

Delaware Township School
Monthly Board of Education Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023 – 7:00 pm

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Delaware Township School District is to prepare each student to become a productive, responsible member of society, able to adapt and change, by providing an environment that:

Creates a foundation for a self-motivated lifelong learner by providing relevant innovative, comprehensive curricula that reflect the New Jersey Student Learning Standards;

Focuses on individual needs and promotes individual excellence by encouraging and enhancing the intellectual and social development of each student.

This environment will be realized through an active and responsive partnership that includes the students, faculty, parents, community and staff.

A. Call to Order – Mrs. Catherine Pouria, President

B. Open Public Meeting Act Statement

Welcome to a meeting of the Delaware Township School Board of Education. Please be advised that this and all meetings of the Board are open to the public and media, consistent with the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975) and that advance notice required therein has been provided. Meeting notice was also posted in the entrance hallway of Delaware Township School; sent to the Trenton Times and the Hunterdon County Democrat newspapers; posted on the school website and sent to the Clerk of Delaware Township. The public will have the opportunity to be heard as shown on the Agenda.

C. Flag Salute

D. Roll Call - Mrs. Harrington, Mr. Hoffman, Mrs. Hornby, Mrs. Lyons, Mr. Pate, Mr. Ponzo, Mrs. Opdyke, Ms. Stahl, Mrs. Pouria

Also Present: Mr. Scott Lipson, Superintendent and Mrs. Susan Joyce, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

E. Audience Participation – Agenda Items None

F. Correspondence - None

G. Presentations - None

H. Superintendent's Report – Mr. Scott Lipson

1. Student Enrollment Student Enrollment (12-02-23) - (Exhibit H.1)

GRADE	ENROLLMENT	SECTIONS	AVERAGE CLASS SIZE
Kindergarten	45	3	15
Grade 1	36	3	13
Grade 2	52	3	17
Grade 3	48	3	16
Grade 4	29	2	15
Grade 5	42	2	20
Grade 6	40	3	14
Grade 7	45	3	16
Grade 8	42	3	14
Pre School	26	2	13
Tuition Sent	5		
Home Instruction	0		
Self-Contained	2		
TOTAL	412	27	14

2. Evacuation Drills 2023-2024 School Year Fire Drill/Security/Evacuation Report

Date of Drill	Time of Drill	Duration of Drill	Type of Drill	Weather Conditions	Participants of Drill	Pull Station/Notes
7/18/23	11:05am	10 min	Fire Drill	83 & sunny	175 students & 26 staff	Fire Panel m97m027 *Summer Recreation
7/27/23	8:40am	5 min	Shelter in Place	90 & sunny	20 students & 20 staff	*Summer Academy
9/8/23	9:30am	5 min	Fire Drill	87 & sunny	407 students & 75 staff	Fire Panel m12m025
9/27/23	8:45am	15 min	Bus Evacuation Drill	54 & sunny	407 students & 75 staff	All students participated in this drill.
9/27/23	11:00am	7 min	Lockdown drill	60 & sunny	407 students & 75 staff	
10/3/23	11:00am	15 min	Fire Drill	72 & sunny	407 students & 75 staff	Fire Panel m12m025
10/16/23	12:15pm	1 hour	Shelter in Place	65 & sunny	407 students & 75 staff	*Due to fire next door to school
11/14/23	2:35pm	7 min	Active Shooter Drill	52 & sunny	407 students & 75 staff	
11/14/23	4:00pm	2 min	Test of notification system	52 & sunny	staff & parents	Text, email & phone call were sent to all staff & our parent community
11/17/23	2:00pm	5 min	Fire Drill	67 & sunny	407 students & 75 staff	Fire Panel m13m009

3. Suspensions –

MONTH OF	IN SCHOOL	OUT OF SCHOOL
September	0	0
October	0	0
November	0	0
December	0	0
January	0	0
February	0	0
March	0	0
April	0	0
May	0	0
June	0	0
TOTAL FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024 TO DATE	0	0

4. HIB Incidents –

MONTH OF	INCIDENTS REPORTED	NUMBER CLASSIFIED AS HIB
September	1	0
October	0	0
November	1	0
December	0	0
January	0	0
February	0	0
March	0	0
April	0	0
May	0	0
June	0	0
TOTAL FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024 TO DATE	2	0

Student Council Liaison –Student Council Secretary Ms. Isabella Alvarez

- Athletics – fall season recently ended
- Basketball just started
- The Mouse Play and concerts are on Thursday
- Spirit week is next week
- After break winter dance “DTS Snow Ball Dance”
- Last Friday was movie night
- The 3rd Grade saw Roxy Ballet
- DTS held “March on Litter”
- 8th grade dissected squid, studying WWII and the Holocaust
- 7th grade studying Greek Mythology

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- 6th grade studying Egyptian Mythology
- 5. Educator of the Year 2023-24 -
 Nadina LaBouliere - Teacher of the Year – Congratulations!
 MS Special Education Math & Social Studies
 Stacy Falkenstein - Educational Services Professional of the Year –
 Congratulations!
 Farewell Mrs. GaNun – We will miss her and everything she has done for DTS and
 our students. Thank you! She has been a phenomenal teacher!
 Farewell to our two outgoing Board of Education Members, Mrs. Hornby and
 Mrs. Opdyke. We are starting a new tradition, donating a book to the
 library in their name.
 Holiday Events – Decorating the hallways, 1st Annual Teacher Swap, lots of
 school activities happening.

