

HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

Monday, February 13, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Regular Session Minutes

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 NJSLS 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 Board of Education is called to order by Mr. Gjivoje at 7:02 p.m. in the Library of the Harding Township Middle 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 12, 2023.

- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**

- IV. **ROLL CALL**
AYES: Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Dr. Alex Anastasiou, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos
Also Present: Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Spelker; Board Secretary, Mr. John Jennings

- V. **PRESENTATION**
District Goals Update #2 - Dr. Matthew A. Spelker, Superintendent
Dr. Spelker provided Goals Update #2 for the 2022-2023 school year. He reviewed the 4 goals with the Board and provided an update on progress for each. He noted that halfway through the school

year the district has made great progress in achieving our stated goals and objectives. All baseline and mid-year assessments have been completed. Teachers are using this baseline and mid-year data to update their instruction and provide the needed assistance and differentiated instruction for the students. He noted that students have been afforded a number of opportunities in the Performing Arts and through Husky TV to enhance their educational opportunities. Various learning opportunities have begun and are being planned that will provide the students with collaborative projects that empower students to become active participants in their learning. Mr. Gjivoje commented that the community should be properly advised of the OEM Drill with first responders (Goal 3) to ensure that the event is a Drill and not an actual emergency. Dr. Anastasiou commented that the District ensure that the AED devices maintained in the District are properly maintained (batteries up to date). Mr. Gjivoje also commented that Goal 2 includes new initiatives as well as enhancing previous initiatives. Suzanne Piotrowski, Harding resident, commented that she would like Goal 2 to build on visual and fine arts.

Semi Annual School Safety Data System/HIB Report - Dr. Matthew A. Spelker, Superintendent
Dr. Spelker reviewed the Semi-Annual SSDS and HIB-ITP Report for the 2022-23 school year. The report covered the time period from 7/1/22 to 12/31/22. He noted that there were zero incidents of HIB, Violence, Vandalism, Substance offense, Theft, Damage to property and Weapons offense and 1 incident of other category which was located in the cafeteria. He also reviewed the historical incident rate noting that the number of incidents per year ranged from 0-4 for the full year. He reviewed the training staff performed during the period reviewed. He commented that Harding Township School is proud to be a safe and caring environment for students to learn and grow. He thanked the faculty and administration who have made a concerted effort to improve the climate and culture of the school. He also thanked the parents and Board for their continued support of the Climate and Culture Committee and School Safety Team. Mr. Gjivoje and Mr. Bruno commented that Harding Township School is fortunate to have a stable learning environment and thanked everyone for their efforts. Dr. Anastasiou noted that Climate and Culture goes beyond what the Committee does and is a community-based effort.

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

MOTION to open public comments for agenda items only presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Dr. Anastasiou, unanimously approved at 7:28 p.m.

Suzanne Piotrowski of Harding commented that she would like to see documents mentioned in the agenda be posted on the website prior to the Board Meeting. Mr. Gjivoje commented that he would review the current procedures and report back to the public.

MOTION to close public comments for agenda items only presented by Mrs. Krikos and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved at 7:31 p.m.

VII. REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS

a. Superintendent – Dr. Spelker asked that Board members and community members take time to read the article in the Observer Tribune regarding the Districts Start Strong Results. He noted that play practice for “Newsies” continues and the performance will be Friday March 3rd 7pm, Saturday March 4th 5pm and Sunday March 5th 2pm. An update on the Long-Range Facility Plan will be given by Dr. Spelker at the April 17th BOE meeting. He noted that both basketball teams made the playoffs and won first round games but lost in the second round. He congratulated both teams and coaches for a great season.

b. Business Administrator – Mr. Jennings reviewed the items on the finance section of the agenda with the Board. Additionally, Mr. Jennings highlighted FF-014 which involves the subscription transportation fees for the 23-24 school year. He noted that subscription fees have not changed since 2012 and with the increased cost of transportation, (up 29% in 22-23 school year) it was necessary to increase the subscription fees by \$100 per level. He commented that even with the increase in fees, the rates are significantly lower than surrounding districts. Additionally, the District is still paying for approximately 2/3 the cost of the transportation costs for the subscription service. Regarding FF-017 Mr. Jennings noted this resolution is to increase the Bid threshold resulting from his attainment of his QPA certification. This allows the district to increase the dollar threshold of purchases without having to go through a Bid process. Mr. Jennings also discussed the walk-in motion FF-023 regarding the ROD Grant application. He noted that while this was previously approved by the Board at the 1/23/23 BOE meeting, the Architect is requesting additional language be added per State requirements.

c. Facilities and Finance, 2/8/23 – Mr. Singh noted the Committee met and discussed the following topics in their meeting;

- Middle School HVAC project update
- ES/MS standby generator which is not being pursued at this time
- Teacher Contract Negotiations
- Budget Presentation
- ES roof project ROD Grant
- MS ADA Ramp
- School Calendar

d. Curriculum and Instruction, No Meeting

e. Personnel and Management, No Meeting

f. Madison Board of Education, 2/9/23 – Mr. Bruno commented there was still some fall-out from the Madison Board's reorganization meeting. He also noted there were several comments from parents regarding the School's Transgender policy. He noted that the District Lawyer did a presentation to the Board on Best Board Practices.

g. Climate and Culture – Dr. Anastasiou commented on the successful 100th Day Celebration where students collected food cans for the food bank.

h. Negotiations – Dr. Anastasiou noted that the Negotiations Committed met with the Teachers association on February 7th. The next meeting is scheduled for March 8th and the process is moving forward.

i. HIB (if necessary)

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

Nurses Report, January 2023

IX. BOARD BUSINESS

BB-013 Approve January 23, 2023 Regular and Executive Session Minutes

BB-014 Approve First Reading of Bylaws, Policies, Regulations

MOTION presented by Mrs. Krikos and seconded by Dr. Anastasiou to approve:

BB-013 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education approve the following minutes:

- Regular Session, January 23, 2023
- Executive Session, January 23, 2023

BB-014 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education approves the following first reading of Bylaws, Policies and Regulations:

Bylaw 0152 Board Officers

P 0161 Call, Adjournment and Cancellation

Bylaw 0162 Notice of Board Meetings

P 1648.11 The Road Forward COVID 19 – Health and Safety (Abolished)

P 1648.13 School Employee Vaccination Requirements (Abolished)

P/R 2423 Bilingual and ESL Education

P/R 2425 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Program

P/R 5200 Attendance

P 5512 Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying

P/R 8140 Student Enrollment, Enrollment Accounting

P/R 8330 Student Records

R 8420.2 Bomb Threats

R 8430.7 Lockdown Procedures

R 8420.10 Active Shooter

Dr. Spelker reviewed the Policy updates with the Board. He noted that the Policy Committee reviewed the updates and were all in agreement on the language of the first read updates.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

Mr. Gjivoje asked for a **MOTION** to add **FF-023** to the agenda, this was presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved to add **FF-023** to the agenda for vote.

FACILITIES/FINANCE

FF-010 Approve Bills List

FF-011 Approve Financial Reports

FF-012 Approve January Transfer Report

FF-013 Approve Tri-County Behavioral Care

FF-014 Approve Subscription Transportation Fees

FF-015 Approve St. Joseph's Children's Hospital

FF-016 Approve Institute of Neurology

FF-017 Approve Bid Threshold

FF-018 Approve Morris Psychological Group

FF-019 Approve The Family Center at Montclair

FF-020 Approve Facility Use Application HTRA Summer Camp

FF-021 Approve submission of REAP Grant

FF-022 Approve Learn Well

FF-023 Approve ROD Grant Submission – This was added to the agenda by motion approved above.

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

FF-010 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the bills listed dated February 13, 2023 in the amount of \$755,200.09.

FF-011 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the January 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 districts obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

FF-012 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the January Transfer Report.

FF-013 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves Tri-County Behavioral Care for the 2022-2023 school year pertaining to the referral for and completion of School Clearance Assessment (SCA) and/or Substance Evaluation & Treatment (SET) at the rate of \$100.00 per SCA and \$150 per SET.

FF-014 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the 2023-2024 annual Subscription Transportation fees as follows: 1 Child \$410, 2 Children \$460, 3 Children \$560, 4 or more children \$600

FF-015 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves St. Joseph's Health for neurodevelopmental evaluations for the 2022-2023 school year at a fee of \$450 per evaluation.

FF-016 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves Institute of Neurology, Dr. Goldberg for Pediatric Neuro Evaluations at a fee of \$725 per evaluation.

FF-017 WHEREAS 18A:18A-2 provides that a board of education shall assign the authority, responsibility and accountability for the purchasing activity of the board of education to a person who shall have the power to prepare advertisements, to advertise for and receive bids and with the prior written authority of the Superintendent of Schools, to award contracts as permitted by this chapter.

