

**HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**34 Lee's Hill Road, New Vernon, NJ 07976**

**Monday, April 17, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

**Regular Session Minutes**

**Mission Statement**

The Harding Township School provides a strong educational foundation which inspires students to achieve academic excellence. Our dedicated faculty stimulates intellectual growth using a challenging curriculum within a supportive learning environment. We encourage students to become self-directed, lifelong learners who are well prepared for the academic and social challenges of the future.

The 2022-2023 Harding Township School District goals are inspired by and connected to the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan that was developed by key stakeholders.

**District Goal 1: Strategic Plan Goal Area: Identify Needs/Personalized Learning**

To identify learning gaps and measure the academic progress of our students through the administration of pre- and post-grade-level assessments in Reading, Math, and Writing that correlate with the NJSL standards and Reader's/Writer's Workshop.

**District Goal 2: Strategic Plan Goal Areas: Future-Ready Instruction and Curriculum and Well-Rounded Student**

Continue to expand student exploration opportunities, such as (examples) the Performing Arts, Husky TV, debate, a student newsletter, and other feasible collaborative projects that empower students to become active participants in their learning.

**District Goal 3: Strategic Plan Goal Areas: Facilities and Safety**

Work with the appropriate local, county, and state authorities to assess the safety/security of the district's buildings/grounds, protocols/guidelines/practices, and continue to foster a safe learning environment.

**District Goal 4: Strategic Plan Goal Area: Identify Needs/Personalized Learning**

To articulate student learning differentiation strategies currently utilized, and to further challenge and enhance learning for each student based on their individual needs, strengths, and interests.

- I. **Call to Order** – The regular session of the Harding Board of Education is called to order by Mr. Gjivoje at 7:00 p.m. in the Library of the Harding Township Middle School, 34 Lee's Hill Road, New Vernon, NJ 07976.
- II. **Presiding Officers Statement/Sunshine Statement:**  
In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*, adequate notification of this meeting has been provided to the Daily Record, Observer Tribune and posted on the bulletin boards of the New Vernon Post Office, Green Village Post Office, Harding Township Municipal Building, Harding Township Elementary School and Harding Township Middle School on January 12, 2023.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**  
**AYES:** Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Dr. Alex Anastasiou, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos  
**Also Present:** Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Spelker; Board Secretary, Mr. John Jennings  
Note Mrs. Krikos was present via teleconference
- V. **PRESENTATION**  
**Long Range Facilities Plan – Dr. Matthew A. Spelker, Superintendent** – Dr. Spelker provided an update to the Board on the Long-Range Facilities Plan ("LRFP"). Dr. Spelker thanked Mr. Singh and Mr. Bruno for their commitment and work on the LRFP. He noted that the LRFP represents a draft "road map" of maintenance and projects that will allow Harding Township School to continue a second century of academic excellence for our students. He noted that HTS has made excellent

progress in achieving its short-term goals in regards to facility upgrades and improvements. The Facilities and Finance Committee will be working on projects that can be found on the yellow list and developing a priority list of projects for the next academic school year 2023-2024. Mr. Gjivoje thanked Dr. Spelker, Mr. Bruno and Mr. Singh for all their work regarding the LRFP.

**VI. HEARING OF PUBLIC REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS (Policy 0167)**

**MOTION** to open public comments regarding agenda items only presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved at 7:25 p.m.

No Public Comments

**MOTION** to close public comments regarding agenda items only presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Dr. Anastasiou, unanimously approved at 7:26 p.m.

**VII. REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS**

- a. Superintendent – Dr. Spelker noted the public hearing for the 2023-2024 school budget will be held on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Spring sport teams have begun their seasons and he wished them best of luck this year. Wednesday April 26<sup>th</sup> will be HTS Day of Service with various grades working with different organizations. HTS will have Friday May 26<sup>th</sup> and Monday May 29<sup>th</sup> off for the Memorial Day Weekend. Promotion Ceremony for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be held on Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. Last day of school for 2023 will be Monday June 19<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Business Administrator – John Jennings reminded the Board and Administrators to complete their financial disclosure forms by the due date. He noted that the budget was reviewed by the County BA and Superintendent with no comments or changes. The Public Hearing is scheduled for May 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Jennings also noted that the Cafeteria P/L is trending better this year with improved volumes and profitability and thanked all the staff for their hard work and dedication. Mr. Jennings also reviewed the agenda items in Facilities/Finance FF-034 to FF-043 with the Board.
- c. Facility & Finance – 4/12/23 – Mr. Bruno noted the middle school HVAC project was completed and noted that the District and Contractor agreed to a final settlement which enabled the district to complete the project under budget. He noted that negotiations were underway and that would be covered by the Negotiations Committee update. He noted the committee discussed the two Regular Operating Grants or ROD grant submissions.
- d. Personnel & Management – 4/12/23 – Mrs. Krikos noted that the district has completed 145 observations. She noted the district has several position postings and is hopeful they will attract good quality candidates.
- e. Negotiations – 4/12/23 – Dr. Anastasiou noted that the District and HTEA have agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) in their contract discussions. He thanked everyone involved in the negotiations for their time and efforts in reaching a contract that is fair to both sides. He also noted that the district teachers, based on rankings are the best in the surrounding area and thanked them for their work for the district. Mr. Gjivoje thanked Dr. Anastasiou and Mrs. Krikos for serving on the Negotiations Committee and the teachers for good faith negotiations and a mutually agreeable outcome.
- f. Madison BOE – Mr. Bruno noted that the Madison Superintendent, Mark Schwarz resigned his position effective June 30, 2023 and is moving to become the Superintendent at Ridgewood School District. Mr. Bruno noted that the next Madison BOE meeting is tomorrow where they will likely vote/approve a new interim Superintendent. Mr. Bruno also noted that the resignation of the Superintendent could potentially result in the school referendum being pushed to a later date but a decision on that has not been made. He also

