

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

34 Lee's Hill Road, New Vernon, NJ 07976

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 21, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

Mission Statement

The Harding Township School provides a strong educational foundation which inspires students to achieve academic excellence. Our dedicated faculty stimulates intellectual growth using a challenging curriculum within a supportive learning environment. We encourage students to become self-directed, lifelong learners who are well prepared for the academic and social challenges of the future.

The 2022-2023 Harding Township School District goals are inspired by and connected to the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan that was developed by key stakeholders.

District Goal 1: Strategic Plan Goal Area: Identify Needs/Personalized Learning

To identify learning gaps and measure the academic progress of our students through the administration of pre- and post-grade-level assessments in Reading, Math, and Writing that correlate with the NJSL standards and Reader's/Writer's Workshop.

District Goal 2: Strategic Plan Goal Areas: Future-Ready Instruction and Curriculum and Well-Rounded Student

Continue to expand student exploration opportunities, such as (examples) the Performing Arts, Husky TV, debate, a student newsletter, and other feasible collaborative projects that empower students to become active participants in their learning.

District Goal 3: Strategic Plan Goal Areas: Facilities and Safety

Work with the appropriate local, county, and state authorities to assess the safety/security of the district's buildings/grounds, protocols/guidelines/practices, and continue to foster a safe learning environment.

District Goal 4: Strategic Plan Goal Area: Identify Needs/Personalized Learning

To articulate student learning differentiation strategies currently utilized, and to further challenge and enhance learning for each student based on their individual needs, strengths, and interests.

- I. **Call to Order** – The regular session of the Harding Township Board of Education is called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Mr. Gjivoje from the Harding Township School, 34 Lee's Hill Road, New Vernon, NJ 07976.
- II. **Presiding Officers Statement/Sunshine Statement:**
In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*, adequate notification of this meeting has been provided to the Daily Record, Observer Tribune and posted on the bulletin boards of the New Vernon Post Office, Green Village Post Office, Harding Township Municipal Building, Harding Township Elementary School and Harding Township Middle School on January 6, 2022.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**
Present: Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos
Also Present: Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Spelker, Business Administrator, Mr. John Jennings
Absent: Dr. Alex Anastasiou
Note: Mrs. Krikos was present via teleconference
- V. **PRESENTATION**
Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) – Ms. Kathi Mantell, Nisivoccia Partners - District Auditor- Ms. Kathi Mantell, Nisivoccia Parters (District Auditor) presented a summary of the Audit for the 21-22 school year to the Board. The ACFR will be posted on the District Website. Mr. Jennings, Dr. Spelker and Mr. Gjivoje thanked Nisivoccia for their Audit presentation.

VI. HEARING OF PUBLIC REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS (Policy 0167)

MOTION presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh unanimously approved to open public comment regarding agenda items only at 7:20 p.m.

Suzanne Piotrowski commented that it would have been nice to have a copy of the Audit Presentation. Mr. Jennings gave a copy of the presentation to Suzanne Piotrowski and noted the ACFR would be Posted on the website.

MOTION presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved to close public comment regarding agenda items only at 7:24p.m.

VII. REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS

- a. Superintendent – Dr. Spelker noted that School will be closed Nov. 24th and 25th due to Thanksgiving holiday. Saturday Dec. 3rd will be the PTO Breakfast. Girls and Boys basketball has begun and wished the students and coaches good luck for a healthy and successful season. Kindergarten through second grade concert will be held Wednesday, December 7th at 9:00 a.m. HTS's Holiday Winter Concert will be held Thursday December 15th at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Friedman will present the Start Strong Assessment results at the December 19th BOE meeting. Christine Mulligan has been named Exemplary Educator by the NJDOE for 2022. Dr. Spelker noted that the District is working on an APP for bus transportation that would allow parents to track the bus locations. The District is hoping to roll this out over the next few weeks. He also noted the District received a 97 score on a Cyber Security test from the NJ Cyber Security Department.
- b. Business Administrator – Mr. Jennings thanked the administration team for all their efforts in attaining a clean audit with no findings. He also reviewed the items on the Board Business and Finance and Facilities agenda with the Board. He also commented on the impact of inflation with certain budget items including health insurance, transportation, property insurance, gas, electric and aid in lieu. He noted that these items are increasing YOY in the range of 7.5% to 35%. Mr. Gjivoje thanked Mr. Jennings for the commentary and noted this was something the District would need to address when formulating next year's budget.
- c. Facilities and Finance, 11/16/22 – Mr. Bruno noted the Committee discussed the following:
 - Update on the MS HVAC project
 - ES/MS Generation Project
 - Budget Timeline
 - Christine Mulligan Memorial
 - Teacher Contract noting Board negotiation committee established
- d. Curriculum and Instruction, 11/16/22 – Dr. Spelker noted the committee discussed the Start Strong Tests, which Mrs. Friedman would present to the Board at December Board Meeting. Updates on the status of teacher observations. They also discussed the Harding Academy noting that 43 students have signed up. Dr. Spelker thanked the teachers for their support of the program.
- e. Personnel and Management, 11/16/22 – Mrs. Krikos noted the committee discussed maternity leave extensions, an update on the status of teacher observations, Start Strong Tests, Christine Mulligan tribute.

f. Madison Board of Education, 11/15/22 Mr. Bruno noted at the last Madison BOE meeting there was a discussion regarding Transgender Policy amendments. They also discussed School calendar changes regarding the start of the school year given lack of air conditioning at the schools. Last year given the heat, the school ended up having half days.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

IX. BOARD BUSINESS

Motion presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh to approve:

BB-011 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education approves the following minutes:

- Regular Session November 7, 2022
- No Executive Session Held on November 7, 2022

BB-012 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools accepts and approves the 2021-2022 Audit and the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) as presented by Nisovocchia & Co., LLP, for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022.

