



**East Brunswick Board of Education
Board Meeting Minutes
June 30, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL AT 7:03 PM

Board Member	Present	Absent	Late
Anna Braun	X		
Timothy Cummings		X	
Jaime Falco	X		
Louis Figueroa		X	
Laurie Herrick	X		
Liwu Hong, Board Vice President	X		
Wilbur Pan	X		
Heather Guas, Board President	X		
Totals	6	2	

With a quorum of six Board members being present, the meeting proceeded with Ms. Guas presiding.

Others Present
Mr. Bernardo Giuliana, SFO, QPA Assistant Superintendent for Business and Support Operations/Board Secretary
Mr. Matthew Giacobbe, Esq. Board Attorney

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend the meetings of, public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed and acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the East Brunswick Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted at the

Board of Education offices, located at 760 Route 18, East Brunswick, New Jersey. Written notice was also provided to the Sentinel, The Newark Star Ledger, The Home News Tribune, The Alternative Press of East Brunswick, and the Municipal Clerk of East Brunswick.

All Board of Education meetings, with the exception of executive session discussions, are video taped for later broadcast. It is the policy of the Board of Education that video taped meetings are not edited for any purpose. Individuals who speak at the Board's public meetings should be aware of these videotaping rules.

The meeting recessed at 7:05 PM and reconvened at 7:08 PM.

INTERVIEWS

1. Board of Education Vacancy Candidate Interviews

The following four candidates were invited to participate in interviews: Denise Contrino, Tatiana Jordan, Neal Shah, and Marianne Tanious.

On behalf of the Board of Education, Mr. Giuliani welcomed the candidates. The candidates were previously apprised of the interview format: that questions would be asked and that each candidate would be allotted two minutes to respond to each question. The questions were not shared in advance.

Prior to commencing with questions, each candidate was allotted one minute to make an opening statement describing why she or he is interested in becoming a Member of the Board of Education and discussing why the Board should select her or him to fill the vacancy.

At the conclusion of the questions, each candidate was allotted one minute to make a closing statement.

The meeting recessed at 7:42 PM and reconvened at 7:45 PM.

Board President Guas invited Mr. Giacobbe to explain the procedure for appointing a board member.

Mr. Giacobbe explained that a Board may deliberate on the candidates in closed session but cannot vote or take a straw poll in closed session. He noted that the reason is to protect each person's privacy. Additionally, Mr. Giacobbe explained that in order to be appointed to fill the current board vacancy, an individual must garner five affirmative votes representing a majority of the full membership of the board of education.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE CAUSE FOR THE PUBLIC

Public Comment Rules

The Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest. To protect the privacy of all students and staff, concerns

regarding individual students and staff members should generally be addressed by first meeting with the appropriate administrative staff.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public comment at every meeting of the Board.

Public participation shall be permitted only as indicated on the order of business in Board Bylaw No. 0164.

Public participation shall be extended to residents of this district, persons having a legitimate interest in the actions of this Board, persons representing groups in the community or school district, representatives of firms eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board, and employees and pupils of this district, except when the issue addressed by the participant is subject to remediation by an alternate method provided for in policies or contracts of the Board.

Public participation is not an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the Board and shall be governed by the following rules:

1. A participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface comments by an announcement of his/her name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate;
2. A participant is limited to three (3) minutes' duration; elapsed time will be determined through the use of a timing device operated by the Board Secretary;
3. No participant may speak more than once and there shall be no yielding of time among speakers;
4. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually;
5. There shall be no cross dialogue between the participant and the Board and/or Administration;
6. Upon conclusion of a participant's remarks, the presiding officer will acknowledge the individual's remarks and may respond and/or direct a member of the Administration to respond to an inquiry following the participant's remarks or at the conclusion of the public participation session;

The presiding officer may:

- a. Interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;
- b. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
- c. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;
- d. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action; and
- e. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or the efficient administration of the Board's business.

Thirty (30) minutes are allotted to this public comment segment. Individuals who are

present and do not have the opportunity to speak during this segment, will have an opportunity to speak after the closed session following completion of the agenda items.

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8

N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

Anushka Shah spoke in support of Board Candidate Neal Shah.

Bobbie Lemay spoke in support of Board Candidate Neal Shah.

Adam Altman spoke on anxiety and depression within the school system, and in support of Board Candidate Neal Shah and Jack Levitt.

Jack Levitt spoke on Board Candidate issues.

Dom Sclafani spoke on Jack Levitt's inability to interview for the Board Member vacancy.

CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session Resolution

RECOMMENDATION: That the following resolution is approved:

WHEREAS, the Board of Education must discuss matters which are not appropriate for discussion in a public meeting; and

WHEREAS, these subjects are within the exceptions to the Open Public Meetings Act and are permitted to be discussed in Closed Session pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education intends to discuss matters as follows:

- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(1), *"any matter which, by provision of federal law or State statute or rule of court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from the provisions of subsection a. of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, public meetings."* The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is:
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(2), *"any matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the Government of the United States."* The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is:
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(3), *"any material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy such as records, data, reports, recommendations, or other personal material of any educational, training, social service, medical, health, custodial, child protection, rehabilitation, legal defense, welfare, housing, relocation, insurance and similar program or institution operated by a public body pertaining to any specific individual admitted*

to or served by such institution or program, including but not limited to information relative to the individuals personal and family circumstances, and any material pertaining to admission, discharge, treatment, progress or condition of any individual, unless the individual concerned (or, in the case of a minor or incompetent, his guardian) shall request in writing that the same be disclosed publicly." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is:

- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(4), *"any collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions which are proposed for inclusion in any collective bargaining agreement, including the negotiation of the terms and conditions thereof with employees or representatives of employees of the public body."* The collective bargaining contract(s) discussed are between the Board and:
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(5), *"any matter involving the purchase, lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of banking rates or investment of public funds, where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matter were disclosed."* The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is:
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(6), *"any tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public, provided that their disclosure could impair such protection. Any investigations of violations or possible violations of the law."* The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is:
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(7), *"any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation other than in subsection b. (4)" of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 in which the public body is, or may become a party. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer."* The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is:
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(8), *"any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance of, promotion or discipline of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting."* The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is: Board of Education member vacancy.
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(9), *"any deliberation of a public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty upon the responding party or the suspension or loss of a license or permit belonging to the responding party as a result of an act or omission for which the*

responding party bears responsibility." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is:

WHEREAS, the length of the Closed Session is estimated to be TWO HOURS after which the public meeting of the Board shall reconvene and action WILL BE taken.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Board of Education will recess into Closed Session for only the aforesaid subject(s); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Board of Education hereby declares that its discussion of the aforesaid subject(s) will be made public at a time when the public's interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Board Member	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention	Did Not Vote
Anna Braun						
Timothy Cummings						ABSENT
Jaime Falco		X				
Louis Figueroa						ABSENT
Laurie Herrick						
Liwu Hong						
Wilbur Pan	X					
Heather Guas						
Totals			6	0	0	

The above action was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

The meeting recessed into closed session at 7:59 PM and reconvened into open session at 9:42 PM.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

1. Nominations to Appoint Board Member

With a motion by Wilbur Pan and a second by Liwu Hong, Marianne Tanious was nominated to fill the Board Member vacancy.

With a motion by Heather Guas and a second by Laurie Herrick, Denise Contrino was nominated to fill the Board Member vacancy.

With a motion by Anna Braun and a second by Laurie Herrick, Neal Shah was nominated to fill the Board Member vacancy.

2. Closing of Nominations to Appoint Board Member

Upon no further nominations coming from the floor to fill the Board Member vacancy, the opportunity for nominations was closed.

3. Vote to Appoint Board Member (Written Ballot)

In accordance with Bylaw 0143 - Board Member Election and Appointment, voting shall take place by written ballot after nominations are closed. Each Board member will be provided a paper ballot after nominations are closed for each position. Each Board member shall write the name of one candidate they wish to vote for on the paper ballot. Each Board member must print and sign their name on their paper ballot. The ballots shall be read aloud by the Board Secretary identifying the Board member and their vote.

The candidate who receives the votes of a majority of the Board members present and constituting a quorum will be elected to fill the vacancy. In the event no candidate receives a majority vote of the Board members present and constituting a quorum, the voting process shall be repeated between the candidates previously nominated until someone receives a majority vote of those Board members present and constituting a quorum. The candidate receiving a majority vote of the members of the Board present and constituting a quorum will be elected to office.

If there are two or more vacancies, each vacancy will be filled by a separate election process described above.

When a Board member is participating in the meeting remotely pursuant to Bylaw 0160.1, that Board member will cast her/his vote verbally. The Board Secretary shall call upon that Board member before the Board Secretary reads aloud the ballots cast by those Board members physically present.

Mr. Giuliana announced and tallied the written ballot received from each Board Member. The result is as follows:

Board Member	Denise Contrino	Tatiana Jordan	Neal Shah	Marianne Tanious	Asbstain	Did Not Vote
Anna Braun				X		
Timothy Cummings						ABSENT
Jaime Falco				X		
Louis Figueroa						ABSENT
Heather Guas	X					
Laurie Herrick				X		
Liwu Hong				X		
Wilbur Pan				X		
Totals	1	0	0	5		

Mr. Giuliana declared Marianne Tanious as the duly appointed individual to fill the current vacancy on the Board of Education.

ADJOURNMENT

1. Adjournment

Recommendation: That the meeting be adjourned.

Board Member	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention	Did Not Vote
Anna Braun						
Timothy Cummings						ABSENT
Jaime Falco		X				
Louis Figueroa						ABSENT
Laurie Herrick						
Liwu Hong						
Wilbur Pan	X					
Heather Guas						
Totals			6	0	0	

The above action was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernardo Giuliana, SFO, QPA
Assistant Superintendent for Business
And Support Operations/Board Secretary