

RIVERDALE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
RIVERDALE, NEW JERSEY

**January 6, 2022**  
7:00 p.m.

**MINUTES FOR REORGANIZATION MEETING**

**I. Call meeting to order/Flag Salute**

Assistant Board Secretary, Mr. Carl Morelli, called the Public Business Meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of Riverdale to order on January 6, 2022. The meeting was opened at 7:07 p.m. with a flag salute.

**II. Presiding Officer's announcement regarding notification of this meeting to the public.**

Marybeth Thomas made the required announcement regarding notification of this meeting to the public: The Notification requirements of the "Open Public Meetings Act" of the State of New Jersey have been satisfied by the inclusion of the date, time, place and purpose of this Reorganization Meeting in a legal advertisement in The Record (January 5, 2022) with copies posted in the Riverdale School, Municipal Building, Town Library, and filed with the Clerk of the Borough of Riverdale.

I direct that this public announcement shall be entered in the minutes of this meeting.

**III. Recognition of visitors**

There were two (12) members of the public present.

**IV. Election Results**

Carl Morelli, Assistant Business Administrator/Assistant Board Secretary reported the results of the annual school election conducted on November 2, 2021

**A. The Votes for the Board Member Candidates Three-Year Term:**

<b>Vote for One</b>	<b>Total</b>
Keith Hamilton	718
Russell Hatzel	441
Alexis Stone	471

**B. Oath of Office**

Mr. Morelli administered the oath of office to newly elected Board Members, Keith Hamilton, Russell Hatzel, and Alexis Stone.

**V. ROLL CALL was taken by Mr. Morelli**

Present: Jessica Muzzio-Rentas, Marybeth Thomas, Keith Hamilton, Kathleen Miceli, and Ann Marie Nadiroglu, Russell Hatzel, and Alexis Stone

Absent:

Also Present: Mr. Jayson Gutierrez, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**VI. Nominations for Election of President:**

Board Secretary, Mr. Gutierrez requested nominations for the office of President of the Riverdale Board of Education. Mrs. Marybeth Thomas nominated Mrs. Jessica Muzzio-Rentas.

Mr. Morelli called for further nominations. Since there were no further nominations, Mr. Morelli closed the floor. Mr. Gutierrez performed a roll call vote as follows:

Trustee	Yes	No	Abstain
Mrs. Stone			

Mr. Hatzel			
Mrs. Nadiroglu			
Mrs. Miceli			
Mr. Hamilton			
Mrs. Thomas			
Mrs. Muzzio-Rentas	X		

There being only one nomination, Mr. Morelli cast a vote on behalf of the Board for Mrs. Muzzio-Rentas. Mrs. Muzzio-Rentas was then given control of the meeting by Mr. Morelli and assumed the chair.

The president asked for input for committees and will present the official committee list at the next BOE meeting.

**I. Nominations for Election of Vice-President:**

Assistant Board Secretary, Mr. Morelli requested nominations for the office of Vice President of the Riverdale Board of Education. Mrs. Keith Hamilton nominated Mrs. Marybeth Thomas.

Mr. Morelli called for further nominations. Since there were no further nominations, Mr. Morelli closed to the floor. Mr. Morelli performed a roll call vote as follows:

Trustee	Yes	No	Abstain
Mrs. Stone			
Mr. Hatzel			
Mrs. Nadiroglu			
Mrs. Miceli			
Mr. Hamilton			
Mrs. Thomas	X		
Mrs. Muzzio-Rentas			

There being only one nomination, Mr. Morelli cast a vote on behalf of the Board for Mrs. Thomas.

**VII. Appointment of committees, chairpersons, and representatives on related boards.**

Mrs. Muzzio-Rentas requested board members' input for committees and will present the official committee list at the next board meeting. Committee appointments and Liaison Appointments to Related Boards.

- A. Committees: Finance, Personnel, Policy, Facilities/Transportation/Technology, Curriculum/Instruction/Special Services, Community Relations, and Health and Safety.
- B. Board Appointments: New Jersey and Morris County School Board Association, NJSBA Legislative Delegate, Educational Services Commission of Morris County Delegate, Pompton Lakes Board of Education

- Mr. Hamilton requested the Board form a COVID committee.
- Mrs. Rentas suggested it be named the Health and Safety Committee and the Board agreed to discuss this further at a later time.

