Lewis F. Cole Intermediate School Cafetorium from 11am until 2pm and our entire community is welcome.

Mr. Kravitz shared an update of our current security staff and the District's plans to hire additional security personnel to include a Class III Officer.

Mr. Kravitz reminded the parents if there are any questions regarding anything in our schools the best place to start is with the teacher and if they cannot answer your question(s) please ask your child's school administrator.

**RESOLUTIONS – WALK INS**

Ms. Colbath read the two walk-in resolutions items #3B and #4B pertaining to residency issues.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Colbath shared that the Committees will be finalized by Wednesday, 1/18/2023.

**PUBLIC WORK SESSION**

Ms. Colbath shared that Jah'Nel Lewis, Fort Lee women basketball player, scored her 1000<sup>th</sup> point at the North Bergen game.

Ms. Stassou shared that she is extremely proud of all the students working so hard and getting good grades.

**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. Stassou to open the floor to the public, 7:39 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

Public questions and comments included welcoming the two new Board members (Dr. Catherine Golfinopoulos and Mr. Kacy Knight); thanked Ms. Taylor for her dedicated service, and will truly be missed; encouraged the Board members to make the right decisions in support of our students and the community as we face challenging issues during the 2022-2023 school year; thanked the Superintendent, Board members, Administrators, Teachers and Staff for doing a wonderful job; a complaint that the Middle School gym floor being extremely slippery and asked if this can be addressed immediately; inquired if 9<sup>th</sup> grade Start Strong Assessment data is being thoroughly analyzed and if being compared to the State average; and, inquired if there are plans to enrich the Fort Lee High School Math and Science Programs curriculum

MOTION by Mrs. Morell, seconded by Mr. Rubino to close the floor to the public, 7:52 p.m.

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

Mr. Knight shared that a member of the community offered to donate 15 tickets for the musical performance, Gift of Music Gala. Ms. Colbath asked for a motion to amend item #7F adding 15 tickets totaling a donation of \$750.00 donated by Ellie Sturrock.

MOTION by Mr. Rubino, seconded by Mrs. Morell to amend item #7F.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

**RESOLUTIONS**

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

Public Business Meeting Minutes	December 12, 2022
Private Executive Meeting Minutes	December 12, 2022
Special Public Business Meeting Minutes	December 21, 2022
Special Private Executive Meeting Minutes	December 21, 2022
Reorganization Meeting Minutes	January 05, 2023

**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.

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

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

**1CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **class trips listed on the attached summary**. *Attachment: [2023-01-17 CLASS TRIPS](#)*

**2CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **out-of-district placements** for the 2022-2023 school year:

<b><u>OUT-OF-DISTRICT PLACEMENTS</u></b>			
<b>Student</b>	<b>Placement</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Tuition/Costs</b>
#36000238	BCSS Washington Elementary	1/9/23-6/30/23	Annual tuition cost of \$64,980.00, prorated to \$39,349.00 (109 days @ \$361.00 per diem). Transportation cost prorated to \$9,068.80 (109 days @ \$83.20 per diem). 1:1 Aide prorated cost to \$29,975.00 (109 days @ \$275.00 per diem).
#99000240	Banyan High School	1/3/23-6/30/23	Annual tuition cost of \$72,177.78 prorated to \$40,499.64 (114 days @ \$355.26 per diem). Transportation cost prorated to \$38,646.00 (114 days @ \$339.00 per diem).
#TBD	CTC-Academy	1/9/23-6/30/23	Annual tuition cost of \$94,296.50 (203 days) prorated to \$48,979.25(107 days @ \$457.75 per diem). Transportation cost TBD. 1:1 Aide prorated cost to \$41,730.00 (107 days @ \$390.00 per diem).

**3CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **Marisa Crozier, a doctoral student at Caldwell University, to conduct a research study** to investigate the perceptions of Child Study Team (CST) members and Directors of Special Services with regards to the early intervening services utilized in district, as indicated in the attached proposal.  
*Attachment:* [CALDWELL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH STUDY](#)

**4CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **the addition of a Curriculum Writer for the remainder of 22-23.**

<b>CURRICULUM WRITER 2022-2023</b>	
<b>Content</b>	<b>Certificated Staff Member</b>

Science	Erin Powers
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MOTION by Mrs. Morell seconded by Mrs. Richter, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1CUR through #4CUR.

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

- 1F **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 November 2022** 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. **Attachment: BOARD SECRETARY'S REPORT-NOVEMBER 2022; TREASURER REPORT-NOVEMBER 2022**
- 2F **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 November 2022**. 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. **Attachment: LINE ITEM TRANSFER-NOVEMBER 2022**
- 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 \$13,415,036.68 for January 2023 checks**. **Attachment: 2023-01-17 BILLS LIST**
- 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 **Cafeteria bills list in the amount of \$212,477.55 for January 2023 checks**. **Attachment: 2023-01-17 CAFETERIA BILLS**
- 5F **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 \$9,221.00 for January 2023 checks**. **Attachment: 2023-01-17 ATHLETIC BILLS**

6F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **Disposal of Equipment**:

<b>DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT</b>				
Quantity	Description	Location	FLBOE ID#s	Reason
1	Television	HS	#03909	Obsolete
1	Upright Piano	School #4	#00301	Obsolete
1	Upright Piano	School #4	#00259	Obsolete

7F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the following **donations**:

<b>DONATIONS</b>			
Item	Amount/ Estimated Value	Donor	On Behalf Of
Refreshments	\$700.00	It's Greek to Me Restaurant/Anthony Papavasiliou	January Parent University
\$250 for each class	\$1,000.00	KPAC Fort Lee, NJ	To assist students with Prom costs
Rock Garden	N/A	School #2 PTA & plaque to thank donors	To beautify the front landscaping
15 Tickets to the Gift of Musical Gala and Concert	\$750.00	Ellie Sturrock, Fort Lee Resident	Fort Lee Board of Education District and Music Department

\*Highlighted items added amending #7F.

8F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, **approves the Miriam Skydell and Associates 2023 Services Contract for the 2022-2023 school year. Attachment: [MIRIAM SKYDELL AND ASSOCIATES 2023 SERVICES CONTRACT](#)**

9F **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, authorizes the Board President and School Business Administrator **to execute Non-Resident Tuition Student Agreement for non-resident student (SS, Grade 9) whose parent(s) are employed by the district for the 2023-2024 school year. Tuition rates to be determined by the Business Office and according to Board policy.**

**10F THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, **authorizes the execution of a renewal Shared Services Agreement between the Borough of Fort Lee and the Fort Lee Board of Education for the Use of Certain Facilities for Recreational Purposes for the 2023 Calendar Year with a full renewal term of 2022-2024 Calendar Years.**

MOTION by Mrs. Curry, seconded by Mrs. Morell, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1F through #10F.

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

Mrs. Richter and Ms. Colbath thanked all the donors for their generous donations.

**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. *Attachment: [2023-01-17 STAFF TRIPS](#)*

**2P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts, with regret, the **retirement of Sheri Steckler, as a Special Education Teacher,** at Lewis F. Cole Intermediate School, after dedicating 35 years of service to the district, effective **April 1, 2023** (change of date).

**3P THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **resignations:**

<b><u>RESIGNATIONS</u></b>			
<b>Employee</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Jennifer Cennarazzo	Part Time Paraprofessional	S2	1/1/2023
Tereza Mossad	Part Time Paraprofessional	S2	1/9//2023 Amended
Amanda Schroeder	Speech Language Specialist	S2	12/20/2022
Yana Ruban	Paraprofessional	S4	2/1/2023

4P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the payment of unused vacation days for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 as per the attached. Attachment: **UNUSED VACATION DAYS PAYOUT**

