

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY
JANUARY 3, 2022
REORGANIZATION OF BOARD INDEX 7:02 P.M.
REGULAR SESSION 7:11 P.M.
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

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**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY
JANUARY 3, 2022
REORGANIZATION OF BOARD MINUTES 7:02 P.M.
REGULAR SESSION 7:11 P.M.
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

- I. **Salute to the Flag - 7:02 p.m.**

- II. **Statement of Public Meeting 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.

Due to the pandemic, the Board of Education expects that in-person attendees to this meeting:

- 1) Have completed and passed a self-assessment of personal health (done at home using the district's screening tool).
- 2) Wear a face covering pursuant to N.J. EO-251.
- 3) Sit in a socially distanced manner from members of different households.
- 4) Maintain social distancing if waiting in line to make public comment.

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. 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.

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 may or may not respond to public comments. 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.

III. **Reorganization of Board - 7:03 p.m.**

IV. **Statement of Election Results**

November 2, 2021 School Election Results:

For 3 Three Year Terms

Robin McKeon	5,334
Timothy Salmon	3,818
Kirsten Light	3,775

For 1 Two Year Term

Ruchika Hira	4,032
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V. **Oath of Office**

Rod McLaughlin, Board Secretary, administered the Oath of Office to the following newly elected Board members noting Ms. McKeon had been sworn in virtually earlier that day:

Ruchika Hira, Kirsten Light, Robin McKeon and Timothy Salmon

VI. Roll Call of New Board

Present: Ms. Gray, Ms. Hira, Ms. Light, Ms. McKeon (attending virtually), Mr. Salmon, Ms. Schafer, Ms. White, Mr. Markarian, Mr. McLaughlin, Board Counsel John Croot

Absent: Mr. Siet, Ms. Fox

VII. Election of Board President

Mr. McLaughlin requested nominations for the position of President of the Board of Education.

Ms. White nominated Ms. McKeon

Ms. Gray seconded the nomination of Ms. McKeon

Ms. Light nominated Tim Salmon; no second nomination was made.

On motion by Ms. White, seconded by Mr. Gray, nominations were closed, and Ms. McKeon was elected President of the Board of Education by the following roll call vote:

“Ayes” - Ms. Gray, Ms. Hira, Ms. McKeon, Mr. Salmon, Ms. Schafer, Ms. White

“Noes” - Ms. Light

“Abstain” - None

VIII. Election of Board Vice President

Mr. McLaughlin requested nominations for the position of Vice President of the Board of Education.

Ms. Gray nominated Mr. Salmon.

Ms. Schafer seconded the nomination of Mr. Salmon.

Mr. Salmon was elected Vice President of the Board of Education by the following roll call vote:

“Ayes” - Ms. Gray, Ms. Hira, Ms. Light, Ms. McKeon, Mr. Salmon, Ms. Schafer, Ms. White

“Noes” - None

“Abstain” - None

IX. Regular Session Agenda - 7:11 p.m.

Vice President Salmon welcomed everyone to the Board of Education meeting, congratulated the new and re-elected Board of Education members and read the Statement of Public notice.

X. Approval of 2022 Board of Education Meeting Schedule

2022 SCHEDULE OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE SESSION (as necessary)
PUBLIC SESSION 7:00 P.M.

<u>Meeting Date:</u>	<u>Location:</u>
January 3, 2022*	Ridge High School PAC <i>Reorganization Meeting</i>
January 24, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
February 7, 2022*	Ridge High School PAC
February 28, 2022‡	<i>Board Retreat – Ridge High School Media Center 4:00pm</i>
February 28, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
March 14, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
March 28, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
April 11, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
April 25, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
May 9, 2022	Ridge High School PAC <i>Public Hearing on 2022-23 Budget</i>
May 23, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
June 13, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
June 27, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
July 25, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
August 22, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
September 19, 2022**	Ridge High School PAC
October 3, 2022*	Ridge High School PAC
October 17, 2022**	Ridge High School PAC
November 14, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
November 28, 2022	Ridge High School PAC
December 19, 2022**	Ridge High School PAC
January 3, 2023†	Ridge High School PAC

* 1st Monday of month

** 3rd Monday of month

† 1st Tuesday of the month

‡ Board Retreat – No Action Items

On motion by Ms. Schafer seconded by Ms. White, the 2022 schedule of Board of Education meeting dates was approved by the following roll call vote:

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

XI. Distribute Ethics Act & Administer Code of Ethics

Board Secretary Rod McLaughlin distributed a copy of the Code of Ethics to the Board Members and requested that signed acknowledgements of the code of ethics from each Board of Education member be sent to his office.

XII. Student Representative - Gordon Li

Mr. Li congratulated reappointed and new Board of Education members. Mr. Li provided an update regarding the preceding winter break, the return to instruction and discussed the successes and hard work of the Ridge High School Music Program.

XIII. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Markarian first wished everyone a Happy New Year. Mr. Markarian noted that several emails that were sent to his office and Board members during the break with regard to virtual and live instruction and stated the policy for virtual learning in regard to the Road Forward document. Mr. Markarian asked that students who are not feeling well not be sent to the schools and noted that the District will provide virtual learning opportunities for kids home on quarantine or with Covid. Mr. Markarian expressed his gratitude for the teachers, nursing staff and administrators for their tireless efforts and hard work.

Superintendent Markarian congratulated returning and new Board Members and thanked everyone for their service to the Board citing their care of the children, education and service to the community without compensation and noted two vacancies.

XIV. Public Comment on Agenda Items

A comment from the public included a thank you to the Board of Education for keeping the schools open after the winter break noting the great job that the teachers and staff did to make it happen.

Superintendent. Markarian read email comments that discussed pediatric care and Covid protocol for clearance for athletics and gym, the quarantine process and community safety, the option for students to learn virtually and support to keep the schools open..

Mr. Salmon spoke to in person public comment.

XV. Approval of Minutes

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

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

- December 20, 2021 - Executive Session Minutes
- December 20, 2021 - Regular Session Minutes

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

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

XVI. Finance Committee Report

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve a list of disbursements dated January 3, 2022 consisting of warrants in the amount of \$7,687,791.53.

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

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

XVII. Personnel Committee Report

No report.

XVIII. Policy Committee Report

No report.

XIX. Curriculum Committee Report

Ms. White provided a report from the December 3, 2021 Curriculum Committee meeting. Topics at the meeting included new courses available, a new graduating assessment for the classes of 2023 and beyond, curriculum special education updates, the summer intervention program, program of student revisions, science and an add/drop analysis.

XX. Wellness Committee Report

Ms. Schafer provided a report from the December 9, 2021 Wellness Committee meeting. Topics at the meeting included updates for the Big Sibling program, Health 10 and TEA Time. Ms. Schafer discussed a few upcoming Wellness items at Ridge High School including an upcoming fundraising event and a wellness BREW. Other topics included updates for the Coaching Manual, a presentation for Junior and Seniors for the Opportunity period and school safety in regard to wellness.

XXI. Liaison Committee Reports

Mr. Salmon provided a report from the December 1, 2021 Somerset County Educational Services Commission meeting. Topics at the meeting included a transportation update and enrollment numbers.

XXII. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items

Emailed comments from the public included the District's decision to return to in person learning after the break, bathroom availability at Ridge High School and sports team protocols for travel.

XXIII. Board Forum

Mr. Salmon discussed the Board goal of reinforcing the chain of command citing the necessity in following the chain of command so that any concerns can be fully and effectively addressed.

Ms. Gray thanked board members for their support of her during her presidency during the past two years, reinforced that the Board has always welcomed communication from the public and discussed being mindful of varying opinions along with guidance being provided to the district from the state. Ms. Gray asked for consideration of the public when using social media.

Ms. Schafer thanked Ms. Gray for her service as Board President and discussed the chain of command and communication to the Board of Education.

Ms. Light thanked the Board for keeping students in person after the break. Ms. Light discussed her reasons for voting "no" during the earlier election for Board President. Ms. Light

stated that she is looking forward to serving the board and having an open dialogue with the Board.

Ms. McKeon thanked Ms. Gray as Board President and outlined the challenges of the job and the assistance she provided to fellow board members during the trying times of the pandemic.

Mr. Salmon thanked Ms. Gray for her leadership and service as Board President, congratulated Ms. Light for her election to the Board, congratulated Ms. McKeon for becoming the new board president and thanked parents and staff for their work and cooperation in getting the students back in school after the break despite challenges. Mr. Salmon made mention of two vacant positions for the Board of Education.

Ms. Gray thanked the staff for rising to the occasion once again for the opening of school after the break.

XXIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Schafer and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rod McLaughlin
Board Secretary