

**DEMAREST BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**COW and REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**County Road School – Media Center**  
**July 22, 2025**  
**7:00 P.M.**

I. OPENING

- A. The meeting was called to order by President Holzberg at 6:45 pm.
- B. Present: Brillhart, Cantatore, Choi, Fein, Governale, Lee, Holzberg.  
Absent: None  
Also present: Mr. Fox/ Superintendent and Ms. Kelly Business Administrator/ Board Secretary

II. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. The Board determined it will enter into executive session for the following reasons:
  - 1. Legal Matter
- B. It was moved by Lee seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous voice vote of those present to approve the following resolution to enter the executive session:

**WHEREAS**, in order to protect the personal privacy and to avoid situations wherein the public interest might be disserved, the Open Public Meetings Act permits public bodies to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which certain matters are discussed;

**WHEREAS**, the length of the closed executive session is estimated to be thirty minutes, after which the Regular Public Meeting will reconvene and proceed with business where formal action may or may not be taken;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that consistent with the provision of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b), the Board of Education will now adjourn to executive session to discuss items stated above; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subjects will be made public at a time when the public's interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure.

- C. It was moved by Governale, seconded by Choi and approved by unanimous voice vote of those present to convene executive session at 6:45 P.M.

III. REOPEN PUBLIC MEETING

- A. It was moved by Governale , seconded by Choi to reopen the Regular Meeting to the public at 7:10 P.M.
- B. President Holzberg read the following announcement:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Demarest Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time

and place thereof posted at the Borough Hall and at the Middle School and by notifying in writing two newspapers: The Record and The Suburbanite.

IV. FLAG SALUTE

A. President Holzberg led the flag salute.

V. ROLL CALL

Present: Brillhart, Cantatore, Choi, Fein, Governale, Lee, Holzberg.

Absent: None

Also present: Mr. Fox, Superintendent and Ms. Kelly Business Administrator/ Board Secretary

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

A. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous voice vote of those present to approve:

- June 17, 2025 COW and Regular Meeting Minutes
- June 17, 2025 Executive Meeting Minutes

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Kelly reviewed the letter from former district parents regarding pre-school tuition refund.

VIII. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Board President Holzberg hopes everyone is having a great summer and she congratulated Ms. Kelly on her distinguished award.

IX. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Fox commented on the following:

- The univent and pump installation, fire and burglar systems, and partial roof replacement are all going well.
- The gym addition at DMS: tile is going in the hallway, the outside is complete, other than the volleyball court, the sub flooring and flooring are being installed soon, and irrigation this week. The scoreboard and changing rooms are done.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None at this time.

XI. OTHER REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

None at this time.

XII. REVIEW OF AGENDA

A. Board members reviewed the items.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

- A. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to open the meeting to public comment.
- B. No one from the public spoke.

- C. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Governale and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to close the meeting to public comment.

#### XIV. ACTIONS

##### A. Instruction – Staffing

1. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the extended unpaid leave of absence for staff ID#10312752 from February 2, 2026 to February 23, 2026, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
2. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the provisional employment of Carra Tangredi, MA, Step 1, leave replacement teacher at Luther Lee Emerson School for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator. Employment status would become effective upon candidate's compliance with P.L. 1986, c. 116 (revised 6/30/98) and N.J.S.A.
3. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the provisional employment of Nicole B. Cutrona, MA, Step 16, Grade 5, Science teacher at Demarest Middle School for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator. Employment status would become effective upon candidate's compliance with P.L. 1986, c. 116 (revised 6/30/98) and N.J.S.A.
4. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the provisional employment of Melissa McDonnell, MA, Step 1, leave replacement teacher at County Road School for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator. Employment status would become effective upon candidate's compliance with P.L. 1986, c. 116 (revised 6/30/98) and N.J.S.A.
5. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the provisional employment of Christopher Collins, BA, Step 7, leave replacement teacher at Demarest Middle School from August 27, 2025 to February 27, 2026, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator. Employment status would become effective upon candidate's compliance with P.L. 1986, c. 116 (revised 6/30/98) and N.J.S.A.
6. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve student teacher Ethan Fusco from Montclair State University to work with Joseph Polvere for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
7. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the resignation of Andrew Lefer, Middle School Teacher, effective September 20, 2025, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

