

TRENTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
108 North Clinton Avenue
Trenton, New Jersey 08609
EMERGENCY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday – April 7, 2020 – 5:30 P.M.

Completed April 8, 2020
Convened at 5:32 P.M.

Call to Order

Board President Addie Daniels-Lane called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

President Daniels-Lane led the salute to the flag.

Roll Call

Present:

Gene Bouie
Nicole Brossoie
Addie Daniels-Lane
Yolanda Marrero-Lopez
Taraun McKnight
Gerald Truehart II
Jeannie Weakliem
Sadé Williams – arrived 5:35 p.m.

Superintendent of Schools – Ronald C. Lee - Present

Business Administrator/Board Secretary – Jayne Howard - Present

New Jersey Sunshine Law - Read by Board President Daniels-Lane

The New Jersey Public Meetings Law, under the emergency provisions, was enacted to ensure the right to the public to have advanced notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted on.

On the rules of this act, the Trenton Board of Education has caused notice of this emergency meeting by publicizing the date, time and place, therefore posted in the Central Services Building, 108 North Clinton Avenue, City Clerk's Office, City Hall, published on our website, the Times and the Star Ledger.

Formal action will take place at this meeting.

Mission Statement - Read by Board President Daniels-Lane

All students will graduate with a vision for their future, motivated to learn continually and prepared to succeed in their choice of college or career.

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At this time, General Counsel James J. Rolle, Jr. advised the Board that, under the NJ Sunshine Law, there is a provision that if the Board is going to have an emergency meeting, ¾ of the members present at the meeting must vote to hold the meeting on an emergency basis without the requisite notice required. He asked for a motion to this effect.

Motion was made by Mr. Bouie and seconded by Ms. Weakliem to hold the meeting on an emergency basis. The motion was approved by all Board Members present.

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Gene Bouie	X		
Nicole Brossoie	X		
Yolanda Marrero-Lopez	X		
Taraun McKnight	X		
Gerald Truehart II	X		
Jeannie Weakliem	X		
Sadé Williams	X		
Addie Daniels-Lane	X		

Adoption Of Agenda

President Daniels-Lane asked for a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion was made by Ms. Marrero-Lopez and seconded by Mr. Truehart to adopt the agenda. Agenda was adopted by all Board Members present.

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Gene Bouie	X		
Nicole Brossoie	X		
Yolanda Marrero-Lopez	X		
Taraun McKnight	X		
Gerald Truehart II	X		
Jeannie Weakliem	X		
Sadé Williams	X		
Addie Daniels-Lane	X		

Prior to the Superintendent’s Remarks, President Daniels-Lane advised the Board that since tonight’s meeting is being held on an emergency basis, all comments must be limited to the agenda items.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REMARKS

Superintendent Lee stated that the purpose of this meeting is to mitigate any hardships occurring since all students have not had an equitable opportunity to perform coursework during the current pandemic. He spoke with the other Mercer County Superintendents, and all are adopting a hold harmless policy regarding student grading. All details are in the revised online Board Policy and Regulation 2624.1 – Grading During Remote Learning due to Coronavirus – which is in force on a temporary basis.

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Superintendent Lee said the fourth quarter grading may need to be considered in light of new guidance from Governor Murphy, who has indicated that school closings will be extended beyond April 30.

The revised school calendar on tonight's agenda extends the third quarter report card date to April 27.

Note to minutes: Mr. Rolle advised the Board that there have been a couple minor revisions made to tonight's policy and regulation after discussions with the Trenton Education Association (TEA). These changes are reflected in the revised documents on the website.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public wishing to address the Board.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Truehart reported on the Policy Committee meeting which was held to address grading during the coronavirus pandemic. He thanked TEA, Trenton Administrators and Supervisors Association (TASA), Board Committee members and Leadership Team members on their cooperative effort in drafting the policy and regulation on tonight's agenda. He stated that all stakeholders have reviewed the policy and regulation prior to tonight's meeting.