BB-013 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the submission of the 2021-2022 Audit Summary Report (AUDSUM).

BB-014 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the submission of the 2021-2022 Electronic Upload of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) Submission Package.

Roll call vote:

AYES: *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

ABSENT: *Dr. Alex Anastasiou*

FACILITIES AND FINANCE

FF-057 Approve Revised Renewal of Public Transportation Routes

FF-058 Approve Bills List

FF-059 Approve Consultant Agreement

FF-060 Approve amendment to Long Range Facility Plan

FF-061 Approve Parent Contract for Student Transportation

FF-062 Approve Budget Calendar

FF-063 Approve Financial Reports – October

FF-064 Approve elimination of inactive lunch accounts

FF-065 Approve Request for use of School Rooms/Grounds

MOTION presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mrs. Krikos to approve:

FF-057 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the revised renewal of public bus routes HAR1, HAR2, HAR3, HAR4, HAR5, HAR6, HAR9, HAR10 for the 2022-2023 school year at a cost of \$476,640.00.

FF-058 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the attached bills list dated November 21, 2022 in the amount of \$988,440.89.

FF-059 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves Education Services, LLC to provide psychological evaluations services for the 2022-2023 school year at a rate of \$425.00 per evaluation for the specified educational services requested by the Board.

FF-060 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the amendment to the Long-Range Facilities Plan to include the Elementary School Roof Replacement Project.

FF-061 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves a Parental Contract for student transportation, student ID 1794276995, from home to the Harding Township School District from 1/1/2023 through 6/30/2023 in the amount of \$6,000.

FF-062 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the 2023-2024 Budget Year Calendar.

FF-063 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the October Secretary and Treasurer reports certifying that no major appropriation or account or fund has been over-extended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

FF-064 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the elimination of inactive student lunch accounts.

FF-065 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves a Request for Use of School Rooms/Grounds by the Harding Township PTO for use of the Cafeteria on December 3, 2022 from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon for a pancake breakfast.

Roll call vote:

AYES: *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

ABSENT: *Dr. Alex Anastasiou*

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

CI-011 Approve Field Trips

MOTION Presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh to approve:

CI-011 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the following:

Mrs. Engelsman, Mrs. Caproni, Mrs. Muench, Mrs. Baldassari; Grade 6, Liberty Science Center, December 8, 2022, to support studies on gravity, solar systems and galaxies.

Roll call vote:

AYES: *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

ABSENT: *Dr. Alex Anastasiou*

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT

PM-028 Approve Substitute Teacher

PM-029 Approve Extracurricular Assignment

MOTION presented by Mr. Singh and seconded by Mr. Bruno to approve:

PM-028 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the following substitute teacher coverage:
Mrs. Connie Kapp, Grade 1 at a per diem rate of \$130, effective Nov. 28, and Nov. 30 through December 23, 2022.

PM-029 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approves the following:
Ms. Duggan, Girls' Basketball Head Coach at a stipend of \$4,015, for the 2022-23 winter season.

Roll call vote:

AYES: *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

ABSENT: *Dr. Alex Anastasiou*

X. HEARING OF PUBLIC REGARDING (Agenda and non-Agenda Items- Policy 0167)

MOTION presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved to open public comment at 8:00 p.m.

Suzanne Piotrowski commented that she loved the idea of the Bus APP. She also commented on the Madison School Year Calendar and how this should be considered with the Harding Township School Calendar. Mr. Gjivoje noted that Dr. Spelker meets monthly with the Madison Superintendent to discuss these types of considerations. Mr. Singh noted that other States begin their school year in Mid-August which puts NJ Students at a competitive disadvantage in regards to Testing.

MOTION presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh unanimously approved to close public comment at 8:05 p.m.

XI. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS – Mr. Gjivoje commented on the Christine Mulligan recognition which would be at the next Board Meeting in December. He mentioned the Bus APP is a great development and thanked everyone for their work on this effort. He also commented on the Cyber Security Test score of 97% and thanked everyone for their work on this accomplishment.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – No Executive Session

MOTION presented by _____ and seconded by _____ to enter Executive Session at _____.

Be It Resolved, that the Harding Township Board of Education convenes Executive Session in full compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.; and the minutes of the discussion of any of these items will be available to the public when such minutes have been approved by the Board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1.

Mr. Davor Gjivoje _____ Dr. Alex Anastasiou _____ Mr. Abi Singh _____
Mr. Richard Bruno _____ Mrs. Melissa Krikos _____

XIII. RETURN to PUBLIC SESSION – No Executive Session

MOTION presented by _____ and seconded by _____ to return to Public Session at _____.

Mr. Davor Gjivoje _____ Dr. Alex Anastasiou _____ Mr. Abi Singh _____
Mr. Richard Bruno _____ Mrs. Melissa Krikos _____

XIV. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS – No discussion

XV. ADJOURN

MOTION presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mrs. Krikos to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

AYES: Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos

ABSENT: Dr. Alex Anastasiou

Respectively Submitted



John Jennings
Business Administrator/Board Secretary