

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC BOARD MEETING
HELD MONDAY, MAY 5, 2008, AT 6:30 P.M.
22 VALLEY ROAD, MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY

A. The meeting opened at 6:38 p.m. and the following statement was read:

Let the minutes reflect that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the following manner:

On November 12, 2007, notice of this meeting was faxed to the Montclair Times, the Herald and News, and the Star-Ledger. The time, date, and location of this meeting were accurately set forth therein.

On this same date a copy of said notice was filed with the Township Clerk and was posted at the public bulletin board in the first floor main hall of the Board of Education Building, 22 Valley Road.

Copies have also been mailed to all persons who have requested same at no cost.

B. RESOLUTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:39 p.m. Mrs. Taylor moved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b), the Montclair Board of Education may exclude the public from that portion of a public meeting at which the Board discusses any of the matters described at N.J.S.A.10:4-(b) (1) – (9);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Montclair Board of Education shall forthwith enter into closed session to discuss the following matters concerning: personnel matters cover by the attorney-client privilege; and matter rendered confidential by state or federal law: personnel matters, personnel report, and out-of-district placements, and exclusions report.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said discussion maybe disclosed to the public when the reasons for discussing and acting upon it in closed session no longer exist.

Seconded by Mrs. Lombard and approved by a vote of 6-0.

At 6:39 p.m. the Board went into executive session.

C. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Personnel Matters
2. Personnel Report

D. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Mrs. Lombard moved that the Board shall return from executive session; seconded by Mr. Riddick and approved by a vote of 6-0.

The Board returned to open session at 7:30 p.m.

E. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance occurred at 7:31 p.m.

F. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Timothy Barr	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
John Carlton	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Shirley Grill	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Robert Kautz	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Shelly Lombard	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Ronald Riddick	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Carmen Taylor	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Staff Members Present	<u> 5 </u>	
Members of the Public	<u> 50 </u>	
Members of the Press	<u> 1 </u>	

G. INTRODUCTIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITIONS

1. First Place Gold Key Award for the 2008 Scholastic Art and Writing Contest

Dr. Cusack and Ms. Sheila Frye (from Mt. Hebron) presented the winners:

Isabella Artale	Savannah Bigelow	Madeline Black	Natasha Jewette
Anita Lombri	Hannah Steffe	Marcus Villanueva	

2. National Silver Writing Award

Presented by Dr. Cusack and Ms. Sheila Frye (from Mt. Hebron):

The following two students will be recognized by Scholastic in June at Carnegie Hall:

Lin-Bong Li and Victoria Riker

Mr. Carlton thanked all of the students for representing Montclair and making everyone proud of them.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

None.

I. BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORTS

Mr. Kautz spoke about a lawsuit brought by the state of Connecticut against No Child Left Behind and the court decided against the school district. The decision is now being appealed.

Mr. Carlton stated that SVPA will have three shows each weekend for the next two weekends. There are a lot of students, former students, teachers, and community members who are involved in this program.

J. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – AGENDA ITEMS

Dr. Alvarez commented on the administrative changes that are taking place in the schools. He feels that Montclair needs to create the strongest possible leadership team across the district. This often identifies individual talents and placing individuals where there would be the most beneficial to the district as a whole. This is about the Montclair Public Schools as a whole, being strong and not just individual schools.

Two months ago, Felice Harris was appointed the position of Director of School and Community Relations, which opened the Nishuane Principal position. Dr. Alvarez thanked everyone for patiently waiting to learn what was going to happen.

Dr. Alvarez asked Gail Clarke, Watchung School Principal, to assume the Nishuane Principal position for a number of reasons. Mrs. Clarke, is an extremely competent administrator, it is felt that Watchung School is extremely strong and she has done a wonderful job there. It is also felt that Watchung can sustain the changes and Mrs. Clarke's transfer to Nishuane is in the best interest of the district.

Mrs. Clarke is a proven administrator who will manage the district's largest elementary school. She has knowledge of early childhood education, and has been a teacher and coordinator for Gifted and Talented education in Bergen County. These are all very critical to the needs of Nishuane. Mrs. Clarke is ready to accept the challenge of moving to Nishuane.

Marcus Rhaney, currently Assistant Principal at Glenfield, will assume the Principal position for Watchung. Mr. Rhaney, has great leadership potential, he is one of the people the Board has identified through our in house program that is, Building Leaders for the Montclair Public Schools. Montclair is trying to keep people in the district that the Board feels are highly qualified within our school district. Mr. Rhaney has experience as a Pre-K, elementary school, and middle school teacher, also as a House Leader, and most recently as an Assistant Principal. He is highly respected by his colleagues and has certainly earned the respect of the students and parents with whom he has worked with in the past. His experience will enable Watchung to remain on the same course that Mrs. Clarke has set for it.

Peter Renwick, Assistant Principal at the High School, is resigning. Mr. Renwick will be moving to the role of Principal at Westfield High School. Montclair takes pride in Westfield wanting Mr. Renwick as Principal of their larger school. He will be starting in Westfield on July 1, 2008.

Currently there are a couple of Assistant Principal positions that will be opening and there may be another one in the near future. Some of these replacements will be done internally, but every once in a while it is felt to be good to bring in someone from the outside that can bring in some new ideas and new energy. Dr. Alvarez, feels that this is an important time for Montclair to be focused internally, to provide support for our staff but also for our schools as a whole.

Mary Beth Rosenthal – PTA Council – Stated that the PTA is about to launch a Shop For Fundraising Initiative in the community. The PTA will be reaching out to local businesses, principals, and teachers. The PTA has been discussing the strengths of our magnet schools. Stephaine Winer has donated her time to help with the magnet schools. On May 17th the PTA will be discussing action steps that they can take to help supports these schools.

Claire Walls – 392 Upper Mountain Ave. – Parent chair at the Nishuane School Review - Ms. Walls is unhappy with the process of moving a Principal into Nishuane without parental input.

Beth Wilensky – 5 Briar Hill Road – Hillside PTA President – Ms. Wilensky questioned if parental input can be made into the decision of moving the Principals locations around? She feels that Mrs. Clarke may not be the right fit for Nishuane, she wants to be assured that Mrs. Clarke understands the Nishuane community and that the school will continue to thrive in a creative learning environment.

Masiel Rodriquez-Vars – 34 Highland Ave. – Feels that Nishuane is extremely important in the district and is concerned that Mrs. Clarke might not fit in at Nishuane. Ms. Rodriques-Vars also wished that there would have been an open process in making this switch.

Dawn Porter – 10 Highland Ave. – Ms. Porter is also upset about the lack of communication regarding the transfer of the Principal.

Jill Hamberg – 155 Alexander – Ms. Hamberg stated that the Bradford PTA hopes that field and drainage repairs will be in a timely manner for the children to be able to use the field in September. The PTA Health and Wellness members would like to be included in the process of these repairs.

Carmen Young Van Atter – 38 Greenview Way – Disagrees with the way the decision was made about the transfer of Principal.

Jeff Appel – 136 Upper Mountain Ave. – Mr. Appel is very disappointed in the reasoning for the transfer of the Principals.

Dr. Alvarez responded that the agenda is posted on the website every Friday and it was certainly on the agenda. The Board is not trying to hide anything, it is the administrative prerogative to move administrators around. Montclair may not do this often, but by law the administrators have the right to do this. If this was a democratic process it could go on for months because of all of the support the Board has received to keep Mrs. Clarke at Watchung. This is the reason why the administrators are hired and called to make these decisions which may not always be agreed upon by everyone. In some cases there has been a different type of process where the situation warranted. There are times when the administrators make a decision they think is in the best interest of the community as a whole. Dr. Alvarez thinks that is what the parents want him to do and he feels that these moves will be beneficial to the community as a whole.

Abbey Daniskis – 49 Erwin Road – Ms. Daniskis was on the interviewing committee when Mrs. Clarke was hired for Watchung and she feels that she was a “breath of fresh air,” who brought a lot to the school system. She is saddened that the Board has made the decision to move her from Watchung. Ms. Daniskis feels that Watchung will lose a lot from Mrs. Clarke transferring.

Leah Korbel – 44 Northview Ave. – Ms. Korbel said that it sounds like the Board received emails of feedback from the parents concerning this change and would like to know how they knew about this when she was not aware of this information.

The response was that this was posted on the website on Friday and the Board received emails over the weekend.

Dr. Alvarez stated that a lot of different scenarios were considered including moving other Principals to Nishuane but this is what he thought was the best choice and what he is recommending to the Board.

Regan Arthur – 60 Tuxedo Road – Ms. Arthur stated that she is going to miss Mrs. Clarke and she envies Nishuane.

Gay Marcellus – 27 Ward Place – Teacher at Nishuane – Ms. Marcellus spoke on behalf of some of her fellow teachers that they were stunned about the transition they will be going through with the changing of the Principal. They hoped that the Board would allow some of the teachers and staff members to sit in on the decision that will be made which will affect them.

K. RESOLUTIONS

1. Other Resolutions

Mrs. Lombard moved to approve the following resolution and change order:

Conference and Travel Expenses

WHEREAS, New Jersey Administrative Code N.J.A.C. 23 B and board of Education policy

require approval of the Board of Education prior to expending Board of Education funds for travel and related expenses, and

WHEREAS, the travel must be directly related to the employee's or Board member's current responsibilities,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following Board members and employees are approved for travel-related reimbursements for an amount up to the estimated cost indicated:

<u>Conference</u>	<u>Board Member/ Employee</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Educational Purpose</u>
Connected Math	Howard Bousel	\$240.00	Enhance classroom instruction and pedagogy for Board approval instruction for Everyday Math.
	Brianne Fitzpatrick	\$240.00	
	Sharon Harwich	\$240.00	
	Jerry Belmonte	\$240.00	
	Bidets Dottie	\$240.00	
	Brand Turner	\$240.00	
	Sue Miller	\$240.00	
	Emmett Murphy	\$240.00	
	Valerie Hamilton	\$280.00	
	Rosalind Thompson	\$280.00	
	Cecil Vincent	\$280.00	
Pete Von Hoffmann	\$280.00		
Audit & CAFR Preparation	Andrea Del Guercio	\$100.00	Help with preparation of year end audit report.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that reimbursement will be made for expenses that are in accordance with Board of Education policy and for which original receipts are submitted to the Business Office.

2. Change Order

#1 For Door and Frame Replacements at Various Schools - For an overall increase of \$9,860.00 for the following:

- Door & Frame Replacement at GI Rooms 402 & 415 \$7,200.00
 - Replace and Paint 5 Doors at Mt. Hebron Large Gym \$2,660.00
- Total** **\$9,860.00**

Seconded by Mr. Riddick and approved by a roll call vote of:

	A YE	N AY
Timothy Barr	<u> X </u>	_____
John Carlton	<u> X </u>	_____
Shirley Grill	_____	_____ ABSENT
Robert Kautz	<u> X </u>	_____
Shelly Lombard	<u> X </u>	_____
Ronald Riddick	<u> X </u>	_____
Carmen Taylor	<u> X </u>	_____

3. Contract Awards

Mrs. Taylor moved to approve the following contract awards:

a. Health Benefits, 2008-2009 School Year

WHEREAS, the Montclair Board of Education currently provides medical benefits pursuant to negotiated agreements with employee associations and Board of Education policy for all covered employees through participation in the "Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey's Blue Select and Blue Choice and HMO Blue Programs", and

WHEREAS, the Montclair Board of Education has received an offer of renewal for the period July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009, utilizing the minimum premium funding mechanism with the Montclair Board of Education holding the reserves with both an aggregate stop loss and an individual stop loss included, with an increase of 5.03% over the 2007-2008 maximum liability and an increase of 16.74% for the HMO Blue program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Montclair Board of Education does hereby approve the renewal of the Blue Cross programs to provide medical benefits for all covered employees effective July 1, 2008, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Business Administrator is directed to implement this decision effective immediately.

b. Dental Benefits, 2008-2009 School Year

WHEREAS, the Montclair Board of Education currently provides dental benefits for all covered employees through participation in the "Delta Dental Plan of New Jersey, Inc." pursuant to negotiated agreements with employee associations and Board of Education Policy, and

WHEREAS, the Montclair Board of Education has received an offer of renewal for the two year period July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2010, from Delta Dental Plan of New Jersey, Inc., for the Premier and Preferred contracts and the Delta Care contract with no increase:

<u>COVERAGE</u>	<u>MONTHLY CHARGES</u>		
		<u>-01</u>	<u>6001</u>
Employee	\$	25.02	22.89
Employee & Spouse		49.46	45.23
Employee & Child(ren)		43.92	40.20
Family		79.74	72.67

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Montclair Board of Education does hereby approve "Delta Dental Plan of New Jersey, Inc." to provide dental benefits for two years for all covered employees effective July 1, 2008, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Business Administrator is directed to implement this decision effective immediately.

- c. Roof Replacement in Multi-Purpose Room of Edgemont School - J. Strober & Sons, 1509 Route 179, Lambertville, New Jersey, 08530, in the total amount of \$57,000.00 (base bid of \$48,000.00 plus alternate #1 for \$1,500.00, alternate #2 for \$7,000.00 and alternate #3 for \$500.00)
- d. Roof Replacement at George Inness Little Theater - Kraft Roofing, Inc., 21 Lauren Lane, Sussex, New Jersey, 07461, in the total amount of \$50,650.00 (base bid of \$48,650.00 plus alternate #1 for \$2,000.00).
- e. Gutter Replacement at Hillside School - SJ Carney Roofing, 76 Ashland Avenue, West Orange, New Jersey, 07052, in the total amount of \$18,900.00.
- f. Roof Replacement at the High School - J. Strober & Sons, 1509 Route 179, Lambertville, New Jersey, 08530, in the total amount of \$196,500.00 (base bid of \$187,000.00 plus alternate #1 for \$9,500.00).
- g. Roof Replacement at Watchung School - Kraft Roofing, Inc., 21 Lauren Lane, Sussex, New Jersey, 07461, in the total amount of \$163,650.00 (base bid of \$150,650.00 plus alternate #1 for \$3,000.00 and alternate #2 for \$10,000.00).

Seconded by Mr. Riddick and approved by a roll call vote of:

	AYE	NAY
Timothy Barr	<u> X </u>	_____
John Carlton	<u> X </u>	_____
Shirley Grill	_____	_____ ABSENT
Robert Kautz	<u> X </u>	_____
Shelly Lombard	<u> X </u>	_____
Ronald Riddick	<u> X </u>	_____
Carmen Taylor	<u> X </u>	_____

4. Mr. Riddick moved to approve the Personnel Report.

Seconded by Mrs. Lombard and approved by a roll call vote of:

	AYE	NAY
Timothy Barr	<u> X </u>	_____
John Carlton	<u> X </u>	_____
Shirley Grill	_____	_____ ABSENT
Robert Kautz	<u> X </u>	_____
Shelly Lombard	<u> X </u>	_____
Ronald Riddick	<u> X </u>	_____
Carmen Taylor	<u> X </u>	_____

L. COMMENTS

1. Members of the Public

Tom Parente – 24 Glenridge Parkway – Mr. Parente questioned who will be involved in the hiring of music teacher since there is not a music supervisor? He also questioned if there has been any awards given to the young musicians recently. He would like the Board to honor some of the young musicians for their achievements.

The response was this year there has not been any awards to musicians issued but there has been in the past.

Jennifer Kohn – 60 Harrison Ave. – She is against the proposal to close the Collaborative classrooms at Nishuane. Ms. Kohn is going to attend a meeting on Thursday, May 8, 2008, about this. She would like to see the data supports this decision.

The Board responded that there is a meeting on Thursday with Dr. Scagliotti and Ms. Harrison and following that meeting with the parents a recommendation will be put forth. The Board has not made any decisions at this time.

Nancy Warren – 10 Lansing Place – She would like to see the data before the Thursday meeting.

Dr. Scagliotti responded that he can email the data to whoever would like it by the end of Wednesday.

Hrant Yousifian – 1 Argyle Rd. – Mr. Yousifian is against the new school being built.

Dr. Alvarez responded that two different community task forces, at two points in time came to the conclusion that Montclair needs a new school. This was not an idea from the administration. Montclair's needs have not changed since then there are still more students in the classroom than we would like to have and there is still stable enrollment. The need for the new school continues to exist.

Dan Henry – 66 Overlook Road – Mr. Henry stated that his family received an email that the district is discontinuing the Collaborative class models and there will be a 10:00 a.m. meeting on Thursday. He would like this clarified because this is not a convenient time for working parents to attend this meeting.

Dr. Alvarez responded that the Board has some sense that there is reason to question these classes. Thursday's meeting will share this data with everyone for a decision to be made, the Board has not made any formal decisions yet. After this meeting there may be reason to have another meeting and notify all of the parents.

Mrs. Lombard stated that the Board always looks at the processes all the time.

Cary Africk – 2 Erwin Park – Mr. Africk questioned if there would be a discussion on contractual renegotiations for the superintendent and senior staff tonight? Mr. Africk also wanted to know about the roof capital expenditure and if it was part of the funds approved for improvements to the Little Theater.

Mrs. Sullivan responded that the Board of Education and Board of School Estimate just approved \$500,000 in the most recent capital budget for next summer. The money being awarded tonight for the roof was from last year's capital budget. The plans for the improvements are being worked on for next summer.

Dorothy Oliver – 278 Valley Way – Ms. Oliver congratulated the superintendent and the staff on the idea to do something about the dress code.

Leslie Kurkes – 1 Kenneth Road – Co-President of the DLC Parents Organization – Ms. Kurkes is happy to learn that the decision of closing the Collaborative class is not a final decision yet. She would like the Board to notify all parties involved in this matter.

Public Hearing on contract amendments for senior staff:

New Jersey statutes require Board's of Education to permit the public to comment on any changes or amendments to certain administrative contracts as they are annually renewed. Tonight we are permitting comment on the contracts for the senior staff. The Board

intends to renew the contracts for these employees for the coming year and is considering an appropriate salary increase/cost of living. The Board will at this time respectfully hear comments from the public.

Pegi Adam – 13 The Fairway – Recommends that salaries be frozen this year.

2. Board Members

Mr. Carlton feels that Personnel moves are very difficult because most of the decision making by law is confidential. He stated that he is proud of Peter Renwick who started out in Montclair as a teacher, and has moved up to Assistant Principal of the 9th graders and is now becoming Principal in Westfield.

Mr. Barr stated that he heard a lot of people tonight refer to a lot of hear say, which is not always correct information. Mr. Barr feels that everyone on the Board work very hard to do what is best for the entire district, and they listen to what everyone says and try to make the best decisions.

Mrs. Lombard said that the processes that the Board goes through can not always be Democratic. The law makes Personnel decisions confidential and that is the Superintendents job to make the decisions that are appropriate for the entire district. The Principal decision was posted the same way that all the other decisions are posted. The Board does welcome the public's opinion when it is possible but this time it was not possible.

Mr. Kautz wants to encourage the parents to voice their opinions. He would like everyone to realize that Dr. Alvarez has to make executive decisions and is looking at the overall district when doing so. Mr. Kautz said that the Board always makes a budget decision in which they try to encourage qualified people within the district to change positions and try to elevate those who show the ability to lead and move up.

M. ANNOUCEMENT OF FUTURE DATES

The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held on May 19, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. in closed session and will open in public at approximately 7:30 in the Board of Education Building, 22 Valley Road.

N. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:22 Mrs. Lombard moved to adjourn Mr. Riddick seconded and was approved by a vote of 6-0.

MINUTES OF THE CLOSED SESSION OF THE
PUBLIC BOARD MEETING HELD MONDAY, MAY 5, 2008
22 VALLEY ROAD, MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY

Mr. Carlton convened the closed session of the public Board meeting at 6:40 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Timothy Barr, John Carlton, Robert Kautz, Shelly Lombard, Ronald Riddick, Carmen Taylor

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Alvarez, Mr. Dabney, Dr. Patterson, Dr. Scagliotti, and Mrs. Sullivan

PERSONNEL REPORT

Presented by Dr. Alvarez & Dr. Patterson. Dr. Patterson presented a list of non tenured staff to the Board of Education. He informed the Board that Dr. Alvarez would be notifying staff that will be non-renewed at the end of this week.

The closed session was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Sullivan
Board Secretary