

**SECAUCUS BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
DATED: May 10, 2018**

President McStowe called the meeting to order at 4:12PM and roll call taken as follows:

PRESENT: Messrs: Giele, McStowe, Ms. Cali, Ms. O'Connell, Ms. Dellafave, Ms. McFarlane and Ms. Pantoliano

LATE ARRIVALS: Mr. Bartletta arrived at 4:47PM, Mrs. Hanley arrived at 5:15PM

ABSENT:

President McStowe declared a quorum present

Also present: Jennifer Montesano, Superintendent
Grace Yeo, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Stephen Fogarty, Board Attorney

President McStowe, asked everyone to rise and join in the salute to the flag.

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, Vice President Cali, announced that the Board Secretary had forwarded notice of this meeting for advertising by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Secaucus Town Hall, on the bulletin board in the hallway of the Board of Education Administration Building, as well as being provided to the Jersey Journal, and the Bergen Record.

RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY: Ruby Pantoliano

SECONDED BY: Kathy O'Connell

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act allows for the exclusion from discussion as the public portion of a meeting certain matters as outlined below, and

WHEREAS, the Secaucus Board of Education wishes to discuss such matters made and will make such discussion public when a proper conclusion has been reached:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secaucus Board of Education will hold a Closed Executive Session on this date, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b (1), (2), (6), (7) and (8) for the purpose(s) as outlined and described below. These matters will be disclosed to the public as soon as the need for confidentiality no longer applies:

Motion by Ruby Pantoliano, seconded by Kathy O'Connell, and unanimously adopted by Board Members present to adjourn Executive Session and resume Regular Meeting at 7:09PM.

Board Members present unanimously adopted the foregoing Resolution.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Lance Bartletta	X			
Joan Cali	X			
Sharon Dellafave	X			
Louis Giele	X			
Norma Hanley	X			
Kathleen McFarlane	X			
John McStowe	X			
Kathy O'Connell	X			
Ruby Pantoliano	X			

Business Administrator/Board Secretary Report:

Introduced by Ruby Pantoliano, seconded by Kathy O'Connell, to accept the recommendation of the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to approve Motion 1.01 as described below for the following:

M1.01 Motion to move Board of Education Meeting on May 24, 2018, change venue from multi-purpose room to gymnasium.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Lance Bartletta	X			
Joan Cali	X			
Sharon Dellafave	X			
Louis Giele	X			
Norma Hanley	X			
Kathleen McFarlane	X			
John McStowe	X			
Kathy O'Connell	X			
Ruby Pantoliano	X			

Public Agenda Comments: None

Committee Reports and New Business

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

1.Human Resources -

R1.01

RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY: Joan Cali

SECONDED BY: Kathy O'Connell

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secaucus Board of Education hereby approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, to appoint all certificated staff members for the 2018-19/SY as indicated in the annexed list with compensation based on the next step of the SEA Salary Guide

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
ABUHOURLAN	MANAL	S
AMATO	MARIETTA	S
AMATO-LEWIS	JOSEPHINE	F
BACKIEL	KRISTIN	
BARNA	KAREN	E
BARTLETTA	LISA	
BELTRAN	YANET	
BIEGLER	LUCY	
BIVIN	BARBARA	
BONITO	NICOLE	A
CANDUSSO	ALISON	E
COLAMARINO	JANET	N
CRUZADO	GEORGINA	
DOERING	DAWN	M
FALCO	ANNA	
GOLDSACK	KERRY	A
GRIFFIN	SAMMANTHA	
HANLEY	KRISTIE	
HARRSCH	JOLANDA	
HENSLE	JESSICA	D
HERRMANN	ASHLEY	
JARAMILLO	LISA	
KNAPP	KRISTEN	
KORYCINSKI	KERRI	L
LAMATINA	MALEESA	
MILLEVOI	WILLIAM	F
MONGIELLO	ANNA	
NGO	SUZANNE	J
ORTIZ	DIORCHINIE	
PALMER	MICHELLE	
PARHAM	KARA	K