noted that transgender policy continues to be a topic that is discussed at the Madison BOE. Mr. Gjivoje speaking on his own behalf, mentioned he did not think it was optimal that the Madison School District has recently lost both its Business Administrator and its Superintendent. Mr. Gjivoje further stated that, to the best of his recollection, there have been 5 Superintendents over the last 10-12 years at the Madison School District indicating a high degree of turnover at that position. He further noted that the Harding School District sends their High School Students to Madison (tuition paid for those students by Harding Township) and such high turnover at Madison is not helpful to the performance of the Madison District. He expects a high-quality education/performance for the students that HTS sends to Madison.

g. NJ School Boards – No Update

h. HIB (if necessary) – None

**VIII. CORRESPONDENCE**

Fire Drill Report, March 2023

Nurses Report, March 2023

**IX. BOARD BUSINESS**

**BB-018 Approve Regular Session Minutes**

**MOTION** presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh to approve:

**BB-018 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education approve the following minutes:

- Regular Session, March 13, 2023
- No Executive Session held on March 13, 2023

**Roll call vote:**

**AYES:** *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Dr. Alex Anastasiou, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

**FACILITIES/FINANCE**

**FF-034 Approve Bills List**

**FF-035 Approve Financial Reports**

**FF-036 Approve Transfer Report**

**FF-037 Approve School Climate Change Pilot Grant**

**FF-038 Approve Pest Control & IPM Law**

**FF-039 Approve RFP Contract Cleaning/Custodial Services**

**FF-040 Approve Comcast Contract**

**FF-041 Approve Clinical Staffing Agreement – Home Therapies**

**FF-042 Approve 2023-2024 Tuition Rates**

**FF-043 Approve Non-Resident Tuition, 2023-24**

**MOTION** presented by Dr. Anastasiou and seconded by Mr. Singh to approve:

**FF-034 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the bills listed dated April 17, 2023 in the amount of \$1,476,506.35.

**FF-035 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the February Secretary and Treasurer reports certifying that no major appropriation or account or fund has been over-extended and that sufficient funds are

available to meet the districts obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

**FF-036 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the February Transfer Report.

**FF-037, RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the submission and acceptance of the School Climate Change Pilot Grant award in the amount of \$6,660.

**FF-038 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves Safe Schools Integrated Pest Management & IPM Compliance Services Renewal Proposal for July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 at a monthly fee of \$215.00.

**FF-039 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the Business Administrator to advertise and conduct a Request for Proposal (Bid) for Contract Cleaning/Custodial Services.

**FF-040 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the Comcast Back-up Internet Renewal Service Agreement. This renewal process was conducted through our E-rate consulting services bidding process and will be effective for 3 years commencing on July 1, 2023 at a monthly rate of \$249.85, before the E-Rate discount.

**FF-041 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves a Clinical Staffing Agreement with Home Care Therapies LLC, dba Horizon Healthcare Staffing commencing on July 1, 2023 to supply on an as needed basis clinical and non-clinical temporary staff per the attached rates.

**FF-042 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the following Pre-School and Non-Resident Tuition rates for the 2023-2024 School Year;

|               |          |
|---------------|----------|
| Pre-School    | \$ 4,450 |
| Elementary    | \$ 9,500 |
| Middle School | \$10,000 |

**FF-043 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the renewal of non-resident tuition contracts for the 2023-24 school year for the following students:

Grade 5 student #10912 with a deposit of \$3,000 to be paid by September 1, 2023, with the remaining \$6,000 to be paid in ten (10) equal monthly installments of \$600, September – June.

Grade 8 student #10911 with a deposit of \$3,000 to be paid by September 1, 2023, with the remaining \$6,500 to be paid in ten (10) equal monthly installments of \$650, September – June.

