FORT LEE BOARD OF EDUCATION FORT LEE, NEW JERSEY

MINUTES

PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING
February 5, 2024
Lewis F. Cole Intermediate School Cafetorium
and Zoom (virtual) Meeting

CALL TO ORDER BY THE PRESIDENT

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

FLAG SALUTE

The Flag Salute was led by Mr. Lopez.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The Public Announcement was read by Board President, Mrs. Richter.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mrs. Tanya Byers-Kang(virtual arrival 6:42 pm; live arrival 6:59 pm), Ms.

Paula Colbath, Mrs. Kim Curry, Mr. Kacy Knight (virtual arrival 6:39 pm), Mrs. Amy Ko-Tang, Mr. Douglas Lopez, Ms. Holly Morell, Mr. Michael Rubino,

Mrs. Kristen Richter

Also Present: Dr. Robert L. Kravitz, Mrs. Dina Messery, Mrs. Diane Collazo-Baker,

Mr. Lester E. Taylor III, Board Attorney

Absent: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

Board President, Mrs. Richter asked for a MOTION to adjourn Executive Session.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mr. Rubino at 7:31 p.m.

The Board reconvened into the Public Meeting at 7:36 p.m.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Kravitz recognized students as well as staff who will be or have been honored by our local VFW. The Patriot's Pen award is an annual event where both teachers and students get recognized for writing on patriotism. This year we have several accomplished individuals:

Brian Bruka
Maksin Kirienko
Caleb Chun
Austin Chen - Voice of Democracy
Joe Berlingo (District 2 winner)
Suzanne Elkechen (District 2 winner)
Christine Delucca - Teacher from School #4 (State winner)

Dr. Kravtiz shared that our schools are celebrating Black History Month and Lunar New Year. Additionally, he mentioned our upcoming KPAC event to celebrate the Lunar New Year in this same venue on Saturday, February 10th, from 2-5.

Dr. Kravitz introduced High School students Abigail and Tessa who spoke about happenings in our High School.

Dr. Kravitz reported the Student Safety Data (SSDS) for September through December 2023.

Dr. Kravtiz stated we are working diligently in many areas of our district to improve everything in our district. Working together with everyone, students, staff, administration, and the Board, we are moving in the right direction. Sometimes, it may seem like a daunting task, however, working together we are seeing incremental growth which is what we need to do. For that Thank You!

Dr. Kravitz introduced Steve Wielkotz who presented the June 30, 2023 audit. He stated that the audit was issued with a Qualified Opinion. There were a number findings in which a corrective action plan has been created and many of the findings have already been corrected. None of the findings were material. The audit is a compliance and financial audit and the majority of the findings were compliance related.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Curry gave the Finance Committee report. She stated last week's meeting focused on the audit and the corrective action plan. The committee will reconvene at the end of February to discuss the proposed budget.

Mrs. Curry gave the Negotiations Committee report. She stated the meeting on February 1st discussed the current contracts and a follow up meeting has been scheduled for February 13th.

Mrs. Ko-Tang gave the Curriculum Committee report. She stated the committee met last Wednesday. They discussed programs of study as well as the curriculum developments coming down the pipeline in math and ELA both of which are critical to every aspect of learning.

Mrs. Ko-Tang gave the Equity Committee report. She stated they focused on the equity report that was done over the pandemic. They discussed the behavior and discipline policies as well as the special education policies and how we can strengthen in those areas.

Ms. Morell gave the Strategic Planning Committee report. She stated the committee is looking at the long range goals for the district. The Board will look at the Board goals and the mission statement first and then come up with a strategic plan from there. Also instead of a five year plan we will be looking at a three year plan since that is more feasible to accomplish.

Ms. Morell gave the Ad Hoc RFPs Committee report. She stated the district will be going out for several RFPs this year including food services whose contract expires on June 30th. The next meeting has been scheduled for February 13th.

Ms. Colbath gave the Ad Hoc Legal Committee report. She stated the committee discussed the status and strategies of pending litigation. The Board also discussed this in private session.

