

**WORK SESSION/BUSINESS MEETING OF APRIL 2, 2020
RIDGEFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT
555 CHESTNUT STREET, RIDGEFIELD, NJ 07657**

A Work Session Business Meeting of the Ridgefield Board of Education will be held on April 2, 2020. This meeting was held remotely as per guidelines to the public posted on the Ridgefield School District’s website. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Michael Jacobs.

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 5:02 p.m. the meeting was called to order.

II. FLAG SALUTE

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

II. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

“The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advanced 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 Ridgefield Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted at the Administration Building, and having notified The Record, The Star Ledger and the Ridgefield Borough Clerk”.

IV. ROLL CALL

Mr. Acosta	Absent
Mr. Grippa	Arrived at 5:10 p.m.
Mrs. Inan	Present
Mr. Morilla	Absent
Mrs. Narvaez	Present
Mr. Pych	Present
Mr. Jacobs	Present

There being four members present, a quorum was declared.

Also present were:

Rory McCourt – Superintendent of Schools

Julyana Ortiz – Business Administrator/Board Secretary

V. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT, PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS -

1. Mr. McCourt provided an update to the Board of Education and public on the District’s extended closure due to the Governor’s Order. Mr. McCourt thanked the board, administration, staff, students and parents for their flexibility, support and patience as the district attempts to provide daily remote learning to students on very short notice. Mr. McCourt also thanked Mr. Nikas, Mr. Valdez from the Technology Department and Mrs. Doviak, Supervisor of Special Projects for their help in coordinating and in some cases delivering chrome books to families in need. Mr. McCourt stated that the Governor has closed schools in New Jersey indefinitely at this time. Mr. McCourt explained why the meeting was starting at 5:00 p.m. was due to the 8:00 p.m. mandated curfew. Mr. McCourt also explained to the public how they could make any comments if they wish.

VI. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS -

- A. Student Liaison – Fatima Hijaza – **N/R**
- B. Finance Committee – Andrew Grippa (Chairperson), Michael Jacobs, Javier Acosta – **N/R**
- C. Curriculum Committee – Claudia Narvaez (Chairperson), Michael Jacobs, Maryam Juliet Inan – **N/R**
- D. Operations Committee – William Pych (Chairperson), Michael Jacobs, Andrew Grippa – **N/R**
- E. Personnel Committee – Ralph Morilla (Chairperson), William Pych, Maryam Juliet Inan – **N/R**
- F. Policy Committee – Ralph Morilla (Chairperson), Michael Jacobs, Claudia Narvaez – **N/R**
- G. NJSBA/Legislative Delegate – Claudia Narvaez - Alternates: Michael Jacobs – **N/R**

VII. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION -

VIII. Motion to move into PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS Session of the Meeting (Resolutions and Discussion Items Only).

Statements made by individual participants are limited to a duration of five (5) minutes unless otherwise announced at the beginning of the discussion. 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 to the microphone, identify themselves by name and address, and to limit their comments to items listed on the agenda. The Board may or may not respond to issues raised by members of the public. All comments will be considered and a response will be forthcoming if and when appropriate. The Board asks all members of the public to be courteous and mindful of the rights of other individuals when speaking. Specifically, the Board discourages comments regarding students and employees and will not respond to such comments. Please note that after the public discussion is closed by the President, no other questions or comments from the audience will be permitted until the “Questions and Comments from the Audience on Any Topic of Concern” at the end of the agenda. At that time, questions do not have to be confined to agenda items.

Motion made by Mr. Pych, seconded by Mrs. Inan.
Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present.

Mr. McCourt confirmed that there were no public comments/questions.

