

**WHITE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION  
565 COUNTY ROAD 519  
BELVIDERE, NEW JERSEY 07823  
908-475-4773**



**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
January 27, 2025**

For the Regular Meeting of the White Township Board of Education  
Monday, January 27, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the White Township Consolidated School Media Center.

*“White Township Consolidated School is committed to inspire, engage and educate our students by providing innovative, personalized opportunities for growth and learning. With a foundation based on academic excellence and a focus on social emotional learning, our students will achieve their full potential and become productive, responsible, resilient members of the community and contributing members of society.”*

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Panetta called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

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 meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is either discussed or acted upon. In accordance with this provision of the act, the White Township Board of Education has sent notice of this meeting to the New Jersey Herald and the Express Times stating date, time, and place and posted the same in the White Township School and Municipal Building.

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**IV. ROLL CALL**

Mrs. Robyn Gardella	<i>Absent</i>	Mrs. Catherine Lensi	<i>Absent</i>	Mr. Frank Panetta	<i>Present</i>
Mr. Tim Havlusch	<i>Present</i>	Mr. Kevin Murray	<i>Present Left at 7:07pm</i>	Mrs. Natalie Pinkerton	<i>Absent</i>
Mr. George Jonkoski	<i>Present</i>	Ms. Michelle Nusser-Meany	<i>Present</i>	Mrs. Elizabeth Vesper	<i>Present</i>

Also present, Mr. William Thompson and Mrs. Lori Tirone.

## **V. PRESENTATION**

Mr. Anthony Ardito of Ardito & Company LLC presented the Annual Comprehensive Audit Report.

## **VI. CSA REPORT**

**Mr. Thompson Presented the Student of the Month for January - Olivia Madonia**

Mr. Thompson reported:

- Audit recommendations.
- Feasibility Study - A draft of the 250 page report will be reviewed by committee.
- Budget in the process of being built.
- Strategic Planning Committee meet before the Board Meeting.

## **VII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**MOTION** by Mr. Havlusch, seconded by Mr. Murray to approve Administrative Report 1, School Board Recognition 2, and Committee Assignments 3.

### **1. APPROVE SUBMISSION OF THE SSDS REPORT**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve submission of the Student Safety Data System Report for the reporting period July 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

### **2. SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION**

**WHEREAS**, The New Jersey School Boards Association has declared January 2025 to be School Board Recognition Month, a time when all residents can acknowledge the contributions made by our local school school board members; and

**WHEREAS**, The White Township Board of Education is one of 581 local school boards in New Jersey, which sets policies and oversees operations for public school districts; and

**WHEREAS**, The White Township Board of Education embraces the goal of high-quality education for all New Jersey public school students; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey's local school boards help determine the educational goals for approximately 1.4 million children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey's 5,000 local school board members, who receive no remuneration for their services, act as advocates for public school students as they work with administrators, teachers and parents for the betterment of public education; and

**WHEREAS**, School boards strive to provide the resources necessary to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs; and

**WHEREAS**, Boards of Education provide accountability to the public, they communicate the needs of the school district to the public; and, they convey to school administrators the public's expectations for the schools; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey can take pride in its schools, which rank among the nation’s best in key achievement indicators such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores, and the preparation for college through advanced placement offerings and SAT assessments;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That the White Township Board of Education, does hereby recognize the services of local school board members throughout New Jersey as we join communities statewide in observing January 2025 as **SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH**; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the White Township Board of Education urges all New Jersey citizens to work with their local boards of education and public school staff toward the advancement of our children’s education.

