

FLEMINGTON-RARITAN REGIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION

January 6, 2025

BOARD REORGANIZATION/REGULAR MEETING - 7:00 P.M.

- I. Call to Order by the Board Secretary.
- II. In accordance with the State's Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this meeting was provided by sending a notice of the time, date, location, and, to the extent known, the agenda of this meeting on December 26, 2024, to the Hunterdon County Democrat and The Courier-News. Copies of the notice also have been placed in the Board Office, posted on the District website, and filed with the Flemington Borough Clerk and the Raritan Township Clerk.
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. 2024 Election Results
 - Ryan Cirillo
 - Michael Owen
 - Julia Whitley
- V. Oath of Office administered to new Board Members by the Board Secretary
 - Ryan Cirillo
 - Julia Whitley
- VI. Roll Call
- VII. Nomination & Election of Board President by Board Secretary
- VIII. Nomination & Election of Board Vice President by Board Secretary
- IX. District Mission Statement

As a Community of One, WE:

Foster social, emotional, and academic growth within a connected learning community
Respect, honor, and embrace diverse family and community values by building collaborative partnerships
Strengthen opportunities that nurture creative and critical thinkers
Develop and inspire personal excellence.

Every Student - Every Day - Every Opportunity

- X. Approval to affirm the New Jersey School Board Association Code of Ethics
- XI. Approval to authorize, if necessary, the past Board President to sign all legal documents, payrolls, and warrants until signatures can be obtained and processed
- XII. Acknowledge the following School Board Recognition:
 - WHEREAS, The New Jersey School Boards Association has declared January 2025 to be School Board Recognition Month, a time when all residents can acknowledge the contributions made by our local school board members; and
 - WHEREAS, The Flemington-Raritan Board of Education is one of more than 581 local boards of education in New Jersey, which sets policies and oversees operations for public school districts; and
 - WHEREAS, The Flemington-Raritan Board of Education embraces the goal of high-quality education for all New Jersey public school students; and

- WHEREAS, New Jersey's local school boards help determine the educational goals for approximately 1.4 million children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade; and
- WHEREAS, New Jersey's 5,000 local school board members, who receive no remuneration for their services, act as advocates for public school students as they work with administrators, teachers, and parents for the betterment of public education; and
- WHEREAS, School boards strive to provide the resources necessary to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs; and
- WHEREAS, Boards of education provide accountability to the public; they communicate the needs of the school district to the public; and they convey to school administrators the public's expectations for the schools; and
- WHEREAS, New Jersey can take pride in its schools, which rank among the nation's best in key achievement indicators such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores, and the preparation for college through advanced placement offerings and SAT assessments; Now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the Flemington-Raritan Board of Education, does hereby recognize the services of local school board members throughout New Jersey as we join communities statewide in observing January 2025 as SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That the Flemington-Raritan Board of Education urges all New Jersey citizens to work with their local boards of education and public school staff toward the advancement of our children's education.

XIII. Superintendent's Report

XIV. Resolution for the approval of a Special Voter Question

Whereas, the Flemington-Raritan Regional Board of Education ("Board") has determined the need to seek voter approval for additional funds resulting in a permanent increase to the local tax levy beginning with the 2025-26 school year budget; and

Whereas, in accordance with P.L. 2024, c.60, N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-5 and -39, the Board is permitted to seek voter approval at a special election for such an increase to the tax levy in order to fund expenditures beyond those required to meet New Jersey Student Learning Standard; and

Whereas, the Flemington-Raritan Regional School District certifies the school district has made efforts to enter into shared arrangements per N.J.S.A. 18A:7-8; and

Whereas, the Board has reviewed and discussed a proposal to increase the local tax levy by an additional 4% above the statutory 2% cap, for a total additional increase of \$2,388,749 beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, and seeks to approve the attached wording for the special voter question and interpretive statement to be submitted to the voters on March 11, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

1. The Flemington-Raritan Regional School District hereby approves the attached special voter question and interpretive statement.
2. A special election will be held on March 11, 2025, with polling hours from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
3. A certified copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the New Jersey Department of Education and the Hunterdon County Clerk's Office.

