



# HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AGENDA  
SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HOLMDEL HIGH SCHOOL  
AUGUST 15, 2022 7:00 PM

## *Mission Statement*

*The mission of the Holmdel Township Public Schools is to provide a comprehensive and caring educational environment that will develop the potential of every student into achievement. In partnership with our community, the School District will support all of our students' efforts to meet and exceed the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and to become responsible and resourceful citizens and lifelong learners.*

### A. Call to Order

The Board of Education, Township of Holmdel, met in a Special Business Meeting on Monday, August 15, 2022 remotely and at Holmdel High School, 36 Crawfords Corner Road, Holmdel, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. by Mrs. Urbanski, Board President.

### B. Opening Statement

Statement is hereby made that adequate notice of this meeting was given by:

- Posting written notice prominently on the bulletin board in the Office of the Board of Education, 65 McCampbell Road, Holmdel, New Jersey, the District's website and sent to the four district schools.
- The mailing and/or hand delivery of said notice to the designated newspapers, Asbury Park Press, Independent, the PLG, PSG, PSA, PTSO, SAB presidents and student representatives to the Board.
- Filing with the Clerk of Holmdel Township, Police Headquarters and Public Library.

### C. Open Public Meetings Act

Meetings of the Board are open to the public and all members of the community should feel free to participate:

- There are two opportunities for the public to speak; the first is at the beginning of the meeting for agenda items only and the second is at the end of the meeting for other items.
- Any individual desiring to speak shall give his or her name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented.
- The presentation shall be as brief as possible but no more than three (3) minutes per individual.
- There are certain matters that may be brought before the board that cannot be immediately addressed in public. Such matters may be referred by the president to a board committee and/or to the Superintendent for consideration and/or resolution.
- The board vests in its president, or other presiding officer, authority to terminate the remarks of any individual if he/she deems it in the best interest of those present to do so.

AGENDA  
SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HOLMDEL HIGH SCHOOL  
AUGUST 15, 2022 7:00 PM

D. Roll Call/Flag Salute

The following Board members were present: Mesdames: Urbanski, Briamonte and Tuccillo. Messrs: Sockol, Hammer, Reddy and Wall. Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur. Also present, Dr. J. Scott Cascone, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Jessica DeWysockie, Assistant Business Administrator/Assistant Board Secretary and Mr. Paul Green, Board Attorney. Student Representatives to the Board, Ms. Trinity Han and Ms. Anugna Parvateneni were absent.

E. Presentation(s)/Public Hearing(s) - None

F. Report of the Student Representatives to the Board - None

G. Report of the Superintendent - None

H. Questions or Comments from the Public on Action Items Only - None

I. Action Items

- Approval of Minutes – None

- Policy - None

- Superintendent's Recommendations

1. Approval of Appointment, Special Education Teacher, Holmdel High School

Resolved: That the Board approve the appointment of Robyn Krause, Special Education Teacher, Holmdel High School, at a salary of step 2-3BA (2), \$56,100.00 effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, pending criminal history review. Salary for the 2022/2023 school year to be dependent upon completion of negotiations with HTEA. [Replacement]

MOTION: Mr. Reddy SECOND: Mrs. Briamonte VOTE: 6-0-1  
Abstain: Mr. Sockol  
Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur

2. Approval of Appointment, Special Education Teacher, Indian Hill School

Resolved: That the Board approve the appointment of John Blaes, Special Education Teacher, Indian Hill School, at a salary of 1MA, \$63,900.00, effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, pending criminal history review. Salary for the 2022/2023 school year to be dependent upon completion of negotiations with HTEA. [Transfer]

MOTION: Mr. Reddy SECOND: Mrs. Briamonte VOTE: 6-0-1  
Abstain: Mr. Sockol  
Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur

AGENDA  
SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HOLMDEL HIGH SCHOOL  
AUGUST 15, 2022 7:00 PM

3. Approval of Appointment, Social Studies Teacher, Indian Hill School

Resolved: That the Board approve the appointment of Timothy Skinner, Social Studies Teacher, Indian Hill School, at a salary of step 1MA, \$63,900.00, effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, pending criminal history review. Salary for the 2022/2023 school year to be dependent upon completion of negotiations with HTEA. [Transfer]

MOTION: Mr. Reddy SECOND: Mrs. Briamonte VOTE: 6-0-1  
Abstain: Mr. Sockol  
Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur

4. Approval of Appointment, Math Interventionist, Indian Hill School

Resolved: That the Board approve the appointment of Marissa Kane, Math Interventionist, Indian Hill School, at a salary of step 7-8MA+15(8), \$70,700.00 effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, pending criminal history review. Salary for the 2022/2023 school year to be dependent upon completion of negotiations with HTEA. [Transfer]

MOTION: Mr. Reddy SECOND: Mrs. Briamonte VOTE: 6-0-1  
Abstain: Mr. Sockol  
Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur

5. Approval of Appointment, Temporary Leave Replacement, Special Education Teacher, Village School

Resolved: That the Board approve the appointment of Christine Crawford, Temporary Leave Replacement, Special Education Teacher, Village School, at a salary of step 4-6MA (5), \$66,600.00, prorated, effective September 1, 2022 through January 11, 2023, pending criminal history review. Salary for the 2022/2023 school year to be dependent upon completion of negotiations with HTEA. [Transfer]

MOTION: Mr. Reddy SECOND: Mrs. Briamonte VOTE: 6-0-1  
Abstain: Mr. Sockol  
Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur

6. Approval of Appointment, Temporary Leave Replacement, Art Teacher, Holmdel High School

Resolved: That the Board approve the appointment of Michelle Colina, Temporary Leave Replacement, Art Teacher, Holmdel High School, at a salary of step 1MA, \$63,900.00, effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Salary for the 2022/2023 school year to be dependent upon completion of negotiations with HTEA. [Leave of Absence]

MOTION: Mr. Reddy SECOND: Mrs. Briamonte VOTE: 6-0-1  
Abstain: Mr. Sockol  
Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur

AGENDA  
SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HOLMDEL HIGH SCHOOL  
AUGUST 15, 2022 7:00 PM

7. Approval of Appointment, PreK Paraprofessional, Village School

Resolved: That the Board approve the appointment of Reilly Gray, PreK Paraprofessional, Village School, at a salary of \$27.21 per hour for 5.75 hours 5 days a week, effective September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. [Resignation]

MOTION: Mr. Reddy SECOND: Mrs. Briamonte VOTE: 6-0-1  
Abstain: Mr. Sockol  
Absent: Mrs. Zhang and Dr. Collur

• **Business Administrator's Recommendations** – None

J. Old Business - None

K. New Business - None

L. Questions or Comments from the Public

1. Devon Roth, a rising junior at the Academy of Allied Health & Sciences expressed her concerns with centralized stops, timing, safety and convenience for students, like herself, participating in after-school activities.
2. Erika Roth, MCVSD parent, expressed concerns with the distance and location of centralized bus stop, stating that some are on hazardous roadways. She currently has an OPRA Request pending. Ms. Roth suggested that door to door bussing resume by either having a longer route or getting a second bus (smaller bus or van). She then suggested removing courtesy bussing for in-district students and said the same burden should be placed on them as being placed on out of district students.
3. Shane Strait, High Tech High School parent, tried to encourage his daughter to come and speak but she didn't want to because she didn't feel there was any point. He expressed his concern with the centralized stops and referenced NJSA 18:A:39-1. His daughter would have to walk on one of the roadways that is unpaved (Holmdel Road) and he would not feel comfortable allowing her to do that. He stated he had written to Ms. Carducci, who responded initially, but at some point the correspondence stopped so he came to the meeting to vocalize his concerns.
4. Peter Vaclavik, parent, whose daughter is entering her junior year at MAST, lives about 2.7 miles from the closest stop and about a mile of it has no sidewalks. They timed it and it takes 53 minutes to walk to the stop without her backpack. Both parents work (he is at work by 6:30 and his wife works in the city) so there is nobody to drive her to the bus stop unless they hire a babysitter to drop her at the bus stop. If she misses the bus, she gets to lug all of her stuff back home. He stated these kids have worked their butts off but they're being told it doesn't matter. It seems you're trying to keep the kids "in" the school. What these kids are seeing does not instill confidence. Parents are going to end up pulling their students from the schools because they cannot get them there.
5. Suzanne Gestrich, parent, whose son is entering his senior year at MAST, states that she and her husband are incredibly disappointed that the district feels that offering transportation within 3 miles of their home is not feasible. She feels that the Township may not have put these routes out to bid in the same manner as they have previously and finds it hard to believe that nobody bid on the route(s). She and her husband have owned home in town for 31 years and have paid several hundred thousand dollars in property tax dollars and they only have one child. She needs to get her kid to the school bus. She

AGENDA  
SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HOLMDEL HIGH SCHOOL  
AUGUST 15, 2022 7:00 PM

wanted to remind the Board that, over a decade ago, the Board made the decision to sell their fleet and rely exclusively on subcontracted bussing. At that time, subcontractors were plentiful and inexpensive. A choice was made and we reaped the benefits, however, now the economy has changed and things are different. She believes the district should not deny this service to people, like herself, who have been paying taxes in this town for 31 years. It would be nice if the township could make some good faith attempt to get some transportation.

