

HOPATCONG BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 25, 2023

6:00 pm. Open the Meeting and enter Executive Session in the Administration Building: Room 21

Public Portion will begin at 7:00 p.m in the Boardroom

2 Windsor Avenue, Hopatcong, NJ 07843

CALL TO ORDER

Time: 6:00 pm

1. FLAG SALUTE

2. OPENING STATEMENT

In accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, this public body, the Hopatcong Board of Education hereby announces that The New Jersey Herald and the Daily Record have been notified by email that this Board of Education Regular Meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m following the Executive Session (in room 21) which starts at 6:00 p.m. on September 25, 2023 at the Hopatcong Board of Education, Board meeting room in the Administration Building.

3. ROLL CALL

Present	Scott Francis	Absent	Nicole Falconi-Shubert	Absent	Philip DiStefano
Present	Joseph Falconi	Absent	Jayson Cittrich	Present	Jayna Gulan
Absent	Jennifer Johnson	Present	Jackie Turkington	Present	Jennifer Polowchena

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion will be made that the Hopatcong Board of Education will enter Executive Session in room 21 to discuss personnel and attorney/client privilege, which are exempt from public participation pursuant to New Jersey Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, Open Public Meetings Act. Any discussions held by the Board which need not remain confidential will be made public when appropriate. Minutes of the Executive Session will not be disclosed until the need for confidentiality no longer exists. The Board will reconvene in public session at 7:00 p.m. following the executive session.

Motion to enter executive session:

(ACTION) Motion by Turkington. seconded by Polowchena

Yes	Scott Francis	Absent	Nicole Falconi-Shubert	Absent	Philip DiStefano
Yes	Joseph Falconi	Absent	Jayson Cittrich	Yes	Jayna Gulan
Yes	Jennifer Johnson	Yes	Jackie Turkington	Yes	Jennifer Polowchena

5. RECONVENE

Motion to Reconvene

(ACTION) Motion by Falconi seconded by Johnson

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Yes	Scott Francis	Absent	Nicole Falconi-Shubert	Absent	Philip DiStefano
No	Joseph Falconi	Absent	Jayson Cittrich	Yes	Jayna Gulan
No	Jennifer Johnson	Yes	Jackie Turkington	Yes	Jennifer Polowchena

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of the following meetings, as reported by the Board Secretary reviewed by the Board President and members of the Board:

- a. August 21, 2023 - Special Meeting
- b. August 28, 2023 - Executive Meeting
- c. August 28, 2023 – Regular Meeting

Motion to approve 6a-6c:

(ACTION) Motion by Turkington seconded by Polowchena

Yes	Scott Francis	Absent	Nicole Falconi-Shubert	Absent	Philip DiStefano
Yes	Joseph Falconi	Absent	Jayson Cittrich	Yes	Jayna Gulan
Yes	*Jennifer Johnson	Yes	Jackie Turkington	Yes	Jennifer Polowchena

* Abstain on item b & c

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND HIB REPORT

a. Superintendent's Report – **Mr. Arthur DiBenedetto, Interim Superintendent of Schools**

- 1. Review of Agenda
- 2. Referendum polls are open from 6am to 8pm voting sites are on the district website and the borough website
- 3. Enrollment is on the rise up almost 20 students over last year
- 4. HIT Grant - applied for a state grant in the amount of \$76,000 for high impact tutoring at the upper elementary, middle and high school levels.
- 5. Student Reps introduced our student representatives for the 23-24 school year. Both are seniors who are actively involved in the high school and community.
- 6. Mrs. Martinez - Congratulations to College Board recognition award winners (insert student names), American Legion Boys State participant (insert name).

b. Whereas there have been no HIBs reported for the month of September 2023, acceptance of the report at the September 25, 2023 board meeting to indicate no findings.

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Motion to approve 7-9:

((ACTION)Motion by Falconi. Seconded by Johnson

Yes	Scott Francis	Absent	Nicole Falconi-Shubert	Absent	Philip DiStefano
No	Joseph Falconi	Absent	Jayson Cittrich	Yes	Jayna Gulan
No	Jennifer Johnson	Yes	Jackie Turkington	Yes	Jennifer Polowchena

8. PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES

9. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL DISCUSSION

10. FINANCE

a. It is recommended by the Superintendent that bills for the General Fund and Special Revenues (Grants) account, August 28, 2023 through September 25, 2023 be approved in the following amounts:

General Fund and Special Revenue (Grants) account - \$1,266,753.45
Cafeteria account - \$ 14,087.96

b. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the board approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of August 2023.

c. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the board approve the Board Secretary's Report for the month of August 2023.

d. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the board approve the Transfer Report for the month of August 2023.

e. Motion to approve the certification by the Board Secretary that the Account Balance Report, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9, as of June 30, 2023, no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures, which in total exceed the line item appropriation in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a).

f. Motion to certify, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c), as of June 30, 2023, after review of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's Monthly Financial Reports and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(b), and sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

g. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the board approve the acceptance of \$4,000 in credit for the successful completion of the requirements to qualify for the 2022/2023 Tier 1 Safety Incentive Program Award.

h. QUASI ENTITY RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the School Alliance Insurance Fund membership allows additional insured status for Booster Clubs, Foundations and other affiliated entities, and

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WHEREAS, upon completion of the Quasi Entity General Application, and a formal Hopatcong Board of Education resolution recognizing the Entity as an additional insured receiving quasi entity status,

THEREFORE, be it resolved, the Hopatcong Board of Education formally recognizes the following, as Quasi Entities of the Hopatcong Board of Education:

- Hopatcong Drama Club
- Hopatcong High School Booster Club
- Hopatcong Music Boosters

i. It is recommended by the superintendent and the Operations Committee that the board of education approve emergency contracts for water damage remediation at the high school with ServPro. The cost of these repairs will be covered by the district insurance carrier subject to our normal deductible.

j. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the board approve the acceptance of the following donation checks to the Dale Salomome Memorial Scholarship fund:

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DALE SOLOMONE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND			
DATE	CK#	AMOUNT	DONATOR INFO
9/8/2023	242	\$250.00	Janet J Rasmussen, 3114 Lakeview Lane, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
9/8/2023	117	\$100.00	Richard & Patricia Hill, 887 Live Oak Trl NE Cleveland, TN 37323
9/8/2023	462	\$200.00	Ginger & Kevin Lein, 24 Anthony Drive Madison, NJ 07940-1523
9/8/2023	849	\$100.00	Diane Ottman, 9 Vale Way Hopatcong, NJ 07843
9/8/2023	517	\$150.00	JJ Pierson Esq., 1583 Saucon Valley Rd Bethlehem, PA 18015-5259
9/8/2023	240	\$50.00	William & Janice McDaniel 8 Christopher Ct Flanders, NJ 07836-4208
9/8/2023	1030	\$100.00	Bill Levy, 7331 Foxfield Dr Fort Wayne, IN 46835
9/8/2023	1125	\$100.00	Dan Dixon & Robert Ivancic 267 Rt 117 Jericho, VT 05465
9/8/2023	6140	\$25.00	Domenic Forcella 25 Hough St Plainville, CT 06062-2216
9/8/2023	1909	\$100.00	Robert A Conte PO Box 723 New Vernon, NJ 07976
9/8/2023	1376	\$100.00	Virginia Hendee & Joseph Huetz PO Box 116 Mt Tabor, NJ 07878
9/8/2023	3459	\$100.00	Carol Terranova, 156 Rosedale Ave Madison, NJ 07940-1755
9/8/2023	3897	\$100.00	George Malanga & Family, 5 Pickerel Point Dr. Hopatcong, NJ 07843
9/8/2023	4220	\$200.00	Janet & Salvatore Internicola 18 Brendan Drive Flanders, NJ 07836-9749
9/8/2023	6845	\$75.00	Martin & Joyce Goldin, 466 1st St Brooklyn, NY 11215
9/8/2023	9605	\$50.00	Elaine Thomas, 8 Dogwood Lane Succasunna, NJ 07876

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9/8/2023	9751	\$18.00	Marblehead Antiques, 118 Pleasant St Marblehead, MA 01945-2344
9/8/2023	164	\$500.00	Jessalyn & Jared Coffin, 11 Forge Rd Hewitt, NJ 07421-3170
9/8/2023	1227	\$25.00	Brian & Tara Lauterbach, 44 Kevin Dr Flanders, NJ 07836
9/8/2023	458	\$250.00	Joseph & Amy Tone, 81 Kevin Drive Flanders, NJ 07836
		\$2,593.00	

- k. It is recommended by the superintendent and the Operations Committee of the board that the following items are to be disposed of as they have outlived their useful lifespan:

ASSET TAG	DESCRIPTION
005659	Fellowes Shredder
00383/002144	One man lift
003596	scoreboard table
006300	piano
003693	electric piano
003685	portable band conductor stand
003489	large format printer
003740	large format printer
003217	Smartboard

- l. It is recommended by the Superintendent and the Operations Committee that the Board of Education terminate the agreement with Windstream for material breach of contract effective September 29, 2023.
- m. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Board of Education enter into a new three-year telecommunications contract with Planet Networks effective September 30, 2023, at a monthly rate of \$699.00 per the attached agreement.

