



HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AGENDA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
HOLMDEL HIGH SCHOOL
MAY 17, 2023 6:00 PM
PUBLIC MEETING APPROXIMATELY 7:00 P.M.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Holmdel Township Public Schools is to provide a comprehensive and caring educational environment that will develop the potential of every student into achievement. In partnership with our community, the School District will support all of our students' efforts to meet and exceed the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and to become responsible and resourceful citizens and lifelong learners.

A. Call to Order

The Board of Education, Township of Holmdel, met in a Committee of the Whole on Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at Holmdel High School, 36 Crawfords Corner Road, Holmdel, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mr. Wall, Board Vice President.

B. Open Public Meetings Act

Statement is hereby made that adequate notice of this meeting was given by:

- Posting written notice prominently on the bulletin board in the Office of the Board of Education, 65 McCampbell Road, Holmdel, New Jersey, the District's website and sent to the four district schools.
- The mailing and/or hand delivery of said notice to the designated newspapers, Asbury Park Press, Star Ledger, the PLG, PSG, PSA, PTSO, SAB presidents and student representatives to the Board.
- Filing with the Clerk of Holmdel Township, Police Headquarters and Public Library.

C. Roll Call

The following Board members were present: Mesdames: Zhang. Messrs: Wall, Buckley, DiMare and Mann. Absent: Mr. Reddy, Mrs. Briamonte, Dr. Collur and Mrs. Tuccillo. Also present, Dr. J. Scott Cascone, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Michael R. Petrizzo, CPA, Business Administrator/Board Secretary and Mr. Paul Green, Board Attorney. Student Representatives to the Board, Ms. Trinity Han and Ms. Anugna Parvateneni were absent.

D. Resolution for Executive Session

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b, permits a public body to go into an Executive (Closed) Session during a public meeting to discuss certain matters specified in the statute; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has determined that it is necessary to go into an Executive Closed Session to discuss matters relating to certain items as permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b;

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THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Education of the Township of Holmdel that it shall adjourn into Closed Session at this time to discuss the following subject matter(s) without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b and 10:4-13:

1. Student matters
2. Personnel matters
3. Matters falling within the attorney-client privilege

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, it is not yet possible to determine when the matters discussed in Closed Session will be made public; the matter(s) discussed will be made known to the public at such time as appropriate action is taken on said matter(s), and when disclosure will not result in unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or prejudice to the best interests of the Board of Education, provided such disclosures will not violate Federal, State, or local statutes or regulations and do not fall within the attorney-client privilege.

MOTION: Mr. Mann SECOND: Mrs. Zhang

Show of Hands to Accept – All Approved

At 6:04 PM, the meeting moved to Executive Session.

E. Motion to Return to Public Session

Resolved: That the Board of Education returns to public session.

MOTION: Mr. Buckley SECOND: Mrs. Zhang

Show of Hands to Accept – All Approved

At 7:05 PM, the meeting returned to public session.

F. Call to Order

The Board of Education, Township of Holmdel, met in a Committee of the Whole on Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at Holmdel High School, 36 Crawfords Corner Road, Holmdel, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Mr. Wall, Board Vice President.

G. Opening Statement

Meetings of the Board are open to the public and all members of the community should feel free to participate:

- There is one opportunity for the public to speak.
- Any individual desiring to speak shall give his or her name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented.
- The presentation shall be as brief as possible but no more than three (3) minutes per individual.

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- There are certain matters that may be brought before the board that cannot be immediately addressed in public. Such matters may be referred by the president to a board committee and/or to the Superintendent for consideration and/or resolution.
- The board vests in its president, or other presiding officer, authority to terminate the remarks of any individual if he/she deems it in the best interest of those present to do so.

H. Roll Call/Flag Salute

The following Board members were present: Mesdames: Briamonte, Collur (at 7:09 p.m.), Tuccillo and Zhang. Messrs: Reddy (at 7.15 p.m.), Wall, Buckley, DiMare and Mann. Also present, Dr. J. Scott Cascone, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Michael R. Petrizzo, CPA, Business Administrator/Board Secretary and Mr. Paul Green, Board Attorney. Student Representatives to the Board, Ms. Trinity Han and Ms. Anugna Parvateneni were absent.

At 7:07 p.m., there was a moment of silence for Lauren Hewski, an 18-year old St. John Vianney student, whose life was cut tragically short, on May 11, 2023.

