



**HIGH BRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 10, 2025**

High Bridge School District Vision Statement
Creating an environment that fosters a love of learning and critical thinking.

1. OPENING OF MEETING - 6:30 PM - *The meeting began at 6:30 p.m.*

Required Notice of Open Public Meeting

Being duly posted at the following locations: High Bridge Middle School and Elementary School main offices, High Bridge Borough Hall Office; and advertised, in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, in the following newspaper: Hunterdon County Democrat, this meeting will convene in the Library of the High Bridge Elementary School, 40 Fairview Avenue, High Bridge, NJ 08829; alternatively the meeting will be available for listening purposes only on Google Meet. The Board will only accept public participation from those physically in attendance, as per Policy 0168. Please notify the board if you intend to record this meeting.

Date: Monday, March 10, 2025

Time: 6:30 pm

No formal action will be taken.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL by Karolina Cywa, SBA / Board Secretary

Caitlin Bowring - *Present*

Gregory Hodges - *Present*

Robert Imhoff - *Present*

Michael McCasland - *Absent*

Colleen Poles - *Present*

Cynthia Sharkey *Present*

Karyn Gove - *Present*

Additional Members Present:

Dr. Gregory Hobaugh, Superintendent - *Present*

Karolina Cywa, SBA / Board Secretary - *Present*

4. NJSBA Training Session - Evaluation Process CSA & BSE, NJSBA Representative, Patricia Rees

As part of the board's goal to become certified, Ms. Rees was invited to present the first step in the certification process. She was also asked to oversee, educate, and guide the board through the certification journey. During the session, board members asked questions, and Ms. Rees provided thorough and detailed answers.

4.1. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Gregory Hobaugh informed the board that the student representatives will not attend this month's meeting due to other school activities. He also provided an update on the ongoing principal search, noting that three applications were received. Ms. Cynthia Sharkey commented that it's great to see all three candidates coming from within the district. Dr. Gregory Hobaugh shared that the district received a 3.36% increase in state aid. He also expressed appreciation to the PTO for donating two refrigerators for the faculty rooms. Dr. Gregory Hobaugh reminded the board members that any correspondence addressed to a board member is considered official. He also updated the board on recent school activities, including Read Across America events. He noted that Ms. Clark, the elementary school nurse, successfully raised funds for the American Heart Association. Parent-teacher conferences have concluded. In the middle school, 130 students were eligible for conferences - 68 of them did not have one scheduled, resulting in a 52% participation rate. At the elementary school, about 80% of families attended their scheduled conferences. Mr. Robert Imhoff raised the question of whether three days are necessary for conferences. Greg responded that the number of days depends on the number of students since the conference time slots are limited to two hours each day. The board discussed the possibility of adjusting the duration of the conference period. Dr. Gregory Hobaugh informed the board that next month, the 2024 – 2025 school calendar will be reapproved due to unused inclement weather days built into the original schedule. He also mentioned that they are still waiting on a quote for repairs to the stairs at the middle school. He also noted receiving a parent inquiry regarding a new technology policy. In response, he prepared a question-and-answer chart to address common concerns.

4.1.1. Business Administrator Report

5. REVIEW OF OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Redacted	02/26/2025	Google Classroom
<i>(Attachment: Redacted Correspondence 2 26 25)</i>		
Redacted	02/27/2025	Redacted
<i>(Attachment: Redacted Correspondence 2 27 25)</i>		

6. REPORTS TO THE BOARD

6.1. Board President's Report

- 6.1.1. Board of Education Goals
- 6.1.2. Student Achievement
- 6.1.3. Sustainability Committee Update - Karyn Gove
- 6.1.4. Hunterdon County School Boards Association Meeting Update - Karyn Gove
- 6.1.5. NJ School Boards Association, Board of Directors - Robert Imhoff

Ms. Karyn Gove noted that the board can set only one goal for this year, which will be established over the summer. She also mentioned that the Sustainability Committee letter was sent to board members for feedback. Since no comments were received, the letter will be shared with the public soon. Ms. Karyn

Gove added that the Unsung Heroes event was a great success. Dr. Gregory Hobbaugh added that sixteen districts were participating in this event. Mr. Robert Imhoff reminded the board that the next county meeting is scheduled for May 8, during which teachers of the year will be recognized.

7. HIB REPORTS

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(e) requires that at the next board of education meeting following its receipt of a HIB report, the board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the superintendent's decision.

