

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

**MINUTES**

**PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING  
MARCH 19, 2018  
LEWIS F. COLE MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA  
6:30 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER BY THE PRESIDENT**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mrs. Romba.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The Flag Salute was led by Mrs. Tuck.

**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 March 12, 2018 and posted 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 (6:45 p.m.), Mrs. Paula Colbath (6:33 p.m.), Mr. Ralph DiMeglio, Mrs. Esther Han Silver, Mrs. Holly Morell, Mr. Michael Rubino, Mr. David Sarnoff, Mrs. Lauran Tuck, Mrs. Candace Romba

**Also Present:** Mr. Kenneth Rota, Dr. Sharon Amato, Ms. Haquisha Taylor, Kathleen Nestor, Esq.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

MOTION by Mr. Sarnoff, seconded by Mrs. Morell, at 6:31 p.m., to move into Executive Session.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 7-0.

The Board reconvened into the Public Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Mr. Rota reported that there were twelve (12) investigations; three (3) were founded.

Fire and Security Drills for February 2018 were conducted.

Mrs. Romba congratulated students that were recognized as Spelling Bee Champions in the North Jersey Spelling Bee on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rota awarded achievement certificates to:

School No. 1	Maya Lee	Grade 3
School No. 2	Lucy Lee	Grade 6
School No. 3	Charlton Park, Jr.	Grade 3
School No. 4	Vikram Rajmohan	Grade 5
Middle School	Alicia Zhang	Grade 8

Mrs. Romba congratulated Alicia Zhang, Grade 8, as the First Place Winner in the Bergen County Science League Competition. Mr. Rota awarded Ms. Zhang an achievement certificate.

Mrs. Romba congratulated the Boys and Girls Winter Track teams for their advancement and participation in the 2017-2018 League Championships. Each coach and team player were recognized. Mrs. Romba and Mr. Rota recognized the following athletes for winning their respective events in the North 2, Group 2, State Sectionals:

Kendall Calballero	55m Dash	Winter Track	Winner
Emanuel Montoya	High Jump	Winter Track	Winner

Mrs. Romba congratulated the Boys Bowling team for their advancement and participation in the 2017-2018 League Championships. Each coach and team player was recognized.

Mr. Rota presented the 2018-2019 Preliminary Budget. Mr. Rota and Ms. Taylor heard and fielded budget comments and questions from Board members and the public.

Mr. Sarnoff commended Mr. Rota and Mrs. Taylor for managing the difficulty of balancing the 2018-2019 budget when other, more affluent districts are cutting programs to do so.

George Porto, Community member, inquired about the budgeting of interest earned on referendum monies as well as the school tax rate.

Amy Ko-Tang, Community member, inquired about debt interest payments to referendum bondholders.

Mr. Rota shared that, upon preliminary budget approval, the budget presentation will be posted on the website for public access.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Curriculum Committee – Ms. Cho shared that the Curriculum Committee met on Tuesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. The 2018-2019 budget was reviewed and includes the continuation of the Star Renaissance assessment program, Balanced Literary training for staff, a new Math program for grades K-8, and a new language arts curriculum for K-5.

Finance Committee – Mr. DiMeglio shared that the Finance Committee met on Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup>. The 2018-2019 budget was reviewed and the Committee is in agreement with the preliminary budget presented. There may be opportunities for additional uses of capital reserves.

### **PUBLIC WORK SESSION**

Mr. Rubino proposes the Board add, for the 2018-2019 school year, one (1) Class III Officer in each of the six (6) schools costing the Board approximately \$270,000 per year.

Mr. Rota shared that we would need to reduce \$270,000 in a current expense in the preliminary budget to support Mr. Rubino's proposal as the preliminary budget on the agenda this evening is currently balanced.

Mr. Sarnoff shared that the idea has been discussed at various times and specifically after the Sandy Hook tragedy and that he supports putting Class III officers in schools. Mr. Sarnoff further shared that he would want to see Class III Officers in the form of certified SROs (School Resource Officers). Mr. Sarnoff shared that a Class III Officer is a retired police officer who by order of the governor is a lawful police officer on school property. Off school property there is no police power. Mr. Sarnoff shared his belief that Class III Officers is a community issue not just a school issue. Mr. Sarnoff further opined that it will require various stakeholders to come together to resolve the funding issue.

Mrs. Colbath asked if reallocating the \$200,000 earmarked for security mantrap installations to Class III Officers makes sense. Mrs. Colbath inquired if staging the budgeting of the recurring costs of Class III Officers is an option. Mrs. Colbath further shared that she is very concerned about the security in our schools because it is relatively easy to get into our schools. Mrs. Colbath strongly suggests the Board move in the direction of hiring Class III Officers even if with a phased-in implementation approach.