**3. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS BY BOARD PRESIDENT**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that White Township Board of Education establishes the following committees and the committee chairs and members appointed by the Board President:

	<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Member 2</b>	<b>Member 3</b>	<b>Member 4</b>
A. Personnel	F. Panetta	R. Gardella	T. Havlusch	K. Murray
B. Curriculum	M. Nusser-Meany	G. Jonkowski	N. Pinkerton	E. Vesper
C. Operations	R. Gardella	T. Havlusch	K. Murray	F. Panetta
D. Governance	E. Vesper	G. Jonkoski	M. Nusser-Meany	N. Pinkerton
E. Negotiations/Ad Hoc	F. Panetta	T. Havlusch	G. Jonkoski	E. Vesper
	<b>Member 1</b>	<b>Member 2</b>	<b>Member 3</b>	<b>Member 4</b>
F. Strategic Planning	R. Gardella	M. Nusser-Meany	F. Panetta	E. Vesper
G. Shared Services	R. Gardella	G. Jonkoski	K. Murray	F. Panetta
H. Sick Leave Bank	M. Nusser-Meany	F. Panetta	N. Pinkerton	

On a voice vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS - Privilege of the Floor**

President Panetta opened the public hearing for public comment. No one from the public made any comments.

**IX. MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Mr. Havlusch, seconded by Mr. Murray to approve the following meeting minutes.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Board of Education meeting, held on the dates indicated as transcribed, be approved and filed.

- December 16, 2024 - Regular Meeting Minutes
- December 16, 2024 - Executive Meeting Minutes
- January 6, 2025 - Reorganization Meeting Minutes

On a voice vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**X. PERSONNEL** - Mr. Panetta, Mrs. Robyn Gardella, Mr. Havlusch, Mr. Murray

Mr. Panetta provided a committee update.

**MOTION** by Mr. Murray, seconded by Ms. Nusser-Meany to approve Personnel item 1.

**1. Approve Leave of Absence**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve a leave of absence for Employee #594 starting February 5th through February 28th. Personal days will be used for February 5th, 6th, 7th and 10th. NJFLA will be used February 11th through February 28th.

On a roll call vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**XI. CURRICULUM** - Ms. Nusser-Meany, Mr. Jonkoski, Mrs. Pinkerton, Mrs. Vesper

Mr. Jonkoski provided a committee update.

**MOTION** by Mr. Panetta, seconded by Mr. Havlusch to approve Curriculum items 1 through 3.

**1. Approve Professional Development**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve Erika Puskas to attend a professional development opportunity offered by the New Jersey Student Council Association for NJSC Advisors on March 24, 2025. The workshop cost is \$35.00. The mileage round trip is 63.36 miles and the reimbursement is \$.70 per mile.

**2. Approve Professional Development**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve Kimberly Rosano to attend a professional development opportunity at Sussex County Community College titled. "Small Steps to Learning: Food, Fitness, Fun," on March 20, 2025. This is a free workshop. The mileage round trip is 46 miles and the reimbursement is \$.70 per mile.

**3. Approve Field Trip**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve students in Grades 4 & 5 who are involved in chorus and/or band to visit the Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown, NJ on April 10, 2025. The cost of the trip is \$9.00 per student and the cost of transportation is \$415.00.

On a roll call vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**XII. OPERATIONS** - Mrs. Gardella, Mr. Havlusch, Mr. Murray, Mr. Panetta

Mr. Panetta provided a committee update.

**MOTION** by Mr. Havlusch, seconded by Mrs. Vesper to approve Operations items 1 through 7.

**1. Acceptance of the Financial Report December 2024**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 requires the Board Secretary and the White Township Board of Education to certify that no budgetary line-item account has been over-expended and that the sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligation, and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C.6A:23A-16.10 further requires the White Township Board of Education receive and accept the monthly financial statements, the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's reports; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's reports for the month ending December 31, 2024 is presented for the Board to accept and are on file in the Office of the School Business Administrator;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the White Township Board of Education acknowledges receipt of and accepts the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's Report for the month ending December 31, 2024; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board Secretary and White Township Board of Education certify that no budgetary line-item account has been over-expended and that there are sufficient funds available to meet the district's financial obligation.

