

**BUSINESS MEETING OF MARCH 25, 2021  
RIDGEFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
555 CHESTNUT STREET, RIDGEFIELD, NJ 07657**

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A Business Meeting of the Ridgefield Board of Education will be held on March 25, 2021. This meeting will be 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 7:02 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.

**III. 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”.

**Ms. Ortiz may we have a roll call please.**

**IV. ROLL CALL**

Mr. Acosta	Present
Mr. Grippa	Present
Mrs. Inan	Present
Mr. Morilla	Present
Mrs. Narvaez	Present
Mr. Pych	Absent
Mr. Jacobs	Present

Also present were:

Dr. Letizia Pantoliano – Interim Superintendent of Schools

Julyana Ortiz – Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**V. Motion to Convene in EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION for School Board Training, Personnel, Legal, Negotiations, Attorney/Client Privilege and/or Student Matters items, at 7:03 p.m.**

Motion made by Mrs. Narvaez seconded by Mrs. Inan.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Ridgefield Board of Education, pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, that the Board meet in closed session to discuss the following subject matter(s), which is (are) permitted to be discussed in closed session

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pursuant to the following designated sub-section(s) of Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act-

- ( ) Sub-section 1 dealing with material rendered confidential by express provision of Federal or State law.
- ( ) Sub-section 2 covering a matter in which release of information would impair a right to receive federal funds.
- ( ) Sub-section 3 involving disclosure of material that would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy, including material related to an individual's personal and family circumstances, without the express written consent of the individual involved.
- ( ) Sub-section 4 pertaining to collective bargaining agreements and the terms, conditions and negotiations thereof.
- ( ) Sub-section 5 dealing with the acquisition of real property, the setting of bank rates, or the investment of public funds where discussion thereof would adversely affect the public interest.
- ( ) Sub-section 6 dealing with tactics and techniques used in protecting the safety and property of the public where disclosure could impair such protection or investigation of violation of the law.
- (X) Sub-section 7 dealing with pending or anticipated litigation, contract negotiations, or matters falling within the attorney-client privilege.
- (X) Sub-section 8 concerning student matters and/or personnel matters dealing with employment, appointment, termination, or terms and conditions of employment of any person or persons, or the evaluation, promotion or disciplining of employees unless all employees involved consent to disclosure thereof.
- ( ) Sub-section 9 involving deliberations after public hearing on a matter, which may result in the imposition of a civil penalty or the suspension or loss of a license.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as precisely as can be determined at this time, the discussion conducted in the said closed session can be disclosed to the public upon taking final action thereon, provided disclosure shall not violate the attorney-client privilege, impair the safety and property of the public or constitute an undue invasion of privacy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is envisioned that the Board will return to open session after this closed session meeting.

**VI. PUBLIC BOARD MEETING** reconvened at 7:47 p.m.

**VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**  
Dr. Pantoliano stated that on March 24<sup>th</sup> the New Jersey Department of Health issued a new guidance so that we can bring more students back for in-person learning. The new guidance allows a 3-foot distancing in classrooms which allows us to bring more students back.

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A survey will be going out by the school administration to the parents to see if they want their children to come back to in-person learning and due back to us by April 1, 2021. Based upon the data from survey we receive and the new guidance from the New Jersey Depart of Health it will tell us how many students we can accommodate at one time. The students will be able to return on back on April 19, 2021. The high school will open on Monday, March 29, 2021. The high school was closed due to three student's positive cases in a period of two weeks and that impacted our staff. The high school was shut down due to staff and contact tracing.

Dr. Pantoliano stated she will be giving the board and the public updates on the modular units at Slocum Skewes School as we move forward. Dr. Pantoliano stated we will be moving the classes from the modular units to RMHS by the end of May. Demolition of the modular units will begin after the students are moved. Dr. Pantoliano spoke about the Social, Emotional Learning Day on March 26, 2021 and Ridgefield District will be participating. Dr. Pantoliano stated the PSAT's for sophomore and juniors will be at the high school on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Freshman and seniors will be virtual for that day.

1. Presentation of CAFR – Jeffrey Bliss from Lerch, Vinci & Higgins, LLP  
Mr. Jeffrey Bliss spoke about the CAFR and stated the district financially is in excellent condition. Mr. Jeffrey Bliss spoke about the recommendations and stated there was only one recommendation and that recommendation is in regard to one of the high school student bodies account and stated that there were four to five checks that only had one signature on them and they require two signatures. Mr. Jeffrey Bliss stated this is excellent audit report.
  
2. Presentation for STEM Academy – Janet Seabold & Michael Zunick  
Mr. Mike Zunick presented on a new academy program at RMHS. The district will be offering a STEM Academy beginning September 2021. Students in Grade 8 will have the opportunity to apply for this academic academy program that is largely based on the fields of science and math.

Mr. Jacobs asked how these courses compare to the Bergen Academies and will these courses help the district with retention going forward. Ms. Seabold stated that these courses match the Bergen Academies courses except we do not have a Medical Science Academy at this time but we can offer a STEM Academy that is offered at the Bergen Medical Science Academies.

Mr. Grippa asked about identifying the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students for the STEM Academy versus the high school students. Is there any way you are going to unify the students? Mr. Zunick stated that when they come to the high school they will be asking the 8<sup>th</sup> grade math and science teachers when to give the tests. We do not just want to offer it just to the Algebra students. We like the idea of letting students prove themselves.

**VIII. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS -**

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- A. Student Liaison – Sophia Popp –Ms. Popp reported on the following school activities (See attached report).
- B. Finance Committee – Andrew Grippa (Chairperson), Ralph Morilla, Michael Jacobs- Mr. Grippa stated we submitted the preliminary budget to the County Office and we are waiting for approval and tonight we will be voting on 2019/2020 Audit Report.
- C. Curriculum Committee – Claudia Narvaez (Chairperson), Michael Jacobs, Javier Acosta – **N/R**
- D. Operations Committee – William Pych (Chairperson), Andrew Grippa, Michael Jacobs – **N/R**
- E. Personnel Committee – Ralph Morilla (Chairperson), Maryam Juliet Inan, William Pych,- Mr. Morilla stated the committee met with the Teacher Assistants and Custodians and that they are off to a good start.
- F. Policy Committee – Ralph Morilla (Chairperson), Maryam Juliet Inan, Javier Acosta
- G. NJSBA/Legislative Delegate – Claudia Narvaez - Alternates: Michael Jacobs – Mrs. Narvaez stated that the Governor said in September there will be no virtual learning.

**IX. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION -**

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

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

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 type their question into the “chat” box, 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.

Mrs. Narvaez stated that Ms. Janet Mazzeo – 594 Morse Avenue that the STEM Academy sounds wonderful.

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

Motion made by Mr. Acosta, seconded by Mr. Grippa.

Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present.

**XI. BOARD COMMENTS ON RESOLUTIONS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS ONLY.**

Ms. Ortiz stated that there was an update made to the Bill List this afternoon. The revised amount is \$412,469.37 for the March 25 2021 Bill List and that the board is tabling Resolution # 13 for another meeting. Resolution #22 is no longer pending County approval. It has been approved by the County.

**XII. OLD BUSINESS**

**XIII. RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION**

**1. CONSENT RESOLUTION – Roll Call**

Motion to approve the following consent items  
2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21:

Motion made by Mr. Acosta, seconded by Mr. Morilla.

**Ms. Ortiz may we have a roll call please.**

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Acosta	Aye
Mr. Grippa	Aye
Mrs. Inan	Aye except Recuse on #21
Mr. Morilla	Aye except Recuse on #21
Mrs. Narvaez	Aye
Mr. Pych	Absent
Mr. Jacobs	Aye

**FINANCE – (Items 2-14)**

**2. MINUTES – Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the minutes of the March 11, 2021 Work Session/Business Meeting and Executive Session (**REF#0325-01**):

**3. BILL LIST – Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the bill list from the month of March 2021 (**REF#0325-02**):

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March 25, 2021 Vendor Batch A	\$412,469.37
March 25, 2021 Vendor Batch B	\$776,561.00

**4. BOARD SECRETARY REPORT- Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the Board Secretary Report for the period ending February 28, 2021 (**REF#0325-03**):

**5. CASH REPORT- Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the Cash Report for the periods ending February 28, 2021 (**REF#0325-04**):

**6. BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR’S CERTIFICATION – Consent**

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6:23-2.11(d), I, Julyana Ortiz, School Business Administrator, certify that as of February 28, 2021 no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments (contractual orders) which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8.1 and 18A:22-8.2.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6:23-2.11(d), I, Julyana Ortiz, School Business Administrator, certify that as of February 28, 2021 no budgetary line item account has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C.6:23-2.11(b).

Motion to certify, pursuant to N.J.A.C.6:23-2.11(e), that as of February 28, 2021, after review of the Board Secretary’s monthly report (appropriations sections) 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.6:23-2.11(e), and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year:

**7. APPROVAL OF BUDGET TRANSFER – Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the budget transfer for month of February 2021 in the amount of \$161,646.00 as attached (**REF#0325-05**):

**8. APPROVAL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (CAFR) FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR – Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education accepts the 2019-2020 Audit Report and the Audit Synopsis for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020:

**9. APPROVAL OF CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN FOR AUDIT FINDINGS – Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the Corrective Action Plan for the year ending June 30, 2020 as per attachment (REF#0325-06):

**10. APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH EDUCATION SERVICES LLC TO PROVIDE SPEECH THERAPY SERVICES - Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the services of Education Services LLC to provide speech therapy services during the 2020-2021 school year, including 2020 summer at a rate of \$95.00 per hour:

**11. APPROVAL OF NEW BRIDGE MEDICAL CENTER/BCSS TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES – Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves New Bridge Medical Center/BCSS to provide educational services to student ID#271848 due to hospitalization from January 25, 2021 – March 22, 2021.at a rate of \$65.00 per hour not to exceed ten (10) hours per week:

**12. ACCEPTANCE OF THE 2020 BERGEN COUNTY UTILITIES AUTHORITY ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS CHALLENGE GRANT – Consent**

BET IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education accepts a grant from the Bergen County Utilities Authority, in the amount of \$1,000.00 for Shaler Academy for the 2020-2021 school year:

Tabled Resolution

**13. APPROVAL OF MOBILEASE MODULAR SPACE, INC CONTRACT – Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the contract with Mobilease Modular Space, Inc for the removal and replacement Slocum Skewes’

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Modular Units for the amount of \$1,703,200 utilizing New Jersey State Contract #ESCNJ 20/21-43:

**14. APPROVAL OF FUNDRAISERS - Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves the following fundraisers for the 2020-2021 school year (**REF#0325-07**):

- A.) **Baseball** to hold an **Online Clothing Sale** from April 1, 2021 through April 21, 2021 with proceeds going towards equipment purchases for outdoor fields.
- B.) **Outdoor Track** to hold an **Online Clothing Sale** from April 1, 2021 through April 21, 2021 with proceeds going towards personalized warm up shirts.
- C.) **Eighth Grade Class** to hold a **Panara Fundraiser** on April 20, 2021 with proceeds going towards the eighth grade dinner and traditions.
- D.) **Slocum & RMHS Student Council** to hold a **Ridgefield Pink Out** on May 6, 2021 for collecting donations and raising awareness for women's cancer charities.

**STUDENT SERVICES – (Item )**

**CURRICULUM – (Item 15)**

**15. APPROVAL OF WORKSHOP EXPENDITURES - Consent**

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Workshop</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Vincent Marriner Jeanine McGlynn Alyssa Blum Anne Marie Russo Laurie Densen	Handle With Care Instructor Review	Virtual	4/1/21	NO FEE
Julyana Ortiz Kelvin Hiciano Kara Doviak	NJSBA – NJ Dept. of Education Overview of the new Coronavirus Response and Relief Appropriations Act	Virtual	4/13/21	\$50.00 pp
Paul Brodsky	Models & Techniques of Clinical Supervision	Virtual	4/19/21	\$100.00
Julyana Ortiz Kelvin Hiciano	NJSBA – Legislative and School Official Update	Virtual	4/29/21	\$50.00 pp
Paul Brodsky	Managing Differences and Challenging Dynamics in Clinical Supervision	Virtual	5/10 & 5/11/21	\$100.00



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Gina Antoniewicz	PECS Level 2 Training	Virtual	5/10 & 5/11/21	\$399.00
Julyana Ortiz Kelvin Hiciano	NJSBA – Preparing for Audit, GASB84 and Internal Controls	Virtual	5/18/21	\$50.00 pp
Lauretta Thrower	LEAD Conference	Atlantic City	6/27 - 6/30/21	\$400.00 \$444.00 – Hotel
Racheal Shuldman	Mastering Mastication	Virtual	-	\$104.00

**OPERATIONS – (Item )**

**PERSONNEL – (Items 16-22)**

**16. APPOINTMENT OF EXTRA SERVICE POSITIONS AND STAFF**

- Consent

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education hereby approves the following extra service positions and staff for the 2020-2021 school year:

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Positon</u>	<u>Step</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Scott Miller	Track – Head Varsity (Boys)	1	\$5,449
Grace Behrens	Track – Assistant #1	1	\$3,577
Chris Panepinto	Track – Assistant #2	1	\$3,577
Stephanie Sinclair	Track – Winter Assistant	3	\$3,031*

\*Revision of previous appointment

**17. APPOINTMENT OF VOLUNTEERS - Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education hereby approves the following volunteers for baseball for the 2020-2021 school year:

Eamon Catherina  
Chris Martucci

**18. APPOINTMENT OF MARIA GARCIA AS A 1:1 FULL TIME TEACHER ASSISTANT AT SLOCUM SKEWES SCHOOL- Consent**

BE IT RESOLVED that upon recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education appoints Maria Garcia as a 1:1 full time teacher assistant (paid by Cliffside Park) for student ID#1054883068 at Slocum Skewes School at a pro-rated salary of \$21,069 beginning March 26, 2021 through June 30, 2021:

19. ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION OF ANTOINETTE BARTOLE –  
Consent

BE IT RESOLVED that upon recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education accepts the resignation of Antoinette Bartole, part time teacher assistant, effective retroactive from March 15, 2021:

20. APPROVAL OF ELIZABETH HILDAGO AS DISTRICT  
SUBSTITUTE BUS AIDE - Consent

BE IT RESOLVED that upon recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves Elizabeth Hildago, as district substitute bus aide for the 2020-2021 school year:

21. APPROVAL OF SEVENTH CLASS FOR JENNIFER RUPPRECHT –  
Consent

BE IT RESOLVED that upon recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, the Ridgefield Board of Education approves seventh class added to Jennifer Rupprechts' teaching schedule at RMHS at a compensation rate of an additional 1/6 of her current 2020-2021 salary of \$21,038.16 (\$126,229.00 x 1/6), on an as needed basis per diem, beginning April 12, 2021:

Roll Call #22

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

22. APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS –  
Consent

BE IT RESOLVED by the Ridgefield Board of Education that, Dr. Letizia Pantoliano is appointed as Interim Superintendent of Schools commencing July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, five (5) days per week at a per diem rate of \$727.85.

**POLICY** – (Items )

**LEGAL** – (Items )

- XIV.** Motion to move into **PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS** Session of the meeting (any items). Second

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

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 type their question into the “chat” box, identify themselves by name and address. 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.

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

Motion mad by Mr. Acosta, seconded by Mr. Grippa.  
Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present.

**XVI. NEW BUSINESS**

**XVII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the business meeting of the Board of Education at 8:47 p.m.

Motion made by Mr. Morilla, seconded by Mr. Acosta.  
Motion passed unanimously by Board Members present.

Respectfully submitted by,

Julyana Ortiz  
Business Administrator/Board Secretary