



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE RIDGEWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes of the Ridgewood Board of Education Special Public Meeting held on Monday, March 18, 2026 at 7:00 pm.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

At 6:05 p.m. Ms. Brogan called the meeting to order with a roll call.

Present:

Ms. Sheila Brogan, President
Mr. Muhammad Mahmoud, Vice President
Mr. Saurabh Dani (*arrived after roll call*)
Ms. Mary Micale
Ms. Mary Louise Handy (virtual attendance)

Also Present:

Dr. Mark Schwarz, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Michelle Fenwick, Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Jaime Cangialosi-Murphy, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Richard Matthews, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Mr. Brian Ross, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Visitors: Approximately 30 community members were present in-person and/or virtually.

III. FLAG SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Brogan led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. OPENING STATEMENT BY PRESIDING OFFICER

Ms. Brogan announced that pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), advance notice of this meeting had been given to The Star Ledger, The Record, and the Clerk of the Village of Ridgewood. In addition, notices were posted in the office of the Board Secretary and in all school buildings.

V. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Dr. Schwarz provided an update regarding the budget and courtesy busing.

Evan Faulk, thanked the Board for the thankless job. Dr. Schwarz you made the comments and some of it was new information for all of us. He wants to clarify one issue, did you say that the Norgate neighborhood, the Glen School of Vanburgh K through 5, 6 through 8 and senior and freshman would not be affected by the coming busing situation on the table?

- Dr. Schwarz replied that all of the residences that are on the other side of route 17, we did confirm as of today that we will continue to provide busing. Most folks in that area are not even courtesy busing. You're outside of the mileage area, especially for Hawes. Today we clarified that the neighborhood has been getting, there are a few who by definition are courtesy, but we will continue servicing that entire section of the community through high

school.

Marc Vogel, lives on Henrietta Court which is over Linwood ave, he would like clarification that he will continue to get busing Kindergarten through 12th grade. He did the drive over Linwood ave and his kids would have to go on two off ramps through route 17, without lights, crossroads, stop signs. Because his kids are young, he has six years to worry about this but does not want to worry about it down the road.

- Dr. Schwarz replied that he will have busing in perpetuity according to what Dr. Schwarz is committing to. This will be updated on the board regulation as well.

Beth Jennings, appreciates the update on busing, you did say that subscription busing is a consideration and you're still working out the details, which she appreciates. Would you be filling empty seats or is it a possibility that you would be adding buses? She is asking because she has one in elementary at Hawes and one at Ben Franklin, she lives 1.9 miles from Hawes and is one of the few on Stevens who do not qualify for the bus./ Drop off at Ben Franklin is a nightmare, to the point where it's a safety concern for drivers, students, and families trying to navigate the area. The congestion is pretty large. More buses there would alleviate so many issues. This may be something to consider.

- Ms. Brogan replied that it is too early for them to do detailing, but they certainly can consider that. This would not be just a one time thing, subscription busing may start smaller and then grow.

Patricia Galasso, from what she understands at Monday's meeting there was talk about cutting teachers/staff at the school levels. The argument was that class sizes are not already large. She is a former teacher in the district and was teaching class sizes with 28 students. She would like to put a word out and understand if there will be teacher cuts because that is something she did not come back for.

Susan, thanked the Board. Have you been considering alternative buses? She does not know if they exist, but a system that has electric buses. If that is a thing yet. Since she expects the gas prices to go up, the current situation in the world is not going to resolve soon.

- Dr. Schwarz replied to comments regarding subscription busing and potential plans for the coming year. The goal is to maintain routes we currently have and shift some of them to subscription. Going into the future, when we have the systems for billing and registration, adding routes would seem like a service that we are willing to do.
- Dr. Schwarz replied to the comment about cutting positions. There will be some impact on class sizes. We do not want to push for classes in the 30s, ideally we want to stay in the low 20s.
- Dr. Schwarz replied to the comment about electric buses. There have been talks about it, there may be internal routes where that is the most viable possibility.

View this portion of the [Ridgewood BOE Meeting](#) starting at 00:10:32 .

VI. MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION and ADJOURN the Public Meeting

Whereas the Ridgewood Board of Education seeks to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 to discuss matters pertaining to personnel. The minutes of this closed session will be released when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

MOTION by: Ms. Brogan **SECOND** by: Ms. Micale

VOICE VOTE:

Ms. Brogan, Mr. Dani, Ms. Micale, Mr. Dani, Mr, Mahmoud - ALL AYES

- The Regular Public Meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Richard Matthews
Business Administrator/Board Secretary