PRIMAVERA	MICHELLE	
REDVANLY	SUSAN	
SCHLEMM	LANA	M
SMEYERS	PATRICIA	A
SMITH-BONIN	LISA	A
SNARSKI	KRYSTLE	A
SOMMER	EDWARD	
SPROW	LAURA	B
VALENTE	LAURIE	A
WASSONG	AMANDA	
WENGER	STEPHANIE	N
WILSON	OLIVIA	
WOECKENER	KIMBERLY	J
ABELLO	LUCIA	
BINETTI	MARY-CATE	
BONIN	ALLAN	
CELEBRANO	KAREN	F
COCUCCI	CAROLANN M.	
COSTELLO	CLAIRE WRAGA	
CRITELLI	ANNA	M
CURRY	ALYSSA	M
CURRY	THOMAS	
DIGIROLAMO	RICCI	A
FITZPATRICK	GERALDINE	
FRANK	LORRAINE	
GONGORA	OSCAR	B
HACKEL	ROXANNE	E
HOLSTEN	SHARON	
IMPREVEDUTO	MARGHERITA	L
INGENITO	KELLY	
JAEGER	JUDITH	M
LEON	DAWN	
LEPPIN	ALEXIS	E
LEPPIN	ANNA	
LOPENA	MELISSA	
MANTHORPE	SHELBEY	A
MARTINELLI-WURST	MICHELE	L
MASTRO	STEPHEN	A
NIEMIERA	JOANIE	J
O'CONNOR	KELLY	
PEDUTO	JENNINE	
PHEMSINT	PATRICE	C
PIANKO	ZAHAVA	
PRUDEN	KERRI	
RAMOS	STEPHANIE	L
RENNIE	FAITH ANN	
RIVERA	SHEILA	E
ROA	ALISON	
ROZANSKY	LACEY	M

SPINELLI	ERICA	R
STAMM	KERRI	A
TURCI-TRINGALI	ORIETTA	A
ULRICH	MARIA	A
VAN ES	LISA	
VIERA	CINDY	
VIGGIANI	EILISH	
VIGGIANO	JAIME	L
YEO	ASHLEY	
ZALLER	ALEXANDRA	M
ANDOLINA	EMANUELA	
BENNETT	VICTORIA	F
BOCZON	SAMANTHA	A
BOSCARINO	ANNA	
CAPOBIANCO	MARISSA	
COCUCCI	PASQUALE	
CARUSO	DYLAN	C
CHOPRA	KRITIKA	
COUTO	ZAIDA	G
DEMONE	DEBRA	
FARO	ALEXANDRA	
GERBASIO	KATHLEEN	
GIUNTA	DANIELLE	L
HADDAD	AMY	
HEINTJES	MELISSA	D
HENNESSY	TAMMY	E
HERNANDEZ	NICOLE	
INNIS	CHRISTOPHER	
JABER	NANCY	
JONES	MEGAN	E
KASABIAN	PIA	M
MADDALENA	MEGHAN	
MALONEY	MARY	F
MARCHIONE	KAREN J.	
MIMMO	JONATHAN	J
MOORE	JULIA	N
MROZ	RONALD	J
ORLANDO	COLLEEN	J
PALMISANO	TONI ANN	
PICARIELLO	ANNA MARIE	D
RICCIARDI	ANTONIA	L
ROBERTO	DANIELLE	
RODRIGUEZ	JEANETTE	
RODRIGUEZ	MARIA	
ROESING	CORY	M
SCISCOLO	SARAH	C
SOMERSET	DONALD	E
SONNETT	SEAN	M
STOKOLS	PAMELA	

TAYLOR	CATHLEEN	M
TOMASZEWSKI	ANETA	J
VITULANO	SANDRA	
WARGOCKI	AMANDA	
WATERS	KELLY	A
WILLIAMS	SARA	
ALVAREZ	ALLISON	
BACIGALUPO	HELEN	M
BAKER	FURY	
BARNABA	JAMES	
BRISLIN	MARIA K.	
BUTLER	AMBER	L
CADENA	MAYDA	
CARSON	BRIAN	W
CASSESE	ANTHONY	M
CHISARI	ALEXIS	
CONFORTI	SARA	
CUNNIFF	ALLISON	M
CZECHOWSKI	NEAL	
D'AURIZIO	JANINE	M
DEGENNARO-RODRIGUES	MICHELE	
DEPICE	DOUGLAS	
DIORIO	CAROLYNN	M
DOMBROWSKI	JULIA	
EDMUNDS	DENISE	N
EISENBERG	RICHARD	
ELASSA	AOMAR	
ENNIS	JOHN	F
FOURNIER	ROBERT	C
GAROFALO	LORI	
GEHM	MICHAEL	N
GERBASIO	DEBRA	
GULISTAN	MIHRIBAN	
KALAPODAKIS	DEBRA	L
KEELER	JEANNE	
KELLY	MICHAEL	T
KIM	SHARON	
KVALHEIM	WILLIAM	O
LEE	STACEY	E
LEITE	THIAGO	V
LYNCH	NANCY	
MARTINEZ	LUIS	
MCKENNA	DENISE	
MEYER	TIFFANY	A
NAMENDORF	CHRISTINA	
NEWMAN	PETER	
PAREDES	ANN	E
PASTOR	RAPHAEL	
PETRUZZELLI	CAMILLE	

POPE	EVAN	D
PREIS	JILL	L
QUAIL	DIANE	
RACANATI	AMANDA	M
REGENSBURG	JANET LYNN	
ROCCO	NICOLE	A
ROESING	EDWARD	
RODRIGUEZ	MARTHA	
SCHEINER	CASEY	J
SCHNEIDER	KEITH	T
SEGRO	DAVID J	
SIAFAKAS	ILIAS	
SPIEKERMANN	ROSEANN	
SUZANO	CATHERINA	
TAVERAS	TARA	K
URBANOVICH	ALLISON	M
VITIELLO	SHARON	
VITULANO	MICHAEL	L
WHITFORD	MATTHEW	
WISWESSER	CHRISTINA	M
ZAVOROTNYAYA	PAVLINA	

R1.02

RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY: Joan Cali

SECONDED BY: Kathy O'Connell

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secaucus Board of Education hereby approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, to appoint all teacher aide staff members for the 2018-19/SY as indicated in the annexed list with compensation based on the next step of the SEA Salary Guide

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
AQUINO	MARY	
BENNETT	JOMARIE	
BOGDAN	JENNY	F
BROWN	PATRICIA	
DADDETTO	PATRICIA	
HANSEN	LINDA	
HURTUK	GRACEANN	
IMPERATO	DENISE	
MELI	MARYANN	
RAMIREZ	LUCILLE	
SAWAGED	RODAINA	K
VERA	IVONNE	E
VERGIEVA	STOYANKA	
WRAGA	MARIA	C

R1.03

RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY: Joan Cali

SECONDED BY: Kathy O'Connell

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secaucus Board of Education hereby approves to accept with regret the resignation of the following individual

Name	School	Position	Date Resignation
Kristen Seetaram	Clarendon	Special Education	06/30/2018

R1.04

RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY: Joan Cali

SECONDED BY: Kathy O'Connell

WHEREAS, formal disciplinary proceedings were initiated against a student whose name is on file (hereinafter referred to as "Student 2") with the Secaucus Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board"), regarding allegations that, on or about March 9, 2018, Student 2 made threatening comments and expressed his intent to engage in school violence at Secaucus High School in violation of Board Policy Nos. 5500 (Expectations for Pupil Conduct), 5600 (Student Discipline/Code of Conduct), 5560 (Disruptive Pupils), 5610 (Suspension), and 5620 (Expulsion).

WHEREAS, on or about April 12, 2018 Student 2's parent was provided with notice of a disciplinary hearing to be held before the Board on April 19, 2018 and of their right to be represented by counsel, to present evidence and witnesses on behalf of Student 2, to cross-examine any and all witnesses presented by the Board, and to have a translator present at the Board's expense; and

WHEREAS, the disciplinary hearing was adjourned at the parents' request until May 10, 2018; and

WHEREAS, a disciplinary hearing took place on May 10, 2018, at which time Student 2 and Student 2's parent appeared before the Board; and

WHEREAS, at the May 10, 2018 hearing, Student 2 stipulated to the evidence and did not contest the evidence presented by the Board in support of the charges; and

WHEREAS, the Board has considered all of the evidence, Student 2's academic, attendance, and disciplinary records, Board Policy Nos. 5500 (Expectations for Pupil Conduct), 5600 (Student Discipline/Code of Conduct), 5560 (Disruptive Pupils), 5610 (Suspension), and 5620 (Expulsion).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Board hereby determines, based upon a preponderance of the competent and credible evidence that, on or around March 9, 2018, Student 2 was in violation of Board Policy Nos. 5500 (Expectations for Pupil Conduct), 5600 (Student Discipline/Code of Conduct), 5560 (Disruptive Pupils), 5610 (Suspension), and 5620 (Expulsion).
2. In light of the serious nature of the conduct, Student 2 shall be suspended from Secaucus High School through June 30, 2018.
3. Student 2 shall not be present on any of the Board's school campuses before, during and after the regularly scheduled school day during the period of the suspension.
4. Student 2 shall not be permitted to participate in any athletic, co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activities sponsored by the Board and shall not be present for or attend any Board sponsored activities, either on campus or in any school district where the District is participating in the activities.
5. During the period of Student 2's suspension, Student 2 shall be provided an alternative educational program pursuant to State law, *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2*, that meets the Core Curriculum Standards in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.1 et seq.*

R1.05

RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY: Joan Cali

SECONDED BY: Kathy O'Connell

WHEREAS, formal disciplinary proceedings were initiated against a student whose name is on file (hereinafter referred to as "Student 1") with the Secaucus Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board"), regarding allegations that, on or about March 9, 2018, Student 1 made threatening comments and expressed his intent to engage in school violence at Secaucus High School in violation of Board Policy Nos. 5500 (Expectations for Pupil Conduct), 5600 (Student Discipline/Code of Conduct), 5560 (Disruptive Pupils), 5610 (Suspension), and 5620 (Expulsion).

WHEREAS, on or about April 12, 2018 Student 1's parents were provided with notice of a disciplinary hearing to be held before the Board on April 19, 2018 and of their right to be represented by counsel, to present evidence and witnesses on behalf of Student 1, to cross-examine any and all witnesses presented by the Board, and to have a translator present at the Board's expense; and

WHEREAS, the disciplinary hearing was adjourned at the parents' request until May 10, 2018; and

WHEREAS, a disciplinary hearing took place on May 10, 2018, at which time Student 1, Student 1's parents and Student 1's attorney appeared before the Board; and

WHEREAS, at the May 10, 2018 hearing, Student 1 through his counsel stipulated to the evidence and did not contest the evidence presented by the Board in support of the charges; and

WHEREAS, the Board has considered all of the evidence, Student 1’s academic, attendance, and disciplinary records, Board Policy Nos. 5500 (Expectations for Pupil Conduct), 5600 (Student Discipline/Code of Conduct), 5560 (Disruptive Pupils), 5610 (Suspension), and 5620 (Expulsion).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

6. The Board hereby determines, based upon a preponderance of the competent and credible evidence that, on or around March 9, 2018, Student 1 was in violation of Board Policy Nos. 5500 (Expectations for Pupil Conduct), 5600 (Student Discipline/Code of Conduct), 5560 (Disruptive Pupils), 5610 (Suspension), and 5620 (Expulsion).
7. In light of the serious nature of the conduct, Student 1 shall be suspended from Secaucus High School through June 30, 2018.
8. Student 1 shall not be present on any of the Board’s school campuses before, during and after the regularly scheduled school day during the period of the suspension.
9. Student 1 shall not be permitted to participate in any athletic, co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activities sponsored by the Board and shall not be present for or attend any Board sponsored activities, either on campus or in any school district where the District is participating in the activities.
10. During the period of Student 1’s suspension, Student 1 shall be provided an alternative educational program pursuant to State law, *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2*, that meets the Core Curriculum Standards in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.1 et seq.*

M1.1 Motion to post for the following positions:

- 2-Special Education Elementary
- Special Education/ESL Elementary
- Math

The foregoing resolutions were adopted by a roll call vote as follows:

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Lance Bartletta	X		R1.01	
Joan Cali	X			
Sharon Dellafave	X			
Louis Giele	X			
Norma Hanley	X			
Kathleen McFarlane	X			
John McStowe	X			
Kathy O’Connell	X			
Ruby Pantoliano	X			

2.Policy- None

3.Shared Services – None

4.Legislation – None

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

5. Curriculum-

Introduced by Kathy O’Connell, seconded by Ruby Pantoliano, to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve Motion 5.01 as described below for the following:

M5.01 Motion to permit a therapy dog to assist in physical education class.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Lance Bartletta	X			
Joan Cali	X			
Sharon Dellafave	X			
Louis Giele	X			
Norma Hanley	X			
Kathleen McFarlane	X			
John McStowe	X			
Kathy O’Connell	X			
Ruby Pantoliano	X			

6. Athletics- None

7. School Technology – None

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

8. Finance-

R8.01

RESOLUTION

INTRODUCED BY: Sharon Dellafave

SECONDED BY: Kathy O’Connell

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secaucus Board of Education hereby authorizes, as recommended by the Business Administrator/Board Secretary, the out of district travel for employees as annexed to this resolution.

REQUEST FOR OUT OF DISTRICT CONFERENCE/WORKSHOPS

DATE : 5/10/2018

Employee Name	Date(s) of Event	Title of Event	Location	Registration Fee	Estimated Tolls and Mileage	Total Cost
Jennifer Montesano	5/22/2018	HIB - Strauss Esmay	Toms River	\$145.00	\$43.40	\$188.40
Carriann DeVito	5/22/2018	HIB - Strauss Esmay	Toms River	\$145.00	\$43.40	\$188.40

The foregoing resolutions were adopted by a roll call vote as follows:

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Lance Bartletta	X			
Joan Cali	X			
Sharon Dellafave	X			
Louis Giele	X			
Norma Hanley	X			
Kathleen McFarlane	X			
John McStowe	X			
Kathy O'Connell	X			
Ruby Pantoliano	X			

9. Safety/Security – Buildings & Grounds- None

10. Technology – None

Public General Comments -

Dr. Robert Berckes –

Principal Berckes spoke of the chain of events of an incident that happened on March 28, 2018 with a student that had a knife and marijuana in his possession. He said he followed the

direction from the SRO officer to get rid of the marijuana. He stated that he followed policy and that the superintendent was aware of the situation. The student received 5 days out of schools suspension. He asked to speak in executive session but was denied so he chose to speak publicly about his side of the story. He stated his record in the district since he's been principal. Since he's been principal the school entered into the top 100 high schools in New Jersey, ranked 4th in Hudson County in SAT scores (number 1 in public schools), and the College Board has put our High School in their AP Honor Roll. Stated that this event hurts him, the school, the town, the police department and his family with the Superintendents actions. He would like a public apology and return to his position to continue to do the right thing and continue to do all the good that he has begun. Thanked all that came to support him and hoped that things get rectified quickly.

Ernie Yanko – Friend of Dr. Bob

High School friend of Dr. Berckes talked about their High School days together and the upbringing that they shared. Spoke to Dr. Bob's hard working style and didn't understand how the situation came to this. Thinks this is a law enforcement matter, and that this is a miscarriage of justice or a vendetta.

Christine DeIasi – Parent

Concerned about the way that knife/marijuana incident has been handled. Parents weren't notified for a month about what was going on. Stated that her and other parents made very clear decisions to send their children to Secaucus High School because of the faculty and the principal. The students love the principal, he is very approachable both to parents and students. Whether what he did wasn't perfect, maybe bad judgement but all of us may have done that during our lifetime and someone stood by them/us. There have been instances in the past with administrators and they walked away with full pension, full pay or resigned and no big thing was made of it. Wants things to get back to do what we do best. Asked board to do the right thing for our kids because that's what this is all about.

Gillian Mosher – 12th Grade Student – Secaucus High School

Dr. Bob was her principal for her 4 years of high school and she and her classmates would be disappointed if Dr. Bob did not do the graduation speech this year. He's a great person and doesn't deserve what is happening to him.

Ann Miller - Parent

Has known Dr. Bob for over 25 years and has only known him to be trustworthy and honest. She hadn't heard about the situation for over 4 weeks until Dr. Bob spoke tonight. Thinks the parents should have been informed. When board goes behind closed doors to decide what they will do about the situation, she hopes that they take into account that he is a good, hard working man in this community and they shouldn't rush to judgement. His heart is really in the principal position and wouldn't want his career ruined because he is a good person and good for Secaucus.

Tom Troyer – Resident

He said he was here to find out what happened. Questioned how the investigation was being handled. Hoped that board members would do some soul searching on what to do about Dr. Bob because he is convinced his heart was in the right place.

Krystal Berckes – Daughter of Dr. Berckes

Felt some of the board members looked surprised about the story Dr. Bob told. She is concerned that a principal and assistant principal were suspended without listening to them about their side of the story. Questioned if there might be corruption going on from the board due to the fact it is 1 month later and still no formal explanation to students, parents or community about the reason for suspension. She also felt, your opinion of someone should not matter. It should not ruin their career, smear their name in the newspaper or in town, or ruin a career. Not the message to send to students. Her father dedicated over 40 years of his life to education.

Board Member Comments-

Mr. Giele, Mrs. Dellafave and Ms. McFarlane thanked all who spoke. Mr. Giele does not agree with the suspensions and believes in Due Process.

Ms. McFarlane said that parents are vital stakeholders and most important that they are advocates for their children.

Mrs. Dellafave thinks Principal Berckes should be reinstated and we should get out from under this dark cloud. Principal Berckes followed policy and should get back to the focus we had with strong collegial spirit, and our goals.

Ms. Pantoliano thanked all for coming and she makes her decisions on what is best for all students.

Motion by Ruby Pantoliano, seconded by Kathy O'Connell, to return to executive session at 7:51 PM.

Motion by Lance Bartletta, seconded by Ruby Pantoliano, to close executive session and return to public session at 8:13PM.

Public session reopened at 8:15PM and closed.
No Action Taken

Motion by Lance Bartletta , seconded by Ruby Pantoliano, and unanimously adopted by Board Members present to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Yeo,
Board Secretary