

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
of the  
MERCER COUNTY SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

BUSINESS MEETING  
Tuesday, March 7, 2017  
4:30 pm

The monthly business meeting for the month of March 7, 2017 was held this day in the Mercer Elementary School Superintendent's Conference Room, 2nd Floor, 1020 Old Trenton Road, Hamilton, NJ.

The Board of Education took the following actions:

1. CALL TO ORDER: Board of Education Vice President, Russ White called the meeting to order at 4:31 pm.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT: Mr. White read the following statement:

In accordance with the provisions New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law, the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be posted in the Board Office and in the Mercer County Clerk's Office and mailed to the *Trenton Times*.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Russell White, Yasmin Hernandez-Manno, Samuel Floyd, Lisa Vena and Sally Gillespie.

Also Present: Dr. Kimberly Schneider, Superintendent, Tanya Dawson, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Dana Hice DePugh, Assistant Superintendent, Deborah Donnelly, Assistant Business Administrator/Assistant Board Secretary, Christine MacDonald, Human Resource Manager and Walter Bliss, Board Attorney.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. White led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. PUBLIC SESSION: held at the end.
4. Approval of the February 7, 2017 Board Meeting Regular Minutes:

A Motion by Lisa Vena and seconded by Sally Gillespie to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd -	Yes	Mr. White -	Yes
	Ms. Vena -	Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno -	Yes
	Ms. Lewis -	Absent	Ms. Rainiero -	Absent
	Ms. Gillespie -	Yes		

5. Bills To Be Approved totaling \$ 4,359,774.02 and authorization of transfers within program areas as approved by the Superintendent

A Motion by Lisa Vena and seconded by Samuel Floyd to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

6. Treasurer’s Report for January 2017

A Motion by Lisa Vena and seconded by Sally Gillespie to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

7. Correspondence & Communications

Dr. Schneider communicated Jim Palmer’s memo from the NJDOE asking for emergency preparedness for people with disabilities (attached) and was shared with the school community.

Also Dr. Schneider noted the artwork that decorated the Board Room was completed by the students at the Joseph Cappello School. Please take a moment before you leave to take a look at them.

Ms. Hice-DePugh noted the Mercer Elementary School is having an Open House on March 24, 2017 to invite child study teams, community directors and counselors to take a look at our programs.

Budget Presentation – Tanya Dawson presented the tentative 2017/18 Budget. District enrollment was presented for the 2017/18 school year showing a decrease for September. We continue to see a decrease in enrollment as there continues to be a push from DOE for sending district to limit out of district placements. District funding source was presented making a special note that the majority of our funding comes in way of tuition from sending districts and tax levy support. History of the county tax levy support was presented showing an increase of 2% for the 2017/18 school year. Total operating budget was presented followed by appropriations by categories that show what makes up the budget. Important issues supporting the budget were presented next. Here is what the Board will be approving in the 2017/18 budget, a decline in enrollment, reduction in force (district wide) some through attrition, we will staff for the number of students in attendance for September with limited openings to begin the year, shared services with MCTS for B&G and IT. Lastly, concerns from our sending districts have not changed from last year. They still have 2% tax levy CAP, state aid for 2017/18 remained flat for most districts, continue to have unfunded mandates (Lead water testing) and they continue to limit out of district placements.

Mr. White – Our enrollment really has me concerned. These numbers are really low. I thought we saw the enrollment level out but they continue to decrease. We may need to make some drastic moves like closing a building.

Ms. Dawson – I don't think we can talk about closing buildings just yet. Administration has been working with each school to see what the needs are of our sending districts and making sure we offer programs that are needed. We are conducting an open house at MES and JFC to invite counselors from the sending districts to come take a look at our programs.

Ms. Hice DePugh talked about some of the exciting initiatives being done district wide. We are looking at new curriculum and sending staff for professional development to enhance our programs.

Dr. Schneider – Special Education today is not how it was years ago. When parents come to look, they are looking to see that literacy and numeracy is embedded in what we are doing.

Mr. White – Are we still having an issue with Trenton?

Ms. Hice DePugh – Although I think our relationship with Trenton is getting better we still have a low number of students from them. My office just received some applications from them for placement that we are looking at now. So that is promising.

Mr. White – We need to look at where some of our sending districts are sending students. As a county public school, we should be the first option for when districts have to place a student out of district if we happen to be an appropriate placement for a student. I don't see how they can send to a private school first without first considering us. Is that something the county office can help us with?

Ms. Hernandez Manno – That is something I can look into. When deciding a placement for a student, the IEP dictates the appropriate placement for the student depending on the students need.

Mr. White – I think that is something we should look at. Where are the students from Mercer County being sent for out of district placement?

Ms. Hice DePugh – I think that is information we might be able to get. Let me look into that.

