

**DEMAREST BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**COW and REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES**  
 County Road School – Media Center  
 February 15, 2024\*  
 5:30 P.M.

\*snow day on the originally scheduled meeting date of 2/13/24

**I. OPENING**

- A. The meeting was called to order by President Holzberg at 5:30 pm.
- B. Present: Brillhart, Cantatore, Fein, Lee, Holzberg.  
 Absent: Choi, Governale  
 Also present: Mr. Fox/ Superintendent and Ms. Kelly Business Administrator/ Board Secretary

**II. OATH ADMINISTERED TO APPOINTED BOARD MEMBER**

Ms. Kelly, Business Administrator/Board Secretary administered the oath of office to Julie Fein.

**III. STATEMENT OF BOARD COMPOSITION FOR DEMAREST BOARD OF EDUCATION 2024**

Board Members	Term Expires
Erica Cantatore	2026
Diane Holzberg	2026
Kyusoon Lee	2024
Gabriela Brillhart	2024
Jennifer Choi	2025
Christen Governale	2025
Julie Fein	2024

**IV. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. The Board determined it will enter into executive session for the following reasons:
  - 1. Student discipline
  - 2. Personnel
- B. It was moved by Cantatore seconded by Holzberg 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 Lee, seconded by Brillhart and approved by unanimous voice vote of those present to convene executive session at 5:50 P.M.

V. REOPEN PUBLIC MEETING

- A. It was moved by Cantatore, seconded by Lee to reopen the Regular Meeting to the public at 5:50 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.

VI. FLAG SALUTE

- A. President Holzberg led the flag salute.

VII. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Choi, Governale

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

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

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

- January 23, 2024 COW and Regular Meeting Minutes
- January 23, 2024 Executive Session Meeting Minutes

IX. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

X. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- A. Board President Holzberg welcomed Julie Fein to the board and thanked the PTO for the new playground equipment at County Road School.

## XI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- A. Superintendent Fox commented on the following:
- Welcome to Ms. Fein.
  - The Demarest Digest should go out soon.
  - We met with the Mayor, Borough Administrator, DPW manager, and two councilmen to discuss shared services agreements. They were open to the idea of purchasing a generator with the district.
- B. Superintendent Fox reported on the following activities on behalf of Principal Mazzini:
- The Lunar New Year celebrations were amazing and included a fashion show, singing, martial arts, and drums.
  - Dinosaur Rock assembly for CRS and LLE was a great way for students to learn about fossils.
  - Fourth graders visited first graders as reading buddies.
  - We are finishing up our One School, One Book initiative at LLE with *Because of the Rabbit*. Later this month CRS will participate in the program reading *How Many Stars in the Sky?*
- C. Superintendent Fox reported on the following activities on behalf of Principal Regan:
- High school scheduling has been completed.
  - DMS hosted the regional VIA competition.
  - Fifth graders attended a field trip to the Meadowlands Environmental Center.
  - The Lunar New Year celebration was a beautiful event celebrating Korean and Chinese cultures.
  - On February 14th the PTO provided hot chocolate and students wore onesies.
  - Play rehearsals for Shrek are going well and we are excited about the show which will run on March 21st and 22nd.
  - We are looking forward to the book fair, a visit from the Nature Center, and from Congressman Gottheimer.

## XII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None at this time.

## XIII. OTHER REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Ms. Cantatore attended the February 6, 2024, Bergen County School Boards meeting where they discussed various topics on how to better communicate with the community. It was suggested that the public relations committee can discuss the topics.

## XIV. REVIEW OF AGENDA

- A. Board members reviewed the items.

## XV. PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

- A. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to open the meeting to public comment.
- B. There were no comments from the public.
- C. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to close the meeting to public comment.

## XVI. ACTIONS

A. Instruction – Staffing

1. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Brillhart and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the provisional employment of the following substitute teachers for the remainder of the 2023/2024 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.

Michelle Santiago
Kyle Bartus

2. It was moved by Fein, seconded by Brillhart and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the provisional employment of Rosemary Kim and Nicole Rinckhoff as substitute teachers for the remainder of the 2023/2024 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.

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 the following field trip(s), as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

Location	Date	Grade/Group
Math Counts Dwight Englewood, Englewood	February 2024	Math team
Science Olympiad Middlesex College Edison	March 2024	Science and Engineering Team

2. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve home instruction for student #7218453620 with staff members Dawn Epiphaniou, Victoria Zimmerman and Nancy Mliczek, not to exceed five hours per week from January 23, 2024, through February 23, 2024, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

C. Support Services – Staffing

1. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve unpaid medical leave of absence for staff # 10313109 from February 5, 2024, to February 19, 2024, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
2. It was moved by Lee, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve unpaid medical leave of absence for staff # 10313073 from December 13, 2023, through February 29, 2024, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

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

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

- 5111 Eligibility of Resident/Non-Resident Students - Policy & Regulation

2. It was moved by Cantatore seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the 2024/2025 School Calendar, as attached, and as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

3. It was moved by Cantatore seconded by Lee 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:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date(s) and time</b>	<b>Location</b>
DAA	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 2/26/2024-3/31/2024 except 3/1/2024, 3/5/2024-3/8/2024, 3/21/2024-3/22/2024 4:45 PM - 5:30 PM	DMS gymnasium

4. It was moved by Cantatore seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve authorization to submit to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools and the New Jersey Department of Education a waiver request from participation, per NJAC 6A:23A5.3, in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative Program (SEMI) for the 2024/2025 budget year. The Demarest Board of Education applies for this waiver due to the fact that it does not project to meet the required minimum of Medicaid eligible classified students, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.

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

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date(s) and time</b>	<b>Location</b>
BSA Troop 163	Saturday 3/2/2024 and 3/9/2024 8:15 AM-4:00 PM	LLE Media Center
BSA Troop 163	Monday when school is open 6:00 PM - 8:30* PM	CRS APR and field

\*Modified from October 17, 2023

E. Support Services—Fiscal Management

1. It was moved by Fein seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to confirm the January 2024 payrolls as follows, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

January 12	\$502,297.67
January 31	\$491,980.34

2. It was moved by Fein seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve additional January bills as follows, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

<u>Subtotal Per Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11 General Current Expense	<u>\$ 19,825.62</u>
Total Bills:	<u>\$ 19,825.62</u>

3. It was moved by Fein seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to approve the February 13, 2024 bill list as follows, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

<u>Subtotal Per Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11 General Current Expense	\$ 469,208.16
20 Special Revenue Fund	\$ 13,674.29
21 Student Activity Fund	\$ 3,268.60
22 Athletic Fund	\$ 396.00
30 Capital Projects Fund	\$ 27,421.85
60 Cafeteria Fund	\$ 39,128.77
61 Laptop Fund	<u>\$ 8,986.37</u>
Total Bills:	\$ 562,084.04

3. It was moved by Fein 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 January 31, 2024, 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 Fein 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 January 31, 2024 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 Fein seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to acknowledge receipt of the January 2024 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 Fein seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to confirm the following budget transfer for January 2024, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator:

To:

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11-000-221-580	Improvement of Instruction-Travel	313.43
11-000-230-332	General Administration-Auditing Services	3,500.00
11-000-266-610	Security-General Supplies	5,000.00
11-000-270-515	Transportation-Special Education	50,000.00
11-150-100-320	Regular Home Instruction-Professional Services	1,000.00
11-401-100-610	School Sponsored Co-Curricular Activities-Supplies	1,530.00
11-402-100-500	School Sponsored Athletics-Athletic Officials	2,000.00

From:

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
11-000-221-890	Improvement of Instruction-Other Objects	313.43
11-000-230-334	General Administration-Architect Services	3,500.00
11-000-263-420	Grounds-Repair and Maintenance	5,000.00
11-000-100-562	Special Education Tuition to Other LEAs	50,000.00
11-190-100-106	Regular Programs-Instructional Aides	1,000.00
11-401-100-110	School Sponsored Co-Curricular Activities-Salaries	730.00
11-401-100-890	School Sponsored Co-Curricular Activities-Misc	800.00
11-402-100-610	School Sponsored Athletics-General Supplies	2,000.00

7. It was moved by Fein seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to accept Schools Development Authority allocation for FY 2024 for the Emergent and Capital Maintenance Needs Grant in the amount of \$16,132.00, to partially fund the replacement of unit ventilators at Demarest Middle School, as recommended by the Chief School Administrator.
8. It was moved by Fein seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to award the contract for the Demarest Middle School gymnasium addition, NJDOE Project # 1070-040-23-1000, to the lowest responsible bidder, Daskal, LLC of Garfield, New Jersey, as a result of the public bid held on December 19, 2023 for a total cost of \$7,161,000.00 based on the bid summary below, as reviewed and recommended by EI Associates and the Chief School Administrator:

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Total Bid</u>
Daskal, LLC	7,161,000.00

Mark Construction	7,377,000.00
DMD Contracting	7,510,000.00
Pal-Pro Builders	7,750,000.00
Belmont Construction	7,885,000.00
Catcord Construction	8,190,300.00
Imperial Const. & Elec.	8,228,000.00
Brahma Construction	8,697,000.00

XVII. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to open the meeting to public comment.
- B. The following attendees spoke:
  - Bruce Murphy, 761 7th Ave., River Edge, of Palmer ACE Hardware.
- C. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous roll call vote of those present to close the meeting to public comment.

XVIII. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

XIX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

XX. ADJOURNMENT

- A. It was moved by Brillhart, seconded by Cantatore and approved by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 P.M.

Sincerely,



Antoinette Kelly  
Business Administrator and Board Secretary