

CLOSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Closter, New Jersey

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING

Tenakill Middle School

March 5, 2025 - 7:30 PM

Call to order: _____ @ _____ P.M.

Roll Call:

Ms. Argenziano	_____
Mr. Choi	_____
Ms. Estrems	_____
Ms. Lee	_____
Ms. Li	_____
Ms. Micera	_____
Mr. Paldi	_____
Ms. Salamea-Cross	_____
Ms. Finkelstein	_____

NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT - Read by the President:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Secretary to the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by having the date, time, and place thereof, posted at each school building within the district, district website, the Board of Education office, the Office of the Borough Clerk, and transmitted to *The Record* and *Northern Valley Suburbanite* newspapers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

BOARD COMMITTEES

School Year 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget Presentation

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to open the meeting to the public.

Statements made by individual participants are limited to a duration of three (3) minutes unless otherwise announced at the beginning of the discussion. A maximum of 15 minutes for public input is scheduled as per bylaw 0167. The Board urges large groups to select one person to represent them. The Board reminds those individuals who take the opportunity to speak to please step up, identify themselves by name and address, and to limit their comments to items listed on the agenda.

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to resume the regular order of business.

BOARD OPERATIONS

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to approve Motions A - C.

Motions were _____ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

A. APPROVAL - Board of Education Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the February 5, 2025, Board of Education meeting minutes.

B. APPROVAL - Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB)

Motion to affirm the decision of the Superintendent of Schools regarding Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) incident TMS-2425-14 as reported to the Board in Executive Session at the February 5, 2025, meeting.

C. APPROVAL - Development of Needs Assessment and Comprehensive Equity Plan

Motion to authorize the Affirmative Action Officer (AAO) to organize a team to develop a Needs Assessment and a Comprehensive Equity Plan, which shall be submitted to the County Office by June 2025. The team will prepare a plan to be presented to the Board for approval. Additionally, the AAO shall submit an annual Statement of Assurance documenting the plan's implementation and progress and complete the District Performance Review in the NJQSAC.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Ms. Finkelstein; Members: Ms. Argenziano, Ms. Lee

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to approve Motions A - C.

Motions were _____ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

A. **APPROVAL - Staff Coursework**

Motion to approve the following courses for the 2024-2025 school year as recommended to the Superintendent by the Principals:

Staff Member: Mary Auriti
Course No./Title: 1) EDUC-6813 Structured Literacy: Students with Reading Difficulties 1
2) EDUC-6184 Structured Literacy: Students with Reading Difficulties 2
3) EDUC-7633 Structured Literacy: Students with Reading Difficulties 3
Institution: Fairleigh Dickinson University
Credits: 9 (3 credits each)

B. **APPROVAL - Staff Conferences**

Motion to approve the following staff conferences for the 2024-2025 school year:

Staff Member(s): Floro Villanueva Jr.
Conference: NJASBO Annual Conference 2025
Location: Atlantic City, NJ
Date: 6/4/25 - 6/6/25
Cost to Board: \$1,053.36 (Registration, hotel and mileage)

Staff Member(s): Margaret Churchill
Conference: NJTESOL Spring Conference 2025
Location: Hyatt Regency, New Brunswick, NJ
Date: 5/20/25 - 5/22/25
Cost to Board: \$375.00 (Substitute)

Staff Member(s): Alexandra Earle
Conference: It's Real: Teens and Mental Health Training for Presenters
Location: Virtual
Date: 3/7/25
Cost to Board: \$0

Staff Member(s): Lori Cohen
Conference: Innovations in Special Education Tech Conference
Location: Monroe, NJ
Date: 3/14/25
Cost to Board: \$56.87 (Mileage)

Staff Member(s): Dianne Smith
Conference: Responding to School Bomb Threats & Bomb Threat Drilling
Location: Virtual
Date: 3/10/25
Cost to Board: \$0

C. **APPROVAL - Field Trips**

Motion to approve the following field trips for the 2024-2025 school year:

School: Tenakill Middle School
Group: Grade 8 Band / Orchestra
Month: June 2025
Destination: NVRHS-D
Location: Demarest, NJ

School: Hillside Elementary School
Group: Grade 2
Month: April 2025
Destination: Newark Museum
Location: Newark, NJ

School: Hillside Elementary School
Group: Grade 2
Month: May 2025
Destination: Closter Nature Center
Location: Closter, NJ

School: Tenakill Middle School
Group: TEP
Month: March, April and June 2025 (One date each)
Destination: Ho-Ho-Kus School (March & April) and Ramapo College (June)
Location: Ho-Ho-Kus and Mahwah, NJ

FINANCE AND PHYSICAL PLANT COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Mr. Choi; Members: Ms. Estrems, Ms. Finkelstein

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to approve Motions A - S.