<u>PUBLIC WORK SESSION - QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS ON ITEMS LISTED ON TONIGHT'S AGENDA OR ANY OTHER TOPIC</u>

Ms. Morell stated that she will make a motion to amend Item 3B to add her name for the on February 6th which she will be attending.

Mr. Knight thanked Ms. Rachel Ventrella for her service. She has done an incredible job.

Ms. Colbath echoed Mr. Knight's sentiments on Ms. Ventrella. She also thanked Mr. Picone and Mr. Welte, who had close to 50 years, for their years of service to the district. Both gentlemen put us on the map in the respective areas of expertise.

Mrs. Ko-Tang thanked Mr. Picone and Mr. Welte for their services and she thanked Mr. Welte for everything he has done for her and her family.

Mr. Rubino thanked Mr. Picone and Mr. Welte. He stated they are wonderful men.

Ms. Morell thanked Mr. Picone and Mr. Welte. She stated her sons had both of them and adored them.

Ms. Collazo-Baker responded to questions regarding item #3CUR. She stated the major changes involve some course additions which includes a third in the Teacher Academy. She also stated that some courses are being removed since they haven't run for three years due to lack of interest.

Several Board members had questions regarding the elementary school lunch program and the students in who are not preordering and receiving a cereal lunch. They inquired if there was alternate lunch with more nutritional value that could be served to the students. They also asked if it would be possible for parents to order up to 8:00 am. Mrs. Messery responded she will look into those questions and get back to the board.

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. Morell, seconded by Ms. Colbath, to open the floor to the public, 8:32 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

Public comments and questions included questions regarding procedure on transgenders and parent notification; status of wooded area behind the intermediate and middle school; accessing grade report.

Dr. Kravitz and Mr. Taylor addressed all questions and concerns.

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Mrs. Curry to close the floor to the public, 8:45 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS

1B	THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED , that the Fort Lee Board of Education, approves the following minutes :						
	Public Business Meeting Minutes January 16, 2024 Private Executive Meeting Minutes- as Amended January 16, 2024						
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:						
	 The nature of the investigation; Whether the District found evidence of HIB; Whether discipline was imposed; 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 for Workshops as outlined below:

WORKSHOP	BOARD MEMBER(s)	<u>DATE</u>	PLACE	AMOUNT PER PERSON
Bergen County SBA Virtual Meeting-How to build relationships in a hostile environment	Kristen Richter Paula Colbath Kim Curry Holly Morell	2/6/2024	Virtual	None
Women's Leadership: Connection, Balance, and Inspiration	Paula Colbath	4/19/2024	Mercer County College, Princeton Junction, NJ	\$99.00

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, adopts and implements the annual Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between the Fort Lee Police Department and Fort Lee Public Schools for the 2023-2024 school year. Attachment: UNIFORM MOA 23-24

MOTION by Ms.Colbath, seconded by Ms. Morell, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1B through #4B.

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 9-0 for item #1B through #2B and for items #4B; 5-0-4 for item #3B as Ms. Colbath, Mrs. Curry, Ms. Morell, and Mrs. Richter abstained.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

1B&G

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **the School Facilities Project and Section 15 Grant Agreement:**

Authorizing execution and delivery of the Grant Agreement

Lewis F. Cole Middle School

Project Description: HVAC System upgrades

DOE Project #: 1550-100-23-R501 SDA Project #: 1550-100-23-G5FY

Grant #: G5-6558

2B&G

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the Delegation of Authority to School Business Administrator for supervision of the School Facilities Project:

Lewis F. Cole Middle School

Project Description: HVAC System upgrades

DOE Project #: 1550-100-23-R501 SDA Project #: 1550-100-23-G5FY

Grant #: G5-6558

MOTION by Ms. Morell, seconded by Ms. Colbath, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1B&G through #2B&G.

