

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MIDLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY  
DECEMBER 12, 2023**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. McCourt at 8:00 p.m. and Ms. Garvey read the following statement:

“Adequate notice of this meeting was provided as specified in the Open Meeting Act. Notices of this Meeting were sent to The RECORD, RIDGEWOOD NEWS, and to the Midland Park Borough Clerk for the 2023 elective year. A notice was also posted inside the office of the Midland Park Board of Education in a place reserved for such announcements. The Board announces that under its long-standing policy, it will not discuss in public any comments made by members of the public concerning individual staff members or students.”

**ROLL CALL**

Present:	James Canellas	Sandra Criscenzo
	Christine Dell’Aglia	Richard Formicola
	Maryalice Thomas	Peter Triolo
	Patricia Fantulin	Brian McCourt

Excused: Nabil Eliya

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Staff: Marie Cirasella, Superintendent of Schools  
Stacy Garvey, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT** *Mr. Brian McCourt*

**Mission Statement**

**The Midland Park School District as part of a strong, dedicated community, provides its students with a comprehensive, adaptive education aligned to 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge and skills needed for success in college and career. The district maximizes all resources to empower students to realize their individual worth and responsibility, with the expectation they achieve the New Jersey state standards at all grade levels.**

Mr. McCourt recognized Mr. Canellas's last Board meeting. He had been a trustee since 2008, Mr. Canellas brought a lot of knowledge, especially in the areas of finance and budgeting. His hard work over the years is appreciated. Congratulations and good luck.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT *Dr. Marie Cirasella*

- Upcoming Musical Performances
  - December 18 – Middle School Chorus
  - December 19 – High School Chorus
  - January 17 – High School Winter Concert
  
- The NJ Department of Health marks National Influenza Vaccination Week with a reminder to Stay up to date against respiratory viruses
  - The Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone ages six months and older. As the respiratory virus season is underway, the State named December 4-8 as National Influenza Vaccination Week. The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) is reminding residents to stay up to date by getting their annual flu vaccine as well as the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine and RSV shot if eligible.

Approve the following resolution:

Motion – Mr. Triolo, seconded – Mrs. Criscenzo...

- a. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation No. 1004233181 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board and directs the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator to transmit a copy of the Board's decision to the affected students' parents forthwith.

Roll Call: All Yes

#### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD *Declan Feehan*

- Musical auditions this Thursday, 12/14, the musical is The Addams Family
- Middle School chorus concert 12/18, High School chorus concert 12/19 in Memorial Hall at 7 pm
- Concert band and broadcasting students just landed from their trip to California, it was a lot of fun
- Fall sports awards ceremony was on 12/7 to honor the teams, seniors and their coaches for all the hard work they put in this season
- Winter sports begin on 12/14, with boys' basketball against Palisades Park
- Wrestling opens on 12/15. We are hosting our first wrestling match on 12/19, along with a girls' basketball team following
- Spirit week is next week to get ready for the holiday break

Open to the Public: **COMMENTS** only for action items on the agenda.

No one chose to speak at this time.

## BOARD MOTIONS

Motion – Mr. Triolo, seconded – Mrs. Criscenzo...

1. Approve the minutes of the following regularly scheduled public meeting held on:

November 14, 2023

Roll Call: All Yes

- A. Personnel – (M. Cirasella)

Board resolutions related to hiring for the 2023-2024 school year will be on an emergency basis, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1, N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 and/or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13, as applicable.

Motion – Dr. Thomas, seconded – Mrs. Criscenzo...

1. Approve the medical leave for Employee #0746 retroactive from November 24, 2023 through December 22, 2023.
2. Approve the medical leave for Employee #1927 retroactive from October 31, 2023 through TBD.
3. Approve the appointment of Fusun Garrett as a substitute lunch aide in the Godwin School, retroactive from November 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. She will be paid at a rate of \$15.65 per hour.
4. Approve the extension of an unpaid leave of absence as per the MPEA agreement for Employee #1310 from February 1, 2024 through June 25, 2024.
5. Approve Mary Ann Peterfriend as a Special Education leave replacement in the High School. She will be paid a salary of \$68,150 (MA +30 Step 5 on the MPEA guide), prorated, effective February 1, 2024 through June 25, 2024.
6. Approve the stipend for Stacy Garvey in the amount of \$4,500 for performing extra duties in conducting the Superintendent search.

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Mrs. Criscenzo, seconded – Mrs. Fantulin...

7. Approve the appointment of Maraid Jordan Mukaida as a substitute building aide, effective December 13, 2023 through June 30, 2024, pending Criminal History Review. She will be paid at the rate of \$15.65 per hour.
8. Approve the following aides to work for the Midland Park Community School Before and After School Child Care Program for the 2023-2024 school year:

Kelly Ballen

Sean Olson – Sub

Megan DeMarco – Sub

9. Approve the following aides to work for the Midland Park Community School sponsored February Break Mini-Camp, effective February 21-23, 2024:

Felicia Robinson – Camp Coordinator  
Nareka Hartman – Camp Assistant Coordinator

10. Approve the payment of Curriculum writing stipends for the High School, as per the attached appendix. A-10

11. Approve the employment contract between Michael Zimmer, School Security Guard and the Midland Park Board of Education, effective January 2, 2024 through June 30, 2024. He will be paid at a rate of \$35 per hour.

12. Approve Mackenzie Conroy as an Assistant Indoor Track Coach for the 2023-2024 Winter Season in the amount of \$4,310.

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Mrs. Criscenzo, seconded – Mr. Canellas...

- S-1. Approve the appointment of Kyle Berry as an Instructional at the High School. He will be paid a salary of \$26,000 (Category V, Step 1 on the Secretarial /Clerical guide), Prorated, effective December 13, 2023 through June 30, 2024, pending Criminal History Review.

Roll Call: All Yes

- B. Finance Committee – (J. Canellas, Chairperson)

Motion – Mr. Canellas, seconded – Mrs. Dell’Aglia...

1. Approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13(e), we certify that as of November 30, 2023, after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section), and upon consultation with the appropriate District officials, to the best of our knowledge, no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13 (b), and that sufficient funds are available to meet the District’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year, subject to the conditions of P.L. 1701.

2. Approve the following block motion:

- a. November 2023 direct pays in the amount of \$543,414.72.
- b. November 2023 Community School claims in the amount of \$59,856.52.
- c. November 2023 cafeteria claims in the amount of \$48,417.61.
- d. First November 2023 payroll in the amount of \$728,043.20.

e. Second November 2023 payroll in the amount of \$685,152.05.

f. December 2023 claims in the amount of \$571,566.09.

3. Approve the cash reports and the Board Secretary's Report for the period November 1 – 30, 2023, as per the attached appendix B-3

4. Approve the transfers among accounts for the period November 1 – 30, 2023, as per the attached appendix. B-4

5. Approve the staffing agreement between the Midland Park Public Schools and General Healthcare Resources, LLC d/b/a GHR Education, effective December 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

6. Approve the increase of the budget by \$125,000.00 for the Midland Park Community School for the 2023-2024 school year:

Account number 13 602 100 511 03 70

7. Approve the youth program, "My Mini & Me – Move & Groove" at the Restore Church in Midland Park, sponsored by the Midland Park Community School. The program runs from March 14, 2024 through May 9, 2024, for an 8 week session for a fee of \$195.

8. Accept the donation from the Midland Park High School Athletic Boosters in the amount of \$7,417.30 for the following items:

LiveView Camera/Tripod (Golf Team):	\$ 470.00
Indoor Batting Cage (Baseball/Softball):	\$ 4,935.00
Warm-up Suits (Boys Basketball):	\$ 1,723.30
County Champ Shirts (Track):	\$ 289.00

9. Approve the use and rental by Goats Basketball, sponsored by Midland Park Community School as follows:

High School Gym: December 10, 17  
January 7, 14, 21, 28  
February 4, 9, 11, 18, 25,  
March 3, 10, 17, 24

10. Approve the decommissioning of surplus technology inventory, as per the attached appendix. B-10

Roll Call: All Yes

C. Curriculum Committee – (M. Thomas, Chairperson)

Motion – Dr. Thomas, seconded – Mrs. Criscenzo...

1. Approve the following staff member requesting workshop attendance:

Name	Workshop	Location	Cost	Date
Nicole Marino	Morphology Plus	Virtual	\$1,500	2/10-11/24 2/17-18/24
Eurico Antunes	Techspo 2024	Atlantic City, NJ	1,232.00	1/24-1/26/24
Nicholas Capuano	Techspo 2024	Atlantic City, NJ	\$864.66 plus tolls	1/24-1/26/24

2. Approve the placement/transportation for a classified elementary school student at The Forum School, Waldwick, NJ effective, retroactive from December 4, 2023 through June 21, 2024.
3. Approve the Spring/Summer 2024 Youth Programs, sponsored by Midland Park Community School.
4. Approve all courses, instructors, programs and trips in the Spring 2024 Midland Park Community School brochure.
5. Approve the Extended Winter 2024 Courses, sponsored by Midland Park Community School as follows:
  - Pilates Extended Winter Beg. Classes 12/7/23-1/25/24 (Midland Park H.S.)
  - Pilates Extended Winter Int. Classes 12/7/23-1/25/24 (Midland Park H.S.)
  - Zumba Extended Winter Classes 1/11/24-2/6/24 (Midland Park H.S.)
  - Italian Beginner Extended Winter Classes 1/3/24-2/7/24 (Midland Park H.S.)
  - Italian Intermediate Extended Winter Classes 1/3/24-2/7/24 (Midland Park H.S.)
  - Men's Basketball Extended Winter Classes 1/8/24-1/30/24 (Midland Park H.S.)
  - Staff Continuation Pickle ball at Midland Park DePhilips Recreation Department 1/3/24-3/37/4
  - Staff Continuation Spring Pickle ball (MPHS/Highland) dates TBD
6. Approve the continuance of the Cooperative Program for Football, Wrestling and Cheerleading between the Midland Park and Waldwick School Districts, effective December 2023 through December 2026.
7. Approve Alexandra Dunham of Going Gold Choreography for choreographing the Waldwick/Midland Park Cooperative high school cheer program's 2023-2024 basketball halftime routine.