Mrs. Tuck shared that tragically Parkland had an armed security guard and still experienced the tragedy. Mrs. Tuck further shared that she would hate to be in the position where we have added staff, we are still somewhat vulnerable, and we get to a point where we would need to cut programs not knowing what state aid, federal aid, and healthcare costs will look like down the line. Mrs. Tuck shared that she absolutely supports the mantrap installations and additional cameras.

Mrs. Romba added that we would need to identify where we will get the funding from and further shared that the mantrap installations are a good start to enhancing school security.

Mrs. Morrell voiced her agreement with Messrs. Rubino and Sarnoff and suggested at least starting with the budgeting of three (3) Class III Officers.

Additional Board member discussions ensued about current SROs, proposals on the various types of officers, and the substantial police presence in and around our schools.

Mr. Rota shared that he will bring the concerns of the Board regarding Class III Officer funding to the Chief of Police and to the Mayor and ask for help. Mr. Rota shared that, in his talks with Chief Bendul, philosophically, there is no opposition to the idea of Class III Officers.

Mrs. Colbath thanked Ms. Frim for her 48 years of service to the Fort Lee Schools. Mrs. Romba also shared this sentiment. Mrs. Tuck remarked that she couldn't be happier to have had the opportunity to have her son in Ms. Frim's current class and shared that she will miss her. Mrs. Morrell echoed the sentiment.

**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 Mrs. Colbath, at 8:29 p.m., to open the floor to the public.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

Julene Stassou, School No. 2 parent, shared her concerns about School 2 security. Ms. Stassou asked the Board for clarification on what qualifies incidents as HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying).

Sara Krikscivn, School No. 3 parent, thanked the Board for resolving the teachers' contract, offered the Board a fundraising committee to offset costs in anticipation of the next round of negotiations, recommended the Board continue to look at school security research about what's most effective so that there are evidence based decisions, asked for an update on the Middle School construction timelines, and thanked Mr. Rota for continuing to meet with School 3 parents.

Mr. Sarnoff shared that, with respect to best practices in school security, our Deputy Chief Pat Kissane is one of the leading authorities on school safety/security not only in the state of NJ but nationally.

Anthony Papavasiliou, Middle and School No. 4 parent, clarified that, the State website details that Class III officers **must** complete SRO training.

Amy Ko-Tang, School No. 3 parent, thanks Mr. Rota and Ms. Taylor for putting together the presentation, recommended comparing our budget to other towns' budgets, suggested simplifying the budget presentation, and asked if the Board would communicate ahead of time the major items to be discussed at upcoming board meetings to increase parent interest.

Cindy Gereb, Middle School parent, recommends that the FLBOE calendar include elementary graduation dates to allow for parents to plan better.

MOTION by Mr. Sarnoff, seconded by Mrs. Tuck, at 8:45 p.m. to close the floor to the public.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**BOARD**

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

Public Business Meeting Minutes	March 5, 2018
Private Executive Meeting Minutes	March 5, 2018

**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 the attendance and travel expenditures for the NJSBA Board Member Delegate for the New Jersey School Boards Association Semi-Annual Delegate Assembly.

<u>WORKSHOP</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>GSA</u>	<u>RATE</u>
				<u>MILEAGE</u>	<u>AND</u>
				<u>TOLLS</u>	
				<u>MAX \$65</u>	
NJSBA's Semi-Annual Delegate Assembly	05-19-2018	Esther Han Silver David Sarnoff	The Conference Center at Mercer (Mercer County Community College Campus) 1200 Old Trenton Road West Windsor, NJ 08550	\$65	

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

MOTION carried unanimously upon roll call vote, 9-0, for items #1B and #2B. MOTION carried upon roll call vote, 8-0-1, for item #3B; Mrs. Han Silver abstained.

### **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 7](#)

**2CUR THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, under recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **amended effective dates for a Related Services Provider** (previously approved on Resolution No. 28779 dated December 11, 2017) to provide speech language services during a leave replacement as outlined below:

Austin Texas Learning Group, LLC (ATX Learning) 12613 Scofield Farms Drive Austin, TX 78727 (800) 846-5120 x103	Services: Rate for Services – SLP: Start Date: End Date: Service Time:	Speech Language Pathologist \$95 per hour January 2, 2018 <b>Extended to April 26, 2018</b> 4 days/24 hours per week
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MOTION by Mrs. Cho, seconded by Mrs. Han Silver, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1CUR and #2CUR.