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

CURRICULUM

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:* <u>2024-02-05 CLASS TRIPS</u>

2CUR

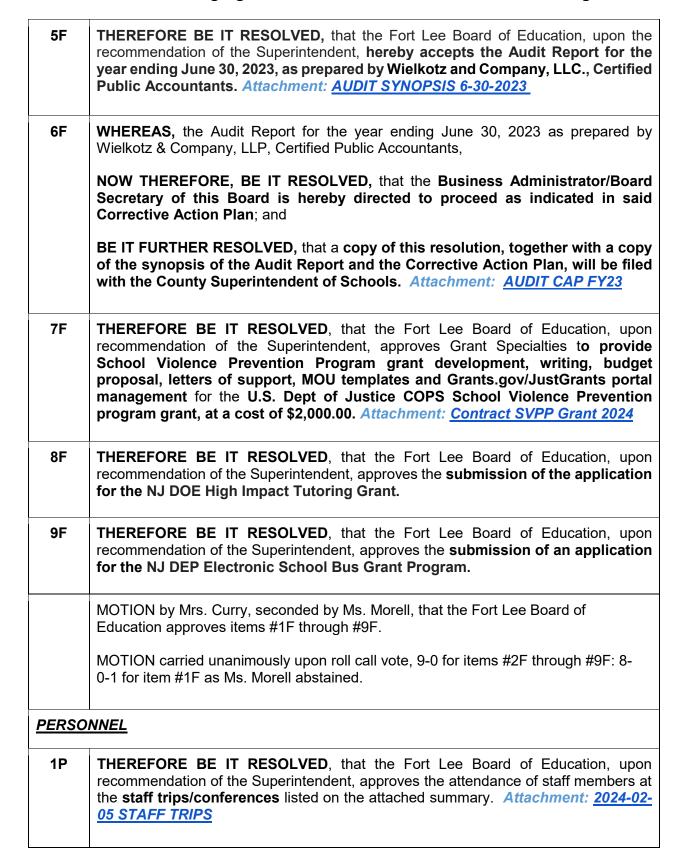
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **out-of-district placements** for the 2023-2024 school year:

OUT-OF-DISTRICT PLACEMENTS						
Student	Placement	Dates	Tuition/Costs			
#1365691158	Leonia Public Schools Anna C. Scott Leonia, NJ 07605	1/2/2024- 6/30/2024	Annual tuition cost of \$38,997.00, prorated to \$23,831.50 (110 days @ \$216.65 per diem). 1:1 Aide, \$32,231.00 prorated to \$16,653.51 (93 days @\$179.07 per diem). Transportation cost prorated to \$30,690.00 (110 days @ \$279.00 per diem).			

3CUR

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the Program of Studies for 2024-2025. Attachment: PROGRAM OF STUDIES 24-25

4CUR	THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves Dr. Michael DiBartolomeo to provide a remote College Search and Admissions Process presentation for parents/guardians of high school students. There is no cost for the presentation. Attachment: COLLEGE SEARCH & ADMISSIONS PROCESS PRESENTATION							
5CUR	THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the Lindsey Meyer Teen Institute (LMTI) to provide a one hour virtual training for all of the new teachers focused on positive engagement with students at a cost of \$250.00, paid using account #11-000-221-320-00-000. Attachment: LMTI PROPOSAL							
	MOTION by Ms. Morell, seconded by Mrs. Byers-Kang, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1CUR through #5CUR.							
	MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 9-0 for item #1CUR, and for items #3CUR through #5CUR: 8-0-1 for item #2CUR as Mrs. Richter abstained.							
FINANC) <u>E</u>							
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 \$3,014,588.34 for February 5, 2024 checks. Attachment: 2024-02-05 BILLS LIST							
2F	recommen current Ca	dation of the Supe	rintendent, appr n the amount	Fort Lee Board of Ed oves the payment of the of \$142,756.56 for Feb RIA BILLS LIST	claims on the			
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 Athletic bills list in the amount of \$6,324.00 for February 5, 2024 checks. Attachment: 2024-02-05 ATHLETIC BILLS LIST							
4F	THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following items for disposal/recycling:							
		Serial Number	Location	Description				
		#01566	School #2	Everett Baby Grand Piano - old and not repairable				
		#01572	School #2	30 in. TV - old and not repairable				
			•		-			



2P	THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon
	recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the retirement of Joseph Picone,
	as a Teacher of Music at School Fort Lee High School, after dedicating 26 years
	of service to the district, effective July 1, 2024.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the retirement of Harry Welte, as a Teacher of Music at School Fort Lee High School, after dedicating 43 years of service to the district, effective July 1, 2024.