Motions were _____ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

A. **APPROVAL - Monthly Financials and Certification**

Motion to approve the following items as required, pursuant to NJSA 18A:17-9 and NJAC 6:20-2.13, as per Appendix A attached:

- a. Board Secretary and School Treasurer Financial Reports for January 2025.
- b. Board of Education's Monthly Certification of Budgetary Major Account /Fund status for January 2025.
- c. Transfer of funds for January 2025.

B. **APPROVAL - Payment of Bills**

Motion to approve the payment of bills from February 6, 2025, to February 28, 2025, in the amount of:

General Fund (Fund 10)	\$1,894,561.19
Special Revenue (Fund 20)	\$ 8,451.97
Capital Fund (Fund 30)	\$ 107,607.01
Total	\$2,010,620.17

C. **APPROVAL - Payment of Bills**

Motion to approve the payment of bills from March 1, 2025, to March 5, 2025, in the amount of:

General Fund (Fund 10)	\$568,754.18
Special Revenue (Fund 20)	\$ 8,489.00
Enterprise (Milk – Fund 60)	\$ 761.27
Total	\$578,004.45

D. **APPROVAL - Staff Remuneration**

Motion to approve remuneration to staff members as follows:

Staff Member: Wendy Manning
Course: 1) Mindful Teachers, Mindful Students
2) ADD/ADHD Strategies & Interventions
College/University: University of LaVerne
Remuneration: \$840.00

E. **APPROVAL – Special Education Placement**

Motion to approve the following 2024-2025 Special Education placement for Closter Students:

<u>NJSMART#</u>	<u>Tuition</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Placement</u>
5220678010	\$25,470.40	K	Valley TIP

F. **APPROVAL - Preliminary Budget for SY 2025 - 2026**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Closter Board of Education, County of Bergen, approves the preliminary 2025-2026 school year budget and authorizes the School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary to submit the preliminary budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Local Tax Levy</i>
General Current Expense (Fund 11)	\$ 26,926,125	\$ 23,633,912
Capital Outlay (Fund 12)	\$ 934,341	
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$ 27,860,466	\$ 23,633,912
Special Revenue Fund (Fund 20)	\$ 547,520	\$ 0
Debt Service Fund (Fund 40)	\$ 459,750	\$ 303,452
Total Base Budget	\$ 28,867,736	\$ 23,937,364

And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Fund tax levy of **\$23,633,912** is approved to support Current General Expense that includes the use of **\$206,689** Health Care Costs Adjustment. The total budget tax levy, including Debt Service Fund, is **\$ 23,937,364**

And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education accepts the State School Aid for the 2025-26 school year as follows:

Transportation Aid	98,966
Special Education Aid	1,438,479
Security Aid	166,009
Debt Service Aid	156,298
Less: SDA Assessment	<u>-14,941</u>
Total Aid	\$ 1,844,811

And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a meeting will be held at the Tenakill Middle School Media Center on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the SY 2025-2026 budget.

G. **APPROVAL - SY 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget – Adjustment for Health Care Costs**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education approves the use of adjustment for increase in health care costs, permitting the tax levy to increase above 2% in the amount of **\$206,689**. The adjustment will be used to support the rising cost of health benefits for eligible district staff.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Business Administrator/Board Secretary is authorized to submit the preliminary budget with the inclusion of the health care costs adjustment as noted above.

H. **APPROVAL - Capital Reserve Withdrawal (Other Capital Projects) for SY 2025-2026**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Closter Board of Education, County of Bergen, includes in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620, a withdrawal in the amount of **\$900,000** from the Board of Education's approved **Capital Reserve Account** to fund Other Capital Projects:

Hillside Elementary School

- Network Infrastructure Replacements - \$150,000
- Blacktop around the new additional wing and upper loop drop-off area/playground - \$300,000

Tenakill Middle School

- Student locker replacement - \$450,000

The total cost of the projects represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner of Education as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Any funds withdrawn from Capital Reserve and unspent by the end of the school year shall be returned to the Capital Reserve fund.

I. **APPROVAL - Maintenance Reserve Withdrawal for SY 2025-2026 Budget**

BE IT RESOLVED that as per N.J.A.C 6A:23A-14.2(d), the Closter Board of Education withdraws **\$340,000** from the Board of Education's approved **Maintenance Reserve Account** for use on required maintenance activities for a school facility as reported in the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan pursuant to N.J.A.C 6A:26-20.5.

J. **APPROVAL - Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement for SY 2025-2026**

WHEREAS, the Closter 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

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 et seq. 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

WHEREAS, the Closter Board of Education has determined that the maximum travel expenditure amount includes all travel that is supported by state and local funds; and

WHEREAS, the Closter Board of Education established \$35,000.00 as the maximum travel amount for the current school year and has an obligated balance of \$19,461.06 as of this date; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Closter Board of Education hereby establishes the maximum travel and related expense reimbursement for the 2025 - 2026 school year at \$35,000.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Business Administrator/Board Secretary is authorized to track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

K. **APPROVAL - Purchase of Math & YOU 2024 for Hillside Elementary School**

Motion to approve a three-year contract with Cengage Learning for Math & YOU 2024 (K-4) student books, workbooks, online access, and professional development in the amount of \$86,467.50. The three-year contract results in a total savings of \$12,650.

L. **APPROVAL – Removal of Carpeting in HES & TMS Offices and Installation of LVT Flooring**

Motion to approve the contract with Hannon Floors, the lowest and most responsive quote for the removal of carpeting in HES & TMS Offices and installation of LVT flooring and cove base. The total contract is \$47,820.71 plus a \$2,000 incidental allowance under the Ed Services Commission of NJ (ESCNJ) Contract 23/24-14 Commercial Carpet & Flooring.

M. **APPROVAL - Transfer Approval and Submission to County Superintendent**

WHEREAS, the Closter Board of Education recognizes the necessity to transfer funds from the General Fund (Fund 11) to the Capital Outlay Fund (Fund 12) to support the purchase of exterior baseball bleachers (\$32,637), removal of carpeting and replacement of LVT flooring and cove base (\$47,820.71) and gym wall padding (\$24,800); and

WHEREAS, the proposed expenditure meets the definition of a capital outlay expense as prescribed by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP); and

WHEREAS, the transfer is necessary to ensure the proper classification of expenditures and compliance with the New Jersey Public Schools Accounting Manual (N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16); and

WHEREAS, sufficient unexpended appropriations exist within the General Fund to support the transfer without adversely affecting the district's operational needs; and

WHEREAS, the transfer requires Board approval in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.3, which governs budget transfers exceeding state-defined thresholds for reallocation of appropriations between fund categories;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education approves the transfer of \$105,167.71 from Fund 11 (General Fund) Account Code 11-000-291-270 to Fund 12 (Capital Outlay Fund) Account Code 12-000-400-450 for the projects mentioned above.

N. APPROVAL - Purchase of 360 Chromebooks

Motion to approve the purchase of 360 Chromebooks (150 for TMS, 210 for HES) from Trafera for \$139,860. The purchase is broken down into the following contracts:

- \$93,240 for the devices and EDU license under the Hunterdon County Ed Services Commission of NJ Contract (#34HUNCCP) #HCESC-CAT-22-01: Technology Supplies and Equipment.
- \$46,620 for the four-year warranty and asset tags under the OMNIA Contract, Region 14 ESC—National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance. The Notice of Intent of Award was published on February 20, 2025, per P.L. 2011, c. 139.

Trafera is a National Cooperative vendor awarded a contract through OMNIA Partners, 501 Aspen Grove Franklin, TN 37067. The Region 14 Educational Services Center awarded the contract, 1850 Highway 351 Abilene, TX 79601-4750 as the Lead Agency. The Contract Award - Technology Solutions, Products, and Services Contract Number 01-149 Expires November 30, 2025.

The Board of Education is permitted to purchase from national cooperative purchasing agreements without advertising for bids under the authority of N.J.S.A. 52:34-6.2(b)(3).

O. APPROVAL - Application of Local Recreational Improvement Grant 2025

Motion to approve the application for the Local Recreational Improvement Grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for approximately \$100,000 to upgrade the playground at Hillside Elementary School. Attached is the resolution and certification required by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs as per Appendix B.

P. APPROVAL - Closeout of the Tenakill Middle School Windows Replacement Project

Motion to approve the closeout of the Tenakill Middle School Windows Replacement Project, which was funded through the referendum. The contract in the amount of \$454,000, including a \$50,000 allowance, was awarded to Panoramic Windows & Door Systems, Inc. The following change orders were included in the project:

- Change Order #1: \$19,265 for window roller shades (approved on December 3, 2024).
- Change Order #2: \$1,520 for window panels required for issuance of warranty

The final project cost is \$424,785, with \$29,215 remaining unused from the allowance. The district has received all required warranty documents, and the project is now considered complete.

Q. **APPROVAL - Closeout of the Modular Classroom Building Addition**

Motion to approve the closeout of the modular classroom building project, which was funded through the district's Capital Reserve Account. The contract, in the amount of \$1,619,650, was awarded to Mobilease Modular Space. The final project cost is \$1,619,650. The district has received all required warranty documents, and the project is now considered complete.

R. **APPROVAL – Purchase and Installation of Exterior Bleacher System**

Motion to approve the contract with Nickerson to purchase and install exterior bleachers at Tenakill. The total contract is \$32,637 under the Ed Services Commission of NJ (ESCNJ) Contract 23/24-20 Bleacher Systems, Exterior, Purchase, and Installation.

S. **APPROVAL – Replacement and Installation of Gym Wall Padding**

Motion to approve the contract with J&J Gym Floors, the lowest and most responsive quote for the replacement and installation of gym wall padding at Hillside Elementary School. The total contract is \$24,800.

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Ms. Salamea-Cross; Member: Mr. Paldi

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to approve Motions A - E.

Motions were _____ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

A. **APPROVAL - Appointment of Cassandra Perez as School Psychologist**

Motion to approve the appointment of Cassandra Perez as full-time, tenure track School Psychologist for the 2024-2025 school year at a salary of \$83,377, MA Step 8, with a start date of March 26, 2025. A criminal history background check is already on file.

B. **APPROVAL - Substitute Teachers/Paraprofessionals/Custodians**

Motion to approve the following substitute teachers/paraprofessionals/custodians for the 2024-2025 school year:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Certification</u>
Brad Rosenberg	Substitute Certificate
Charlotte LoSchiavo	Teachers Certification
Maribel Velasco	Nursing Certificate
Vivian Vail	Substitute Custodian
Michal Nevo	Substitute Certificate
Sharon Mai	Substitute Paraprofessional

- C. **APPROVAL - Yaxuan Zhang - Non-Employee Researcher for Proposed Project**
Motion to approve Yaxuan Zhang, Teachers College-Columbia University student, for five to ten classroom hours in Tenakill School for the 2024-2025 school year, to undertake a proposed research project to see how educators plan and deploy concepts and techniques to support students with various cultural backgrounds and language capabilities, as per Appendix C.
- D. **APPROVAL - Rescindment of Motion for Michael Wowkun as Track Coach**
Motion to approve the rescindment of Michael Wowkun as Track Coach for the 2024-2025 school year, as per Schedule F.
- E. **APPROVAL - Joseph Calabria as Track Coach for the 2024-2025 School Year**
Motion to approve Joseph Calabria as Track Coach for the 2024-2025 school year at a rate of \$3,133.00, as per Schedule F.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Ms. Micera; Member: Ms. Li

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to approve Motion A.

Motion was _____ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

- A. **APPROVAL - First Reading of Policies and Regulations**
Motion to approve the first reading of the following Policies and Regulations, as per Appendix D:
- P 5111 Eligibility of Resident/Non-Resident Students
 - P 5512 Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying
 - P 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Device
 - P 5512 Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying
 - P 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices
 - P 5533 Student Smoking
 - P 5701 Academic Integrity
 - P 5710 Student Grievance
 - P 7441 Electronic Surveillance in School Buildings and on School Grounds
 - P 8500 Food Services
 - P 9163 Spectator Code of Conduct for Interscholastic Events
 - P 9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies

- R 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices
- R 5533 Student Smoking
- R 7441 Electronic Surveillance in School Buildings and on School Grounds
- R 9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to open the meeting for public comments.

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to close the meeting to public comments.

CLOSED SESSION MOTION (If required)

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to approve the following Closed Session Motion.

Motion was _____ by a voice vote of the Board:

YEAS:

NAYS:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education will adjourn to a Closed Session to discuss the following:

HIB

The matters so discussed will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public.

The Board went into Closed Session at _____ PM.

The Board reconvened from Closed Session at _____ PM.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by _____, seconded by _____ to adjourn the meeting at _____ PM.