HOPE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
320 JOHNSONBURG ROAD, P.O. BOX 293
HOPE, NEW JERSEY 07844
908-459-4242

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 16, 2026

For the Regular Meeting of the Hope Township Board of Education
Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. in the Hope Township School Media Center.

Hope Township School, in cooperation with our community, values the importance of a supportive, challenging education for all students delivered through an effective, contemporary curriculum that meets or exceeds the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. By fostering communication and respect in a positive educational environment, all children can realize their potential.

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is either discussed or acted upon. In accordance with this provision of the act, the Hope Township Board of Education has sent notice of this meeting, stating the date, and place, to the Star Gazette and the New Jersey Herald, and posted the same in the Hope Township School, Municipal Building, and Post Office.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. ROLL CALL

Mrs. Andrea Beatty	***Present***	Mrs. Diane Kasharian	***Present***	Mrs. Tina Ritchie	***Present***
Mrs. Linda Chamberlain	***Present***	Mr. Mathew Leitner	***Present***		
Mr. Joseph Ciccarelli	***Present***	Mr. John Lucas	***Present***		

Also present, Tammy Green, CSA and Lori Tirone, SBA/BS

V. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Hope School Happenings

Mrs. Green reported on:

- Spring Arts Festival and Music Concert
- Panther Pride Day and the 5th Grade moving up ceremony
- Hope Helping Our Planet Everyday and White 8th Grade Graduation
- Camp Invention next week.
- Interviews for Nurse and Music Teacher

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to approve Administrative Reports A through F.

A. Comprehensive Equity Plan - Needs Assessment

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve a committee to conduct a Needs Assessment for the Comprehensive Equity Plan 2025-2028.

B. Comprehensive Equity Plan

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the Comprehensive Equity Plan for the Hope Township School District for the Three Year Plan for 2025 through 2028.

C. Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the Hope Township School District Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan for the 2026-2027 school year.

D. Approve Submission of Bus Evacuation

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve submission of the Bus Evacuation completed on 6/05/2026 for reporting.

E. Submission of School Security Drill Statement of Assurance

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve submission of the School Security Drill Statement of Assurance for the 2025-2026 school year.

F. Submission of the Student Safety Data System (SSDS) Report

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the submission of the Student Safety Data System Report for the reporting period January 1, 2026 - June 30, 2026.

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

VII. PUBLIC HEARING & PETITION

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

VIII. MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to approve the following minutes.

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

May 19, 2026 - Regular Board Meeting Minutes

On a voice vote, all present were in favor; except Mr. Lucas abstained since he did not attend the May 19, 2026 meeting. The motion passed.

IX. BUILDINGS & GROUNDS/TRANSPORTATION - Mr. Lucas, Mr. Ciccarelli

Mrs. Green provided an update.

X. COMMUNITY & PUBLIC RELATIONS - Mr. Leitner, Mrs. Kasharian, Mrs. Beatty

No committee meeting.

XI. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY - Mrs. Chamberlain, Mrs. Beatty, Mrs. Kasharian

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to approve Curriculum items A and B.

A. Tuition Contract - White Township Consolidated School

BE IT RESOLVED to approve a Special Education Tuition Contract Agreement for the 2025-2026 school year between the Hope Township Board of Education (sending) and White Township Board of Education (receiving) for Student ID #1353922988 starting September 2, 2025 at a cost of $25,000.00 for tuition. (11.000.100.562.000.000).

B. Tuition Contract - White Township Consolidated School

BE IT RESOLVED to approve a Special Education Tuition Contract Agreement for the 2026-2027 school year between the Hope Township Board of Education (sending) and White Township Board of Education (receiving) for Student ID #1353922988 starting September 2, 2026 at a cost of $25,000.00 for tuition. (11.000.100.562.000.000).

The Board discussed the MD program and the new ERI program beginning in September.

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

XII. FINANCE - Mr. Ciccarelli, Mrs. Beatty, Mrs. Chamberlain

MOTION by Mr. Lucas, seconded by Mrs. Ritchie to approve Finance items A through G.

A. Acceptance of the Financial Report May 2026

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

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

WHEREAS, the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's reports, for the month ending May 31, 2026, are presented for the Board to accept and are on file in the Office of the School Business Administrator;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Hope Township Board of Education acknowledges receipt of and accepts the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's Report for the month ending May 31, 2026; and

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

B. Approval of Budget Transfers for May 2026

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

WHEREAS, transfers in the report "Budget Transfers" for the time period of May 2026 were necessary to maintain the needs of the district and are on file in the Office of the School Business Administrator,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, that Hope Township Board of Education ratifies and approves the transfers in the report "Budget Transfers" for May 31, 2026 in fiscal year 2025-2026, approved by the Chief School Administrator, so that no budgetary line-item account has been over-expended and that sufficient funds would be available to meet the district's financial obligations.

