

**CALIFON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 18, 2026
7:00 p.m. Library**

I. CALL TO ORDER – OPENING STATEMENT

This meeting is called to order at 7:01 p.m. with the following opening statement read by Mr. Reaves:

“I would like to announce and have placed in the minutes that adequate notice of this meeting of the Califon Board of Education has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Proper notice of this Regular Meeting was provided to Hunterdon County Democrat and the Hunterdon Review. A copy of this notice has also been posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building and filed with the Borough Clerk. The agenda of this meeting has been posted at the Califon School and on the district’s website.

II. THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Mr. Christopher Keiser - President	Present
Mr. Michael Reaves - Vice President	Present
Dr. Rebecca Kipp-Newbold	Present
Ms. Rita Lemley	Present
Mr. Netz Sacro	Absent

Also present:

Dr. Michele Cone, Superintendent	Present
Mr. Matthew Herzer, Board Secretary	Present

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

AT THIS TIME, COMMENT IS INVITED ON RESOLUTIONS ON TONIGHT’S AGENDA ONLY. PLEASE STATE ALL OF YOUR COMMENTS IN SUCCESSION TO THE BOARD DURING YOUR SPEAKING TURN. BE AWARE THAT YOU MAY NOT RECEIVE AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO YOUR COMMENT. ALL COMMENTS WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE BOARD AND IF APPLICABLE, WILL BE ANSWERED DURING THE BOARD COMMENT SECTION OF THE MEETING. PLEASE RESPECT THE 3 MINUTE SPEAKING RULE AS PER BOARD OF EDUCATION BYLAW #0167 AND BOARD MEETING PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES POSTED ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE SO THAT BUSINESS OF THE BOARD MAY PROCEED IN A TIMELY MANNER.

None.

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V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Dr. Kipp-Newbold and seconded by Mr. Reaves to approve the January 21, 2026 regular session minutes

Ms. Lemley abstained.

Motion approved

VI. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A letter from Dr. Cone was received to announce her retirement.

VII. CHIEF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- Enrollment 85
- HIB - 0
- Suspension - (1) 2-Day Out of School Suspension
- Updates:
 - Read Across America Week March 2-6, 2026
 - Creative Arts Night & Talent Show March 31, 2026
 - The Playground Grant Application was Accepted by the SDA

1. Motion by Mr. Reaves and seconded by Mr. Keiser to accept the HIB and suspension report.

Moton approved

Presentation of Proposed Eagle Scout Project by Liam Newbold

Motion by Mr. Reaves and seconded by Ms. Lemley to approve the proposed Eagle Scout Project by Liam Newbold.

Dr. Kipp-Newbold abstained.

Motion approved

VIII. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Curriculum & Instruction Committee: The committee discussed the health report and the NJDOE surveys.

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Policy & Legislation Committee: The second readings and policy abolishments were discussed.

Finance, Facilities, & Transportation Committee: The committee reviewed the budget and discussed health benefit increases.

Personnel Committee: The committee discussed a leave replacement and the volleyball activity.

Negotiations Committee: None.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

Matters listed within the consent agenda have been referred to members of the Board of Education and/or its standing committees, for reading and study and will be enacted with one motion. The Personnel items on the consent agenda are recommended by the Superintendent. If separate discussion is desired, the item may be removed from the consent agenda by Board action.

Motion made by Mr. Reaves and seconded by Mr. Keiser to add addendum items.

Motion approved on unanimous roll call vote.

Motion made by Mr. Keiser and seconded by Dr. Kipp-Newbold to discuss the Consent Agenda.

Motion approved on unanimous roll call vote.

Motion made by Mr. Reaves and seconded by Dr. Kipp-Newbold to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion approved on unanimous roll call vote.

Finance/Facilities/Transportation/Personnel/Curriculum and Instruction/Policy

Finance:

1. Motion to approve the bill list dated 2/18/2026 in the amount of \$307,823.70.
2. Motion to approve and file the Treasurer's and Board Secretary report for January 2026 and note that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligation and that no major account has been over-expended in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A:16.20.

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3. Motion to approve the transfers for January 2026
4. Motion to approve NJ DCA grant application

Whereas, the Califon Board of Education desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for approximately \$50,000.00 to carry out a project to install preschool playground equipment.

Be it therefore resolved,

1. That the Califon Board of Education does hereby authorize the application for such a grant; and,
2. Recognized and accepts that the Department may offer a lesser or greater amount and therefore, upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of any such grant agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of fund pursuant to the terms of the agreement between the Califon Board of Education and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

Be it further resolved, that persons whose names, titles and signatures appear below are authorized to sign the application, and that they or their successors in said titles are authorized to sign the agreement and any other documents necessary in connection therewith:

Matthew P. Herzer

Facilities:

1. Motion to approve documentation of mandated Security/Fire/Emergency and Evacuation Drills

Date of Drill	Type of Drill
2/11/26	Fire

2. Motion to approve the use of the Califon School Facilities:

Sponsor of Event	Date(s)	Event

*adhering to COVID related restrictions. **Based on Custodial availability

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Transportation:

Personnel:

1. Motion to approve Megan Piontkowski as Leave Replacement Teacher from April 27, 2026 through June 30, 2026 at Step 3 BA \$61,585.00 prorated, no health benefits.
2. Motion to approve Megan Piontkowski as Leave Replacement Teacher from August 26, 2026 through September 30, 2026 at Step 3 BA \$63,730.00 prorated, no health benefits.
3. Motion to approve Tristan Downey and Mike Bruton to volunteer to supervise an after school volleyball activity for middle school students during the Spring of 2026.
4. Motion to accept, with regret, the resignation for the purpose of retirement of Dr. Michele Cone, Chief School Administrator, effective June 30, 2026.
5. **Board of Education Resolution Approving Post Severance Contributions of Sick Day and Vacation Day Pay for the Chief School Administrator**

WHEREAS, the Califon Public School Board of Education (the “Board”) intends to make non-salary reduction contributions on behalf of the Chief School Administrator who retires,

WHEREAS, the Board will not permit the Chief School Administrator to have an option of receiving the equivalent amount as compensation,

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to make such contributions as Employer Contributions as permitted under Sections 403(b) or 403(b)(7) and Section 415(c)(1) of the Code for eligible employees;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby authorizes and directs the Califon Public School to make post-retirement contributions of all accumulated Sick Day Pay and all accumulated Vacation Day Pay to the 403(b) or 403(b)(7) contract of the Chief School Administrator commencing immediately in the year of the Chief School Administrator’s retirement. These Employer Contributions shall not exceed the annual limits of Section 415(c)(1) of the Section 403(b) Code.

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Curriculum and Instruction:

1. Motion to accept the Health Report for January 2026.
2. Motion to approve the submission of the Visual & Performing Arts Education Resources Survey to the NJDOE.

Policy:

1. Motion to approve Califon Public School District first reading for the following policies and regulations:
2. Motion to approve Califon Public School District second reading for the following Policies:

P 0142.1	Nepotism (M) (Revised)
P 1220	Employment of Chief School Administrator (M) (Revised)
P & R 1552	Sexual Harassment – Staff (M) (New)
P & R 2530	Resource Materials (Revised)
P & R 2535	Library Material (M) (New)
P & R 9130	Public Complaints (Revised)

3. Motion to abolish Califon Public School District abolishment for the following Policies:

P 3362	Sexual Harassment (M) (Abolished)
R 3362	Sexual Harassment of Teaching Staff Members Complaint Procedure (Abolished)
P 4352	Sexual Harassment (M) (Abolished)
R 4352	Sexual Harassment of Support Staff Members Complaint Procedure (Abolished)

X. OLD BUSINESS

None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

None.

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XII. PUBLIC COMMENT (all school-related topics; time limits: 3 min. /person)

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Ms. Smith commented on the years of service by Dr. Cone.

XIII. BOARD COMMENT

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 6 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 (R. S.10:4-13), permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting or portion of a meeting of this public body in certain circumstances, and

WHEREAS, the Board must consider (see check below), which is/are exempt from public discussion pursuant to the Act;

- 1. Matter which by express provision of law is rendered confidential
- 2. Release of information which would impair receipt of federal funds
- 3. Individual Privacy/Student Matters
- 4. Collective Bargaining/Negotiations
- 5. Real estate matters
- 6. Disclosure could impair public safety
- 7. Pending/Anticipated litigation/Contract negotiation
- 8. Terms and conditions of employment
- 9. Deliberations involving imposition of specific civil penalty

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education adjourns to executive session at 8:57 p.m. to discuss the above-mentioned matters to the exclusion of all others. Matters discussed may or may not be made public this evening. Resulting action may or may not be taken following re-entry into regular session.

Motion made by Mr. Keiser and seconded by Mr. Reaves to enter Executive Session.

Motion approved on unanimous roll call vote.

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XV. RECONVENE

Motion made by Mr. Keiser and seconded by Mr. Reaves to reconvene at 8:58 p.m..

Motion approved on unanimous roll call vote.

1. Motion by Dr. Kipp-Newbold and seconded by Mr. Reaves to approve a contract with Kathy Helewa Consulting for a CSA search not to exceed \$10,000.

Mr. Keiser voted no, motion approved on roll call vote.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mr. Keiser and seconded by Mr. Reaves to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm.

Motion approved on a unanimous all call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Herzer
Board Secretary