6. Mr. Wang, parent, whose daughter attends High Tech High School, expressed concerns with centralized stops. He suggested we look at what other districts (Allentown, for instance) are doing to see if we can find a solution.
7. Mr. Reddy shared his thoughts on the bussing situation and requested that Ms. Carducci attend the last Board Meeting in August to go through the process.
8. Dr. Cascone thanked everyone for coming out to speak this evening. He acknowledged that this process has not been great and thanked everyone for their time and asked for pardon for having to take their time. He apologized for the relatively late nature with which parents were provided transportation information, without clarification or an opportunity for questions. He also apologized for releasing a 'plan' with some significant holes. The district is looking at additional options and working on adding additional stops. He assured parents that no student attending a vocational school will have a bus stop more than 2.5 miles from their house and no student will have to traverse a roadway that is hazardous.
9. Mr. Wall inquired about Local Public School Contracts Law and asked if there is an exception for the district to negotiate an emergency contract, rather than through the traditional bidding process so we can have this problem solved before school starts. Mr. Green responded accordingly and stated that a, as long as it meets the emergency criteria, an emergency contract can be awarded on a short-term basis. However, the route would still need to be put out for bid before it reaches the bid threshold.
10. Mr. Liu, parent, who has two children attending High Tech High School. He expressed concerns with centralized stops and stated the kids and parents will have to pay the price. Every decision the Board makes has a consequence. He stated that he appreciates the Board looking into this and hopes there is a resolution soon.
11. Mrs. Zhang, parent, whose daughter attends High Tech High School expressed concerns with the centralized stops. She stated that it takes an adult an hour to walk 2.5 miles (average speed) and it will be very difficult to get her child to the bus stop in the morning and from the bus stop in the afternoon. She said the kids should not have to walk one hour to the bus stop. It is not acceptable.
12. Dr. Cascone responded that the 2.5 mile standard is based upon distance from home to school mileage. We are applying it to the bus stop because there is no regulation speaks to vocational school students and the distance from the bus stop to the home. Presently, there is no regulation that speaks to that but he agrees that it is somewhat of an unrealistic expectation that someone is going to walk 2.5 miles to a bus stop.
13. Dr. Mehnart, parent, stated that she has lived in Holmdel for fourteen years and has had three children in the Holmdel School District (none any longer) and this is the first time she's up in front of this Board. She said it takes a lot for her to come up and complain about something. She applauded Dr. Cascone for admitting that perhaps some mistakes were made in this process. She shared her first

AGENDA  
SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HOLMDEL HIGH SCHOOL  
AUGUST 15, 2022 7:00 PM

interaction with Dr. Cascone, just a few weeks after he started, where she was having some challenges getting her child to MAST. The issue was resolved within about 2 hours, which was impressive. She stated that when there is chaos like this, the most important thing leadership can do is get out in front of it. Transparency and trust are the most important things we can have in terms of communication with our students and our families. She feels this process was not well thought out, not well organized and not all possibilities were considered. Where is the transportation for these kids and how did this happen. That is all they want to know.

14. Mr. Sockol shared that he was on the board when they voted to eliminate bus equipment and fully outsource transportation. He stated that he cannot remember a July or August and July where we didn't have a group of parents unhappy about the bussing situation. It's a thing that changes from year to year and Ms. Carducci has always found a solution. Mr. Sockol has confidence that Dr. Cascone and Ms. Carducci will continue to look at our bussing situation and come up with a solution that addresses the needs of the families. He stated that optimism is a good approach to take.
15. Dr. Cascone stated that, since we have been receiving the outreach from parents, amidst the many other priorities, this is at the top of the list. The next time a message goes out to the community, it will be from Dr. Cascone. He wants to be able to say, with complete confidence, that we've looked at every option. I also heard the request for transparency and details and you will get those as well. Dr. Cascone said he can't promise that the end result will be exactly what you are looking for but he can say that whatever inefficiencies or inadequacies there were in communication, will be fixed. The feedback was definitely impactful, has made an impression and has increased my level of priority.

M. Executive Session (if required) - None

N. Adjournment

Board President Mrs. Urbanski called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Sockol motioned, Mr. Reddy seconded and by a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica L. DeWysockie  
Assistant Business Administrator/Assistant Board Secretary