The Superintendent shall inform the parties of the Board's determination in writing, as well as their right to appeal the determination to the Commissioner of Education, in accordance with the procedures set forth in law and regulation, no later than 90 days after the issuance of the board's decision; or to file a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights within 180 days of the occurrence of any incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying based on membership in a protected group as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," P.L.1945, c.169 (C.10:5-1 et seq.)

7.1. HIB Investigation Report 2024-2025 MS05 (*Attachment: 2024-25 MS05 Redacted*).

8. ACTION ITEMS

8.1. **Student Achievement** - Curriculum, Instruction, Technology, & Policy

8.1.1. Following class trips and transportation:

Grade	Location	Cost/Student	Incurred By
5-8 Student Leadership	High Bridge NJ Transit Train Station	N/A	N/A

8.2. **Human Resources** - Personnel, Management & Community Relations

8.2.1. Substitute nurse hourly rate of \$32.00 for the 2024-2025 school year.

8.2.2. Robert Alparone as a substitute custodian for the 2024-25 school year at a rate of \$17.00 per hour, pending receipt of paperwork and background check.

8.2.3. Coleen Conroy and Aimee Luster for up to six (6) hours each for office coverage for evening conferences on March 5 and March 6, 2025, at their respective hourly rates.

8.2.4. Placement of the following Hunterdon County Polytech students to observe elementary and/or middle school teachers two (2) days per week, for two (2) hours per day for the months of March, April, and May.

- Darla Rudnicki
- Hannah Rosenthal
- Olivia O'Neill
- Mia Lione
- Catherine Brennan

8.2.5. Following staff members for a Preschool Open House on March 26, 2025, to be funded through PEA Grant.

Name	Rate	Hours	Total
Alyssa Oliver	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00
Julia Monge	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00
Maurica Hash	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00
Jacky Remaly	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00
Daniela Balena	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00

Shannon Parfitt	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00
Erin Wert	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00
Emma Alparone	\$32.00	.75	\$24.00

8.3. Educational Resources - Finance and Facilities

- 8.3.1. Acceptance of a \$300.00 US Games gift card donation from the American Heart Association to purchase equipment for the Physical Education class.
- 8.3.2. The purchase of two refrigerators, one for the elementary school and one for the middle school faculty rooms, in the amount of \$1,403.70, was fully paid for by High Bridge PTO.
- 8.3.3. Disposal of an old Middle School refrigerator from the faculty room (#100102).
- 8.3.4. PEA Transfer for preschool playground funded by PEA Expansion Aid and approved by County and DOE. (*Attachment: PEA Transfer Form*)
- 8.3.5. Payment of Bills
- 8.3.6. Financial Reports
- 8.3.7. Line Item Transfers
- 8.3.8. Travel Expenditures for Workshops:

Staff/Bd Member	Workshop	Date	Registration Fee	Mileage	Other	Total
Marisa Monaco	Handle With Care Instructor Recertification	4/11/2025	\$525.00	\$47.00	\$32.00 For the time above the contracted day	\$604.00
Heidi Johnston	Handle With Care Instructor Recertification	4/11/2025	\$525.00		\$32.00 For the time above the contracted day	\$557.00
Kimberly Sandorff	Centenary University Literacy Conference, Centenary University	3/28/2025	\$99.00	\$5.08	N/A	\$104.08
Melissa Betz	IXL Live Workshop, Montclair, NJ	4/02/2025	\$179.00	\$42.77 *(\$17.50 + \$25.27)	\$18.00 (Parking)	\$240.57
Danielle Weber	IXL Live Workshop, Montclair, NJ	4/02/2025	\$179.00	\$41.55 *(\$17.50+\$24.05)	\$18.00 (Parking)	\$238.55
Danielle Weber	Centenary University Literacy Conference, Centenary University	3/28/2025	\$99.00	\$6.20 *(\$3.76 + \$2.44)	N/A	\$105.20

Amy Miller	Centenary University Literacy Conference, Centenary University	3/28/2025	\$99.00	\$15.42 *(\$9.40 + \$6.02)	N/A	\$114.42
Gregory Hobaugh	Strauss Esmay Annual Educational Law and Policy Seminar	06/06/2025	N/A	\$52.83	\$3.69 (Tolls)	\$56.52
Caryn Rinehart	Strauss Esmay Annual Educational Law and Policy Seminar	06/06/2025	N/A	\$52.83	\$3.69 (Tolls)	\$56.52
Karolina Cywa	NJASBO 2025 Annual Conference	June 4-6, 2025	\$500.00	\$127.84	\$350.50	\$978.34
* amended to reflect actual mileage						

