

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY  
MINUTES INDEX  
APRIL 11, 2022  
REGULAR SESSION 6:00 P.M.  
EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:01 P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER  
REGULAR SESSION 7:01 P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

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**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 11, 2022  
REGULAR SESSION 6:00 P.M.  
EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:01 P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER  
REGULAR SESSION 7:01 P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

**I. Regular Session – Call to Order – 6:00 p.m.**

**II. Salute to the Flag**

**III. Roll Call**

Present: Ms. Gray, Ms. Hira, Ms. Light, Mr. Khanna, Ms. McKeon, Mr. Salmon, Ms. Schafer, Ms. Singh, Ms. White, Mr. Markarian, Ms. Fox, Mr. McLaughlin, Board Counsel John Croot

Absent: Mr. Siet

**IV. Executive Session – 6:01 p.m.**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Bernards Township Board of Education shall meet in closed session to discuss item(s) a, b, f, g and h below which falls within an exception of our open meeting policy and permits the Board to have a private discussion, since it deals with specific exceptions contained in N.J.S.A.10:4-12b. Matters rendered confidential by Federal Law, State Law, or Court Rule:

- a. Individual privacy
- b. Collective bargaining agreements
- c. Purchase or lease of real property if public interest could be adversely affected
- d. Investment of public funds if public interest could be adversely affected
- e. Tactics or techniques utilized in protecting public safety and property
- f. Pending or anticipated litigation
- g. Attorney – client privilege
- h. Personnel – employment matters affecting a specific prospective or current employee

On motion by Ms. White seconded by Ms. Schafer, and approved by all present, the Board recessed into executive session at 6:02p.m.

Any discussion held by the Board, which need not remain confidential, will be made public as soon as practical. Minutes of the private session will not be disclosed until the need for confidentiality no longer exists. All appropriate persons, who may be discussed in private session, have been adequately notified.

On motion by Mr. Salmon seconded by Ms. Light, and approved by all present, the Board closed executive session at 6:40p.m.

**V. Reconvene Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:01 p.m.**

**VI. Statement of Public Notice**

This is a regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Bernards Township. Notice of the time and place of this meeting was provided and copies of that resolution were forwarded to the official newspapers as designated by the Board of Education and to the Township Clerk and a copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Board of Education Offices in accordance with P.L. 1975 Chapter 231A.

For those members of the public who are unable to attend our meeting in-person there are two livestream links of the meeting posted through the district website, [www.bernardsboe.com](http://www.bernardsboe.com). The two livestream links are both airing our meeting, each simply backs up the other to be prepared for possible technical difficulty.

We very much welcome input from the public. There are two times during regular meetings that the public is invited to speak. One time is early in the meeting before the Board votes, when you may speak about any item that is listed on tonight's agenda. Towards the end of the meeting, there is another public forum to address any matter of public concern related to the schools.

When you approach the microphone, please state your name and address. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes duration. No participant may speak more than once during a given public comment session. In order to run efficient meetings and to allow maximum opportunity for members of the public to speak, the Board reserves the right to set a different time limit for individual comments and/or to set an overall time limit for the public comment portions of the agenda. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer, no participant may address or question Board members individually.

As a courtesy to those individuals unable to attend our meetings in person, public comment may be made remotely through Zoom. Interested individuals should navigate to the district webpage, [www.bernardsboe.com](http://www.bernardsboe.com), and select "Board of

Education" followed by "Public Comment" to review specific instructions, or click [here](#).

Public comments made in-person will be processed first, then comments via Zoom. No public comments will be accepted before 7PM or after item XX. Board Forum of the agenda begins.

Please understand that public comment portions of our agendas are not structured as question and answer sessions, but rather they are offered as opportunities to share your thoughts with the Board. The Board/Administration will respond to public comments to the extent possible. Any Board responses to public comments will generally be addressed during Board Forum, or during committee reports. However, all comments are considered and will be investigated and addressed as appropriate.

Please be courteous and mindful of the rights of others when speaking. Comments may not be abusive, obscene, threatening or irrelevant. Please understand that students and employees have specific legal and privacy protections. The Board is not permitted to respond in public to comments about students and employees. Please also understand that the Board will not be responsible for the content of comments made by members of the public. Members of the public are cautioned that they are speaking at their own risk and any personally directed statements they make may subject them to legal liability to the effected individual.

If it is necessary for the Board to go into executive session at the end of the meeting, we will provide an estimated length of time for the session and whether any action is anticipated to be taken upon returning to public session.

## **VII. Student Representative – Gordon Li**

Mr. Li provided an update on the Ridge High School student body. Mr. Li commented on the upcoming fourth marking period, positive initiatives that students are taking, the upcoming prom, preparations and fundraising for the prom for the classes of 2024 and 2025. Mr. Li discussed the Ridge Computer Science Club's recent event and thanked the sponsors, participants and teachers for an amazing day. Mr. Li discussed the outreach initiative by the Ridge Student Government and an upcoming event in which students will visit the four elementary schools in Bernards Township. Mr. Li noted that as the fourth marking period is on the horizon, this school year will go down in history as one of recovery, resilience and hope.

## **VIII. Board President Comments**

Ms. McKeon thanked the student government representative.

## IX. Board Presentations

1) **District Educational Technology Plan & Policy Review 2022-25** – Nick Markarian, Superintendent, Alex Blinder, Director of Technology, Kristin Fox, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Tom Misiak, Supervisor of Science & Technology, Grant Kolmer, Supervisor of Mathematics, Jennifer Flaherty, K-5 Teacher, Christopher Keri, K-5 Teacher, Stephanie Ruggerio, K-5 Teacher, Chris Swanson, William Annin Teacher, Rachel Sharpe, William Annin Teacher, Melanie DuPuis, William Annin Teacher, Jennifer Kaltenbach, Ridge High Teacher and Jeff Stellitano, Ridge High Teacher

Assistant Superintendent Fox welcomed everyone to the District Instructional Technology Plan & Policy Review 2022-2025 presentation. Ms. Fox thanked everyone attending for their hard work not only on the presentation but during the challenges during the past two years and introduced the staff.

Assistant Superintendent Fox provided a timeline of the technology plan and recognized the teachers, staff and administrators who had taken part and described the goals. Ms. Fox outlined the technology models and challenges since 2011 and some of the research that had been done to meaningfully enhance instruction using technology.

Assistant Superintendent Fox discussed how emergency remote teaching helped to formulate the 2022-2025 Technology Plan and the vision that plan encompasses. Ms. Fox discussed the aspect of the vision that includes creating a society of digital citizens who are creative, innovative, critical thinkers and problem solvers, clear communicators, collaborators and empathetic and responsible. Ms. Fox discussed the visions for both teachers and parents.

Director of Technology, Alex Blinder, discussed the current statuses and needs of the District Technology department specifically staff, programs, instructional software and equipment.

Tom Misiak, Supervisor of Science and Technology, discussed a comparison between student device initiatives in other school districts.

Mr. Blinder discussed the goals for the 2022-2025 District Technology plan. Goals include operational goals in which district technology, operating systems and hardware are replaced. Mr. Misiak discussed the policy and procedural goals that include fluid access to enhance instruction while providing student security on their devices.

Grant Kolmer, Mathematics Supervisor, discussed the goal of building a digitally rich learning experience for students that “focuses on a robust culture of appropriate technology use” incorporating wellness, scope and sequence for different grade levels. Mr. Kolmer discussed the third goal of effective teacher training so they may integrate technology into instruction.

Assistant Superintendent Fox discussed the fourth and final goal designed to enhance communication and collaboration including an updated district website. Ms. Fox discussed classroom management software for student safety and engagement.

Chris Swanson, Science Teacher at William Annin Middle School, discussed some of the exciting and engaging software and technology being used for instruction. Mr. Swanson discussed the innovative ways that technology was brought into the classroom during the pandemic along with the challenges that arose in digital learning noting the distractions in the digital world and steps that instructors are using, and need to enable, to mitigate technology based distractions in the classroom.

Ridge High School Teachers Jeff Stellitano and Jennifer Kaltenbach discussed student engagement software benefits at the high school level and some of the challenges they experience during digital learning.

Teachers Stephanie Ruggiero from Oak Street School and Christopher Kerri from Liberty Corner School discussed digital learning at the elementary school level including collaborative learning, independent writing along with how engagement software would support the classroom.

Melanie DuPuis, sixth grade teacher at William Annin Middle School, thanked the presenters and Board of Education for their support and hard work. Ms. DuPuis discussed the learning and teaching differences pre and post pandemic and supported the need for classroom management software to assist students with a safe and effective learning environment.

Superintendent Markarian discussed the Board of Education related policies in relation to technology, school property and electronic communication and how they are designed for responsible use of technology. Mr. Markarian discussed classroom management software and its consistency with policies set forth by the Board. On a final note, Mr. Markarian discussed a recent press release resulting from a data security event in the spring of 2021 and discussed the upcoming BT Connect meeting on May 19, 2022 that will focus on Technology in Education. Mr. Markarian thanked everyone for their hard work and for the presentation.

Board members discussed curriculum development and different platforms available to operating systems to organizations, asked how technology is being used to assist in work efficiencies, financing options for chromebook replacement, special needs student technology needs and expressed appreciation thanking the presenters for their hard work.

To view the presentation please click [here](#).

**X. Superintendent's Report**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- 1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby affirm receipt of the **HIB Report** dated April 11, 2022.

On motion by Ms. Gray seconded by Mr. Salmon Item #1 was approved by the following roll call vote:

- “Ayes” - Ms. Gray, Ms. Light, Ms. Khanna, Ms. McKeon, Mr. Salmon, Ms. Schafer, Ms. Singh, Ms. White  
“Noes” - None  
“Abstain” - None

**XI. Public Comment on Agenda Items**

Comments from the public included questions and concerns about classroom technology.

**XII. Approval of Minutes**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- 1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve the following minutes:

April 7, 2022 - BT Connect Meeting Minutes  
March 28, 2022 - Executive Minutes  
March 28, 2022 - Regular Session Minutes

On motion by Ms. Gray seconded by Ms. Khanna the foregoing were approved by the following roll call vote:

- “Ayes” - Ms. Gray, Ms. Hira, Ms. Light, Mr. Khanna, Ms. McKeon, Mr. Salmon, Ms. Schafer (Regular and Executive only), Ms. Singh, Ms. White  
“Noes” - None  
“Abstain” - Ms. Schafer (BT Connect only)

**XIII. Finance Committee Report**

- 1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve a [list of disbursements](#) dated April 11, 2022 consisting of warrants in the amount of \$5,078,969.05.



2) BE IT RESOLVED, the Bernards Township Board of Education hereby approves the formation of a High School Sailing Team, subject to the Letter of Agreement with the Team and the Team's continued compliance with District policies regarding new teams and activities.

On motion by Mr. Salmon seconded by Ms. Light Items #1-2 were approved by the following roll call vote:

“Ayes” - Ms. Gray, Ms. Hira, Ms. Light, Mr. Khanna, Ms. McKeon, Mr. Salmon,  
Ms. Schafer, Ms. Singh, Ms. White  
“Noes” - None  
“Abstain” - None

Ms. Gray provided a summary of the finance agenda items.

Athletic Director Rich Shello discussed the Ridge High School Sailing Team and introduced Dr. Leopold. Dr. Leopold thanked everyone for their support of the Sailing Team formation and provided comments on plans to get the spring season started.

#### **XIV. Personnel Committee Report**

Mr. Salmon discussed the April 8, 2022 Personnel Committee meeting. Topics at that meeting included class sizes and the Future Genius program and postings for the training program.

#### **XV. Policy Committee Report**

No report.

#### **XVI. Curriculum Committee Report**

No report.

#### **XVII. Wellness Committee Report**

No report.

#### **XVIII. Liaison Committee Reports**

Mr. Salmon provided a report from the SCESC meeting that was held on Wednesday, April 6, 2022 that included class sizes and post pandemic student challenges and discussed updates to the New Jersey CDL exam for bus drivers.

## **XIX. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items**

Comments from the public included support for monitoring and assisting students with digital learning, costs included in monitoring software, the Ridge High School sailing team, a public recognition of the cast and crew of the musical Matilda that was held at Ridge High School including a thank you to the PAC Director, Michael Fackelman, Martha Harvey, Theater Teacher and Dallas Harvey, PAC Manager, for incorporating younger students in the production and comments to the recent BT Connect Meeting that discussed diversity, equity and inclusion and curriculum transparency.

Superintendent Markarian spoke to the costs of classroom management software and the equity audit and survey. Assistant Superintendent Fox spoke to the health and physical education standard changes in the state of New Jersey and the development of curriculum so that changes will be adequately presented to the community for input prior to implementation.

## **XX. Board Forum**

President McKeon discussed monitoring software testing and implementation. Ms. Gray discussed the support that educators need in the classroom to be allowed to have flexibility and controls for effective learning. Ms. Schafer discussed the challenges in keeping students engaged in the classroom when they are online. Ms. Light discussed the importance of communicating with the community prior to implementation of any software. President McKeon noted that any classrooms that are piloting software will notify parents in advance. Ms. White provided support to the teachers noting that they are requesting monitoring software for the classrooms. Several board members expressed support for the educators and noted that teaching students responsible use of technology is vital.

### **1) Board Governance**

President McKeon discussed Board Governance and the need to discuss how the board operates. Ms. McKeon discussed the committee system, board member authority and information access. Board members discussed mindfulness in working with the staff and going through the proper channels to obtain answers. Ms. Light discussed obtaining equitable access to information.

Ms. White discussed frustrations with communication occurring between Board members and protocol. Ms. Gray discussed the importance of understanding that the board needs to represent all students and families as stakeholders. Ms. White expressed the need for the Board to work together and support one another. Ms. Schafer discussed that decisions by the Board are made for the entire district and that all students need to be considered in decisions that are being made.

Board members discussed the logistics behind addressing questions in regard to responding to public inquiries that are sent via email. Ms. McKeon highlighted notable BOE policies and the Board Member Code of Ethics by distributing hard copies of the same. Ms. White thanked Superintendent Markarian and Dr. Lazovick for their diligence in providing the recent make-up opportunity for the SAT.

**XXI. Adjournment**

On motion by Mr. Salmon and seconded by Ms. Gray and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 9:58p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rod McLaughlin  
Board Secretary