**VIII. Code of Ethics**

In accordance with Board of Education Policy #0142, the Board of Education approves the Code of Ethics for School Board Members. In accordance with the Policy, each Board Member shall sign an

acknowledgment that they have received a copy, read and will become familiar with the Code of Ethics, which shall be kept on file in the Business (BOE) Office. Every BOE member was sent a DocuSign. Please be sure to sign them at your earliest convenience.

Every BOE member has a copy in their folder they need to sign and return to Mr. Gutierrez at the end of the meeting.

### **Code of Ethics for School Board Members**

A school board member shall abide by the following Code of Ethics for School Board Members:

- A. I will uphold and enforce all laws, rules, and regulations of the State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures
- B. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing.
- C. I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
- D. I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.
- E. I will recognize that authority rests with the board of education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.
- F. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
- G. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its school.
- H. I will vote to appoint the best-qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
- I. I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.
- J. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

### **IX. Oral Communication on Agenda Items only:**

- Lisa Ferrara 115 Newbury Place asked if there were any changes to the Agenda since it was posted on the website.
  - Mrs. Thomas responded no.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked who the chief school administrator was
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded that it was him.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked why the December minutes were not being approved tonight.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded that the November minutes were on the website and we will approve the December minutes at the next BOE meeting.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked what day the BOE meetings would be.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded that they would continue to be on Tuesdays.

- Mrs. Ferrara asked if there was any discussion about the Tuesday night meetings.
  - Mrs. Miceli responded that there were discussions about the conflicts and it was decided to stay with Tuesdays.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked about the Superintendent authorizing payments in between BOE meetings.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded that this was customary in case any payments needed to be made. He can issue the payment, the committee would be informed and the BOE would approve the payment at the next BOE meeting.
- Mrs. Thomas also agreed with this statement.

**X. Approval of Reorganization Items**

It is recommended by the Superintendent/Interim Business Administrator that the Board of Education approve the following **Reorganization** items, **A - E**

Motion By:	Mrs. Thomas	Second by:	Mrs. Nadiroglu
Discussion:			
Roll Call Vote:			
Alexis Stone-Yes	Russell Hatzel-Yes	Ann Marie Nadiroglu-Yes	Kathleen Miceli-Yes
Keith Hamilton-Yes	Marybeth Thomas-Yes	Jessica Muzzio-Rentas-Yes	

- A. Adoption of the attached meeting schedule for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school year with all meetings to be held in the Riverdale School Library. The Regular Business meetings are to be held on the specified Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise listed, and the Business Administrator/Board Secretary is authorized to post the meeting schedule in accordance with Board Policy and cause it to be published in a legal newspaper.
- B. Designation of The Suburban Trends, The Record and The Star-Ledger as legal newspapers for 2022. The Trends shall be utilized whenever possible for all public announcements, however, when publication time requirements cannot be met, the daily publications noted may be utilized in an effort to properly inform the public in a timely manner.
- C. Re-adoption all actions, policies, policy manuals, and contracts entered into by the previous boards of education for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, or until such time that this Board amends the same.
- D. Approval to authorize the Superintendent of Schools/Interim Business Administrator to issue payments for certain recurring (or emergency) operating expenses/necessary transfers of funds prior to the approval of the Board and have these payments ratified at the subsequent Board meeting effective until the next reorganization meeting.
- E. Designation of Lakeland Bank, Pompton Plains, New Jersey as the official depository for the accounts listed below for 2022. The signatures of the employees listed be approved for all checks, drafts, notes, or orders drawn against the indicated accounts.

<b>Authorization of Accounts and Signatories</b>		
General Account #621401459	3 signatures	President or Vice President Board Secretary Treasurer of School Monies

Payroll Account #621401203	1 Signature	Board Secretary or Treasurer of School Monies
Payroll Agency Account #621401254	3 Signatures	President or Vice President Board Secretary Treasurer of School Monies
Petty Cash Account #621401610	1 Signature	Board Secretary or Superintendent
Cafeteria Account #621401629	3 Signatures	President or Vice President Board Secretary Treasurer of School Monies
Student Activities Account #621401637	2 Signatures	Board Secretary and Principal
Athletic Account #621401645	3 Signatures	President or Vice President Board Secretary Treasurer of School Monies
Capital Reserve Fund #621403087	1 Signature	Board Secretary or Treasurer of School Monies
Maintenance Reserve Fund #621408410	1 Signature	Board Secretary or Treasurer of School Monies
Unemployment Trust Fund #621403001	3 Signatures	President or Vice President Board Secretary Treasurer of School Monies
1:1 Chromebook #621410172	3 Signatures	President or Vice President Board Secretary Treasurer of School Monies

**XI. Approval of New Business Items**

**A. FINANCE**

1. Committee Report -Marybeth Miller -None

**B. PERSONNEL**

1. Committee Report- Kathleen Miceli: Meeting prior to tonight’s BOE meeting to discuss the Spanish teacher, aides, and staffing issues.
2. It is recommended by the Superintendent/Interim Business Administrator that the Board of Education approve the following items.

I would like to make a motion to approve **Personnel** items, a-f

Motion By:	Mrs. Miceli	Second by:	Mr. Hatzel
<p>Discussion: Mr. Gutierrez – “b.” Thanked Lumy Rodriguez for coming into the district as an Aide, absorbing all that she was tasked with, and eventually working toward becoming our Spanish teacher. She quickly made her way throughout the building learning new skills and assisting wherever needed. She will be missed.</p> <p>“c.” Nurse Evans has played a pivotal role in keeping us safe with regards to COVID-19. As we grappled with the surge in December she put in a significant amount of time contact tracing on the weekends and after hours during the week. Thank you, Nurse Evans.</p> <p>“f.” Carolina Santamaria has 16 years of experience as a classroom Spanish teacher. She was most recently at Freedom Prep Academy in Provo, UT. She was also a Spanish teacher at Immaculate Heart Academy and Saint Joseph School, both in Bergen County.</p>			

Roll Call Vote:			
Alexis Stone-Yes	Russell Hatzel-Yes	Ann Marie Nadiroglu-Yes	Kathleen Miceli-Yes
Keith Hamilton-Yes	Marybeth Thomas-Yes	Jessica Muzzio-Rentas-Yes	

- a. Approve the contract for the following non-certified, non-tenured, part-time employee, without benefits, effective on or about January 6, 2022, through June 30, 2022, pending receipt of a favorable criminal history review.

Name	Job Description	2021-2022	Not to Exceed Hours Per Week
Angela Cipolletta	Aide	\$13.00	29.15

- b. Approve the resignation, with regret, of Lumy Rodrigez, effective December 23, 2021.
- c. Approve the payment to Victoria Evans, school nurse, at the contractual rate of \$50 an hour, for one hour each school day from on or about December 1, 2021, to on or about December 31, 2021, for an amount NTE \$750.00.
- d. Approve the addition of the following to the 2021-2022 substitute list, pending a favorable criminal history review.

Name	Job Description
Joanne Howard	Substitute

- e. Approve the amendment of the following dates for forty (40) hours of classroom observation by the following student from Susquehanna University from January 10, 2022, through January 30, 2022, pending receipt of a favorable criminal history review.

Student	Teacher
Allison Garofalo	Andrea Swanson

- f. Award the following certified professional teaching contract (tenure-track) with health benefits, effective on or about January 24, 2022, through June 30, 2022, pending receipt of a favorable criminal history review.

Name	Step	Salary
Carolina Santamaria	BA ST 6	\$56,585 (prorated)

### C. POLICY

- Committee Report** -Mr. Hatzel: Reported that the Policy Committee has not had a meeting since December.

### D. TECHNOLOGY/FACILITIES/TRANSPORTATION

- Committee Report** - Keith Hamilton: Reported that the committee has not had a meeting since December.

**E. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION/SPECIAL SERVICE**

1. Committee Report - Ann Marie Nadiroglu reported that there was no committee meeting.
2. Items to be approved:  
 It is recommended by the Superintendent/Interim Business Administrator that the Board of Education approve the following items.  
 I would like to make a motion to approve **CISS** items, a-c

Motion By:		Second by:	
Discussion: Mr. Hatzel asked about Dr. Rasa and the practice. Mr. Gutierrez responded that Ronda White, PA-C worked with Dr. Rasa. Mrs. Muzzio-Rentas requested a curriculum committee meeting.			
Roll Call Vote:			
Alexis Stone-Yes	Russell Hatzel-Yes	Ann Marie Nadiroglu-Yes	Kathleen Miceli-Yes
Keith Hamilton-Yes	Marybeth Thomas-Yes	Jessica Muzzio-Rentas-Yes	

- a. Approve the agreement with Tri-County Behavioral Care, LLC for in-district professional development day on January 17, 2022, at a cost of \$1,500.00.
- b. Approve Ronda White, PA-C, professional healthcare services for the 2021-2022 school year at \$700.00 per month not to exceed \$7,000.00
- c. Approve the reimbursement and expenses, previously approved by the Superintendent for the following staff training, workshops, conventions, conferences, and/or seminars as they are directly related to and within the scope of the participant’s duties and are critical to the instructional needs of the district and/or further the efficient operation of the district. The travel and expenses are within state travel guidelines established by the Department of Treasury and are justified.

Date	Participant	Workshop	Location	Workshop Fee*	Overnight Fees	Substitute Required
1/21/22	Lisa Moro-Zemaitis	Help students develop better social behavior for increased school success	West Orange	\$279	NA	Yes
1/27/22-1/28/22	Paul Kobliska	Techspo	Atlantic City	\$299	\$97 lodging \$66 meals	No

\*PLUS MILEAGE AND TOLLS IF APPLICABLE

**XII. Discussion of Items to be Approved on January 18, 2022**

- A.** It was noted that the following Minutes will be on the agenda at the next meeting:

Public Business Meeting	December 14, 2021
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- B.** It was noted that the following **Finance** items will be on the agenda at the next meeting:

- a. Approval of the payment of the following bills and claims:

Payroll for the period ending December 31, 2021	\$
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Payroll for the period ending January 15, 2022	\$
Bills List dated January xx, 2022	\$
Warrants # through #	
Health/Prescription plan premiums (SEHBP) for January	\$

b. Approval the attached line item transfers for November 2021.

c. Approval of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports for the month ending November 30, 2021. It has been determined that they are in agreement; acknowledges receipt of the Secretary's certification that no budgetary line item account has obligations, payments or orders which exceed the amount appropriated or has been over expended in accordance with N.J.A.C.6A-16.10(c)3 and 4; and certifies that in accordance P.L.2004 Ch.73, no budgetary transfers cumulatively exceed 10% that would require the approval of the Commissioner of Education.

**A.** Letters and Communications - Mrs. Muzzio-Rentas: Mrs. Rentas received 2 letters from the county. The first regarding Riverdale Public School HIB investigations and the second approving the contract for the new Business Administrator.

**B.** Superintendent's Report - Jayson Gutierrez

**C.** Enrollment as of January 6, 2022

PreK-8	284
PLHS - Tuition	128
Option III	0
Academy/Vo-Tech	16
Out of District (Prek-8th grade)	4
Out of District (9th grade +)	6
Charter	5
Home Instruction	0
School Choice	3

**D.** Business Administrator's Report - Jayson Gutierrez reported that the audit will be completed shortly.

**E.** Information and Questions from Board Members

- Mr. Hatzel reported that he had complaints from parents regarding our students attending Pompton Lakes and that the students had to wear jackets and are using blankets to stay warm in their classrooms because the building is very cold and that since we are a paying district to Pompton Lakes, we need to look into this issue.
  - Mr. Gutierrez stated that he will contact them and discuss this situation.
- Mrs. Rentas thanked the BOE members for her nomination and continued support.
- Mrs. Thomas also thanked the BOE members for their support.
- Mrs. Thomas also thanked the administration and staff for filling in the gaps in the school due to the current health crisis.
- Mrs. Nadiroglu thanked Dan Denude for the work he did during the break with the gym ceiling and also thanked Mr. Gutierrez and Mr. Morelli for filling in.