Dr. Schneider – Let's see if we can get that information. There used to be a report that showed that data but I am not sure if that report is still around. Let Dana see if she can get that information.

Mr. White – Thank you. I think that information would be useful to have.

8. Committee Reports – None

9. Superintendent's Report - None

New/Special Projects: None

Recommend Board approve the following:

**PERSONNEL & ADDENDUM**

BE IT RESOLVED That the Board of Education does hereby approve the following appointments, reappointments, adjustments, resignations, terminations, retirements, leaves, transfers, suspensions, and requests for expedites, emergency certification for the School Year 2016 – 2017 as recommended by the Superintendent.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the Board of Education submit to the County Superintendent, as required, applications for emergency hiring and the applicants’ attestations that they have not been convicted of any disqualifying crime pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq, N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 et seq, or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et seq.

**PERSONNEL:**

Recommend Board approve the following:

Appointments, Resignations, Leaves, Retirements and addendum etc. (*Attachment 9-A*)

A Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes*
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

\*Note: Ms. Hernandez-Manno abstains from Emergent hire.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Recommend Board approve the following:

2017-2018 School Calendar - **Revised** (*Attachment 9-B*)

A Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

New Policies/Regulations/By-Laws – ***First Reading*** (Attachment 9-C).***POLICIES***

- 8507 Breakfast Offer Versus Serve (OVS)  
 2460 Special Education (M)  
 2567 Surrogate Parents and Foster Parents (M)

***REGULATIONS***

- R2460.15 Special Education – In-Service Training Needs for  
 Professional and Paraprofessional Staff (New)

A Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

New Policies/Regulations/By-Laws – ***Second Reading***  
*(no changes from First Reading)****POLICIES***

- 1550 Americans with Disabilities Act (M)  
 5116 Education of Homeless Children  
 5330.04 Administering an Opioid Antidote (New)  
 8330 Student Records (M)

***REGULATIONS***

- R1550 Americans with Disabilities Act (M)  
 R8330 Student Records (M)

A Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

**Abolished** -- Policies, Regulations, or By-Laws

*None*

**REPORTS:**

Fire and Security Drills for month of February 2017 (*Attachment 9-D*)

A Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call: Mr. Floyd - Yes                      Mr. White - Yes  
               Ms. Vena - Yes                         Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes  
               Ms. Lewis - Absent                        Ms. Rainiero - Absent  
               Ms. Gillespie - Yes

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying Report for February 2017:

Month	Investigations	HIB	Non-HIB	Pending
July	0	0	0	0
August	0	0	0	0
September	0	0	0	0
October	0	0	0	0
November	0	0	0	0
December	0	0	0	0
January	0	0	0	0
February	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	0	0	0	0

A Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call: Mr. Floyd - Yes                      Mr. White - Yes  
               Ms. Vena - Yes                         Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes  
               Ms. Lewis - Absent                        Ms. Rainiero - Absent  
               Ms. Gillespie - Yes

Enrollment Data as of February 28, 2017:

YEAR	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
2015-2016	521	519	654	659	665	661	666	661	657	660	657	652
2016-2017	511	508	586	598	601	600	603	607				

	<u>01/31/17</u>	<u>02/28/17</u>
Mercer High School	295	292
Mercer Elementary School	204	206
Regional Day	9	9
J. F. Cappello School	<u>95</u>	<u>100</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>607</b>

A Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

## 11. New Business

Recommend Board approve the following:

- a. Approve Wiss & Company, LLP, Engagement Letter for Mercer County Special Services School District Financial Audit for year ending June 2017 in the amount of \$61,200 GAAP Account # 11-000-230-339-01-AUD (Attachment 11-a).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- b. Approve the Special Child Health Services Staff Meeting Dates (Attachment 11-b).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- c. Approve Budget Planning Schedule (Attachment 11-c).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- d. Approve a new student worksite: Columbus Market, 2919 Route 206, Columbus, NJ

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- e. Approve “Eyes of the Wild Wallaby Tales Traveling Zoo Show” at Mercer Elementary School to be held on May 23, 2017 from 10:30 – 11:30AM at a cost of \$295 GAAP Account#11-214-100-890-80-AUT.

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- f. Approve Center for Aquatic Sciences Outreach Traveling Education Program at Mercer Elementary School to be held on June 8, 2017 at a cost of \$345 GAAP Account #'s 11-222-100-610-80-CS (\$213) AND 11-214-100-610-80-AUT(\$132).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- g. Approve the Affiliation Agreement between Mercer County Special Services School District Project Child Clinic Program and Lakeview Child Care Center beginning July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 (Attachment 11-g).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- h. Approve the Affiliation Agreement between Mercer County Special Services School District Project Child Clinic Program and The Learning Center beginning July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 (Attachment 11-h).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:      Mr. Floyd -    Yes                      Mr. White -    Yes  
                      Ms. Vena -    Yes                      Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes  
                      Ms. Lewis -   Absent                Ms. Rainiero - Absent  
                      Ms. Gillespie - Yes

- i. Approve Fee Proposal from DIGroup Architecture in the amount of \$64,250 for the following Capital Improvements (Attachment 11-i) :
- JFC Fire Alarm Replacement
  - JFC Intercom System Replacement
  - MHS Clock System Replacement
  - MES Unit Ventilator Replacement
  - Pole Barn Construction on site adjacent to MHS

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:      Mr. Floyd -    Yes                      Mr. White -    Yes  
                      Ms. Vena -    Yes                      Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes  
                      Ms. Lewis -   Absent                Ms. Rainiero - Absent  
                      Ms. Gillespie - Yes

- j. Approve Dr. Joseph Wieliczko to provide one 1.5 hour Professional Development training session for the certified and non-certified staff at Mercer High School. The topic of the training is "Mindful Eating and Stress Management Program" which will include a lecture and question and answer period, to be held Monday, May 15, 2017 from 8: 15 a.m. until 9:45 am at no cost to the District.

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:      Mr. Floyd -    Yes                      Mr. White -    Yes  
                      Ms. Vena -    Yes                      Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes  
                      Ms. Lewis -   Absent                Ms. Rainiero - Absent  
                      Ms. Gillespie - Yes

- k. Approve David Goldberg of Tobii Dynavox to provide one 2.0 hour Professional Development training session for MCSSSD's speech therapists. The topic of the training is "Assistive Technology Devices". To be held Monday, May 15, 2017 from 8: 15 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. There is no cost to the District for this training.

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- l. Approve the annual out of state field trip to Disney World, Florida, Tuesday May 2, 2017; Sponsored by the Sunshine Foundation. Approximately 22 Students and 7 staff members will be going at no cost to the District.

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- m. Approve Resolution to submit tentative 2017/18 Mercer County Special Services School District Budget to the Executive County Superintendent (Attachment 11-m – HANDOUT).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Abstain
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- n. Approval of Transportation Contract (s), Bids, Renewals & Addendums (Attachment 11-n).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Abstain
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

- o. Staff and Student Travel (Attachment 11-o).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

p. Miscellaneous Equipment for Disposal (Attachment 11-p).

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

q. Approve Mr. Cy Masterpole to provide required CPR Certification training for the MCSSSD school nurses. The four-hour certification training will be held on Monday, March 20, 2017 from 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm. The cost of the training is \$55.00 per nurse not exceed \$330, GAAP account #'s 11-000-223-590-30-MHS, 11-000-223-590-40-JFC and 11-000-223-590-80-MES.

A Motion by Lisa Vena and Seconded by Sally Gillespie was made to approve the aforementioned was carried by roll call vote.

Roll Call:	Mr. Floyd - Yes	Mr. White - Yes
	Ms. Vena - Yes	Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes
	Ms. Lewis - Absent	Ms. Rainiero - Absent
	Ms. Gillespie - Yes	

## 12. PUBLIC SESSION

Tina Jablonski, Teacher at Joseph Cappello School made a comment about the low enrollment; she said I heard from a parent that students are being sent to Lakewood that are from Trenton. How are they able to bypass MCSSSD?

## 13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits the Board of Education to meet in closed session to discussion certain matters, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mercer County Special Services Board of Education shall recess to executive session for the purpose of discussing:

*Grievance*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the discussion of such subject matter in closed session will be disclosed to the public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists, unless such is otherwise prohibited by law.

On a Motion by Samuel Floyd and Seconded by Sally Gillespie the Board unanimously voted to go into Executive Session at 5:34 PM.

Roll Call:     Mr. Floyd -    Yes                    Mr. White -    Yes  
                  Ms. Vena -     Yes                    Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes  
                  Ms. Lewis -    Absent                Ms. Rainiero - Absent  
                  Ms. Gillespie - Yes

On a Motion by Sally Gillespie and Seconded by Lisa Vena the Board unanimously voted to return to the open meeting at 5:47 PM.

Roll Call:     Mr. Floyd -    Yes                    Mr. White -    Yes  
                  Ms. Vena -     Yes                    Ms. Hernandez-Manno - Yes  
                  Ms. Lewis -    Absent                Ms. Rainiero - Absent  
                  Ms. Gillespie - Yes

13     ADJOURNMENT

A Motion by Samuel Floyd and Seconded by Lisa Vena to adjourn the meeting passed by unanimous voice vote, (5) aye’s (0) nay’s. Meeting was adjourned at 5:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tanya Dawson  
Business Administrator/Board Secretary