4. The Board's Officers and Administration are hereby authorized to take any and all steps necessary to carry out this action of the Board.

The Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Board of Education is seeking approval from the district's legal voters to raise an additional \$2,388,749 for the 2025-2026 school year as permitted under P.L. 2024, c.60, N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-5 and -39 to keep thirty (30) teachers and staff, and a Class III Security Officer for each school in the District, specifically for the following purposes:

- Twenty-five (25) teaching staff needed to maintain small class sizes in the elementary schools including teachers to support specialized reading programs such as the reading recovery program in elementary schools and reading & mathematics support classes at the intermediate and middle school levels and instruction in all support class programs;
- Hire a Class III Security Officer for every school;
- Five (5) Gifted and Talented and/or STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) supplemental teachers;
- Avoid the elimination of junior varsity (JV) extracurricular athletics and co-curricular activities for softball, volleyball, field hockey, cross-country, soccer, lacrosse, wrestling, basketball, cheerleading, and baseball.

Interpretive Statement:

The Flemington Raritan Regional School District was impacted significantly by the state funding formula which has reduced school aid by over a million dollars cumulatively over the past 6 years. The district made significant reductions in the 2024-2025 and for the 2025-2026 school year.

Despite these reductions, the district again faces a significant shortfall for the 2025-26 budget year. If the district has to make reductions again to teaching staff and programs, the reductions will impact our students. Therefore, the district is seeking additional funding in the 2025-26 budget to support the maintenance of small class sizes in elementary classrooms of approximately 17 to 24 students per grade level. Class sizes, without the approval of the public question, will be over 25 students in most homerooms in grades K through 8.

Approval of the question will support evidence-based reading instruction, and supplemental academic programs such as gifted and talented programs and courses in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). The question approval will also fund safety and security personnel, specifically Class III Officers in each school. After-school programming, which includes extracurricular sports, will be affected without the approval of the public question. Approval of this public question will result in a permanent increase in the district's tax levy.

- XV. Citizens Address the Board - The public is invited to respectfully share their concerns, comments, and suggestions according to the Board's policy and by-laws. Please be aware that this portion is your opportunity to comment on items of concern regarding the agenda only. The second public comment is for comment on any issue. Each speaker will have 3 minutes and the total session will be 30 minutes. The public is requested to sign the register and to state their name, municipality of residence, and group affiliation, if applicable. While all comments will be considered, Board Members will not respond to speakers at this time.
- XVI. Report of the Standing Committees and Appointments

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS FOR APPROVAL:

- A. PERSONNEL – Chairperson, TBA, Next Meeting – January 9, 2025**
- B. INSTRUCTION AND PROGRAM – Chairperson, TBA, Next Meeting – TBA**
- C. OPERATIONS/TRANSPORTATION – Chairperson, TBA, Next Meeting – TBA**

D. POLICY– Chairperson, TBA, Next Meeting – TBA

E. MISCELLANEOUS (INFORMATION/ACTION)

1. Approval of the 2025 Board Calendar

XVII. Correspondence

XVIII. Old Business

XIX. New Business

XX. Citizens Address the Board - The public is invited to respectfully share their concerns, comments, and suggestions according to the Board's policy and by-laws. Each speaker will have 3 minutes, and the total session will be 30 minutes. The public is requested to sign the register and to state their name, municipality of residence, and group affiliation, if applicable. While all comments will be considered, Board Members will not respond to speakers at this time.

XXI. Sunshine Resolution (if needed)

XXII. Adjourn

2025 Board Meetings

January 23, 2025

February 13, 2025

February 27, 2025

March 13, 2025

March 27, 2025

April 10, 2025

May 1, 2025

May 22, 2025

June 12, 2025

June 26, 2025

July 24, 2025

August 28, 2025

September 11, 2025

October 9, 2025

November 13, 2025

December 11, 2025