**2. Approval of Budget Transfers for December 2024**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C.6A:23A-16.10-(c)1 states that a report shall be presented to the Board showing all transfers between line-item accounts for each line-item account shown on the budget prepared in accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:22-8; and

**WHEREAS**, transfers in the report "Budget Transfers" for the time period of December 2024 were necessary to maintain the needs of the district and are on file in the Office of the School Business Administrator,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, that White Township Board of Education ratifies and approves the transfers in the report "Budget Transfers" for December in fiscal year 2024-2025, approved by the Chief School Administrator, so that no budgetary line-item account has been over-expended and that sufficient funds would be available to meet the district's financial obligations.

**3. Approval of December and January Bill Lists**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 18A:19, Expenditure of Funds; Audit and Payment of Claims, provides Boards of Education to make payments on claims for goods received and services rendered payable to the order of the person entitled to receive the amount after approval by the board; or in accordance with payrolls duly certified; or debt service or when provided by resolution approval by a person designated by the board; and

**WHEREAS**, a list of bills for the month of December 2024 and January 2025 are being presented to the board with the recommendation that they be ratified, approved and paid; and

**WHEREAS**, each claim or demand has been fully itemized, verified and audited as required by law in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the White Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, ratifies and approves the list of bills for payment in the sum of \$503,071.50 for December 2024 and \$775,967.42 for January 2025; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the list of bills is on file in the Office of the School Business Administrator, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the White Township Board of Education authorizes the School Business Administrator to pay bills if it is determined that a need arises prior to the next board meeting.

#### **4. Acceptance of the 2024 Audit, Approval of the 2024 Fiscal Year End Corrective Action Plan**

**WHEREAS**, the White Township Board of Education (the Board) caused an annual audit of the district's accounts and financial transactions to be conducted by a public school accountant for the 2023-2024 fiscal year pursuant to NJSA 18A:23; and

**WHEREAS**, said "Annual Comprehensive Financial Report" (ACFR) and "Auditor's Management Report" (AMR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, are required to be filed with the Office of the Commissioner, pursuant to NJSA 18A:23-3; and

**WHEREAS**, a presentation of the audit with discussion of the district's fiscal status, any audit findings and recommendations was made to the Board and public by Anthony Ardito of Ardito and Company LLC audit firm at the board meeting of January 27, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, the presentation allowed for a public discussion of the audit results including the district's overall financial position, reserved, unreserved and excess surplus fund balances, funding of worker's compensation and compensated absences, and food services' operations; and

**WHEREAS**, the presentation further allowed for a public discussion of the audit results including any audit findings and recommendations, repeat recommendation, significant deficiency, material deficiency, and Corrective Action Plan needed; and

**WHEREAS**, the synopsis of the ACFR was available to the public at the January 27, 2025 board meeting with copies of the synopsis available at the offices of the School Business Administrator upon request; and

**WHEREAS**, a Corrective Action Plan has been drafted and disseminated to the board and appropriate parties by the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary addressing each of the two (2) audit recommendations presented in the AMR in response to their recommendations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Corrective Actions Plan were provided prior to the board meeting to the Finance Committee for their review, comments and support and providing such support on the action within the Corrective Action Plan;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the White Township Board of Education accepts the June 30, 2024 audit and approves the Corrective Action Plan for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board hereby incorporates the Synopsis of the Audit with each specific audit recommendation and the resulting Corrective Action Plan as part of the

minutes of this meeting of January 27, 2025, and noting any public discussion of same for the minutes; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be directed to forward to the Executive County Superintendent the minutes together with necessary copies of the ACFR, Synopsis, Corrective Action Plan, and certified board minutes adopting the above items or as stated in the Department of Education's requirements; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, in accordance with the directive from the Department of Education, listed below are the specific board action and the disposition of each audit recommendation:

**Recommendation 2024-001**

The district should document and implement internal controls to monitor the preparation of asset and liability reconciliations to ensure accounts are reconciled to the underlying account detail on a monthly basis.

**Disposition**

The School Business Administrator will document and implement internal controls sufficient to monitor the preparation of general ledger reconciliations, ensuring accounts are properly reconciled to the underlying account detail.

**Recommendation 2024-002**

Expenditures which exceed the bid or quote threshold must be made in accordance with the requirements of the Public School Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 18A:18A et seq.) and documentation must be maintained substantiating the bid process.

**Disposition**

The district understands the Public School Contract Law and will document and maintain documentation of the bidding process.

**5. Waiver of Requirements for Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI)**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.3(b), the White Township Board of Education approves the filing of a waiver of participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) for the 2025-2026 school year, due to the district projecting an enrollment of less than 40 Medicaid eligible students per the October 15, 2024 ASSA report.

**6. Approve the Use of Facilities**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the use of the cafeteria facilities to the PTO for the PTO Someone Special Dance on Friday, February 7th, 2025.

**7. Approve the Use of Facilities**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the use of the baseball field to the Warren County Little League for t-ball from April 1, 2025 through June 20, 2025.

On a roll call vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**XIII. GOVERNANCE** - Mrs. Vesper, Mr. Jonkoski, Ms. Nusser-Meany, Mrs. Pinkerton

Mrs. Vesper provided a committee update.

**MOTION** by Ms. Nusser-Meany, seconded by Mr. Havlusch to approve Policy item 1.

**1. Approve First Reading**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve First Reading on the following Policy and Regulation Updates:

- P 2365 Acceptable Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) (NEW)
- P 5111 Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students (M) (Revised)
- P 5512 Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (M) (Revised)
- P 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices (Revised)
- R 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices (Revised)
- P 5533 Student Smoking (M) (Revised)
- R 5533 Student Smoking (Revised)
- P 5701 Academic Integrity (Revised)
- P 5710 Student Grievance (Revised)
- P 7441 Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings and On School Grounds (M) (Revised)
- R 7441 Electronic Surveillance In School Buildings and On School Grounds (M) (Revised)
- P 8500 Food Services (M) (Revised)
- P 9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies (M) (Revised)
- R 9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies (M) (Revised)

On a roll call vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**XIV. BHS BOARD MEMBER UPDATE** - Mrs. Gardella

Mr. Panetta read the BHS update from Mrs. Gardella.

- BHS had a BOE meeting on Jan 22.
- They are in search of a Special Education Teacher for a medical leave replacement.
- Natalie Sroka, White Township student honored with 1000 points in her basketball career, achieved in her 3rd game of her junior year!
- Coach John O'Neil honored with 200th win in his basketball coaching career.
- Open seat on the BHS board does have an applicant.
- Board received Ethics training by Kelly from Warren County School Boards.

**XV. ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF HIB INCIDENTS**

**MOTION** by Mr. Havlusch, seconded by Mr. Panetta to acknowledge receipt of no HIB investigations.



On a roll call vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

#### **XVI. OLD BUSINESS**

No old business.

#### **XVII. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Thompson informed the Board of the univent pipe breaking in the music room.

#### **XVIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS - Privilege of the Floor**

President Panetta opened the public hearing for public comment. No one from the public made any comments.

#### **XIX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION** by Mr. Havlusch, seconded by Mr. Panetta for the Board to enter into Executive Session at 7:25 p.m.

On a voice vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act authorizes a public body to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which the Board of Education discusses topics falling within certain specified exceptions to the requirement for public meetings;(N.J.S.A. 10:4-13) and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education wishes to discuss matters that fall within statutory exceptions to open public meetings

**BE IT RESOLVED** pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act(N.J.S.A. 10:4-12), that the Board adjourn from public session and enter into executive session at this time to discuss confidential matters pertaining to legal matters and personnel.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the matters discussed in executive session should be made public as soon as the need for confidentiality no longer exists, but it is not known at this time when that may be. The Board expects to reconvene into public session in approximately 30 minutes. Action may be taken.

**BE IT RESOLVED** to return to Open Public Session at 7:57 p.m.

**MOTION** by Mr. Panetta, seconded by Mrs. Vesper for the Board to reconvene the public session.

On a voice vote, all present were in favor. The motion passed.

**XX. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN** by Mr. Havlusch, seconded by Mr. Panetta.

On a voice vote, all present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori A. Tirone  
Board Secretary