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Dr. Thomas, seconded – Mrs. Criscenzo...

- S-2. Approve the placement/transportation for a classified elementary school student at Shaler Academy in Ridgefield, NJ, start date to be determined through June 30, 2024.

S-3. Approve the following staff member requesting workshop attendance:

Name	Workshop	Location	Cost	Date
Joann Manicone	College Advising Program	Columbia University – Teacher’s College	\$400	January-April 2024

Roll Call: All Yes

D. Policy Committee – (S. Criscenzo, Chairperson)

No Report

E. Legislative Committee – (Dr. Marie Cirasella)

No Report

F. Buildings & Grounds Committee – (N. Eliya, Chairperson)

No Report

G. Negotiations Committee - (R. Formicola, Chairperson)

No Report

H. Technology & Public Relations Committee – (M. Thomas, Chairperson)

No Report

I. Town Council Committee – (B. McCourt, P. Fantulin)

No Report

J. Diversity Committee – (C. Dell’Aglia, Chairperson)

- Scheduling a meeting after the holidays

K. Liaison Committee

High School PTA - (C. Dell’Aglia)

- Therapy dog initiative to help enhance the mental health of our students
- Appreciate the programs they bring to school to supplement & compliment the HS programs

Elementary School PTA- (P. Fantulin)

- Book fair sales went very well, \$1300 in classroom books
- Bowling event
- Holiday Store

- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade dance at the firehouse
- Talent show on 2/2
- Curriculum Grants
- Meeting in January for tech issues
- Food pantry collection
- Mill Gardens programs
- No screen day
- Mentoring by our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at CTC Academy in Fair Lawn
- Art Ventures
- Penny Wars

Booster Club – (R. Formicola)

- Fall events coming out soon

Performing Arts Parents – (P. Triolo)

- Meeting tonight
- Poinsettia fundraiser
- Addams Family musical on 1/3

Special Education – (M. Thomas)

- Will start scheduling in Jan./Feb.

Education Foundation – (S. Criscenzo)

- Battle of the Bands – 3/19
- Looking for sponsors and basket donations

Board of Recreation – (J. Canellas)

No Report

Community School – (N. Eliya)

No Report

L. Old Business

No Report

M. New Business

The following Board members acknowledged James' service to the Board of Education:

Rich Formicola – Thank you James for your service. I do appreciate it, it's not an easy job. You did a great job for the kids, administration and I thank you for that.

Pete Triolo – I just wanted to say, it's all your fault I'm sitting here, you convinced me to run for an unexpired term. There has been a constant presence here and that's been you. When I was president and had a lot of issues you were a level headed person I could talk to. My



admiration and respect grows for you every day. Your dedication to the district and most of all the children is exemplary.

Christine Dell’Aglia – I would like to thank James for showing me the ropes and for sharing advice. I wanted to personally thank you for lending an ear and a positive smile to help me along.

Maryalice Thomas – I watched you transition from a high profile business career to a high profile educational career. I give you the utmost in kudos for making the transition and wish you only the best. We will miss you terribly.

Sandra Criscenzo – We have been together here a long time. Good luck in everything else you do. I loved watching you move into the town and your family grow with us. Thank you for everything you have helped us do here.

Patricia Fantulin – I just want to remind everyone that he still lives in town. We are still going to be hitting him up for advice.

Marie Cirasella – I want to acknowledge that the almost 14 years I have been Superintendent you have been a constant on the Board. I learned so much from you. I think you made the Board better by your presence and your knowledge of finance. I am lucky to have Board members like you to collaborate with. You never came to the table with a personal agenda, you came with the best interest of the kids. I admire you very much, you will always have my friendship. Best of luck in everything you do.

Stacy Garvey – I got to spend the last 15 years with James as a Board member and I get to spend the next 15 years with him as a colleague. I can’t tell you in the short time that James has entered this field, he has been mentoring the old dogs that have been around for a very long time. He is an attribute to the colleagues in our group. I am not so upset that he is leaving as a Board member because now I have him as a colleague and I am very thankful for that.

Motion – Mrs. Criscenzo, seconded – Mr. Triolo...

Motion to go into closed session before the meeting of January 2, 2024, for the purpose of reviewing the hiring of personnel, legal updates and confidential student HIB case reviews.

Roll Call: All Yes

Open to the Public - general **COMMENTS** only at this time are to be directed to the Board President.

No one chose to speak at this time.

Mr. McCourt wished the Board a Happy Holiday.

Motion - Mr. Formicola, seconded – Mr. Triolo...  
To adjourn the meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Garvey  
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary