

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
April 26, 2021
Board Secretary's Memorandum
REMOTE PUBLIC MEETING**

**In accordance with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Local Operational
Guidance – Covid-19: Guidance for Remote Public Meetings in New Jersey.**

DATE

Monday, April 26, 2021

PLACE

Remote Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION

7:03 P.M.

ADJOURNED

7:33 P.M.

CALLED TO ORDER

7:38 P.M.

ADJOURNED

8:26 P.M.

OPEN MEETING:

Ms. Maryadele Wojtowicz, Board President, presided and voiced the call to order in Executive Session at 7:03 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion by Ms. Egan Seconded by Ms. Skelton to approve the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits boards of education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the West Essex Regional Board of Education adjourns to Executive Session to discuss Personnel, Student, Negotiations and/or Litigation matters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that public release of these discussions will occur when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

OPEN MEETING:

The Board reconvened from Executive Session and Ms. Maryadele Wojtowicz, President, presided and voiced the call to order at 7:38 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

Ms. C. Egan
Ms. A. Fahey
Ms. J. Marcus
Mr. F. Perrotti
Mr. A. Rubinich
Ms. D. Sacco-Calderone – Vice-President
Ms. J. Skelton
Mr. R. Stampone
Ms. M. Wojtowicz – President

Administration:

Mr. Damion Macioci, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Melissa Kida, Board Secretary/Business Administrator

West Essex Regional Board of Education
MINUTES – April 26, 2021

PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING:

Notice of the April 26, 2021 meeting of the Board of Education was e-mailed to the Clerks of the Boroughs of Essex Fells, North Caldwell and Roseland and to the Township of Fairfield, and to the editor of The Progress on January 7, 2021 and The Star Ledger on the same day.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED 2021-2022 BUDGET

After opening the meeting, **Ms. Wojtowicz** introduced **Ms. Melissa Kida**, West Essex School Business Administrator, who presented the 2021/2022 budget with the following points highlighted:

- This budget provides monies to maintain existing staff, academic offerings, extra-curricular activities, and transportation.
- Monies have been allocated for additional staff, classroom renovations, and additional security cameras, while still meeting the increases of salaries & benefits and operational costs.
- Tuition revenue for the district's 18-21-year-old Special Education Program, miscellaneous revenue (facilities rentals), and a projected increase in anticipated state aid have been helpful in offsetting costs for the upcoming year.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Ms. Egan requested clarification on the percentage change per town. Ms. Kida responded.

Mr. Rubinich commented that the 2020/2021 budget contained considerable COVID-related expenses. He asked if COVID-related expenses were built into this budget, too. Ms. Kida responded.

Ms. Marcus requested clarification on the increasing costs of out-of-district tuition.

Ms. Wojtowicz thanked Ms. Kida for her budget presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Ms. Wojtowicz opened the floor to the public for comments. Hearing none, she closed the floor and resumed the meeting.

Item 1, **Adoption of the 2021-2022 School Year Budget**, will be voted upon in one motion. Motion by Ms. Wojtowicz Seconded by Ms. Sacco-Calderone to approve the following motion:

1. BE IT RESOLVED to approve a school district budget for the FY 2021-2022 School Year, as follows:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Local Tax Levy</u>
Total General Fund	\$ 42,213,057	\$ 38,858,193
Total Special Revenue Fund	\$ 263,000	\$ -
Total Debt Service Fund	\$ 2,033,975	\$ 2,033,975
Totals	\$44,510,032	\$40,892,168

West Essex Regional Board of Education
MINUTES – April 26, 2021

1. (continued)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this budget contains a withdrawal of \$100,000 from the Maintenance Reserve account for window screen replacements, roof repairs/maintenance, walk-in freezer repairs and parking lot striping; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary be authorized to transmit any and all such supporting documentation to the County Superintendent of Schools as may be required.

ROLL CALL:	Yes:	Ms. Egan, Ms. Fahey, Ms. Marcus, Mr. Perrotti, Mr. Rubinich, Ms. Sacco-Calderone, Ms. Skelton, Mr. Stampone and President Wojtowicz
	No:	None
	Abstain:	None
	Absent:	None

BOARD PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

Ms. Wojtowicz thanked Ms. Kida on the thoroughness of her budget presentation.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Mr. Macioci provided his regional COVID update. He commented that, despite some uncertainty pertaining to the upcoming school year, Administration is committed to having students return to campus five full days per week this fall. He stated that specifics are contingent upon guidance from the Department of Education and Governor’s Office.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Rubinich requested clarification on the vaccination status of staff members. Mr. Macioci responded.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS/COMMENTS:

Curriculum & Instruction Committee – Ms. Skelton, Chair, commented that the Committee met on April 15th and discussed concerns by Board members and Administration on how to assess student progress and interventions to address deficiencies. She commented that Mr. Gupta would provide a comprehensive update at the May 10th Board meeting. She stated that summer school and Senior Service were also discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Wojtowicz opened the floor to the public for comments on agenda items. Hearing none, she closed the floor and resumed the meeting.

West Essex Regional Board of Education
FINANCE– April 26, 2021

The following finance motions are made at the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools:

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, Items 2- 7 will be voted upon in one motion.

Motion by Mr. Rubinich Seconded by Mr. Stampone to approve the following motions:

2. To approve the bills and claims **check number 046261** through **check number ~~046328~~** and **check number 510647** through **check number 510649**.
Payroll check number 500976 through **check number 500977**.
Void check numbers 042710 and 045716.
Totaling: \$1,923,729.75

Enclosures 1F – 3F

3. To *amend* **Finance Motion #2** previously approved at the **April 14, 2021** Board meeting, as follows: approve the **Student Activity Check Register** from February 27, 2021 through April 1, 2021, **check number 12140** through **check number 12197** and **check number 12199** through **check number 12217** and **check number 12219** through **check number 12264** and check number 12268. **Void check numbers 12198, 12218, 12265, 12266, and 12267**.
Totaling: \$48,657.90

Enclosures 4F – 17F

4. To approve the **Student Activity Check Register** from April 2, 2021 through April 22, 2021, **check number 12269** through **check number 12273**.
Void check numbers 11895 and 12243.
Totaling: \$6,419.20

Enclosure 18F

5. To approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of **April 14, 2021**.

Enclosures 19F – 27F

6. To approve the Executive Session Minutes of **April 14, 2021**.

Enclosure 28F

7. WHEREAS, the West Essex Regional School District Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") intends to solicit bids for the purchase of **Magic Aire Unit Ventilators**, which are self-contained unit ventilators designed for use in schools and public settings, are manufactured only by Magic Aire, and are proprietary products pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:34-9.1 and N.J.S.A. 18A:18A.2; and

7. (continued)

WHEREAS, the Business Administrator/Board Secretary has certified that the product is of a specialized nature and is necessary for the conduct of the affairs of the West Essex Regional School District (hereinafter referred to as the “District”), as set forth more specifically below:

Specialized Nature

Magic Aire Unit Ventilators are truly proprietary equipment, in that no other manufacturers make such products, the parts are not interchangeable with those of other brands, and a substantial number of Magic Aire Unit Ventilators are already installed and utilized in District facilities. Purchase of additional units will permit all units to be maintained or repaired by a single Magic Aire-certified technician or vendor, and the replacement parts will be interchangeable with those already in use in the District.

Necessary for the Conduct of the Board’s Affairs

The public need for the proprietary equipment is of a compelling nature, such that the value to the public that is gained by the proprietary designation overshadows the public benefit of a “brand name or equivalent” and the benefits of such competition.

Although competing or similar products are available, the parts are not interchangeable with those already in use in the District, and if such equipment were installed, additional technicians or service vendors would be required to perform maintenance and repair. The Board made a substantial investment in the Magic Aire Ventilators it already owns, and the purchase of further units will lead to cost savings in parts and service as well as increased efficiency in facilities management.

WHEREAS, based upon the foregoing, the Board finds that the public need for the proprietary designation is appropriate and outweighs the benefit of competition through the use of another “brand name or equivalent”; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

The Board hereby authorizes the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to negotiate directly with the product manufacturer for the purchase of Magic Aire Unit Ventilators, which are a proprietary product available only through the manufacturer.

ROLL CALL:	Yes:	Ms. Egan, Ms. Fahey, Ms. Marcus, Mr. Perrotti, Mr. Rubinich, Ms. Sacco-Calderone, Ms. Skelton, Mr. Stampone and President Wojtowicz
	No:	None
	Abstain:	Mr. Perrotti (#6 Only), Ms. Wojtowicz (#6 Only)
	Absent:	None

West Essex Regional Board of Education
PERSONNEL – April 26, 2021

The following personnel motions are made at the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools:

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, Items 1- 12, will be voted upon in one motion.

Motion by Mr. Stampone Seconded by Ms. Egan to approve the following motions:

1. To approve the letter of resignation from **Jenine Serritella** as a 3/5th's School Nurse assigned to West Essex Regional High School effective April 21, 2021.
2. To approve one-half (½) day, without pay, for employee **#3243**, on Tuesday, April 20, 2021.
3. To approve two (2) days, without pay, for employee **#3218**, on Thursday, April 29, 2021 and Friday, April 30, 2021.
4. To approve the appointment of **Christopher Conroy (BA)** as a Technology Education-Woodshop teacher assigned to West Essex Regional High School, effective September 1, 2021, for the 2021/2022 school year, pending receipt of mandatory certification from the state of New Jersey, at an annual salary of \$61,274, which is Step 5 of the 2021/2022 Bachelor's Degree Teacher's Salary Guide.
[NOTE: Mr. Conroy replaces Robert Haas, who resigned.]
5. To approve the appointment of **Frank Cherichello** as a 3/5th's leave replacement Guidance Counselor for West Essex Regional High School, effective on or about September 1, 2021 through November 24, 2021, at an annual salary of \$38,486, pro-rated, which is 3/5th's of Step 1 of the 2021/2022 Master's+30 Degree Teacher's Salary Guide.
[NOTE: Mr. Cherichello replaces Kimberly Greulich, who on a Board-approved maternity/disability leave of absence.]
6. To approve a maternity/disability leave of absence for **Maria Faggiani**, Special Education teacher assigned to West Essex Regional High School, beginning **September 1, 2021** through **January 31, 2022**, with a return date of **February 1, 2022**.
7. To approve a maternity/disability leave of absence for **Jenna Maus-Colucci**, Reading teacher assigned to West Essex Regional Middle School, beginning **September 27, 2021** through **January 31, 2022**, with a return date of **February 1, 2022**.
8. To *amend* **Personnel Motion #13** previously approved at the **March 1, 2021** Board meeting approving **Juliann Hoebee** to the position of Acting Supervisor of Health/Physical Education, to read: beginning March 1, 2021 through May 14, 2021. All other details remain the same.

West Essex Regional Board of Education
PERSONNEL – April 26, 2021

9. WHEREAS, certain administrators, supervisors and the executive administrative assistant (“Employees”) have been unable to take the vacation leave that accrued to them this year because of duties directly related to the present public health emergency declared by the Governor; and
- WHEREAS, the Employees’ respective collective negotiations agreements and/or employment agreements (“Agreements”) limit the number of days that may be accrued in a given year and used in the next succeeding year; and
- WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:30-9.1, the Board is authorized to establish a plan to allow the Employees’ vacation leave to accumulate until the leave is used or the Employees are compensated for their accrued vacation leave; and
- WHEREAS, the Board has determined that it is in the best interests of the West Essex Regional School District to develop a plan to allow the Employees’ to accumulate vacation leave accrued during the 2020-2021 school year.
- NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby approves the following plan for Employees who have accrued vacation leave in the 2020-2021 school year only:
1. Employees shall be required to carry over the maximum number of days allowed under their Agreements before selecting any other option in the plan.
 2. After deducting the maximum number of days allowed to be carried over under their Agreements, the Employees may elect to cash-out up to five (5) of their remaining vacation days at their respective per diem salaries.
 3. Any vacation days remaining after carrying over the maximum number of days the Employees may accrue under their Agreements and deducting the days the Employees elect to cash-out, shall be taken over the next five school years, provided that the number of days taken in any school year shall not exceed one-fifth of the remaining days.
10. To *amend* **Personnel Motion #4** previously approved at the **August 19, 2020** Board meeting to read: To approve the appointment of **Richard Larcara (BA15)** as a Social Studies teacher assigned to West Essex Regional Middle School, effective October 1, 2020, for the 2020/2021 school year, pending receipt of mandatory paperwork in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18-A:6-7.9, at an annual salary of \$58,625, which is Step 2 of the 2019/2021 Bachelor’s+15 Degree Teacher’s Salary Guide, pending contract negotiations.
11. To *amend* **Personnel Motion #5** previously approved at the **September 14, 2020** Board meeting to read: To approve the appointment of **Richard Larcara** as a leave replacement Social Studies teacher assigned to West Essex Regional Middle School, effective September 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020, pending receipt of mandatory paperwork in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18-A:6-7.9, at an annual salary of \$58,625, pro-rated, which is Step 2 of the 2019/2020 Bachelor’s+15 Degree Teacher’s Salary Guide, pending contract negotiations.

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PERSONNEL – April 26, 2021

12. To *amend* **Personnel Motion #11** previously approved at the **January 6, 2021** Board meeting to read: To approve the following movement on the guide for the 2020/2021 school year, effective September 1, 2020:

	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Brophy, Kelly (3/5 th 's)	MA Step 12 \$46,888	MA15 Step 12 \$48,463
<u>WITHDRAWN</u> (Richard Larcara)	BA Step 2 \$57,890	BA15 Step 2 \$59,341
Ruiz, Nicola	MA Step 11 \$75,141	MA15 Step 11 \$78,069

ROLL CALL: Yes: Ms. Egan, Ms. Fahey, Ms. Marcus, Mr. Perrotti, Mr. Rubinich, Ms. Sacco-Calderone, Ms. Skelton, Mr. Stampone and President Wojtowicz
No: None
Abstain: Mr. Perrotti (#9 Only), Ms. Wojtowicz (#9 Only)
Absent: None

Ms. Wojtowicz opened the floor to the public for comments on non-agenda items:

- **Ms. Lisa Smith**, Fairfield parent, asked if Administration planned to bring all students on campus five days per week for the fourth marking period. She also asked if satellite rooms could be used in the middle school in order to move from two to one cohort. Ms. Wojtowicz, Mr. Macioci, and Mr. Gupta responded.

Ms. Marcus requested clarification on how outdoor social distancing guidelines impacts high school and middle school athletics. Mr. Macioci responded.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Rubinich Seconded by Ms. Egan at 8:26 PM.

ADJOURN: There being no further business before this Board of Education, BE IT RESOLVED that this public meeting be adjourned.

President

Business Administrator/Board Secretary