<b>UNUSED VACATION DAY PAYOUT</b>						
Last Name	First Name	Salary Year	Salary	Daily (240)	# Vacation Days	Total
Aitken	Susan	21-22	\$84,114.00	\$350.48	22	\$7,710.45
Aitken	Susan	22-23	\$86,640.00	\$361.00	11	\$3,971.00
					Total:	\$11,681.45
Battista	Mary	21-22	\$64,410.00	\$268.38	6	\$1,610.25
Battista	Mary	22-23	\$65,974.00	\$274.89	8	\$2,199.13
					Total:	\$3,809.38
Berman	Jay	21-22	\$175,694.00	\$732.06	2	\$1,464.12
Berman	Jay	22-23	\$175,694.00	\$732.06	12.5	\$9,150.73
					Total:	\$10,614.85
Mayer	John	21-22	\$71,687.00	\$298.70	8	\$2,389.60
Mayer	John	22-21	\$77,532.00	\$323.05	8	\$2,584.40
					Total:	\$4,974.00

5P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **appointments** for the 2022-2023 school year, pending verification of employment:

<b>APPOINTMENTS</b>						
First Name	Last Name	Position	Loc	Position Control #	Annual Salary Prorated	Effective Date
Claudia	Testino	Teacher - Spanish	MS	06-1550-07	\$58,875.00	2/1/2023
Mark	Bitar	Interim Asst. Principal	S3	N/A	\$376.45	12/27/22-12/30/22
Michele	Carlor	Additional responsibilities of the Instructional Supervisor of K-12, ESL, Bilingual, and World Language Supervisor, 7th-12th ELA and Social Studies		N/A	\$1,000.00 Monthly	1/1/23- replacement is found



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

<b>LEAVES OF ABSENCES</b>								
Name	Position	Loc	Type	New or Amend	Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave with benefits	Unpaid Leave No Benefits	Return Date
Laura Caddell	Counselor	HS	Medical	New	1/11/2023 - 11/25/2023	N/A	N/A	1/26/23
Genna Kornweiser	Gr 5 & 6 BSI Math	LFCIS	Maternity	New	N/A	9/1/23- 3/12/24	N/A	3/13/23
Karli Raffo	LDT-C	S2	Maternity	Amend	1/30/23 - 3/30/23	3/31/23 - 6/30/23	N/A	9/1/23
Cheryl Zoll	Grade K Teacher	S2	Medical	Amended	10/13/22- 1/12/23	N/A	N/A	1/13/23

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 2022-2023 school year, as outlined below:

<b>LEAVE REPLACEMENTS</b>					
Name	Grade/ Subject	Loc	Salary	Effective Dates	Reason for opening
Lina Giraldo	Teacher Grade 4	S4	Sub pay for the first 60 days \$150 per day, day 61+ at the daily rate equal to a BA, Step 1; No Benefits	1/3/23 - 4/18/23 Amend	Gina DeMartino

8P **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 2022-2023 school year:

<u>SUBSTITUTES</u>
Linda Bongardino Andrew Dragoslavac Cynthia Conto Nieves Garcia Pimienta

9P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the change of Pay Structure of **Leave Replacement Teachers** during the 2022-2023 school year, effective February 1, 2023. Leave Replacement Teachers will receive the salary equal to BA, Step 1 on Teachers Salary Guide from day 1 of the assignment, no benefits.

10P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the amendment of a pensionable stipend of \$6,500, for teaching staff members assigned to **teach a sixth period** at Lewis F. Cole Middle School for the 2022-2023 school year:

<u>6th Period Stipends</u>		
Lewis F. Cole Middle School		
First Name	Last Name	Department
Gene	Fusco	Special Education - Prorated 12/1/22 to 3/30/23
Angela	Papas	Special Education - Prorated 12/1/22 to 3/30/23
Elisa	Minissale	Special Education - Prorated 12/1/22 to 3/30/23
Dave	Fidel	Special Education - Prorated 12/1/22 to 3/30/23
Inne	Cho	Special Education - Prorated 12/1/22 to 3/30/23

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the additional pensionable stipend of \$6,500, for a teaching staff member assigned to **teach a sixth period** at Fort Lee High School for the 2022-2023 school year:

<u>6th Period Stipends</u>		
Fort Lee High School		
First Name	Last Name	Department
Brandon	Barron	English - Retroactive 9/1/22 to 6/30/2023
Soo Me	Yoo	Math/Special Education (rescind for school year)
Kristen	Baldofsky	Math/Special Education (Effective 1/1/23)

11P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **appointment of Co-Curricular Advisors** for the 2022-2023 school year. All appointments are subject to completion of all personnel documentation and fingerprinting process, prior to starting of said activities.

<b>CO-CURRICULAR 2022-2023</b>				
Name	Co-Curricular Activity		Class	22-23 Stipend
Vicki Iasso *	Band Camp Assistant		HS N/A	\$200.00
Brittany Lodato	Assistant Cheerleader Advisor (Fall Season only)	HS	B (1/2 stipend)	\$1,580.50

12P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **rescinding the appointment for a Middle School Winter Coach** at the employee’s request, **and reappointing the coach’s stipend** for the 2022-2023 school year, as follows:

<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL WINTER COACHES</b>				
Coach	Sport	Position	Season	Stipend
Rescind: (previously approved on 11/7/22, Resolution #31957)				
Ethan Goya	Basketball	Co-Coach	Winter	\$1,000.00
Reappoint				
Lewis Maira	Basketball	Coach	Winter	From \$1,000.00 to \$2,000.00

13P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **appointment of Co-Curricular Advisors** for the 2022-2023 school year. All appointments are subject to completion of all personnel documentation and fingerprinting process, prior to starting of said activities.

<b>CO-CURRICULAR 2022-2023</b>				
Name	Co-Curricular Activity		Class	22-23 Stipend
Eldric Etra*	Theatre - Play Choreographer (Spring Musical only)	HS	N/A	\$625.00

\*Out-of-District

14P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **voluntary clubs** at no cost to the District, to enhance the opportunities for students:

<b><u>VOLUNTARY CLUBS</u></b>		
<b>Club</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Voluntary Advisor</b>
Newspaper Club	S-2	Clara Walden & Rachel Standish
Media & Communications Club	IS	Cortney Teitell
STREAM Club	IS	Genevieve Callahan
Yarn Club	MS	Kimberly Bouchard
STEAM Club	HS	Tahreen Chowdhury
Political Awareness	HS	Mateusz Pokoj & Christopher Carter

15P **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following staff members for **After-School Tutoring Program** during the **2022-2023 school year** on an as needed basis:

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Assignment</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Extra Compensation</u></b>
Michael Mottershead Rachael Standish	After-School Tutoring Program	S2	\$45.00 per hour

MOTION by Mrs. Morell seconded by Mrs. Richter, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1P through #15P.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 7-0. Ms. Stassou expressed a special congratulations to Mr. Mark Bitar.

1POL **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **second reading and adoption of the following policy/regulation updates** listed below: **Attachment:**  
[2023-01-17 POLICY UPDATES](#)

Policy/Reg No.	Topic
P & R 2431.4	Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries (M) (Revised)
P 3161	Examination for Cause (Revised)
P 4161	Examination for Cause (Revised)
P 5512	Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (M) (Revised)
P & R 8465	Bias Crimes and Bias-Related Acts (M) (Revised)
P & R 9320	Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies (M) (Revised)

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

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

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Colbath acknowledged Fort Lee athletes that appeared in the Record.

- Stephanie Yakoff had an undefeated tennis season
- Listed the top 40 power players in North Jersey High School sports to include Mark Bitar, high-level official in the NFL as a referee assigner who ranked #30, and Nicole Pacciani, President of the Bergen County Women’s Coaches Association who ranked #11

Ms. Colbath shared that the NJ School Board Association (NJSBA) School Leader magazine featured Ms. Taylor (1 of 3 Business Administrators interviewed) discussing school districts contending with inflation.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mr. Rubino, seconded by Mrs. Curry, to adjourn, 8:00 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

*Haquisha Q. Taylor*

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*Haquisha Q. Taylor*

SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

HQT/toc 1/20/2023