

ALPHA BOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting Minutes – August 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Approved September 21, 2021

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER:

President, Jennifer Pettinelli called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a subsequent moment of silence.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT:

Jennifer Pettinelli read the following statement:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is either discussed or acted upon. The Board has fully complied with the notice requirements by advertising in The Express Times and The Star-Ledger posting publicly and by notifying the Municipal Clerk of the date, time and place of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Present

President, Jennifer Pettinelli
Vice-President, Patrick Smith
Travis Conway
Christopher McGee

Absent

Loretta Reed

Others Present

Seth Cohen, Chief School Administrator
Tim Mantz, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Flag Salute – Pledge of Allegiance

Silent Meditation

President Jennifer Pettinelli read the District Mission Statement:

The mission of the Alpha Public School is to provide every student with the opportunity to receive a high quality education, in a small, personal, caring, safe and positive environment in which all students at all grade levels achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. In partnership with the parents and the community, a competent and dedicated staff guides students to develop confidence and become productive and contributing members of a constantly changing society.

II. PRESENTATION

Mr. Cohen presented the Road Forward Re-opening Plan.

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III. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Motion made by Travis Conway seconded by Patrick Smith, to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2021 regular meeting.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Travis Conway, to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2021 executive session.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2021 work session.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2021 executive session.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

None

V. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Cohen gave an update regarding the fire alarm system.

VI. MONTHLY REPORTS OF BOARD SECRETARY AND TREASURER

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Travis Conway, to approve, on the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, the acceptance of the monthly financial reports of the Board Secretary and the Treasurer for the month of **July 2021** and further that, in compliance with NJAC 6A:23-2.11(c)4, the Board of Education certifies that as of **July 31, 2021**, after review of the secretary's monthly financial report and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of our knowledge, no major account has been over expended in violation of NJAC 6A:23-2.11(b) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

VII. APPROVAL OF TRANSFERS/LIST OF BILLS

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Travis Conway, to approve the July 21, 2021 through August 17, 2021 current expense bill list for check numbers 19874 to 19899 totaling \$194,322.48.

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Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Motion made by Travis Conway, seconded by Patrick Smith, to approve budget transfers in the amount of \$20,586 as presented for the period July 21, 2021 through August 17, 2021 noting that Commissioner approval was not required as the year to date transfers on a cumulative basis do not exceed 10% pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8.1.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

VIII. PUBLIC INPUT

Kevin Fenlon asked a question regarding the bill list and transfer report.

IX. CHIEF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Cohen told the Board that the town library committee decided that masks would need to be worn within the library.

Mr. Cohen said a new aide will need to be hired due to a revision in a student's IEP.

Mr. Cohen encouraged interested parties to apply for the two currently vacant Board seats.

Mr. Cohen stated that the State has only provided resources regarding the LGBTQ curriculum but not standards. As a result, the district will have significant flexibility with how the curriculum is implemented.

ACTION ITEMS: Chief School Administrator's Recommendations

CONSENT AGENDA: Matters listed within the consent agenda have been referred to members of the Board of Education and/or its standing committees, for reading and study, are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion.

Consent Agenda Motion: BOARD AFFAIRS

Motion made by Travis Conway, seconded by Patrick Smith, to approve the following board affairs agenda items **1.1** through **1.5**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

1.1 To approve the re-opening plan.

1.2 To approve the Alpha Board of Education's Strategic Plan.

1.3 To approve the Alpha Board of Education's Board Goals.

1.4 To approve the first reading of Policy 1648.11 "The Road Forward COVID-19 – Health and Safety".

1.5 To reapprove all existing curriculum.

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Consent Agenda Motion: PERSONNEL AFFAIRS

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the following personnel affairs agenda item **3.1**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

3.1 To approve Sarah Payne to work three days, from August 25th through August 27th, to perform technology work for four hours a day, not to exceed 12 hours total, to be paid at the contractual hourly rate.

Consent Agenda Motion: SCHOOL AFFAIRS

Motion made by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee, to approve the following school affairs agenda item **4.1**.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

4.1 To approve the identified student to be home schooled for the 2021-22 school year.

X. NEW BUSINESS

None

XI. PUBLIC INPUT

Lisa Rockafellow said that she had heard of teachers given incentives to teach and encourage their students to be vaccinated. She said that should this be the case in Alpha, she is requesting an opt out option for her student. Mr. Cohen said that this has not and will not happen in Alpha.

Lisa Rockafellow asked how the district was planning to implement the LGBTQ curriculum. Mr. Cohen said that has yet to be decided.

Kevin Fenlon asked for the process leading up to motion 4.1. Mr. Cohen explained.

Kevin Fenlon asked if parents would be invited to the LGBTQ curriculum workshops that Mr. Cohen would be conducting. Mr. Cohen confirmed they would be invited.

Kevin Fenlon stated his opinion that it should be the parent's choice as to whether or not their children wear masks in school. He said that his research concluded that young children rarely spread or catch COVID and that the blanket mask directive should not have been handed down by the State. Mr. Cohen said it was an executive order from the NJ Governor and that he, nor the Board, are able to ignore or change the directive.

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XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m. on a motion by Patrick Smith, seconded by Christopher McGee.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Mantz
Business Administrator/ Board Secretary