I. Old Business

1. Superintendent Evaluation Process-Mary Ann Friedman, NJSBA
 - Ms. Friedman reviewed the evaluation process with the Board.
2. PBSIS Goal Update – Mr. Art Howard
 - Mr. Howard, Assistant Superintendent for Academics and Operations, presented this topic.
3. Book Review Update
 - Dr. Cascone provided an update regarding this matter.
4. Complementary High School Testing
 - Dr. Irwin, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, presented this topic.

At the conclusion of this topic, Mr. Wall moved to Questions/Comments from the Public.

- Mr. Ramraj, Parent, thanked the Board/Administration for an excellent system and referenced the letter he received on transportation for the vocational school and inquired regarding the following: How many kids, who attend Holmdel High School, receive this courtesy bussing to Holmdel High School? What is the average distance these kids walk or transport themselves to the bus stop from their homes? How many Vocational School Districts will be affected under the new proposal to have a central bus stop at Holmdel High School? What is the average distance these kids have to commute to get to the central bus stop?
- Ms. Kidorf, Parent, referenced the letter sent this weekend regarding vocational school transportation and read a statement. She requested that the Board establish a task force of stakeholders and some vocational school parents to put their heads together to come up with a sustainable, long-term solution that is fair and equitable for all students, regardless of which school they attend.

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- Ms. Sundarajan, Parent, referenced the vocational school transportation topic and (speaking on behalf of other parents who were texting her) inquired about whether the Board has considered the safety of the younger children when parents will have to leave them to drive their older students to the centralized bus stop.
- Mr. Chang, Parent, referenced the Character Ed program and the vocational school transportation topic.
- Ms. Gudelis, Parent, expressed concerns with the Board's/District's decision regarding the transportation for vocational school and stated that she doesn't think the parents should be penalized and the students should be punished for attending vocational school. She stated that nobody reached out to her and she doesn't believe anyone reached out to (anyone from) the group of vocational parents. She shared that they could work with the Board and be a resource and would be happy to engage in any kind of dialogue with the Board if invited to do so. She also mentioned the possibility of subscription bussing, similar to Matawan.
- Ms. Shah, Parent, expressed concerns with the decision regarding transportation for vocational school. She stated both she and her husband work and they have two kids – one at Village and the other at High Tech High. She stated she would not be able to drop her daughter off at Holmdel High School in the morning to catch the bus to vocational school or pick her up in the afternoon at Holmdel High School due to work commitments.
- Ms. Zhang, Parent, expressed concerns with the decision regarding vocational school transportation. Both parents work and she asked that the district not penalize the kids and parents.
- Mr. Andrawes, Parent, expressed concerns with the decision regarding vocational school transportation since both parents work. He referenced this same issue occurred last year and the district was able to work something out. He asked why the district didn't budget for this transportation and asked how the district is going to ensure his child's safety walking to Holmdel High School with no sidewalks. He suggested creating a task force to come up with a plan or possibly reaching out to a neighboring town to see if the cost can be shared.
- Ms. Kidorf, Student (Freshman at Communications High School), expressed concerns with the decision regarding vocational school transportation.
- Ms. Hijli, Parent, expressed concerns with the decision regarding vocational school transportation and referenced this same issue occurred last year. She stated that she and her husband work and he travels a lot. She is a pharmacist in Keyport and, while not far, she would have to close the pharmacy at 3 o'clock to pick her daughter up and drop her off at home and then go back to the pharmacy, which is not possible. She shared that getting a dependable sitter is very challenging. She is hopeful that everyone can come to a workable solution.
- Ms. Sundarajan, Parent, has two children - one in BioTech HS (Freshman year) and the other is starting 8th grade next year. She stated that she has been on the PSG and HFEE and has raised thousands of dollars for the school. Even when the kids leave the district, they feel like they are part of the community with sports, plays and musicals. The letter created a sense of alienation and, when you create that 2-tier system, in any aspect, whether it's medicine, politics, kids, economy, it's not going to lead to any good in terms of people's morale and people start to diverge

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and it is difficult to get people to converge again. The kids still proudly wear their ‘We are Holmdel’ and most kids in the MCVSD schools do come back to participate in activities one way or the other and she feels this decision regarding vocational transportation should be reconsidered.

- Mr. Strait, Parent, stated he came to speak about bussing but decided to speak briefly about character education instead. He referenced an incident that occurred a few years ago and shared that he would prefer the schools avoid teaching about character education and stick to reading, writing, math and science – the important stuff.