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11. PERSONNEL

Approval of the following personnel items, **11a – 11i**, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools and the Student Achievement Committee of the Board:

- a. Approval to accept the resignation, with regret of **Carmen Hernandez** from her position as Paraprofessional effective August 31, 2023.
- b. Approval to rescind the employment of **Ashely Labar** from her position as Paraprofessional effective August 31, 2023.
- c. Approval of **Kelcey Russo** to work as the High School Math Temporary Assistance Position, for the purpose of lesson planning and grading at a rate of \$35 per hour for 1-2 hours per week/per class period as needed.
- d. Approval of the following staff for the **Extra Duty/Extra Pay Positions** for the 2023 – 2024 school year in the Hopatcong School District:

Name	Nature of Action	Duty/Position	Salary*
Jennifer Valenti	Appoint	PEA Facilitator	\$6,367 NJDOE Funding

- e. Approval of the following **Coach/Advisor Positions** for the 2023-2024 school year:

Name	Nature of Action	Position	Class	Level	Salary
Eric Fajerman	Appoint	Head Wrestling Coach	A	4	\$7,712
Amie Robertson	Appoint	Asst. Fall Cheerleading Coach	B	1	\$2,093
Isabel Yarosz	Appoint	Asst Competition Cheer Coach	B	1	\$2,093
Alexa McLean	Appoint	Volunteer Boys Soccer Coach	-	-	Volunteer
Michele Culcasi	Appoint	CTE Skills USA Programs - Fall	C	4	\$2,858
Michele Culcasi	Appoint	CTE Skills USA Programs - Spring	C	4	\$2,858
Heather Bivone	Appoint	CTE Skills USA Programs - Fall	C	2	\$1818
Heather Bivone	Appoint	CTE Skills USA Programs - Spring	C	2	\$1818
Christine Fetcho Gannon	Appoint	Competition Cheer Head Coach Winter	B	1	\$3,187

- f. Approval of the following salary guide movements*

Name	Current Degree Status	Degree Change	Effective Date
James McDonald	MA+30	MA+45	9/1/2023
Dominic Schiavone	MA+15	MA+30	9/1/2023

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***Approval of the listed staff members to move up on the HEA guide due to increased education credentials**

- g. Approval of the following staff to take and receive tuition reimbursements*, as per contract, upon successful completion of the course and submission of paperwork:

Course Approval /Reimbursement Approval

Name	Course Title	Course Number	Credits	Cost
James McDonald	eLearning Made Easier: Creating Dynamic Learning Opportunities	EDUC 718P	3	\$405
Karen Cubberly	Learning & Teaching Biology: Chemistry of Life	BIOL6841	3	\$432
Norm Sutton	Learning Experience Design Foundations I	D291	3	\$1,333.32
	Learning Experience Design Foundations II	D292	3	\$1,333.32
	Assessment and Learning Analytics	D293	3	\$1,333.32
Robert Wade	ABA 609 Behavior Change Systems	ABA 609	3	\$1,333.32
	ABA603: Research Methods and Experimental Design	ABA 603	3	\$1,333.32

****The maximum rate of reimbursement per credit for the 23-24 school year is \$444.44.***

- h. It is recommended by the Superintendent and the Operations Committee that the Board approve the Merit Goals for Assistant Superintendent for Business, Jeffrey Hallenbeck. The goals have been reviewed and approved by Dr. Gayle Carrick, Executive County Superintendent of Schools.

- i. Approval of the following substitutes for the Hopatcong School District:
- i. Leidy Johanna Yepes Patino, Substitute Paraprofessional
 - ii. Kimberly McLane, Substitute Paraprofessional
 - iii. Christy Brennan, Substitute Teacher
 - iv. Shiela Pernito, Substitute Paraprofessional (pending Criminal History check)

12. TRAVEL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Resolved, that the Hopatcong Board of Education approve travel costs as related in this resolution which are educationally necessary and fiscally prudent and are related to and within the scope of the employee's current responsibilities and promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district. The reimbursement listed in this resolution are in compliance with the state travel reimbursement guidelines as established by the Department of Treasury and Board of Education policy in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1. seq

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Approval of the following staff to attend Professional Development/Conference*

Name	Title	Cost	Date
Stephanie Martinez	NJPSA Council and Board Meeting	\$0+mileage	9/22/23
Tanya Pagano	Building Healthy Learners: Information, Activities & Lessons	\$0	10/20/23
Austin Brown	Deep Learning & Effective Cross Content Application & Literacy	\$745	9/9/2023-12/23/23
	Educational Equity and Cultural Diversity	\$558	9/9/2023-12/23/23
Art DiBenedetto	NJSBA Workshop 2023	Mileage, tolls parking, meals \$436.32	10/23/2023 - 10/25/2023
Jeff Hallenbeck	NJSBA Workshop 2023	Mileage, tolls parking, meals \$436.32	10/23/2023 - 10/25/2023

****Cost will be reimbursed upon completion of attendance and all documentation has been provided.***

13. POLICY & REGULATIONS

Approval of item 13a, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools and the Student Achievement and Operations Committees of the Board:

a. Approval of modifications and additions to the policies and regulations of the Hopatcong Board of Education in accordance with statutory and regulatory changes for approval, as revised, for **FIRST READING:**

Policy/Regulation #	Title
P & R 1642.01	SICK LEAVE
P & R 2419	SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS (M)
R 5166	CELL PHONES

14. STUDENTS AND SERVICES

Approval of the following items, 14a-14e as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools and Student Achievement Committee of the Board:

- a. Approval for 5 hours of home instruction services per week for student no. 12031. Instruction will be provided by Hopatcong certificated staff at the Board approved rate of \$40.00 per hour beginning September 11, 2023 until approximately November 1, 2023.
- b. Approval for 5 hours of home instruction services per week for student no. 13760. Instruction will be provided by Hopatcong certificated staff at the Board approved rate of \$40.00 per hour beginning September 11, 2023 until approximately January 1, 2024.

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- c. Approval for educational instruction services for student no. 13617 for five hours per week beginning September 7, 2023. Instruction will be provided by Saint Clare's Hospital at a rate of \$55.00 per hour.
- d. Approval for 2 1/2 hours of home instruction services per week for student no. 15059. Instruction will be provided by Hopatcong certificated staff at the rate of \$40.00 per hour effective 9/11/23 for approximately 6 weeks.
- e. Approval of educational instruction services for student no. 12710, a tenth grade Hopatcong High School student. Tutoring services are arranged through Learnwell Education at the rate of \$48.25 per hour for a maximum of ten hours per week.
- f. Approval of the following field trip requests:

School	Date	Trip
HHS	10/12/23	Duke Farms
Tulsa	10/12/23	Waterloo

15. RESOLUTIONS

- a. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Board of Education approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the Sussex County Community College for the 23-24 school year for the Concurrent Enrollment Program.
- b. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Board of Education approve final summer hours compilation of staff as follows. Kurt Zimmerman, 10 hours, Amy Landrud (as per Article VIII of HEA contract) 12 hours,
- c. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Hopatcong Board of Education approve the Nicole Roman-Gerena to re-type curriculum for \$25/an hour up to \$1000 total.
- d. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Board of Education approve sale of the former garage, 486 River Styx Rd. to Mr. Jeffrey Michalski LLC, 117 West End Avenue, Hopatcong for the amount of \$220,000. Closing to be set as soon as possible.

16. SUSSEX COUNTY REGIONAL COOPERATIVE

- a. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **approval of bills** for the Sussex County Regional Cooperative Operating account for August 28, 2023 through September 25, 2023 in the amount of \$133,555.40 for Regular bills and \$3,347,326.40 for Bus Contractors.
- b. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the approval to **rescind the offer of employment** to **Andrea Marcinek**, Bus Aide, for the 2023-2024 school year.
- c. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative/Hopatcong Board of Education, approve the following resolution to disqualify Millennium as a bidder for a period of 5 years:

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WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4 allows the Hopatcong Board of Education ("Board") to disqualify a bidder who would otherwise be determined to be the lowest responsible bidder, if the Board finds that it has had prior negative experience with the bidder within the past 10 years; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4 defines prior negative experience as, among other things, the bidder defaulting on a contract that required the Board to utilize the services of another contractor to perform the services or to complete the contract; and

WHEREAS, the Board, through the Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative ("SCRTC"), contracted with Millennium to provide transportation services during the 2022-2023 school year; and

WHEREAS, Millennium defaulted on the contract with the Board, leading to the Board terminating the contract and contracting with other contractors to complete the services; and

WHEREAS, the Board provided Millennium with written notice that: (1) the Board is considering disqualifying Millennium; (2) the reasons for disqualification; and (3) that Millennium has the right to a hearing before the Board; and

WHEREAS, upon review of the reasons for the disqualification outlined in the written notice provided to Millennium, the Board finds that it is in the best interest of the Hopatcong School District and SCRTC to disqualify Millennium from being awarded contracts with the Board or SCRTC for a period of five years; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, after due consideration and for the reasons set forth above, the Board finds that Millennium is hereby disqualified from being awarded contracts with the Board or SCRTC for a period of five years pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4.

d. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **approval to renew the Agreement with the Town of Newton**, a municipal corporation of the State of New Jersey, located at 39 Trinity Street, Newton, New Jersey, to purchase gas and fuel from the fuel tanks located at the Road Department Garage on Moran Street in the Town of Newton. The term of the Agreement shall be for three (3) years beginning on September 1, 2023 and terminating on August 31, 2026.

e. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation **recommend the approval of registration** for Janine Byrnes and Chris Verdi at the School Boards Workshop October 23 – 26, 2023 in Atlantic City, NJ for a total cost of \$1,100.00.

f. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **approval of the following new member district** for the 2023-2024 school year:

Great Meadows

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g.

1. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **acceptance** of student transportation **quotations for Special Education School Year Routes** for the 2023-2024 School Year as listed on Exhibit A.

2. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **award** of student transportation **quotations for Special Education School Year Routes** to the lowest, responsible and responsive bus contractor companies for the 2023-2024 School Year as listed on Exhibit A.

3. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **renewal of 2022-2023 School Year Routes for the 2023 – 2024 School Year** at State issued CPI increase of 5.86% or less as listed on Exhibit A.

4. The Superintendent and the Director of **Transportation recommend the acceptance of bids submitted from the August 8, 2023 Bid #2023-24-04** for the 2023-2024 School Year as listed on Exhibit A

5. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **award of bids submitted from the August 8, 2023 Bid #2023-24-04** to the lowest, responsible and responsive bus contractor company for the 2023-2024 School Year as listed on Exhibit A.

6. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **approval of Parent route Contracts** for the 2023-2024 School Year as listed on Exhibit A.

7. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **acceptance** of student transportation **quotations for Athletic/Class/Field Trips** for the 2023-2024 School Year as listed on Exhibit A.

8. The Superintendent and the Director of Transportation recommend the **award** of student transportation **contracts for quoted Athletic/Class/Field Trips** to the lowest, responsible and responsive bus contractor companies for the 2023-2024 School Year as listed on Exhibit A.

ADDENDUM

- a. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Hopatcong Board of Education approve the following items, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools:
1. Approval of 5 hours of home instruction per week for student no. 13507 effective date is September 21, 2023 until approximately Jan. 2024. \$40 per hour contracted rate.

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2. Approval of 1.25 hours of home instruction per week for student 13271 effective Sept. 21, 2023 to Oct. 26, 2023. \$40 per hour contracted rate.

b. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Hopatcong Board of Education approve the following field trips:

1. Youth Empowerment Summit - Oct. 18, 2023 - Sussex County Technical School
2. Al Cerulo - Middle School Music Performance William Paterson Univ. - December 8, 2023
3. Tranquility Farms - Community Based Instruction - Oct. 24, 2023 MD Class ERI class Tulsa Trail
4. Fairview Lake YMCA - Suicide Prevention Summit - Sept. 26, 2023, HHS

c. It is recommended by the Superintendent and Director of Special Services that the Board of Education approve a request for a Group Size Waiver for the Tulsa Trail School 3rd grade Pull-Out Resource Room, Mrs, Neu.

d. It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the following resignations with regret and a thank you for excellent service:

1. Paula Engber, ParaProfessional Durban Ave. (retirement)
2. Carolyn Segura, Para Profesional Tulsa Trail.

e. It is recommended by the Superintendent that the Board of Education approve Shiela Pernito as a substitute ParaProfessional.

Motion to approve item 10a through addendum e:

(ACTION) Motion by Francis. seconded by Falconi

Yes	Scott Francis	Absent	Nicole Falconi-Shubert	Absent	Philip DiStefano
Yes	Joseph Falconi	Absent	Jayson Cittrich	Yes	Jayna Gulan
Yes	*Jennifer Johnson	Yes	Jackie Turkington	Yes	Jennifer Polowchena

* Abstain on items 13 & 15c

17. BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER COMMENTS

18. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn:

(ACTION) Motion by Gulan seconded by Johnson

All in favor Yes. Time: 7:34 pm

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Hallenbeck". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jeffrey Hallenbeck, Board Secretary