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

**FINANCE**

- 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 January 2018** 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 24](#)
- 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 January 2018**. 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 60](#)
- 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 \$840,875.22 for March 2018 checks**. [See Appendix Page 8](#)
- 4F** **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
1 - \$100 Amazon Gift Card	\$100.00	Yellow Folder	District Employee Wellness Initiative
Check	\$700.00	Scholarship America – Target Field Trips Grants Program	To be used to offset FLHS Library Field Trip expenses
<b>TOTAL VALUE</b>	<b>\$800.00</b>		

- 5F** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-38, that the 2018-2019 school year budget includes an Enrollment Adjustment in the amount of \$577,137 and a Health Care Cost Adjustment in the amount of \$1,016,435.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, approves a **Preliminary 2018-2019 School District Budget** as follows:

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Local Tax Levy</b>
General Fund	\$67,485,835	\$63,212,253
Special Revenue Fund	1,241,954	-0-
Debt Service Fund	4,274,389	3,716,281
<b>Total Base Budget</b>	<b>\$73,002,178</b>	<b>\$66,928,534</b>

**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 2017-2018 school year and has spent \$27,333.72 as of March 14, 2018.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education hereby establishes the school district travel maximum for the 2018-2019 school year at \$100,000.

MOTION by Mr. DiMeglio, seconded by Mrs. Morell, that the Fort Lee Board of Education approves items #1F through #6F.

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

**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 23](#)

**2P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves **the suspension, without pay**, from March 13, 2018 to March 18, 2018, and the **termination of employment for Gary Dimick, Physical Education Aide at School No. 1**, effective March 19, 2018.

**3P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, **accepts, with regret, the retirement of Joanne Frim, Elementary Teacher at School No. 4**, after dedicating 48 years of service to the district, effective July 1, 2018.

**4P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, **accepts, with regret, the retirement of Georgia Servos, Confidential Assistant to the Business Administrator in Central Office**, after dedicating 27 years of service to the district, effective June 1, 2018.

**5P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following **leaves**:

First Name	Last Name	Position	Loc	Type	New or Amended	Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave with benefits	Unpaid Leave No Benefits	Return Date
Anastasia	Findanis	Kindergarten Teacher	S1	Maternity	New	6/1/18-6/30/18	9/1/18 - 1/31/19	N/A	2/1/19
Michele	Sabella	Lang Arts Teacher	MS	Maternity	Amended	3/12/18 - 4/3/18	4/4/18 - 5/18/18	N/A	5/21/18
Christina	Zalokostas	Grade 1 Teacher	S1	Medical	New	3/12/18-3/23/18	N/A	N/A	4/2/18

- 6P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment of **leave replacements** during the 2017-2018 school year, as outlined below:

LEAVE REPLACEMENT						
FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	GRADE/ SUBJECT	SCHOOL	Salary	Effective Dates	Reason for opening
Chae Ri	Han	Special Education Inclusion	MS	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	<b>Amended</b> Work days: 3/9/18 to 6/30/18	Admin Leave for #4793
Cara	Becher	Special Education ASD	S2	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	Work Days: 4/26/18 to 6/30/18	Maternity Leave for Jaritza Rojas
Sandra	Tarabokija	Grade 6	S2	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	Work Days: 4/23/18 to 6/30/18	Maternity Leave for Ashley Rice

- 7P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the **appointment of Aides** for the 2017-2018 school year, as follows:

Appointment of Additional Aides for the 2017-2018 School Year (All Salaries are Prorated)								
First Name	Last Name	Position	Loc	Step	Class	Annual Salary	Effective Date	Reason
Fatemah	Nabiyouni	PT 1:1 Aide (.83) Preschool Special Education	S2	1	Degreed	\$21,019	3/20/18	IEP Need

- 8P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the appointment an additional **Fall Coach** for the 2017-2018 school year, as follows. All appointments are subject to completion of all personnel documentation and fingerprinting process, prior to starting of said activities.

Name	Sport	Position	Season	Class	Step	Stipend
Daniel LaFalce	Soccer	Assistant Coach	Winter	II	1	\$5,955

- 9P** **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fort Lee Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approves additional **Tuition Reimbursement for 2014-2015 coursework** (previously approved at the tuition reimbursement rate for the 2014-2015 school year not to exceed \$522.85 per credit) **for Kristine Rodriguez in the amount of \$4,185.00** (for 3 graduate courses at TCNJ at \$1,395.00 per course), inadvertently not paid at that time.

- 10P** **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 2017-2018 school year:

**Evangelia Zouras**

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



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

**POLICY**

**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: [Click here for 2018-03-19 #1POL Back-up](#)

Policy/Reg No.	Topic
P & R 5530	Substance Abuse (Revised)

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

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

**OLD BUSINESS** – None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Good Luck to Mrs. Han Silver and Mrs. Morell who qualified to sit as Certified Master Board Members.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mr. Rubino, seconded by Mrs. Morell, to adjourn, 8:51 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously upon voice vote, 9-0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

*Haquisha Q. Taylor*

SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY

HQT/haa  
03-22-2018