##### B. Instruction – Pupils/Programs

1. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve a non-domicile tuition agreement with Jason Beckerman and Susan Giacin for their child to attend first grade for the 2025/2026 school year, at an annual rate of \$20,531.00, as non-residents with domicile pending, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

2. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the athletic schedule for girls and boys basketball for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
3. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following contracts with the State of New Jersey Department of Human Services, Commission of the Blind and Visually Impaired for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Student ID	Level of Service	Cost
4538439360	Level 1	\$2,541.00
8491500919	Level 1	\$2,541.00
2273019823	Level 1	\$2,541.00

C. Support Services – Staffing

1. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the provisional employment of the following paraprofessional not to exceed 29 hours per week, according to the paraprofessional hourly guide, for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator. Employment status would become effective upon candidate's compliance with P.L. 1986, c.116 (revised 6/30/98) and N.J.S.A. 19A:6-7.7

Assunta Androsiglio	Step 1
Sofia DeCrescente	Step 1

2. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve to the payment of unused sick leave to the following former lunch aides, as per NJ paid sick leave law, effective 2018, NJSA 34:11D-1 et seq NJAC 12-69, as approved by the Chief School Administrator:

Employee	Total
Michelle Andreasen	\$724.80
Marcella Azilides	\$718.00
Robert Fitzpatrick	\$556.92
Aida Hernandez	\$145.77
Rhoda Hernandez	\$144.96
Charlotte Salamone	\$596.40

3. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the employment of the following lunch aides not to exceed 29 hours per week, according to the aide's hourly guide for the 2025/2026 school year, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Luther Lee Emerson School	Demarest Middle School
Jo Ann Martin, step 25	Mary Jeanne Drescher, step 25

4. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to accept the resignation of Laurie Palagano, paraprofessional at County Road School, effective June 30, 2025, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

5. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve unpaid leave of absence for staff ID# 10312944, from August 11, 2025 through August 15, 2025, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

**D. Support Services – Board of Education**

1. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

**APPROVAL - Establishment of Updated Bid and Quote Thresholds**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(a) permits boards of education to increase their bid threshold to the amount authorized by the Governor and the State Treasurer upon the appointment of a Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA); and

WHEREAS, Antoinette Kelly possesses the necessary certification as a Qualified Purchasing Agent, as issued by the Director of the Division of Local Government Services; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to P.L. 2021, c. 412 and N.J.S.A. 52:34-7, and in consultation with the Governor, the State Treasurer authorized the Director of the Division of Purchase and Property to increase the bid threshold from \$44,000 to \$53,000 effective July 1, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Demarest Board of Education in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey hereby appoints Antoinette Kelly as the Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA) for the Demarest Board of Education, with the authority, responsibility, and accountability for the district's purchasing activities as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2(b); establishes the district's new bid threshold at \$53,000 effective July 17, 2025; sets the quote threshold at \$7,950, which is 15% of the updated bid threshold, in accordance with the Public School Contracts Law; authorizes the Qualified Purchasing Agent to award contracts up to the new bid threshold in compliance with the statutory provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(a).

**APPROVAL - Revision of Purchasing and SOP Manuals to Reflect Updated Bid and Quote Thresholds**

Motion to approve the revision to the district's Purchasing Manual and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual to reflect the updated bid threshold of \$53,000 and quote threshold of \$7,950, in accordance with the statutory changes effective July 1, 2025.

2. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following request for facilities use on the following dates, in accordance with policy 7510, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Event	Date(s) and time	Location
Demarest Catchball	Wednesday's 9/3/25-6/1/17/26 as available	LLE gymnasium primary DMS old gym and DMS new gym as needed
DAA basketball	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 4:30 PM - 10:00 PM Wednesday 4:30 PM - 7:45 PM Saturday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM 9/2/25-6/2026 as available and agreed upon	LLE gymnasium
DAA basketball	Monday - Friday 4:30 PM - 10:00 PM Saturday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM	DMS old gymnasium DMS new gymnasium

	9/2/25-6/2026 as available and agreed upon	
DAA Men's basketball	Monday - Friday 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM 9/2/25 - 6/20/26	DMS new gymnasium (backup LLE gym if DMS not available)
Vikings	Monday-Friday 9/2/25-10/30/25 as available	LLE fields
PTO Staff breakfast	8/26/25 7:30 AM - 9:30 AM (set up) 8/27/25 7:30 AM - 9:30 AM (event)	LLE APR
PTO 5th/6th grade dance	11/14/25 3:00 PM - 9:00 PM	DMS old gymnasium
PTO PK Me & My Dance	10/9/25 3:15 PM - 6:30 PM	CRS gymnasium
PTO Lunar New Year Fan Dance	11/13/25, 12/4/25, 12/11/25, 12/18/25, 1/8/26, 1/15/26, 1/22/26, 1/29/26, 2/5/26, 2/12/26 4:15 PM - 5:30 PM	LLE APR
PTO Meetings	9/18/25, 1/14/26 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM	DMS cafeteria
PTO Class parent meeting with teachers	9/15/25 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	LLE Media Center
PTO Volleyball clinic	9/10/25, 9/11/25, 9/15/25, 9/17/25, 9/22/25, 9/29/25, 10/6/25, 10/8/25 4:30 PM -6:00 PM	DMS new gymnasium
PTO Fall Enrichment iCamp	9/15/25-11/21/25 3:15 PM - 4:15 PM	LLE rooms as needed and available (requesting APR, fields, gym, media center and other)
PTO Fall Enrichment iCamp	9/15/25-11/21/25 3:15 PM - 4:15 PM	LLE rooms as needed and available (requesting APR, fields, gym, media center and other)
BSA Troop 163 Troop meetings	Mondays 9/8/25-6/15/26 7:00 PM - 8:45 PM as available	CRS APR

3. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the attendance of the following workshops, with all hotel, meals and travel reimbursed at the statutory rates per NJ OMB guidelines, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Name/Title	Event	Registration Fee
Christie Bermudez	NJIDA Fall Conference 10/18/25 Virtual	\$250.00

4. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to acknowledge that the board accepts the results of the following HIB cases as reported at the June 17, 2025 meeting, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

2425-43 A

2425-43 B
2425-43 C
2425-44
2425-45

5. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to accept the donation of the scoreboard for the new Demarest Middle School gymnasium in the amount of \$9,246.29 by the Kane and Yu families, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
6. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the Virtual Learning Plan for the 2025/2026 school year, and its submittal to the Bergen County Superintendent's Office, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
7. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve renewal of the agreement with AlphaBest Education as the aftercare program provider for the 2025/2026 (facility use fee of \$2.15 per child per day) and 2026/2027 (facility use fee of \$2.25 per child per day) school years, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
8. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the IDEA grant and submission of the application, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

IDEA Basic Non-Public share	\$ 12,708.00
IDEA Basic Board share	\$180,025.00
IDEA Preschool Board share	\$11,538.00

E. Support Services—Fiscal Management

1. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to confirm the June payrolls as follows, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

June 13, 2025	\$533,474.44
June 18, 2025	\$500,986.16
June 30, 2025	\$112,303.28

2. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve July 22, 2025 bill list as follows, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

<u>Subtotal Per Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11 General Current Expense	\$ 866,291.41
12 Capital Outlay	\$ 290,382.01
20 Special Revenue Fund	\$ 41,942.70
21 Student Activity Fund	\$ 4,700.00
30 Capital Projects Fund	\$ 895,727.46
60 Cafeteria Fund	\$ 26,362.16
61 Laptop Account	\$ 596.00
Total Bills:	\$2,126,001.74

3. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Receipt of Certification from Board Secretary

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13 (d), I, Antoinette Kelly, certify that as of June 30, 2025, no budgetary line item account has obligations or payments (contractual orders) that, in total, exceed the amount appropriated by the district Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8 and 18A:22-8.1.

4. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the following resolution, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Certification of Board of Education

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13 (e), we certify that as of June 30, 2025 after review of the secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district official, to the best of our knowledge, no major account or fund has been over-extended in violation of NJAC 6:20-2.13 (b) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

5. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to acknowledge receipt of the June 2025 Report of the Board Secretary, A148 and the Report of the Treasurer, A-149, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

6. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to confirm the following budget transfer for June 2025, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

**To:**

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11-000-213-320	Health Services-Purchase Professional Services	7,932.50
11-000-216-320	Related Services-Purchase Professional Services	19,955.38
11-000-230-339	General Administration-Other Professional Services	1,000.00
11-000-251-590	Central Services-Misc. Purchased Services	1,161.83
11-000-261-420	Required Maintenance-Cleaning, Repair, Maintenance Services	13,150.77
11-000-262-100	Custodial Services-Salaries	5,650.41
11-000-262-621	Custodial Services-Natural Gas	3,250.52
11-000-262-622	Custodial Services-Electric	26,254.21
11-000-270-162	Student Transportation Services-Salaries	407.57
11-000-270-890	Student Transportation Services-Other Objects	180.55
11-000-291-290	Employee Benefits-Other Employee Benefits	48,717.88
11-000-291-299	Employee Benefits-Unused Sick Day Payments	5,056.92
11-190-100-340	Regular Programs-Purchased Technical Services	470.40
11-204-100-101	LLD-Salaries of Teachers	325.00
11-401-100-100	School Sponsored Co-Curricular Activities-Salaries	8,465.88
11-401-100-800	School Sponsored Co-Curricular Activities-Other Objects	1,282.00
<b>Total Transfers In</b>		<b>143,261.82</b>

**From:**

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11-000-213-104	Health Services- Regular Salaries	7,151.41
11-000-213-340	Health Services-Purchased Technical Services	239.39
11-000-213-610	Health Services-General Supplies	541.70



11-000-216-100	Related Services-Regular Salaries	28,421.26
11-000-230-334	General Administration-Architect/Engineering Services	1,000.00
11-000-251-610	Central Services-General Supplies	1,161.83
11-000-261-610	Required Maintenance-General Supplies	13,150.77
11-000-262-107	Custodial Services-Non Instructional Aides	2,554.67
11-000-262-610	Custodial Services-General Supplies	32,600.47
11-000-270-513	Student Transportation Services-Between Home and School	407.57
11-000-270-610	Student Transportation Services-General Supplies	180.55
11-000-291-270	Employee Benefits-Health/Dental Premiums	53,774.80
11-190-100-610	Regular Programs-General Supplies	470.40
11-204-100-106	LLD-Other Salaries for Instruction	325.00
11-401-100-600	School Sponsored Co-Curricular Activities-General Supplies	1,164.85
11-402-100-610	School Sponsored Athletics-General Supplies	117.15
<b>Total Transfers Out</b>		<b>143,261.82</b>

7. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve change order #10 with Daskal, LLC., for the Demarest Middle School Gymnasium, NJDOE Project # 1070-040-23-1000, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

This change order is the result of: electrical work, window modification, duct work, gym glazing upgrade, tariff increase office windows, volleyball court

Original contract contingency sum	\$250,000.00
Net change of previously authorized change orders	\$207,980.91
Contract contingency sum will be decreased by this change order in the amount of	\$42,019.09
New remaining contingency sum including this change order will be	\$0.00

Original contract sum was	\$7,161,000.00
Net change by previously authorized change orders	0.00
Contract sum prior to this change order	\$7,161,000.00
contract sum will be increased by this change order in the amount of	33,668.98
New contract sum including this change order will be	\$7,194,668.98

8. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve payment application #17, in the amount of \$194,445.06 to Daskal LLC for the Demarest Middle School Gymnasium addition, NJDOE Project # 1070-040-23-1000, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
9. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the first year of the lease purchase agreement with Apple Financial Services for staff laptops, cooperative Educational Services Commission of Morris County Apple Corporate Contract Number 1670625 Customer Contract Number ESC/ED-DATA 12158. Terms are a 4 year payout in the amount of \$44,996.00 per annum , for a total award of \$ \$179,984.00, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
10. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve change order #1 with Open Systems Integrators, for circuits to monitor new

duct detectors, additional hardware and wire pulls, burglar and alarm sensors for doors, in the amount of \$17,137.73, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

11. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve purchase of chromebooks for students at Luther Lee Emerson School, in the amount of \$74,880.00, through cooperative Educational Services Commission of New Jersey-CBK (ESCNJ/AEPA-22G), as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

XV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no motion for public comment being no one from the public was present.

XVI. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. There was no motion to enter the executive session.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

- A. It was moved by Choi, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 P.M.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antoinette Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Antoinette" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Kelly".

Antoinette Kelly  
Business Administrator and Board Secretary