IX. Motion to close PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS Session of the Meeting.

Motion made by Mrs. Inan, seconded by Mrs. Narvaez.
Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present

X. BOARD COMMENTS ON RESOLUTIONS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS ONLY.

Mr. Jacobs spoke about Resolution #7 Resolution Opposing Delay In Transmission of Quarterly Tax Revenue to School District. Mr. Jacobs stated that the New Jersey State Legislator passed Bill 3902

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unanimously. This bill has to do with the Corona Virus 19. Mr. Jacobs stated that he reached out to NJSBA for some guidance. Mr. Jacobs stated this bill as currently written which is designated to ease the financial burden on municipality by giving grace periods for the receipt of property taxes. New Jersey public schools are highly dependent on property tax revenue to support education programs. On average property taxes constitute 60% of public school revenue. A delay in payment would result in a financial crisis for school districts, seriously disrupting the educational process and bring it to a halt. Mr. Jacobs stated once he was aware of this bill, he reached out to the Superintendent and the Board to discuss the possible ramifications of this. Mr. Jacobs thanked the Board for taking up this resolution tonight in opposition of the bill as many school districts through the state will be doing. Mr. Jacobs also thanked Darla Ferdinand, President of the local NJEA Chapter for reaching out to the state NJEA. They are big stack holders as well and are in total opposition. Mr. Jacobs state lastly this is not a law yet, it must pass New Jersey Senate and there is nothing on the calendar as of now.

Mr. McCourt thanked Mrs. Mary Ellen Paradiso for her services as speech/language specialist for the district who is retiring and wished her the best and welcomed Mr. Daniel Gonzalez for joining the district as Magnet School Secretary at Slocum Skewes School.

Mrs. Ortiz stated that Resolution #14 – Approval of Unpaid Work Days for Almira Olazabal but the body says Alyssa Faris but it should say Almira Olazabal and the minutes will reflect this change.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Ortiz pointed out that in the March 12, 2020 minutes that the board is approving tonight, Resolution #15 – Approval of the 2020-21 Preliminary Budget – Use of Banked Cap the details now says it will be used to purchase the textbooks for the Bergen County Community College program in the amount of \$3,175 because we are required to put the details in the resolution.

XII. RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION

1. CONSENT RESOLUTION – Roll Call

Motion to approve the following consent items 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17 and 18:

Motion made by Mr. Pych, seconded by Mrs. Inan.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Acosta	Absent
Mr. Grippa	Aye except Recuse #10
Mrs. Inan	Aye
Mr. Morilla	Absent
Mrs. Narvaez	Aye
Mr. Pych	Aye
Mr. Jacobs	Aye

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FINANCE – (Items 2-7)

2. MINUTES – Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the minutes of the March 12, 2020 Work Session/Business Meeting and Executive Session (**REF#0402-01**):

3. BILL LIST – Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the bill list from the month of March 2020 (**REF#0402-02**):

March 26, 2020 Vendor Batch 1	\$ 209,589.71
March 2020 Payroll	\$2,519,636.69
March 2020 Benefits	\$ 466,603.69

4. ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FROM RETRO 1951 – Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education accepts a donation from the Retro 1951 of a package of 25 pens and 3 pencils for Serendipity at RMHS.

5. APPROVAL OF TUITION CONTRACTS FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR BETWEEN THE RIDGEFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE FOLLOWING SENDING DISTRICTS – Consent

BE IT RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the tuition contracts for the 2019-2020 academic year between the Ridgefield Board of Education, receiving district, and the sending districts as follows:

<u>District</u>	<u>SID</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Edgewater	1086312952	\$ 26,427.40
Hasbrouck Heights	4786192116	\$ 33,106.00
Lodi	3853949435	\$ 28,460.00
Teaneck	7385883246	\$ 18,617.33
Tenafly	2012002483	\$ 16,823.00
Weehawken	1176023765	\$ 24,591.84
Weehawken	3562663162	\$ 37,864.43
Weehawken	5063636524	\$ 16,343.36
Weehawken	4858970836	\$ 32,525.60
Weehawken	8677051173	\$ 14,968.70

6. AUTHORIZATION OF AUDIT AND PAYMENT APPROVAL– Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the Superintendent of Schools to audit and approve payments prior to presentation to the Ridgefield Board of Education through June 30, 2020, as needed. Any such approval shall be presented to the Board for ratification at their next meeting, as per Title 18A:19-4.1.