At the conclusion of the comments, Dr. Cascone responded and thanked everyone for their feedback and shared that all of the comments have been heard. He assured everyone that the district will be taking a closer look at it and stated that centralized stops are in place in many other districts, it is not something new. Dr. Cascone shared that the district did, in fact, reach out to vocational parents and actually scheduled an open house that was geared specifically towards parents who were considering sending their children to vocational schools and also sent a follow up survey to try and ascertain the reasons for why you might be considering sending your children to a vocational school. The district also scheduled a follow up focus group, with those parents, to see if we could take a deeper dive into some of that survey data to understand the reasoning behind why you might be considering sending your children to vocational schools. Dr. Cascone also shared that the district is pleased that, in one year, we’ve cut the number of students going to vocational school by about 50%. Dr. Cascone shared that, in response to some of the preliminary feedback that we’ve received from parents, we have already started to take a closer look at it and he shared that we know, presently, that we are going to be able to offer additional stops within the current allocation in order to significantly decrease the distance between the home and the bus stop. He suggested that we come at it with a ‘Version 2.0’ which we’ll present and, again, solicit feedback. One of the other things that we also talked about was offering supervised space at the High School both in the morning and in the afternoon. Dr. Cascone shared that, we’ll take another run at it and, perhaps, Version 2.0 will represent a compromise and a show of good faith that addresses most of your concerns.

There was an additional question from the public regarding whether the Board would consider establishing a Task Force to review vocational school transportation options. Mr. Wall stated that Administration and the full Board are all here and have heard the input and will take the tremendous amount of input from this meeting and assess it. There are some shared challenges with the delivery of transportation services, not just in Holmdel, but with every district in the state.

Old Business (continued)

5. National Honor Society New Regulations – *This item was moved to the next meeting.*
6. Standardized testing time allotments
 - Dr. Irwin provided an overview of this matter.
7. RFP Process and Timeline Update
 - Mr. Petrizzo, Business Administrator/Board Secretary provided an update regarding this matter.
8. Mr. Wall referenced the PILOT funds and thanked Mayor Luccarelli and Deputy Mayor Imprieveduto and their team on the Township Committee for including \$200,000 for school security efforts and shared the appreciation of the Board.

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At 10:09 p.m., Mr. Wall called for a short recess.

At 10:22 p.m., the meeting reconvened.

J. New Business

1. Review of Agenda Action Items for May 24, 2023 Public Meeting
 - Dr. Cascone, Dr. Irwin, Ms. Lamoglia, Ms. Jaume, Mr. Howard and Mr. Petrizzo reviewed the agenda.
2. Central Office Department Updates
 - Dr. Cascone, Dr. Irwin, Ms. Lamoglia, Ms. Jaume, Mr. Howard and Mr. Petrizzo provided updates.
3. Mr. Wall requested that Mr. Green provide an overview of the difference between Committee of the Whole and Committee structures. Mr. Green provided the overview and Mr. Wall asked the Board to provide feedback of their opinions on the Committee of the Whole format. There was a discussion among the Board which led to the following suggestions:
 - There is a hard stop at, approx. 10:00 PM, and/or a limit to presentations being presented.
 - Possibly limiting the repetition by not having each Administrator review each individual item on the draft agenda. Administrators would simply give their updates and if Board Members had any questions on the draft agenda items, those individual questions would be addressed.
 - Being flexible and pushing items to the next meeting or a future meeting if time does not allow for discussion.
4. Dr. Cascone stated that we added the Department Updates to the Committee of the Whole and asked if that was that useful. The Board agreed that the updates were helpful.

K. Questions or Comments from the Public

- Mr. Ramraj, Parent, referenced the AP Testing presentation tonight and requested to not change anything yet until we get the 2023 results. He shared that he feels Dr. Cascone and the Board is doing a great job and moving the district in the right direction.
- Mrs. Perez, Parent, thanked the Board for their time and referenced a book that was pulled from the Indian Hill Library (Welcome to Hellstreet). She then referenced a book in the Village School Library (The Marvels) and then she expressed concerns with the book that her third grade student read last year.

Dr. Cascone responded accordingly leading to a discussion among the Board on this topic.

L. Executive Session (if required) - None

M. Adjournment

Board Vice President Wall called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mann motioned, Mr. Buckley seconded and by a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 11:34 p.m.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Michael R. Petrizzo, CPA
Business Administrator/Board Secretary