

MEDFORD LAKES SCHOOL DISTRICT
 MEDFORD LAKES, NJ 08055
 MEETING MINUTES
 February 7, 2018

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

This meeting is called to order under the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. The Secretary certifies that all requirements have been met. I, Kim Bezanis, Board President, call this meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NOTICE

Adequate notice of the meeting was advertised by the Burlington County Times on January 17, 2018 and sent by electronic mail to the Clerk of the Municipality.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Kim Bezanis
 Mr. Robert Brittain
 Mrs. Kristen Caputo
 Ms. Mary Sullivan
 Mr. Ken Wolson

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Anthony Dent, Superintendent
 Mr. Michael Colling, Business Administrator
 Mrs. Carole Ramage, Director of Curriculum
 Dr. Michael Lee, Director of Special Education
 Mr. Frank Cavallo, Jr., Esq., Solicitor

FLAG SALUTE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Annie Jones, 166 Blackfoot Trail – Read a prepared statement, a copy of which is attached.

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. FINANCE/BUDGET

1. Motion by Ms. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Brittain;

RECOMMEND that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Business Administrator, approve the following finance items:

- a. Payment of bills with funds available.

Mr. Colling thanked the Board for agreeing to add a bills list this evening as the timing between meetings was longer than usual.

- b. Approve the following district travel to include mileage reimbursement:

Name	Description	Date	Registr. Amount	Sub Cost
Jay Wassell	Burlington county Curriculum Consortium's "Effective Technology Integration for the 21 st Century Classroom"	2/22/18	\$0.00	\$125.00
MaryBeth Swindells	Burlington county Curriculum Consortium's "Effective Technology Integration for the 21 st Century Classroom"	2/22/18	\$0.00	\$125.00
Jay Wassell	Camden County College's "Social Media: Instructional Imperative or Legal Liability"	2/26/18	\$149.00	\$125.00
MaryBeth Swindells	Camden County College's "Social Media: Instructional Imperative or Legal Liability"	2/26/18	\$149.00	\$125.00

ROLL CALL VOTE: *Ayes: Ms. Bezanis, Mr. Brittain, Mrs. Caputo, Ms. Sullivan, Mr. Wolson*
Nays: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None
Motion Carried

c. Budget Discussion

Mr. Colling lead the Board in the budget building process and answered questions. Board members asked about various line items and future expenses. Mr. Colling and Mr. Dent also noted that there are items in the Budget that are worst case scenarios at this time. One of the only items that are set in stone are the salaries as the agreement with MLEA is still current.

Mr. Brittain asked about some of our curriculum and the lawsuits that have occurred. Mr. Dent and Dr. Lee updated the Board Members.

Mrs. Ramage noted that we are currently recommending Foundations for our ELA block. This would expose all students, including regular education students.

Mr. Brittain noted that we need to be proactive in getting one of our staff members to add Wilson to our curriculum. This would help in getting some of our out of district students back and help to eliminate some of the projected costs.

Ms. Sullivan stated that we really need to start thinking outside the box in trying to eliminate some of our other legal costs.

Mr. Brittain wanted to know why we aren't using Wilson if it's so good to which Dr. Lee explained the review process that we have in order to get students to return to the district.

Mr. Wolson wanted to know if there was a roadmap for the future. Do we have a plan for teachers or staff taking classes and then in 2 to 3 years, we can bring back certain students in order to reduce the out of district expense? Dr. Lee responded that the programs that we have are good, but Wilson is the best of the best because they make up their own rules. They have a great Marques that advertise these programs and we don't have that yet in order to retain those students.

Mrs. Caputo noted that once a student goes out to an out of district school, it's very hard to get them back in district. They might not be exactly happy with all the services that they have here, but it should be in the best interest of the student.

Discussion ensued regarding various line items.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Annie Jones, 166 Blackfoot Trail – Requested that the Board make sure that our educational needs are a priority in the budget process.

NEW BUSINESS

The following meeting additions/changes were made:

Wednesday, March 7, 2018 – Budget Workshop, 6:00 PM start

Tuesday, March 20, 2018 – Business Meeting / Preliminary Budget Approval, 6:30 PM start

Wednesday, March 21, 2018 – Business Meeting CANCELLED

EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mrs. Caputo and seconded by Mr. Brittain to adjourn meeting.

VOTE: 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent 0 abstain Motion Carried

Time: 8:26 PM

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael F. Colling

I attended my first BOE meeting around June of 2013 after learning that extended day kindergarten and a 3rd grade teacher were cut from the budget for the 2013/14 school year. Both of these cuts were life changing in my household.

My 3rd grader was crammed into a class with 24 students, and 4 adults- a GE and SE teacher, a full time nurse and a full time aid. He cried a lot that year.

I rolled the dice and asked my employer to work from home full time so I could pick up my Kindergartener each day to take her to daycare- the only way she could attend ML Kindergarten with 2 working parents.

I promised Mr. Collins he would see me at every meeting after that and for the next 4 years I made BOE meetings a priority, often being the only member of the public in attendance. In addition to my volunteer position on the HSA Board I also was the HSA member on the grading committee. This district is blessed with parents that spend their free time volunteering.

Last year I took a different approach and met with Mr. Dent to discuss why our amazingly small and nimble district was not thinking outside the box and at the cutting edge of education- why we were not looking at proactive solutions to mid-year retirements or maternity leaves. One of the suggestions I brought forward was rotating the specials by trimester to allow for knowledge retention from daily lessons rather than visiting the subject one every 6 days.

This year I planned to make suggestions for the Student Council program and push for study skills to be taught in upper elementary. Instead I have been drowning in 4th grade- like déjà vu- the Neeta class of 2022 is crammed into 2 classrooms with multiple teachers, something I thought I would never see again. Aside from the unforeseen teacher absence, the large number of students and multiple teachers has had a negative impact on my child's educational experience this year- the environment is extremely busy, organization is not stressed and there is an absence of one-on-one student attention that my child has received in the past to push her to her fullest potential- in one year my 4th grader has gone from seeking and receiving enrichment from her classroom teacher to just getting by with a ton of help reviewing and studying material at home. Every grade counts when only 2 tests are given in multiple main subjects for an entire trimester. The lack of tests per subject per trimester this year is another disappointment as it ignores the grading guidelines and makes it impossible for the students to turnaround a poor test grade, especially one of ML infamous benchmark tests.

Before I make my last comment I want to be clear that I support Child Study Teams and Special Ed services- my husband is a special ed teacher and I am proof that an IEP- even one put in

place as late as 5th grade- does create successful students. There was no communication regarding the reason the students were consolidate into 2 classrooms. One can assume it has to do with the state required ratio of special ed teachers to students that require services. If that is the reason, I would like to know what can be changed to lower the student teacher ratio to a level that facilitates the maximum learning for ALL students. All students deserve to be serviced in an equitable fashion.