**Roll call vote:**

**AYES:** *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Dr. Alex Anastasiou, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

#### **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

**CI-011 Approve Extended School Year Program**

**CI-012 Approve Field Trips**

**CI-013 Approve Leadership Award Program Registration**

**MOTION** presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Dr. Anastasiou to approve:

**CI-011 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the 2023 Extended School Year Program:

Monday, July 3 through Friday July 7 (Closed Tuesday, July 4)

July 10 thru July 27, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Monday-Thursday)

(3) Certified Teachers, with endorsement, salary per diem hourly 2023/24 HTEA contract;

(2) Teaching Assistants, salary based on hourly rate applicable to 2023/24 school year

(1) Speech Therapist with endorsement, salary per diem hourly 2023/24 HTEA contract

(1) Occupational Therapist (Jump Start) salary per diem hourly contract

(1) Physical Therapist (PG Chambers) salary per diem hourly contract

**CI-012 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the following field trip:

Mr. Alworth/Mrs. Gareau, Gr.6-8 Band/Chorus, Adjudication, May 19, 2023, Jackson, NJ (REVISED)

Mrs. Larson/Duggan Grade 4, Old Barracks Museum, May 19, 2023, Trenton, NJ

Mrs. Doyle, Grades 6-8, Junior Solar Sprints, May 22, 2023, New Providence, NJ

**CI-013 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the registration and attendance to the Morris County Superintendents Middle School Student Leadership Award Program on May 10, 2023 for April Friedman, Principal, Matthew Spelker, Superintendent, Recipient and 2 Parents, \$50 per person, \$250 total.

**Roll call vote:**

**AYES:** *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Dr. Alex Anastasiou, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

**PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT**

**PM-013 Approve Extended School Year Faculty**

**PM-014 Approve Long Term Substitute Teacher**

**PM-015 Approve Administrator Salary/Assignment, 2023-24**

**MOTION** presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Dr. Anastasiou to approve:

**PM-013 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approves the following staff assignments/salaries for the Extended School Year Program Monday, July 3 through Friday July 7 (Closed Tuesday, July 4); July 10 thru July 27, 2023 (Monday-Thursday) from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Ms. Sarah Orr, teacher, at per diem hourly as per the negotiated 2023/24 HTEA salary guide.

Ms. Eileen Kemner, teacher, at per diem hourly as per the negotiated 2023/24 HTEA salary guide

Ms. Kristen Carleen, Speech Language Services, at per diem hourly as per the negotiated 2023/24 HTEA salary guide.

(1) Occupational Therapist (Jump Start) salary per diem hourly contract.

(1) Physical Therapist (PG Chambers) salary per diem hourly contract.

**PM-014 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approves the following long-term substitute teacher:

Mr. William Geyer, Library/Media Center, effective April 18, 2023 through June 19, 2023, at a

per diem rate of \$130.

**PM-015 RESOLVED**, that the Harding Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the reappointment of the following Administrator contract: Mr. Chris Magno, Director of Student Services at an annual rate of \$126,783, (10.5 months, effective August 14, 2023 thru June 30, 2024.

**Roll call vote:**

**AYES:** *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Dr. Alex Anastasiou, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

**X. HEARING OF PUBLIC REGARDING (Agenda and non-Agenda Items- Policy 0167)**

**MOTION** to open public comments regarding Agenda and non-Agenda Items presented by Dr. Anastasiou and seconded by Mr. Bruno, unanimously approved at 8:04 p.m.

Suzanne Piotrowski congratulated the District for a tentative agreement with the HTEA and echoed the comments of Dr. Anastasiou on the outstanding teachers the District maintains. She was happy to hear that the phone-in option of attending Board of Education Meetings is being maintained.

**MOTION** to close public comments regarding Agenda and non-Agenda Items presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved at 8:07 p.m.

**XI. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS** – Mr. Gjivoje commented on the Day of Service as something the District is very proud to continue, which encourages students to participate in Public Service. He also mentioned that the May 1<sup>st</sup> BOE meeting will be the Public Budget Hearing and encouraged all that are interested to attend the meeting.

**XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION** presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mr. Singh, unanimously approved to enter Executive Session at 8:10 p.m.

Be It Resolved, that the Harding Township Board of Education will convene into Executive Session to discuss School Safety concerns in full compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.; and the minutes of the discussion of any of these items will be available to the public when such minutes have been approved by the Board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1. *Topics: School Safety Concerns, no action will be taken.*

**XIII. RETURN to PUBLIC SESSION**

**MOTION** presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Dr. Anastasiou, unanimously approved to return to Public Session at 9:15 p.m.

**XIV. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS -None**

**XV. ADJOURN**

**MOTION** presented by Mr. Bruno and seconded by Mrs. Krikos to adjourn at 9:17 p.m.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**AYES:** *Mr. Davor Gjivoje, Dr. Alex Anastasiou, Mr. Abi Singh, Mr. Richard Bruno, Mrs. Melissa Krikos*

Respectively submitted,



John Jennings  
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