C. Approval of May 2026 and June 2026 Claims

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

WHEREAS, a list of bills for the months of May 2026 are being presented to the board with the recommendation that they be ratified, approved and paid; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hope Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, ratifies and approves the list of bills for payment in the grand sum of $288,870.60 for May 16, 2026 through May 31, 2026 and a total of $186,847.51 for June 1, 2026 through June 12, 2026.

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

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

D. Approval of the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Reserve Transfers

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:21-2 and N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-13 permits a Board of Education to establish and/or deposit into certain reserve accounts at year end; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned Statutes authorize procedures, under the authority of the Commissioner of Education, which permit a Board of Education to transfer anticipated current revenue or unexpected appropriations into reserve accounts during the month of June by resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Hope Township Board of Education wishes to deposit anticipated current year surplus into the Capital Reserve account at year end; and

WHEREAS, the Hope Township Board of Education has determined that an amount, not to exceed $300,000.00 may be used for such purpose of transfer;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hope Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, authorizes the School Business Administrator to make a transfer into the Capital Reserves in an amount not to exceed $300,000.00 consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

E. Approval of the Fiscal Year 2026 Maintenance Reserve Transfers

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:21-2 and N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-13 permits a Board of Education to establish and/or deposit into certain reserve accounts at year end; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned Statutes authorize procedures, under the authority of the Commissioner of Education, which permit a Board of Education to transfer anticipated current revenue or unexpected appropriations into reserve accounts during the month of June by resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Hope Township Board of Education wishes to deposit anticipated current year surplus into the Maintenance Reserve account at year end; and

WHEREAS, the Hope Township Board of Education has determined that an amount, not to exceed $300,000.00 may be used for such purpose of transfer,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hope Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, authorizes the School Business Administrator to make a transfer into the Maintenance Reserves in an amount not to exceed $300,000.00 consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

F. Participation in Memorandum of Agreement for Related Services with WCSSSD

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve a Memorandum of Agreement for the Participation in Related Services between Hope Township Board of Education and Warren County Special Services School District for July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027. Service schedule:

Service	Service Rate (Hourly)	Evaluation
Basic Skills Instructor	$85.50-$95.00	n/a
Behavioral Support Services as provided by BCBA/Behavioral Supervisor	$90.00-$110.00 (3 hour minimum)	TBD
Bilingual Evaluations	n/a	$545-$560
Home Instruction	$72.50-$80.00	n/a
LDTC	$100.00-$115.00	$435-$445
Music Therapy	Price available on request	n/a
Occupational Therapy	$85.00-$105.00	$440-$460
Paraprofessional	$35.00-$45.00	n/a
Physical Therapy	$90-00-$110.00	$440-$460
Psychologist Services	$100.00-$115.00	$440-$460
Reading Specialist	$90.50-$95.00	n/a
School Counselor	$96.50-$110.00	$440-$460
Social Work Services	$88.50-$108.50	$440-$460
Speech Therapy	$90.00-$105.00	$440-$460
Supplemental Instructor	$85.50-$95.00	n/a
Teacher of the Deaf Services	$151.00-$155.00	n/a

G. Approve Shared Services Agreement - Business Administrator

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the Shared Services agreement between the White Township Board of Education and the Hope Township Board of Education for the Business Administrator, for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, in the amount of $70,547.00.

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

XIII. PERSONNEL - Mrs. Ritchie, Mr. Lucas. Mr. Leitner

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to approve Personnel items A through F.

A. Approve Personal Day Payout

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the personal day payout to the following teachers, for a total of $2,765.00:

Employee	Days	Amount
Meghan Geeek	5	$500.00
Lianne Markus	5	$500.00

Susan Martino	3	$240.00
Jessica Gwynn	4.5	$415.00
Catherine Trotter	4	$360.00
Jennifer Encin	5	$500.00
Tracy Sheldon	2	$250.00

B Approve Summer Work

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the CST Team to work up to 20 hours over the Summer for the following employees at their hourly pay:

Employee	Position	Hourly
Rivera, Michelle	LDT-C	$68.98
Zarro, Erica	Social Worker	$53.98
Groben, Melody	Speech Therapist	$50.39
Kassis, Ellen	Speech Therapist	$49.37

C. Approve Summer IEP Attendance

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve all certified staff to attend summer IEP meetings, as required, at their hourly rate.

D. Appoint Paraprofessional Staff for the 2026-2027 School Year

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, accept and appoint paraprofessionals with final appointments pending assignments as required through student Individual Education Plans for the 2026-2027 school year and in accordance to the agreement between the Hope Township Board of Education and the Hope Township Education Association.

Staff Member	Rate	FTE	Salary	Hours	Total Salary
Barben, Christine	$20.60	5 Days	21,507.00	5.8 Hours	$21,507.00
DeYong, Sam	$16.70	5 Days	17,435.00	5.8 Hours	$17,435.00
Hughes, Megan	$16.44	5 Days	17,164.00	5.8 Hours	$17,164.00
Kenny, Anna Marie	$20.60	5 Days	21,507.00	5.8 Hours	$21,507.00
Shinkowski, Jennifer	$24.88	5 Days	27,274.00	6.09 Hours	$27,274.00
Vesper, Elizabeth	$22.28	5 Days	23,261.00	5.8 Hours	$23,261.00

E. Approve Summer ESY at White

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the following staff to work at White Extended School Year June 29, 2026 through July 23, 2026. It will be up to 16 days, 4 hours a day.

Employee	Position	Days	Hourly Rate	Hours per day	Total
Christina Barben	Paraprofessional	16	$20.60	4.00	$ 1,318.40
Sam DeYong	Paraprofessional	8	$16.70	4.00	$ 534.40
Anna Marie Kenny	Paraprofessional	12	$20.60	4.00	$ 988.80
Erika Leopardi	Paraprofessional	12	$25.00	4.00	$ 1,200.00
Melissa Thomas	Paraprofessional	2	$25.00	4.00	$ 200.00
Elizabeth Vesper	Paraprofessional	12	$22.28	4.00	$ 1,069.44
Melissa Woodhull	Nurse	8	$47.96	4.00	$ 1,534.72
Melody Groben	Speech	8	$50.39	4.00	$ 1,612.48

F. Approve Summer ESY at White - Substitutes

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the following staff as substitute teachers and paraprofessionals at $120.00 per day during the White Extended School Year June 29, 2026 through July 23, 2026.

Erika Leopardi
Melissa Thomas
Cathy Trotter

The Board discussed hiring of substitutes and the payout of personal days.

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

XIV. POLICY - Mr. Lucas, Mrs. Chamberlain

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mrs. Beatty to adopt Governance item 1.

1. Second Reading

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board adopt the first reading of the following policies:

- P 1230 Superintendent's Duties (M) (Revised)
- P 2200 Curriculum (M) (Revised)
- P 2411 Career Education and Academic Counseling (M) (Revised)
- P 0162 Notice of Board Meetings (Revised)
- P 0162.01 Legal Notices (M) (New)
- P 1643 Family Leave (M) (Revised)
- P 2260 Equity in School and Classroom Practices (M) (Revised)

• P 5561	Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion Techniques for Students with Disabilities (M) (Revised)
• P 6112	Reimbursement of Federal and Other Grant Expenditures (M) (Revised)
• P 6115.01	Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls - Allowability of Costs (M) (Revised)
• P 6115.02	Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls - Mandatory Disclosures (M)
• P 6311	Contracts for Goods or Services Funded by Federal Grants (M) (Revised)
• P 8561	Procurement Procedures for School Nutrition Programs (M) (Revised)

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

XV. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - Mrs. Kasharian

Mrs. Kasharian discussed:

- Boards adopting an AI policy.
- A policy for student sick days.

XVI. BHS BOARD MEMBER UPDATE - Mr. Ciccarelli

Mr. Ciccarelli discussed the Belvidere Board voting 7 to 5 to get out of the Girls Field Hockey Coop with North Warren.

XVII. WHITE BOARD MEMBER UPDATE - Mrs. Ritchie

Mrs. Ritchie discussed:

- 8th grade graduation, awards, and the flowers.
- Contract for the 6- 8 grade to attend White Township.

XVIII. GOOD OF THE ORDER

The Board discussed:

- the Tuition contract with White Township and its cost effectiveness.
- changing the August 18, 2026 Board Meeting to August 25, 2026.
- Board seat vacancy.

XIX. PUBLIC HEARING AND PETITION

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

XXI. ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF HIB INCIDENTS

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to acknowledge receipt of no HIB investigations.

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

XXII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas.

On a voice vote, all present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori A. Tirone
Board Secretary