**F.** Oral Communication -

- Lisa Ferrara 115 Newbury Place asked if the school would be discussing gender, anal sex, and gender identity by the end of 2nd grade and also if there would be an opt-out form for the parents. Mr. Gutierrez responded that the board would take her questions under consideration.



- Melanie Marino 80 Cottage Place stated that Pompton Lakes had a curriculum workshop for parents and if we could do the same.
  - Mr. Hatzel responded we would have to follow any state rules regarding this issue.
- Curtis Wong 47 Fernwood Crescent asked if a curriculum workshop takes place would the public be notified?
  - Mr. Hatzel responded that as of now this item was not up for discussion.
  - Mrs. Thomas also responded that it was not on the table yet for discussion.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded that New Jersey is a top-down state and the public should go to higher offices if not satisfied.
- Mrs. Ferrara asked which curriculum we are contemplating for September.
  - Mrs. Miceli responded that Mr. Gutierrez is working with Pompton Lakes to update our curriculum and we would be adopting the curriculum for our district.
  - Mr. Gutierrez stated that we would be having a 2 hour delayed opening tomorrow due to the weather and would be following Pompton Lakes.
- Mrs. Ferrara asked about the 15 million dollar bond referendum and how the money would be spent.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded as of this time there is no referendum to discuss and we are only in the preliminary stages of discussions.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked if any BOE member has any affiliation to the law firm approved for this referendum. The board members responded no.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked about the salary for the new Business Administrator.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded that the board is aware of the salary.
  - Mrs. Thomas also responded that the contract was approved by the board and the county.
  - Mr. Hamilton also responded that any contract like this goes before the personal and finance committees before being placed on an agenda for a vote and the county must also approve the contract.
- Lisa Ferrara asked about the retention bonus for the staff and how it was determined.
- Mr. Gutierrez responded that last year was very difficult. The BOE agreed to use Title II funds to distribute as equitable as [possible and did not include any supervisors or administration. It included all teachers and support staff and they were given approximately \$300.00 each.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked about the gym assistant salary.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded they assist the coach in the gym during games.
- Mrs. Ferrara then asked about Covid testing being considered.
  - Mr. Hatzel responded that many states have pushed for the test and stay policy using rapid tests to stay in class because we need kids to be in school and we will continue to follow the state guidelines to keep the school open.
- Curtis Wong asked if we will continue the breaks outside during colder weather.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded when we can't go outside due to low temperature below 32 degrees, there will be no snacks in the building and masks come off at lunch so the students can eat
- Andrea Swanson stated that no kids were complaining this week with the cold weather.
- Mrs. Ferrara asked what will happen on January 11th if the mask mandate is not extended.
  - Mr. Gutierrez responded that as of now we have no guidance from the state regarding this.
  - Mrs. Thomas also responded that the board will address this issue when it happens.

**XIII. Future Meetings and Important Dates reported by President Norris**

January 18, 2022	Public Business Meeting	6:30 p.m.
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**XIV.** Executive Session: Motion by Mrs. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Hatzel at 8:19 pm to adjourn from the public business and move into Executive Session WHEREAS, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, also known as the Open Public Meetings Act, authorized a public body to meet in executive or private session under certain limited circumstances, and

WHEREAS, said law requires the board to adopt a resolution at a public meeting before it can meet in such an executive or private session,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BOROUGH OF RIVERDALE THAT:

1. It does hereby determine that it is necessary to meet in Executive Session prior to adjournment of this meeting to discuss confidential student and personnel matters.
2. The matter discussed will be made public when confidentiality is no longer required.

**XV. Adjournment**

Motion by Mrs. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Hatzel at 8:19 pm to adjourn from the public business meeting

Carried by unanimous voice vote

Respectfully submitted,

DocuSigned by:  
  
Jayson Gutierrez  
**Superintendent**  
**Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary**