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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 16, 2025

For the Regular Meeting of the Hope Township Board of Education
Tuesday, December 16, 2025 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 Left @6:45p.m.***		
Mr. Joseph Ciccarelli	***Present***	Mr. John Lucas	***Present***		

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

V. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Hope School Happenings
Presentation of Paw Awards -PAWSitively Caring
Presentation of Red Apple Award -Red Apple Joy Spreader
Recognition of Mr. Brian Grennan, Governor's Educator of the Year
Recognition of Ms. Meaghan Hughes, Educational Service Professional of the Year

Mrs. Green reported on:

- Winter Concert, Holiday Shoppers, Craft Market
- Hope Tree, all ornaments made by students
- Basketball, Warren County Consortium 12/9 and 12/16
- Math-a-Magicians/Marvelous Math
- Staff Holiday Party/ PTA Luncheon 12/17

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

Mre. Tirone reported on:

- Send/ Receive Letter from Dr. Lamonte for BHS
- Board of Education Election Results - Official
    - Three Year Terms
        - Linda Chamberlain
        - Mathew Leitner

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.

November 18, 2025 - Regular Meeting Minutes

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

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

Mrs. Tiroen gave the committee update.

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to approve Buildings & Grounds Transportation items A through E.

A. Approve the Use of Facilities

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, to approve the use of the gymnasium, classroom, upper and lower parking lots by the Hope PTA on Saturday, March 14, 2026 from 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. for Tricky Tray and 50/50 Raffle.

B. Approve the Use of Facilities

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, to approve the use of the gymnasium for the Illusion Maker's "Three 'R' Circus presented as a free assembly by Warren County on January 20, 2026 from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. for all grades.

C. Approve the Use of Facilities

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, to approve the use of the gymnasium for the St. Clair Hospital Teddy Bear Clinic presented on March 26, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. for PreKindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade.

D. Approve the Use of Facilities

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, to approve the use of the gymnasium for the Bright Smiles yearly presentation on February 18, 2026 from 9:00 a.m. through 10:30 a.m. for all grades.

E. Approve the Use of Facilities

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, to approve the use of the gymnasium, four classrooms and lower parking lot to Camp Invention for the week of June 22nd through 26th, 2026 for Summer Science Camp.

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

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

No meeting.

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

Mrs. Beatty gave the committee update.

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to approve Curriculum items A through C.

A. Fundraiser - Yearbook Committee

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve a Yearbook Committee Fundraiser to sell hot chocolate at the winter concert on December 17, 2025.

B. Approve Professional Development

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve Catherine Trotter to participate in a three part webinar of "Connecting the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports and Intervention & Referral Services" Part One is December 4, 2025, Part Two is March 5, 2026, and Part Three is April 29, 2026. There is no cost to the district.

C. Approve Field Trip - Centenary Stage Company

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve a field trip to Centenary Stage Company, Hackettstown, NJ for the First and Second grade to see "Miss Nelson is Missing" on February 13, 2026. The cost of the trip is $14.00 per student. Transportation will be provided by the district.

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

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

Mr. Ciccarelli gave a committee update

MOTION by Mr. Lucas, seconded by Mrs. Beatty to approve Finance items A through H.

A. Acceptance of the Financial Report November 2025

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 November 30, 2025, 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 November 30, 2025; 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 November 2025

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 October 2025 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 November 30, 2025 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 November 2025 and December 2025 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 November 2025 and December 2025 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 $166,096.87 for November 16, 2025 through November 30, 2025 and $326,493.29 for December 1, 2025 through December 15, 2025.

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. Professional Services Agreement with BAYADA Home Health Care, Inc.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve a Professional Services Agreement for Substitute Nursing Services between Hope Township Board of Education and BAYADA Home Health Care, Inc. for December 8, 2025 to June 30, 2026 at a cost of $75.00 an hour for a minimum service of four hours.

E. Professional Services Agreement with Best Choice Home Care, LLC

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve a Professional Services Agreement for Substitute Nursing Services between Hope Township Board of Education and Best Choice Home Care, LLC. for December 8, 2025 to June 30, 2026 at a cost of $72.50 an hour for a minimum service of five hours.

F. Ancillary Educational Services Agreement with Sussex County Educational Services Commission

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve an Ancillary Educational Services Agreement between Hope Township Board of Education and Sussex County Educational Services Commission for December 16, 2025 to June 30, 2026 as a Non-member. The cost of a Substitute Nurse would be $88.00 an hour and a 3% Administrative fee.

G. Approval of the Use of Maintenance Reserve

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2 permits a district board of education to withdraw by resolution funds from the maintenance reserve account and appropriate the funds into the required maintenance account lines at budget time or any time during the year for use on required maintenance activities for a school facility, as reported in the comprehensive maintenance plan pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26A-4;

WHEREAS, funds withdrawn from the maintenance reserve account shall be restricted to required maintenance appropriations. A district board of education or board of school estimate shall not transfer the funds to any other line-item account;

WHEREAS, in any year that maintenance reserve account funds are withdrawn, the district board of education shall restore to the maintenance reserve account at year-end any unexpended required maintenance appropriations, up to the amount of maintenance reserve account funds withdrawn;

WHEREAS, the Hope Township Board of Education has determined that an amount of $53,000 is needed to replace and install new light fixtures throughout the building except for the gymnasium. We will be seeking a rebate from JCP&L in the amount of $18,040 for the purchase of the fixtures;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hope Township Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, authorizes the School Business Administrator to make a transfer from the Maintenance Reserves in an amount of $57,000 to the 261 maintenance lines.

H. Accept Donation

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, accept a donation from the Hovole Family in the amount of $500.00.

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

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

Committee update

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

A. Approve Minimum Wage Increase

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve the NJ Minimum wage increase from $15.49 to $15.92 per hour effective January 1, 2026, for substitute custodians, secretaries and paraprofessionals.

B. Approve Substitute

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, approve Kimmy Chiromeras as a teaching substitute at a rate of $120.00 daily for the 2025-2026 school year, pending background check.

C. Accept Resignation

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, upon recommendation of the Chief School Administrator, accept with regret the resignation of Jacqueline Kaminski from Cafeteria Aide effective December 3, 2025.

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

XIV. POLICY - Mr. Lucas, Mrs. Chamberlain

Committee update

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mrs. Chamberlain to adopt the second reading of Governance item A.

A. P 2468 Independent Educational Evaluations (Revised)

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

XV. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - Mrs. Kasharian

No update.

XVI. BHS BOARD MEMBER UPDATE - Mr. Ciccarelli

Mr. Ciccarelli reported on:

- Sale of 3rd Street School
- Dr. Garcia is the Director of Special Services

XVII. WHITE BOARD MEMBER UPDATE - Mrs. Ritchie

Mrs. Ritchie reported on:

- School play

XVIII. GOOD OF THE ORDER

No good of the order.

XIX. PUBLIC HEARING AND PETITION

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

XX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas for the Board to enter into Executive Session at 7:40 p.m.

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

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act authorizes a public body to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which the Board of Education discusses topics falling within certain specified exceptions to the requirement for public meetings;(N.J.S.A. 10:4-13) and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education wishes to discuss matters that fall within statutory exceptions to open public meetings

BE IT RESOLVED pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act(N.J.S.A. 10:4-12), that the Board adjourn from public session and enter into executive session at this time to discuss confidential matters pertaining to legal matters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the matters discussed in executive session should be made public as soon as the need for confidentiality no longer exists, but it is not known at this time when that may be. The Board expects to reconvene into public session in approximately 10 minutes. Action may be taken.

BE IT RESOLVED to return to Open Public Session at 7:49 p.m.

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas for the Board to reconvene the public session.

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

XXI. ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF HIB INCIDENTS

MOTION by Mr. Ciccarelli, seconded by Mr. Lucas to acknowledge receipt of HIB investigation #1 deemed a HIB incident.

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

XXII. ADJOURNMENT

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

On a voice vote, all present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori A. Tirone
Board Secretary