Ms. Broissoie said she had listened to the Governor's address today, and the State of Emergency has been extended to May 9. She asked why the District is grading during this time and whether a grade of Pass or Incomplete would be more appropriate. Superintendent Lee said this was considered, but it was felt that the fairest way is for students to receive the grades they have earned. He stated that students will have an opportunity to raise their grades in the fourth quarter. He recognized that there are varied home life factors affecting student performance. Online access, or lack thereof, is a big issue for some families.

Ms. Daniels-Lane asked if students will be given until the end of the school year to complete their work, and the Superintendent answered that he will get back to her after he has consulted with his Leadership Team.

Ms. Williams asked how student work done in paper packets will be evaluated. Superintendent Lee said Teachers will reach out to students to send documentation electronically only (i.e., sending pictures, ClassDojo, etc.) in the interest of public health and safety. Ms. Daniels-Lane advised that students will be held harmless if they have no way of submitting their work electronically.

Ms. Broissoie asked for information on follow-up with students who do not have electronic access. Chief Academic Officer Ms. Elizabeth DeJesus said that Counselors, Climate &

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Culture Specialists and Parent Liaisons are reaching out to these families. Assistant Superintendents for Elementary and Secondary are gathering the data on this.

BOARD DISCUSSION & ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Superintendent’s Recommendations:

Grading Policy Changes
District Calendar Changes

Mr. Rolle advised the Board of two revisions to the proposed Policy 2624.1. One additional sentence reads as follows: “Furthermore, it is the policy of the Board that no teaching staff member shall be disciplined for student non-participation.” At the end of the policy, regarding the policy only remaining in effect until the District reopens, the sentence now reads: “This policy, and any rules and regulations created hereunder, shall automatically expire when the District reopens and teachers and students return to the teaching and learning environment in place on March 11, 2020.”

President Daniels-Lane asked for a motion to accept the amendments to the policy.

Motion was made by Mr. Truehart and properly seconded to accept the amendments to the policy. The motion was **approved** by all Board Members.

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Gene Bouie	X		
Nicole Brossoie	X		
Yolanda Marrero-Lopez	X		
Taraun McKnight	X		
Gerald Truehart II	X		
Jeannie Weakliem	X		
Sadé Williams	X		
Addie Daniels-Lane	X		

Mr. Rolle advised the Board that Bylaw 0131 authorizes the Board to adopt policies on an emergency basis. He asked for a motion to adopt the policy and regulation as per Bylaw 0131 on an emergency basis.

Motion was made by Ms. McKnight and seconded by Ms. Weakliem to adopt Policy and Regulation 2624.1 – Grading During Remote Learning Due to Coronavirus – on an emergency basis. The motion was **approved** by all Board Members.

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Gene Bouie	X		
Nicole Brossoie	X		
Yolanda Marrero-Lopez	X		
Taraun McKnight	X		
Gerald Truehart II	X		
Jeannie Weakliem	X		

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Sadé Williams	X
Addie Daniels-Lane	X

Ms. Daniels-Lane asked if there is any discussion on the revised 2019-2020 School Calendar. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve.

Motion was made by Ms. Marrero-Lopez and seconded by Mr. Bouie to approve the revised 2019-2020 School Calendar. The motion was **approved** by all Board Members.

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Gene Bouie	X		
Nicole Brossoie	X		
Yolanda Marrero-Lopez	X		
Taraun McKnight	X		
Gerald Truehart II	X		
Jeannie Weakliem	X		
Sadé Williams	X		
Addie Daniels-Lane	X		

Ms. Daniels-Lane thanked the Board Members for making themselves available for this emergency meeting. She also wished to extend the Board's sympathies to Superintendent Lee on the passing of his mother. She thanked him for his sacrifice and leadership.

Superintendent Lee thanked the Board for their condolences; and he thanked his Leadership Team, TEA & TASA Leadership for all their work in keeping the District on track.

Motion was made by Ms. McKnight and seconded by Mr. Truehart to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

ADJOURN 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Jayne S. Howard

Jayne S. Howard
Business Administrator/Board Secretary