7. RESOLUTION OPPOSING DELAY IN TRANSMISSION OF QUARTERLY TAX REVENUE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS-Consent

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 3902, currently pending in the State Legislature, would authorize the Department of Community Affairs to permit municipalities to delay the monthly transmission of property tax revenues to school districts during gubernatorial-declared emergencies; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's public schools are highly dependent on property tax revenue to support education programs; and

WHEREAS, on average, local property taxes constitute close to 60% of public school revenue, with the percentage even greater in a significant number of districts; and

WHEREAS, a delay in payments from municipalities would result in a financial crisis for school districts, seriously disrupting the educational process—and bringing it to a halt; and

WHEREAS, although public school buildings are closed during the current health emergency, the education of our students is taking place through remote learning and home instruction; and

WHEREAS, continued timely transmission of school property taxes is critical for the education process to continue without interruption; and

WHEREAS, even though municipalities are designated as the authorities to collect property taxes, these taxes are levied for specific purposes—e.g., municipal, school, county, fire district— and these obligations must continue to be met; and

WHEREAS, as currently written, A-3902, which is intended to ease a financial burden on municipalities, would place a severe strain on school districts and the students and families that They serve; and

WHEREAS, the Ridgefield Board of Education recognizes the impact of the current public health emergency on the state and local governments, as well as local school districts, but believes this legislation would worsen the situation for our communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Ridgefield Board of Education urges the State Senate and the Governor to oppose A-3902; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be delivered to Governor Phil Murphy, State Senate

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President Stephen M. Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin; and the 36th Legislative District’s representatives in the state Senate and General Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

STUDENT SERVICES – (Item 8)

8. APPROVAL OF CLASS TRIPS - Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the following class trips for the 2019-2020 school year:

Teacher Name	Location	Purpose	Date	School	Learning Center	General Ed.	# of Students Attending
Amy Oliff Teresa Petrov	Bergen County Zoo	Animal Habitats and animal adaptations	5/18/20	SS		X	15

CURRICULUM – (Item 9)

9. APPROVAL OF WORKSHOP EXPENDITURES – Consent-

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the following workshop participation and expenditures:

Name	Workshop	Location	Date	Fee
Oliver Islambouli	NJSELA Spring Roundtable	Monroe	5/8/20	\$35.00

OPERATIONS – (Items –10-11)

10. APPROVAL SECRETARIAL AND CUSTODIAL CALENDERS FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR – Consent-

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the following secretarial and custodial calendars for the 2020-2021 school year:

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Secretarial Calendar 2020-2021

- (1) July 3, 2020 (Independence Day)
- (2) September 7, 2020 (Labor Day)
- (3) September 18, 2020 (Rosh Hashanah)
- (4) September 28, 2020 (Yom Kippur)
- (5) & (6) November 5 & 6, 2020 (NJEA Convention)
- (7) & (8) November 26 & 27, 2020 (Thanksgiving Recess)
- (9) January 18, 2021 (Martin Luther King Day)
- (10) & (11) February 15 & 16, 2021 (Presidents Day Recess)
- (12) April 2, 2021 (Good Friday)
- (13) April 9, 2021 (Spring Recess)
- (14) May 31, 2021 (Memorial Day)

Custodial Calendar 2020-2021

- (1) July 3, 2020 (Independence Day)
- (2) September 7, 2020 (Labor Day)
- (3) and (4) November 26 & 27, 2020 (Thanksgiving Recess)
- (5) December 24, 2020 (Christmas Eve)
- (6) December 25, 2020 (Christmas Day)
- (7) December 31, 2020 (New Years Eve)
- (8) January 1, 2021 (New Years Day)
- (9) January 18, 2021 (Martin Luther King Day)
- (10) & (11) February 15 & 16, 2021 (Presidents Day Recess)
- (12) April 2, 2021 (Good Friday)
- (13) April 5, 2021 (Spring Recess)
- (14) May 31, 2021 (Memorial Day)

11. ADDENDUM TO TRANSPORTATION CONTRACTS – Consent-

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the following addendum to transportation contracts:

Whereas, the Ridgefield Board of Education has contracts with various bus companies and, due to the enactment of Executive Order 104 (Murphy) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have been closed to students until further notice; and

Whereas, the emergency closure of all schools in the district has also caused the suspension of services provided by bus companies to transport students to and from school; and

Whereas, bus company vendors may be forced to lay off bus drivers and cancel our routes for the future which will force the district to bid out all routes at a potential higher cost than offered in a renewal of the routes at the current prevailing Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase of 1.7%; and

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Whereas, even though services aren't being currently rendered, the cost of not paying these contracts can potentially be more detrimental to districts than paying for the maintaining of these contracts in the future.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that the Ridgefield Board of Education authorizes the continued payment of its bus contracts for the transportation of students to and from school at the rate of up to 100% of the contract price; and

Be it Further Resolved, that continuing payment of bus contracts through April 30, 2020 shall only be made upon the express conditions that bus companies receiving payment guarantee the contracts for existing routes continue for the 2020-21 School year at a renewal increase amount of 0% and that each company provide the district with certified payrolls confirming that bus drivers and aides are being paid, which conditions shall be confirmed by each bus company in writing; and

Be it Further Resolved, that bus contracts for field trips and other non-home to school bus routes shall not be included in the continued compensation authorized by this Resolution.

PERSONNEL – (Items 12-18)

12. APPROVAL OF UNPAID WORK DAY FOR JOSEPH SKUNCA - Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves unpaid work day for Joseph Skunca retroactive from March 13, 2020:

13. APPROVAL OF UNPAID WORK DAY FOR ALYSSA FARIS - Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves unpaid work day for Alyssa Faris retroactive from March 13, 2020:

14. APPROVAL OF UNPAID WORK DAYS FOR ALMIRA OLAZABAL - Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves unpaid work days for Almira Olazabal retroactive from March 12, 2020 and March 13, 2020:

15. APPROVAL OF UNPAID WORK DAY FOR CHRISTINA CANCIAN - Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves unpaid work day for Christina Cancian retroactive from March 4, 2020:

16. APPOINTMENT OF DANIEL GONZALEZ AS MAGNET SCHOOL SECRETARY AT SLOCUM SKEWES SCHOOL- Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves Daniel Gonzalez as magnet school secretary at Slocum Skewes School at a pro-rated salary of \$34,160, step 1, retroactive beginning March 27, 2020 through June 30, 2020:

17. ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION OF MARY ELLEN PARADISO - Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the resignation (for retirement purposes) of Mary Ellen Paradiso, speech/language specialist, effective July 1, 2020:

18. AUTHORIZATION OF CONTINUED PAY FOR HOURLY EMPLOYEES– Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the continued payment of hourly employees (example, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, custodians) in accordance with their normally scheduled hours where the District is operating remotely due to the COVID 19 pandemic shut down through April 30, 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that subject to such laws, rules, regulations, or orders that may supersede this action, the Ridgefield Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to authorize employees of the Board, as referenced herein, who, due to the temporary closure, are or may be unable to provide services under their job description to work remotely by performing additional services, as directed by the Superintendent Schools or his designee, thereby allowing them to continue to be paid.

LEGAL – (Item)

VIII. Motion to move into PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS Session of the meeting (any items).

Please follow the guidelines as stated under “Questions and Comments from the audience on Agenda items”.

Motion made by Mrs. Narvaez, seconded by Mr. Grippa.
Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present.

Mr. McCourt confirmed that there were no public comments/questions.

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XIV. Motion to close **PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS** Session of the meeting.

Motion made by Mrs. Inan, seconded by Mr. Pych.
Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present.

XV. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Jacobs stated on behalf of the board he wished everyone to be safe and please follow the rules.

Mr. Pych thanked and acknowledged all staff who are doing a very unique thing working at home and doing so well keeping our students educated at this difficult time.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Mr. McCourt for his ability in crisis management and also thanked Mrs. Ortiz who has done a fantastic job.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the business meeting of the Board of Education at 5:17 p.m.

Motion made by Mrs. Inan, seconded by Mr. Pych.
Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present.

Respectfully submitted by,

Julyana Ortiz
Business Administrator/Board Secretary