8.3.9. Use of Facilities

Organization	Dates	Day / Times	Location
High Bridge Pickleball Club	5/01/25 thru 4/30/25	M-F 5 pm-7 pm & Weekends 9 am-12 pm	MS - Playground

8.3.10. RESOLVED, that the Board of Education submit the Preschool Expansion Budget Workbook for the 2025-2026 school year and subsequent years upon submission of a yearly update, allowing the District to operate according to their Preschool Expansion Plan. The Preschool Expansion Plan describes how the school district will implement each component of a high-quality preschool program, as detailed in the New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:13A and the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines. The District plans to operate a "targeted preschool program" for "at-risk" three and four-year-olds as defined in the N.J.A.C. 6A:13A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the administration to execute the necessary documents to submit the Preschool Expansion Budget Workbook for the 2025-2026 school year.

8.3.11. TENTATIVE BUDGET

High Bridge School District

Adoption of the Tentative Budget for School Year 2025 - 2026

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2025 - 2026 school year using the 2025 - 2026 state aid figures and the Secretary to the Board of Education be authorized to submit to the Executive County Superintendent for approval in accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:7F-5 and 18A:7F-6:

	General Fund	Special revenues	Debt Service	Total
2025 - 2026 Total Expenditures	\$XXXXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXXXX	\$XXXXXXX
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$XXXX	\$XXXXXX	\$XXXX	\$XXXX
Taxes to be Raised	\$XXXXXX	\$0.00	\$XXXXXX	\$XXXX

And, to advertise said tentative budget in the Hunterdon County Democrat in accordance with the form suggested by the New Jersey Department of Education and according to law;

AND a public hearing on the 2025-2026 school year budget will be held at the Library of the High Bridge Elementary School on XXXXXXXXX.

Maximum Travel

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, a board of education must establish a maximum dollar limit for travel expenditure, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq.,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget a maximum travel expenditure in the amount of \$XXXX for the 2025 - 2026 school year. The maximum travel expenditure amount for 2004-2005 is \$XXXX, of which \$XXXX has been spent and XXXX is encumbered to date.

Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement

The Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district;

AND, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board;

AND, a board of education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30);

AND, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the board of education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms;

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 as being necessary and unavoidable, as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A

Subchapter 7, to a maximum expenditure of \$6,000 for all staff and board members for the 2025-2026 school year.

The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

Maintenance Reserve:

Maintenance Reserve Account Withdrawal: \$XXXXXX

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the budget a maintenance reserve withdrawal in the amount of \$XXXXXX for the purpose of repair and maintenance as needed.

- 8.3.12.** Withdrawal of \$XXXX from Maintenance Reserve as an offset of Required Maintenance in the 2025 -2026 school year (Accounts 11-000-261-xxx).

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

This period of time provides an opportunity for the public to speak on any topic related to the High Bridge Public Schools. It is the policy of the Board of Education (Policy #0164) that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to three (3) minutes per person and no person may make more than one (1) comment per subject. While all comments will be considered and a response will be forthcoming if and when appropriate, School Board members will not respond to the speakers during the public comment portion of the meeting. Speakers with questions are encouraged to contact the Superintendent directly before or after the meeting.

10. BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION

11. EXECUTIVE/CLOSED SESSION

The Board President calls for a motion at 8:40 p.m. Robert Imhoff and a second **Cynthia Sharkey** *unanimously approved*, in accordance with the Sunshine Law, Chapter 321, P.L. 1975, to discuss:

- HIB Appeal (*Attachment: 24-25 MS04 Redacted*)
- Personnel
- Executive Session Minutes

The matters discussed will be made public if and when the circumstances requiring confidentiality no longer exist; however, it is not presently known when such circumstances will exist.

12. RECONVENE PUBLIC SESSION

The Board President calls for a motion at 10:05 p.m. Cynthia Sharkey and a second **Caitlin Bowring** *unanimously approved* to reconvene the public session.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The Board President calls for a motion at 10:05 p.m. Cynthia Sharkey and a second **Colleen Poles** *unanimously approved* to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

Karolina Cywa

Karolina Cywa

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary