

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS
IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN**

MINUTES

**Regular Public Meeting
August 30, 2022**

**Board Auditorium
540 Farview Avenue, Paramus, New Jersey**

The Board of Education of the Vocational School District in the County of Bergen held its Regular Public Meeting on Tuesday August 30, 2022 in the Board of Education Auditorium, 540 Farview Avenue, Paramus, N.J. The public meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mr. William Connelly, President of the Board.

ROLL CALL:

Present at roll call:

Mr. William Connelly, *President*
Mr. Louis DeLisio, *Executive Bergen County Superintendent of Schools*
Dr. Lawrence Meyerson

Absent at roll call:

Ms. Ivonne Enrique
Mr. Jason Kim, *Vice President*

Also in attendance:

Howard Lerner, Ed.D., *Superintendent of Schools*
John Susino, *Board Secretary/School Business Administrator*
Andrea Sheridan, *Assistant Superintendent of Schools*
Gary Hall, *Director of Human Resources*
William Soukas, Esq., *Board Attorney*

All present pledged allegiance to the United States of America.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT:

John Susino, Board Secretary, read the following statement as required by the Open Public Meetings Act:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of the public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Board of Vocational Education in the County of Bergen has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted on a bulletin board prominently displayed in lobby of the Board offices and by the The Record and Herald News.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A motion was made by Dr. Meyerson, seconded by Mr. DeLisio, to approve the following minutes:

Public Work Session Meeting: June 28, 2022
Regular/Public Meeting: June 28, 2022
Executive Session: June 28, 2022

A roll call vote was taken to approve the minutes:

Mr. Connelly	Yes
Mr. DeLisio	Yes
Ms. Enrique	Absent
Mr. Kim	Absent
Dr. Meyerson	Yes

BOARD SECRETARY/BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Board Secretary John Susino made the following report to the Board.

Mr. Susino first spoke to the impact of the proposed health benefits premium increase on the school district.

Today the Board is considering a resolution, number 23-A-22T, that expresses the Board's opposition to the proposed rate increase for health benefits coverage as provided by the State of New Jersey School Employees Benefits Program.

The proposed rate increase of over 15% was announced after the adoption the district's operating budget, thus posing a significant budgetary challenge to the Board. Specifically, the district will be faced with an unbudgeted cost of over \$834,000 just for the first six months of the plan year.

This increase will also be shouldered by participating staff members through higher premium costs. Finally, the Board opposes the rate increase as it comes after the passage of public law 2020, commonly known as Chapter 44, which was designed and adopted by the State of NJ to minimize rate increase through plan and benefit offerings, as well as higher out of pocket costs for participating members.

Mr. Susino also reported to the Board that in the coming months, the administration will be implementing a fully digital board packet and agenda. All resolutions will be sent via a secure web-based portal. Board members will be able to view and comment on resolutions through this portal. As we near the time of implementation, Mr. Susino will schedule a training for each Board member.

Mr. Susino thanked the district's operations and maintenance staff, led by Operations Director Tom Jodice, for their tireless work in getting our buildings ready for the start of school later this week.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

❖ HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING REPORT

The District is required to report specific incidents of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying to the Board of Education. The District had one (1) Alleged-HIB incident reported in late June 2022.

- **HIB Incident: Alleged-HIB Case #11 – BCA - School Year 2021-2022**

❖ **DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS, ACCOLADES AND OTHER IMPORTANT DISTRICT INFORMATION**

Dr. Lerner shared some highlights of the many accomplishments our students and staff have had, including the following:

- **NAVIGATING SUCCESS THROUGH WELLNESS INITIATIVE**
 - We are beginning Senior Transition Groups for graduating students to ease the changes and challenges they would face entering college or the workforce, along with freshmen Resilience Training will begin in September.
 - We conducted several parent and student virtual seminars over the summer, including *Time Management and Organization*, *Freshmen Transition*, and the *Power of Positivity*.
 - Wellness screenings for all 700 incoming freshmen were conducted and completed over the summer months.
- **APPLIED TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL**
 - This summer AHS students across all grade levels participated in the summer CTE workshop. During this two-week program students explored advanced concepts related to cybersecurity, robotics, and emergency medical care.
- **BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES**
 - Congratulations to BCA's 2022 National Merit Scholar Finalists! Out of a total of 15,000 students nationwide who were recognized as high scorers, 54 BCA seniors were named finalists. This is the highest number of finalists in our school's history.
 - BCA students excelled in the recent American Computer Science League Finals. Several students earned gold, silver and bronze medals in the senior, intermediate and junior levels.
- **PARAMUS CAMPUS**
 - During the month of July over 150 students from the Paramus Campus technical areas attended a CTE Summer Enrichment program. The program was held four days a week for two hours a day, throughout the entire month of July, giving students the opportunity to participate in activities to enhance their individual hands on experience.
- **TETERBORO CAMPUS**
 - A Bergen Tech Fashion student won the gold with a total score of 96.66/100, and placed in the Top 10 National Finalists in the Fashion Design Junior/Senior category, at this year's FCCLA National Leadership Conference held at San Diego, California. Bergen Tech was the only school from NJ to place in the Top 10 from this category.
 - A Bergen Tech Law & Justice student was accepted to and attended the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute - an all-expenses paid leadership experience in Washington D.C.
- **ADULT EDUCATION**
 - Our daytime trade programs are almost full for the classes starting in fall of 2022. There is even a waitlist for our electrical program and few spots left for our HVAC and Plumbing course.
 - Adult Education and New Bridge Medical Center have teamed up to create internship and apprenticeship opportunities for our students and alumni within the plumbing and electrical fields.
- **INSTITUTE FOR INTERACTIVE DESIGN @ NORTHERN VALLEY – DEMAREST & OLD TAPPAN**
 - The Institute for Interactive Design program is entering its third year.
 - The Institute for Sports Medicine & Exercise Science program will launch its pilot year on September 2, with their first freshman class.

- **EMS**
 - Summer EMS classes included EMT class and Career Fire Class.
- **ATHLETICS**
 - We had 594 students sign up for fall sports.
- **BERGEN COUNTY JOB CENTER**
 - For the first time EVER —the top three search queries to the website did NOT include unemployment!
 - We won't be the best-kept secret for long. I believe the mobile job center is helping us get the word out! We have been to several towns this summer and are booked for the fall.
- **BELA**
 - BELA is excited to welcome both new and returning students this year!

BOARD OF EDUCATION ACTION:

On the motion of Dr. Meyerson, seconded by Mr. DeLisio, the following resolutions were presented for action.

Administration	23-A-01T	Through	23-A-29T
Personnel	23-P-01T	Through	23-P-19T
Finance	23-F-01T	Through	23-F-51T

BOARD DISCUSSION - CONSENT AGENDA ONLY

Mr. DeLisio reported that he will be abstaining from the following resolutions:

23-A-22T, 23-A-23T, 23-A-24T, 23-A-28T, 23-P-05T, 23-P-07T, 23-P-19T, 23-F-01T, 23-F-02T, 23-F-03T, 23-F-06T, 23-F-07-T, 23-F-39T, 23-F-42T, 23-F-47T, 23-F-48T, 23-F-49T, 23-F-51T

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – CONSENT AGENDA ONLY

There was no public participation on the consent agenda.

BOARD VOTE - CONSENT AGENDA

A roll call vote on the consent agenda, as identified above, was taken:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Mr. Connelly	X			
Mr. DeLisio	X		23-A-22T, 23-A-23T, 23-A-24T, 23-A-28T, 23-P-05T, 23-P-07T, 23-P-19T, 23-F-01T, 23-F-02T, 23-F-03T, 23-F-06T, 23-F-07-T, 23-F-39T, 23-F-42T, 23-F-47T, 23-F-48T, 23-F-49T, 23-F-51T	
Ms. Enrique				X
Mr. Kim				X
Dr. Meyerson	X			

OFF-CONSENT RESOLUTIONS

There were no off-consent resolutions.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ANY ISSUE

There was no public discussion on any issue.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dr. Meyerson, seconded by Mr. DeLisio. All members present voted in the affirmative; none opposed. Mr. Connelly adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

NOTE: No further action was taken by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,



John Susino
Board Secretary/School Business Administrator

Approved by the Board of Education at its regular meeting of 9/27/22