WHEREAS, 18A:18A-3 provides that contracts, awarded by the purchasing agent that do not exceed in the aggregate in a contract year the bid threshold may be awarded by the purchasing agent without advertising for bids when so authorized by board resolution, and;

WHEREAS, 18A:18A-3 also authorizes a board of education to establish a bid threshold of \$44,000 if they employ a qualified purchasing agent as determined by the Department of Community Affairs, and;

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. Statue 18A:18A-37, c. provides that all contracts that are in the aggregate less than 15% (\$6,600) of the bid threshold may be awarded by the purchasing agent without soliciting competitive quotations if so authorized by Board Resolution.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education pursuant to the statutes cited above hereby appoints John Jennings, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary as its duly authorized purchasing agent, and is duly assigned the authority and responsibility for the purchasing activity of the Harding Township School District, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that John Jennings is hereby authorized to award contracts on behalf of the Harding Township District Board of Education that are in the aggregate less than 15% (\$6,600) of the bid threshold without soliciting competitive quotations, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that John Jennings is hereby authorized as a qualified purchasing agent as determined by the Department of Community Affairs and holds a certificate attesting to the same which authorizes him to issue contracts up to \$44,000 without soliciting bids.

FF-018 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves Morris Psychological Group P.A. for the 2022-2023 school year per the attached fee schedules.

FF-019 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves The Family Center at Montclair for the 2022-2023 school to provide Mental Health Screenings at \$150 and Psychiatric Evaluations for the Child Study Team at a cost of \$1600.

FF-020 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves a Facility Use Application submitted by Jennifer Baldassari for use of Middle School 1st floor classrooms, health office, gymnasium, cafeteria, PreK and Kindergarten classrooms, blacktop, basketball courts, playgrounds and fields from June 26th – July 24th (excluding July 4th) for HTRA Summer Camp at a cost of \$400 per week for 5 weeks.

FF-021 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the submission and acceptance of the FY 2023 (2023-2024 school year) Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) Grant Application as part of the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP in the amount of \$23,437.

FF-022 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves LearnWell to provide Home Instruction Services for Student ID #10694 for 10 hours per week at the rate of \$55 per hour, not to exceed \$3,500.

FF-023 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, in the County of Morris, New Jersey, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, authorizes Parette Somjen District Architects to submit all necessary plans and paperwork to the Department of Education concerning the:

1. Roof Replacement at Harding Elementary School

to serve as an application to the Office of School Facilities and an amendment to the District's Long-Range Facility Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this project shall be a "Regular Operating District Grant" project and the Board of Education is seeking State funding but will fund the remaining portion of the Project through the District's Capital Reserve Account. The submission of the application does not obligate the District to proceed with the project. The final decision on whether to proceed on the project will be taken by the Harding Township Board of Education at a future date.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

CI-002 Approve School Calendar, 2023-24 SY

CI-003 Approve Business Administrator Travel

CI-004 Approve Board Professional Development

CI-005 Approve Faculty Professional Development

CI-006 Approve In Service Professional Development

CI-007 Approve Faculty Professional Development

MOTION presented by Dr. Anastasiou and seconded by Mrs. Krikos to approve:

CI-002 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the school calendar for 2023/24 school year.

CI-003 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the Registration and Travel Expenses for John Jennings to attend the NJASBO Conference on June 6-9, 2023. Registration of \$275, Lodging of \$351.24 (\$117.03 for 3 nights), Meals & I&E at the GSA per diem rate, and mileage at 47 cents per mile.

CI-004 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the Registration for Mr. Richard Bruno, to attend the Spring Education Symposium (Virtual) on April 25th for a registration fee of \$99.

CI-005 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approves the following:

Mrs. Justine Aquitato, Mrs. Melanie Rega and Mrs. Brittany Worley to attend a Rutgers University online webinar, Using Patterns of Strengths/Weakness Model to Identify Specific Learning Disabilities/Problems, March 3/March 10, 2023, registration \$140 per person.

CI-006 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the following one-hour in-service Professional Development: College of Saint Elizabeth guest speaker, "Adult Well-Being" Feb. 27, 2023 at the monthly faculty meeting.

CI-007 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the Following:

Mrs. Justine Aquitato to attend the NJALC Spring Conference April 28, 2023, registration \$125 and mileage reimbursement of \$0.47 per mile.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT

PM-008 Approve Administrator in Charge, Field Trip

PM-009 Approve Faculty Resignation

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

PM-008 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approves the following:

Mrs. Jennifer Baldassari, Administrator in Charge at the Grade 8 overnight field trip June 6-8, 2023.

PM-009 RESOLVED, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approves the following resignation:

Mrs. Sharon Cerverizzo, Teacher of French, effective February 13, 2023.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

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

MOTION to open public comments for agenda and non-agenda items presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved at 8:10 p.m.

No Public Comments

MOTION to close public comments for agenda and non-agenda items presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved at 8:11 p.m.

XI. PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS – Mr. Gjivoje encouraged the public to attend the March 13th BOE meeting which will present the Tentative Budget. He noted it will be a challenging budget given inflation and costs pressures. He also thanked the faculty and staff for the 100 Days Celebration which was a big success.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – No Executive Session Held

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 held

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 - None

XV. ADJOURN

MOTION presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

Respectively submitted,



John J. Jennings

Business Administrator/Board Secretary