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				
Michaela Kowalski	PT Paraprofessional	S3	Declined Position				
Rachel Ventrella	Teacher	S4	7/1/2024				

Effective date indicates first day off payroll

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **appointments** for the 2023-2024 school year, pending verification of employment:

ļ	<u>APPOINTMENTS</u>								
First Name	Last Name	Position	Loc	Position Control #	Annual Salary Prorated	Rationale	Effective Date		
Sharon	Cua Lee	Paraprofessional 2:1 Resource Grade 4	S4	9151-090-1213-01	\$25,079.00 (.83) 1/Deg	Resignation	2/20/2024 or sooner		
Lucia	Nunez	Paraprofessional 1:1 ASD GR 2-4	S2	9101-070-217-11	\$21,783.00 (.83) 1/ND	Resignation	2/20/2024 or sooner		
Christina	Perla	Learning Disabilities Consultant Teacher	LFCMS	3118-100-219-01	\$117,652.00 17/MA+60	Resignation	4/8/2024		
Jocelyn	Reinoso	Paraprofessional	S3	9101-080-1205-03	\$25,079.00 (.83) 1/Deg	Retirement	3/1/2024		

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following additional **staff transfers** during the 2023-2024 school year.

TRANSFERS								
Name	From Location	From Position	To Location	To Position	Salary Change	Effective Date		
Beverly Schlobach	СО	Registrar	CST	Administrative Assistant	\$66,514.00 prorated (Step 8)	3/1/24		
Joseph Cappellini	LFCMS	Custodian	S2	Custodian	N/A	2/6/24		
John Drejaj	S2	Custodian	LFCMS	Custodian	N/A	2/6/24		
Aben Lee	S3	Registered Nurse	S3	School Nurse	N/A	2/6/24		
Kathleen Pastena	S3	Paraprofessional S-LLD 1:1	S1	Paraprofessional 3:1 Resource Grade 4	N/A	2/6/24		

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

LEAVES OF ABSENCES								
Name	Position	Loc	Туре	New or Amend	Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave with benefits	Unpaid Leave No Benefits	Return Date
Georges Barretto-Sierra	Bus Driver	со	Medical	Amend	12/16/23 - 1/12/23	1/13/24 - 2/9/24	N/A	2/12/24
Lauren Carney	Speech Specialist	S1	Maternity	Amend	5/31/23 - 6/21/23	N/A	9/1/23 - 4/12/24	4/15/24
Kristin Cassavell	Grade 5 Math/Science Teacher	IS	FMLA	Amend	11/13/23 - 1/1/24	1/2/24 - 3/28/24	N/A	3/29/24
Mishell Chung	Grade 3 Teacher	S3	Maternity	Amend	1/19/24 - 2/5/24	2/6/24 - 6/2/24	N/A	6/3/24
Kathryn Drumgoole	Director of School Counseling	HS	Maternity	New	4/18/24 - 5/10/24	5/13/24 - 7/11/24	N/A	7/12/24
Jacqueline McCabe	Grade 4	S4	Maternity	Amend	2/26/24 - 4/19/24	4/22/24 - 6/30/24	N/A	9/1/24
Teny Ravul	Biology Teacher	HS	Maternity	New	N/A	9/1/24 - 2/28/25	N/A	3/3/25
Cean Spahn	Media Specialist	MS	Medical	New	1/11/24 - 1/26/24	N/A	N/A	1/29/24
#6953	Paraprofessional	MS	Admin	Amend	N/A	N/A	N/A	2/6/24

10P

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of **leave replacements** during the 2023-2024 school year, as outlined below:

LEAVE REPLACEMENTS							
Name	Grade/ Subject	Loc	Salary	Effective Dates	Reason for opening		
Andrea Nunez	Grade 2	S2	\$59,875.00 prorated	2/7/24 - 6/30/24	Clara Walden		
Sara Rho	Grade 4	S2	\$59,875.00 prorated	3/11/24 - 6/30/24	Jane Mun		
Sara Rho	Grade 5	IS	\$59,875.00 prorated	11/29/23 - 3/8/24	Kristen Cassavell		
Su Bin Sin	Grade 3	S4	\$59,875.00 prorated	3/27/24 - 6/30/24	Giana lafelice		

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 2023-2024 school year:

SUBSTITUTES

Margaret Conway - Substitute Nurse Rosemary Picinic - Substitute Teacher Ethan Cheung - Substitute Teacher Josephine Caputo - Substitute Teacher

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the payment of unused vacation days for Roberto Reyes, Custodian, in the amount of \$3,141.89, based upon 3 days at a per diem rate of \$273.94 for the 2022-2023 school year and 8.33 days at a per diem rate of \$278.52 for the 2023-2024 school year. (12/1/23 retirement)

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 2023-2024 school year:

6th Period Stipends						
Lewis F. Cole Middle School						
First Name Last Name Department						
Inne Cho World History - starting 1/17/24						

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the additional athletic officials for the 2023-2024 school year:

James Sullivan Connor Hughes Joseph Padovano Loai Hamdeh Michael Schroback

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following staff members for District sponsored After-School Extra Curricular Activities during the 2023-2024 school year, based upon IEPs, on an as needed basis:

<u>Names</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	Extra Compensation	Account #
Manal Hajmahoud	Extracurricular Paraprofessional for After- School Activities	\$30.00 per hour	11-401-100-100-00-000

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of an additional Home Instructor for the 2023-2024 school year as follows:

Additional Home Instructor 2023-2024				
Name	Certification Area(s)	Rate		
Rachel Healy	Teacher - Special Education	\$45.00 per hour		

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following staff members to provide support for the Sylvan After School Tutoring Program. To be paid out of ARP ESSER funds, account 20-487-200-100-00-000.

Name	Position	Effective Date	Rate	Max. hours/ Compensation
Caryn Gilbert	Paraprofessional	1/16/24 to 6/13/2024	\$30.00 per hour	80 hours / \$2,400.00
Sanjeeta Jain	Paraprofessional	1/25/24 to 6/13/24	\$30.00 per hour	57 hours/ \$1,700.00

- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the salary adjustment for Mariela Sanchez, a Custodian at School No 2, to include the \$350.00 Black Seal stipend, to be prorated as of November 20, 2023.
- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves Byung (Tom) Hur to provide CPR/AED Training for district employees (bus drivers, teachers, nurses, coaches 5 classes 3 hours each) at the hourly rate of \$45.00, not to exceed \$675.00.
- 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 2023-2024 school year:

INTERNSHIPS/STUDENT TEACHERS/PRACTICUM CANDIDATES Referring Type of Months From-Cooperating Student Name School Placed **Placement** Subject Area Duration Staff Member University To Fordham Monica Clinical School 2/6/2024-120 hours 5/18/2024 High School Reina Proto University **Belous** Practicum Psychology 2/6/2024-Middle Columbia Xiaoman Student Alexandra University Chen Teacher I Mathematics 150 hours 5/15/2024 School Scheiman

Fort Lee Board of Education Public Business Meeting Agenda

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MOTION by Ms. Morell, seconded by Ms. Colbath, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1P through #18P.

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

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Colbath, seconded by Ms. Morell, to adjourn, 8:50 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote 9-0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Dina Messery

Dina Messery
SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

DM/is Attachments 02-05-24