I. School Business Administrator’s Report – Mrs. Susan Joyce

1. Reviewed Training Requirements for individual Board Members
2. Official Election Results

3x3 Year Term	Jennifer Martin	1,142	Elected
	Adam Pate	1,115	Elected
	John Kafarski	1,086	Elected
	Write-in’s	40	

J. President’s Report – Mrs. Catherine Pouria

Mrs. Pouria thanked our retiring board members and recognized them for their many contributions.

Laura Hornby - Joined our board in October 2018. We had some challenging meetings, and Laura began chairing the Communication Counts committee to help improve communication between parents, administration and the board. Shortly afterwards, Covid began. Laura was helpful in reading through all of the DOH guidance and mitigations, and spent a lot of time in discussions about them. She was a strong supporter of DTS reopening for 5 days per week in-person learning in September of 2020, and staying open. In April of 2021, she supported returning to full day school with lunch. She took part in the principal interview committee with Cathy Pouria and Maegan Harrington and we helped bring in Mr. Lipson together. She took part

in the superintendent search. Over the years she served as Chair of the Personnel and Policy Committee, Vice President, and Chair of the CIT Committee.

Heather Opdyke - Heather joined the board in January '21. She had a very eventful term. She participated in our meeting where we voted to return to 5 full days of school in April '21 and supported it. She helped promote the construction of the DTS Learning Garden. She was an active member of the Green Team and input the action items necessary to obtain our Bronze Certification and helped with grants. She supported the restructuring of our administration and creation of the principal position. She took part in our superintendent search. Was a member of the Finance and Facilities and Curriculum, Instruction and Technology Committees.

The work that board members do sometimes isn't fully known or recognized. We recognize the work that each of you did that had an impact on our school. Thank you Laura and Heather!

Happy Retirement Ms. GaNun! – We will celebrate her in May. She has done a lot for our students, school and St. Baldrick's. She played a role in helping to keep the school open during covid. Thank you, we will miss you!

- K.** Approval of the regular and executive session minutes of the November 21, 2023 board meeting.

Motion by Mrs. Hornby, seconded by Mr. Hoffman to approve the November 21, 2023 Regular and Executive Meeting Minutes. Discussion followed.

Regular minutes motion passed by unanimous roll call vote (9-0-0).

Executive minutes motion passed by roll call vote (7-0-2; Hornby & Lyons abstained)

L. Committee Reports and Action

1. Curriculum/Instruction/Technology

Mrs. Hornby reported on the committee meeting.

Motion by Mrs. Hornby, seconded by Mr. Hoffman to approve items 1.1-1.2.

Discussion followed. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote (9-0-0).

- 1.1 MOVE to accept the HIB incidents per H.4 of the Superintendent's Report.
- 1.2 MOVE to approve the following field trips for the 2023-2024 school year.
(Exhibit 1.2)

ACTIVITY	DATE	GRADE LEVEL	LOCATION
Mental Health/Substance Abuse Prevention	1/19/24	7 th Grade	HCRHS Flemington, NJ
Career Expo	2/29/24	8 th Grade	RVCC Branchburg, NJ
Science Olympiad Competition	3/21/24	5 th Grade	South Hunterdon H.S. Lambertville, NJ

2. **Finance/Facilities**

Mrs. Lyons reported on the committee meeting.

Motion by Mrs. Lyons, seconded by Ms. Stahl to approve items 2.1-2.8.

Discussion followed. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote (9-0-0).

2.1 MOVE that the financial reports of the Business Administrator/Board Secretary and the Reconciler for the month ended November 2023. The Board of Education, after review of the Board Secretary and Reconciler's monthly financial report and consultations with the Board Secretary, hereby certifies that no major account has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C.6A:23A-16.10(b). (Exhibit 2.1)

2.2 MOVE to approve the attached line account transfers for November 2023. (Exhibit 2.2)

2.3 MOVE to approve District invoices presented for payment for the second November bills list in the amount of \$78,875.06 and December bills list in the amount of \$97,031.77. (Exhibit 2.3)

2.4 MOVE to approve the following payroll amounts:

November 30, 2023 - \$272,695.61

2.5 MOVE to approve the following travel expenditures for staff members to attend professional development conferences/workshops. This travel is deemed educationally necessary and fiscally prudent and all travel expenditures shall be directly related to and with the scope of the staff

member's current responsibilities and the district's professional development plan.

ATTENDEE	WORKSHOP/CONFERENCE	DATES	INCLUDE (see below*)	MAXIMUM AMOUNT

*(R) registration, (M) mileage

2.6 MOVE to approve the following Use of Facilities/Buses. (Exhibit 2.6)

GROUP	APPLICANT	ACTIVITY	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Delaware Township School	Valerie Wheatley	Author Visit Grades 3-8	1/8/24	9:00 AM-11:30 AM	PAR

2.7 MOVE to approve and accept the 2023-2024 REAP (Rural Education Achievement Program) Grant funds in the amount of \$50,333.00.

2.8 MOVE to approve the Waiver of Requirements for Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program:

RESOLVED that the Delaware Township School Board of Education approves the filing of a waiver to accept the Delaware Township School District's participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) due to that the district projects an enrollment of less than 40 Medicaid eligible students.

Personnel/Policy

Mr. Ponzo reported on the committee meeting.

Motion by Mr. Ponzo, seconded by Mrs. Harrington to approve items 3.1-3.6. Discussion followed. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote (9-0-0).

3.1 MOVE to approve the following candidates for the positions, contractual salaries and starting dates indicated for the 2023-2024 school year, pending fingerprint clearance if necessary, per the recommendation of the Superintendent.

NAME	POSITION	SALARY	DATES
Evelyn Abbatiello	Substitute Custodian	\$15.13/hour	1/1/2024 Due to Minimum Wage Increase
Zach Ubry	Substitute Custodian	\$15.00/hour	1/1/2024 Due to Minimum Wage Increase
Rachel Rosen	Part Time Paraprofessional	Step 1, FTE .42 Annual salary \$10,838.10 Prorated salary \$6,502.92	January 1, 2024-June 30, 2024
Cynthia Weil	Substitute Teacher	\$125/per day	2023-24 School Year
Joleen Pugliese	Substitute Teacher	\$125/per day	2023-24 School Year

- 3.2 MOVE to approve chaperones for movie night on December 8, 2023 per the recommendation of the Superintendent

NAME	POSITION	SALARY	DATE
Kathy Ferry, Lisa Aron, Mark Deneka, Stephanie Joyce	Chaperones for Movie Night	Per the CBA	December 8, 2023

- 3.3 MOVE to approve the following faculty member for Movement on the Guide, effective February 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024, per the recommendation of the Superintendent.

TEACHER	ANNUAL SALARY
Laura Ferrante, Elementary Teacher	Step 17 M+60 Annual Salary \$94,870.00 Prorated Salary \$47,435.00

- 3.4 MOVE to approve the following policy updates, per the recommendation of the Superintendent. (Exhibit 3.4)

POLICY	NUMBER	REVISION ONLY	READING
Nonresident	5118	X	

- 3.5 MOVE to approve Extended Leave for Employee #67350892, teacher, beginning December 14, 2023, through January 14, 2024, per the recommendation of the Superintendent.

- 3.6 MOVE to approve Rodrigo Ramirez Ortiz as a student teacher from The College of New Jersey with cooperating teacher Mrs. Marlatt, from January 22, 2024 to May 3, 2024.

M. Additional Business – Mrs. Pouria asked Mr. Lipson for an administrative structure update. Mr. Lipson is doing dual roles as Superintendent/Principal. Mr. Lipson said that the work is doable. He has two great supervisors supporting him. They are very approachable, according to the DTEA president. Mr. Hoffman and Mrs. Pouria are seeing the same thing.

N. Audience Participation - None

O. Board Representatives Liaison Reports

1. Recreation

- Chili Bowl and Bingo will take place on Saturday, Feb 3rd from 6-10pm at the Sergeantsville Volunteer Fire Company
- A 2024 Calendar of Events will be sent to all residents at the beginning of the year

2. PiE

Holiday Shoppe

- The Holiday Shoppe was on 12/4-12/6/2023. It was a great experience for the students

PiE Holiday Happy Hour at Sergeantsville Inn

- PiE will be hosting a happy hour at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 13th at the Sergeantsville Inn.
- **Please let us know if you plan to attend by sending an email to dtspie@gmail.com so we can reserve the correct amount of space.**
- Light snacks will be provided with a cash bar running. Come out and get to know some fellow DTS parents!

After-School Enrichment

- Planning is already underway by our Enrichment Committee for after-school enrichment.
- If you or anyone you know would like to run a class, please email us at dtspie@gmail.com.

Assemblies

- On January 23rd, Sky Dome, a portable, inflatable planetarium, is coming to Delaware Township School to guide students through the stars of the Northern Hemisphere exactly as they appear on the day of the assembly. Students will learn about every planet, Greek mythology characters found in the stars, and witness the night sky in different seasons and from different global perspectives.

Family Roller Skating Night

- January 14th will be the next one for the year so make sure to mark your calendars.

3. Township

- Meeting is scheduled for 12/11

4. ESC

- The Hunterdon ESC cooperative continues to gain new members. There was not a meeting in November, causing the December agenda to have additional action items. A requested increase in the transportation budget is due to an increased number of contracted transportation agreements, as well as an increase in the cost of routes. Additional revenue to be received to justify the increase.

5. Planning Board

- Meeting on December 5th was canceled.

6. HCSBA

- Mr. Lipson, Dr. Moore (Hunterdon Central) and Dr. Hart (Readington) participated in a panel discussion on academic achievement moderated by Mrs. Pouria. They provided valuable insights based on their experiences and expertise, and took questions from newly elected and current board members. They did a wonderful job and received positive feedback. Turnout for the NJSBA 3 R's program was good.

7. NJSBA Legislature - the following summarizes pertinent legislative action:

- **Senate Education Committee**
- The committee considered the following bills:
 - ***Tax Deduction for Classroom Supplies* S-1980/A-2227**: would allow educators to deduct from their gross income for the taxable year up to \$250 in unreimbursed expenses for the purchase of classroom supplies. K-12 teachers, counselors, speech language specialists, principals and aides that provide at least 900 hours of service in a public or private school would be eligible. The Assembly approved A-2227 in May 2023; the bill now awaits a final vote by the full Senate.
 - ***Expedited Certification Route for Paraprofessionals* A-5416/S-3883** would require the New Jersey State Board of Education to authorize an alternate, expedited route to teacher certification for paraprofessionals and instructional assistants. In developing the requirements for that expedited certification, the commissioner of education would be required to consult with representatives of the education community, including the New Jersey School Boards Association. The bill next heads to the Senate floor for further consideration.
- **Assembly Higher Education Committee**
 - On Nov. 20, the committee advanced the following bill, which is aimed at alleviating teacher shortages:
 - ***Transferring of County College Credits to Meet EPP Requirements* A-5417** would prohibit educator preparation programs from restricting the number of accredited county college professional education credits that may be used to meet the teacher certification requirements of an educator preparation program, except as may be required by the EPP's accrediting organization. The bill is part of the [legislative package](#) spearheaded by Assembly Education Committee Chairwoman Pamela Lampitt to address the ongoing teacher shortage. The NJSBA supports the package. A-5417 was approved by the Assembly Education Committee in May, and next heads to the Assembly floor for further consideration. Its Senate counterpart, S-3890, was approved by the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee in June, and awaits further action by the Senate.
- **Governor Action**

- ***Alternate CE Without Basic Skills Requirement*** On Nov. 27, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a bill into law ([S-1553](#) / P.L.2023, c.180) requiring the State Board of Education to create an “alternative certificate of eligibility” that does not require teacher candidates to satisfy the “basic skills” requirement of the traditional CE. The law goes into effect immediately.
- Additionally, the governor recently conditionally vetoed the following bills and returned them to the Legislature, which must concur with his recommendations before they can be signed into law:
- **Electric School Bus Program Appropriation** On Nov. 27, Murphy conditionally vetoed a bill (S-3044) that would have appropriated \$15 million to fund the first year of the Electric School Bus Program authorized by P.L.2022, c.86. The governor’s conditional veto addresses a timing technicality. As initially sent to the governor, S-3044 appropriated the funds to the fiscal year 2023 budget; the governor’s conditional veto moves the appropriation to the fiscal year 2024 budget.

8. Community Relations

- The seniors met on 12/6 for a holiday lunch with live music. Mrs. Ferry provided her contact information for seniors who’d like to volunteer with the 1st graders. Reading has started up again. They were reminded that they’re welcome to attend the band/chorus concert on the 14th.

9. HCRHS

- Early College Planning Night for Freshman and Sophomore Parents will be February 6, 6:30 pm
- All 9th and 10th grade students will meet with their counselors in December and January to review standardized testing, building a college list, building a personal portfolio of activities and accomplishments, four-year academic planning, and college programming offered at Hunterdon Central.
- Winter choral concert is on 12/12/23

10. DTAA

- DTAA is looking for a new treasurer and a soccer co-director

- DTAA has a new secretary
- DTAA is still looking to get reimbursed from the township from all the park improvements.
- Basketball is underway and has a high number of participants.

11. SEPAG

- Nothing from SEPAG

P. Executive Session - None

Q. Adjourn – 8:17 PM

Motion by Mr. Ponzo, seconded by Mrs. Harrington to adjourn at 8:17 PM. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan M. Joyce
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Catherine Pouria
President

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