

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY  
MINUTES INDEX  
OCTOBER 9, 2017  
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EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:31 P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S CONFERENCE ROOM  
REGULAR SESSION 7:08 P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

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**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY  
MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 9, 2017  
REGULAR SESSION 6:30 P.M.  
EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:3X P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S CONFERENCE ROOM  
REGULAR SESSION 7:08 P.M.  
RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

**I. Regular Session – Call to Order – 6:30 p.m. – Ridge High School Performing Arts Center**

**II. Salute to the Flag**

**III. Roll Call**

Present: Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Dr. Dunten, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Korn, Ms. McKeon, Ms. Richman, Ms. Wooldridge, Mr. Markarian, Mr. Siet, Mr. McLaughlin, Board Counsel John Croot

ABSENT: None

**IV. Executive Session – 6:31 p.m. – Ridge High School Principal's Conference Room**

On motion by Ms. Wooldridge and seconded by Ms. Richman, and approved by all present, the Board recessed into closed executive session at 6:31p.m.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Bernards Township Board of Education shall meet in closed session to discuss: confidential personnel and contract items; matters of litigation; confidential student matters; and further

BE IT RESOLVED that the matters discussed in closed session will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public interest or without violation of the confidentiality of personnel.

On motion by Ms. Wooldridge seconded by Ms. Korn and approved by all present, the Board closed the Executive Session at 7:01p.m.

**V. Regular Session – Call to Order – 7:08 p.m. – Ridge High School Performing Arts Center**

**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.

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, and 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 topic whatsoever.

When you approach the microphone, please state your name and address. 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 time limit for individual comments and/or public comment portions of the agenda. 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. Any Board responses to public comment will be addressed during Board Forum, or during committee reports.

There are times when a member of the public makes a comment or asks a question about an employee. New Jersey statute does not permit us to discuss personnel issues in public. Also as a matter of law, a Board of Education may only vote for or against the hiring of an employee upon the recommendation of the superintendent. If the superintendent does not recommend a person, that person's name is not listed on the agenda and there is no vote on that action.

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 - RJ Milligan**

Student Representative, RJ Milligan, provided an update on the events of Spirit Week at Ridge High School (October 9-13). Spirit Week events include a bagel breakfast, "Walt Disney Wednesday", Tropical Thursday and a Pep Rally on Friday that includes a parade down to the Lee Field and performances by the Ridge Marching Band and Ridge Cheerleaders. On Saturday, October 14, 2017 the Homecoming Dance will take place with Duck Donuts, pizza and a chance to win the Principal of Ridge High School's parking space for two weeks.

President Cwerner stated that the Board is excited to hear about these activities and the increasing attendance at them.

## VIII. Board Presentation

### 1) Culture and Climate Survey Results - Nick Markarian, Superintendent

Superintendent Nick Markarian presented the summary results of the Culture and Climate Survey. Mr. Markarian noted that due to the extensive amount of information only results from the Ridge High School parent, student and staff surveys for both the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and Bernards Township Board of Education would be reviewed during the presentation and that the rest of the results from the survey could be reviewed at ([WEBSITE here](#)). Mount Prospect School did not participate in this survey as that school has recently been through a similar evaluation.

The presentation included:

- Review of the questions that were given in the surveys noting that the NJDOE questions are in black and white and the Bernards Township Board of Education questions and results are in color.
- Number of respondents per category, an agreement rating with specific amounts of respondents per category and the mean rating for each question.
- Domain scores for each category
- Indicators of questions and results that require further investigation

The purpose of the presentation was to instruct the public how to read the results and not to establish any cause and effect at the present time. Safety Teams from each school in the district will be closely examining the results from these surveys.

Questions and comments from the Board included response rates, disclosure and analysis of open ended responses to the survey questions and the synergy between homework, social media, time management and student stress.

For the complete presentation click [here](#).

## IX. Superintendent's Report

1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby accept the **HIB Report for Reporting Period 2** and the **Report of Student Conduct** for the 2016-17 school year.

2) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby affirm receipt of the **HIB Report** dated October 9, 2017.

On motion by Ms. Wooldridge seconded by Ms. Gray Items #1-2 were approved by the following roll call vote:

“Ayes” - Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Dr. Dunten, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Korn, Ms. McKeon, Ms. Richman and Ms. Wooldridge

“Noes” - None  
“Abstain” - None

Superintendent Nick Markarian provided a brief explanation for items #1 and 2.

#### **X. Public Comment on Agenda Items**

Comments and questions from the public included asking if climate survey participation was mandated or optional, the timeframe to implement changes in the schools, who participates in the School Safety Team and parent involvement in decision making with the schools.

Superintendent Nick Markarian responded that participation was optional and that the School Safety Teams are comprised of at least one administrator in each school and that these teams are already working on the analysis of survey results and mitigation of potential issues.

#### **XI. Approval of Minutes**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

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

September 11, 2017 – Executive Minutes  
September 11, 2017 – Regular Session Minutes  
September 11, 2017 – Board Retreat Minutes  
September 25, 2017 – Executive Minutes  
September 25, 2017 – Regular Session Minutes

On motion by Ms. Korn seconded by Mr. Fry the foregoing were approved by the following roll call vote:

“Ayes” - Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Dr. Dunten, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Korn, Ms. McKeon, Ms. Richman and Ms. Wooldridge  
“Noes” - None  
“Abstain” - None

#### **XII. Finance Committee Report**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1) The Bernards Township Board of Education does hereby approve a [list of disbursements](#) dated October 9, 2017 consisting of warrants in the amount of \$3,953,153.38.

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

“Ayes” - Mr. Byrne, Ms. Cwerner, Dr. Dunten, Mr. Fry, Ms. Gray, Ms. Korn, Ms. McKeon, Ms. Richman and Ms. Wooldridge  
 “Noes” - None  
 “Abstain” - None

### **XIII. Personnel Committee Report**

No report.

### **XIV. Policy Committee Report**

No report.

### **XV. Curriculum Committee Report**

No report.

### **XVI. Advocacy Committee Report**

Ms. Richman reported on the October 2, 2017 Advocacy Committee Meeting. Topics of discussion were the PTO Meeting Calendar, an overview of the legislative meetings that Ms. Cwerner, Ms. Wooldridge, Ms. McKeon and Ms. Richman had attended and some of the concerns presented at those meetings and a technology update from Superintendent Markarian.

### **XVII. Liaison Committee Reports**

Ms. Wooldridge reported from the October 3, 2017 Municipal Alliance meeting. Topics of discussion at that meeting were adolescent mental health and upcoming events such as Empowerment Day at William Annin Middle School and a November 15, 2017 presentation from Joan Harris providing information on the “Stigma Free Task Force”. Ms. Wooldridge also reported from the October 4, 2017 meeting with the Somerset County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) that Superintendent Dunsavage stated there had been an increase in enrollment in programs.

### **XVIII. Ad Hoc SEL Committee Report**

No report.

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

Public comments were made about the rotating drop schedule, potential capital improvements to William Annin Middle and Ridge High Schools, the technology

initiative, PARCC testing, character education and climate, physical education assessments at the middle school and questions regarding the Health Curriculum, the availability of information for local community service programs available to students, vaping and an effective presentation recently held at the high school about bullying.

President Cwerner addressed the technology plan citing that nothing has been approved at this point as it is in the process of review and members of the board are going to be visiting classrooms in the near future as part of this review process. Effective School Solutions is also providing parent and staff training. Ms. Cwerner and Ms. Gray also stated that the Health Curriculum is scheduled to be reviewed at the next Curriculum Committee Meeting.

Superintendent Markarian commented on the challenges that student vaping presents and noted some recent changes in policy that now consider vaping devices drug paraphernalia.

## **XX. Board Forum**

Board Members discussed the climate survey process including the process for determining and mitigating critical issues. They also discussed the proposed rotating drop schedule at Ridge High School and President Cwerner passed out a list of questions that each of the committees would consider in their discussions regarding schedule changes.

Superintendent Markarian proposed a Board presentation to review possible master schedule changes at Ridge High School and their implications at the December 18, 2017 Board of Education Meeting.

Mr. Fry recognized Liberty Corner School Art Teacher, Alicia Bynoe, for being the recipient of the Art Educators of NJ Division Award for Elementary Art Educator of the Year.

## **XXI. Adjournment**

On motion by Ms. Wooldridge and seconded by Ms. McKeon and approved by all present, the meeting was adjourned at 9:32p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rod McLaughlin  
Board Secretary