

Passaic Valley Regional High School District

MINUTES

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Tuesday, March 14, 2023**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

**The Board of Education of the Passaic Valley Regional High School
In the County of Passaic, New Jersey**

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Tuesday, March 14, 2023**

The minutes for the regular meeting of the Passaic Valley Regional High School District #1 in the County of Passaic on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, held in the Adra Suchorsky Library at the Passaic Valley High School located at East Main Street, Little Falls, New Jersey, 07424.

**I. CALL TO ORDER BY MR. DAMIANO, BOARD PRESIDENT,
AT 7:30 P.M.**

Roll Call:

Ms. Brigati – Yes

Mr. Casasnovas – Yes

Dr. Cathcart – Absent

Mr. D’Ambrosio – Yes

Mr. Damiano - Yes

Mr. D’Angelo – Yes

Mr. DeLuca - Absent

Mr. Doell – Absent

Dr. Varcadipane -Yes

Also Present:

Bracken Healy, Superintendent of Schools

Colin Monahan, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Raymond Reddin, Esq., Board Attorney

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. READING OF ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Monahan read the Public Notice.

Public Notice

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, the Board of Education of the Passaic Valley Regional High School District #1 issued notice of this meeting on January 6, 2023, by having the date, time and location of the meeting posted on the bulletin board of Passaic Valley High School and sent to The North Jersey Herald News and The Record. Notice was also filed with the Township Clerk of Little Falls, the Borough Clerk of Totowa and the Business Administrator of Woodland Park and sent to those persons requesting that such notice be mailed to them. Notice was also filed with the Township Clerk of Little Falls, the Borough Clerk of Totowa and the Business Administrator of Woodland Park and sent to those persons requesting that such notice be mailed to them.

IV. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

None

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

None

Mr. DeLuca entered the meeting at 7:02 P.M.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr. Damiano asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of February 28, 2023.

Mr. D’Ambrosio made a motion to approve the Regular Minutes of February 28, 2023; seconded by Ms. Brigati.

Roll Call:

Ms. Brigati – Yes

Mr. Casasnovas – Yes

Dr. Cathcart – Absent

Mr. D’Ambrosio – Yes

Mr. Damiano - Yes

Mr. D’Angelo – Yes

Mr. DeLuca - Yes

Mr. Doell – Absent

Dr. Varcadipane – Yes

Dr. Cathcart entered the meeting at 7:05 P.M.

VII. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Healy invited Mr. Rob Lerch from Lerch, Vinci and Bliss to review the audit report.

Mr. Lerch reviewed the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022.

Mr. Lerch stated two (2) recommendations were given.

No recommendations for Significant Deficiencies on Internal Controls and Material Weaknesses on Financial Statements.

Dr. Healy stated when he was first hired there were three (3) items the Board stressed to him which are the following:

- Increased enrollment: Dr. Healy stated when he began enrollment was 981 students and now enrollment is at 1037; enrollment is going up.
- Improving test scores: Dr. Healy shared the test scores at a previous meeting. He stated Passaic Valley outscored schools they have never outscored before in the last 13 years. The increased test scores reflect the positive climate here at Passaic Valley.
- Suspensions: Dr. Healy stated in 2018-2019 there were 387 out of school suspensions which is a 25%. Last year there were 31 suspensions out of school. This year there are 28. Students are making good choices.
- Dr. Healy stated Girls' Show has been brought back to PVTV. He stated prior to his arrival at Passaic Valley, Girls' Show was outsourced to a paid production company which cost approximately \$20,000.00. This year was all PVTV with the new teacher, Mr. Clonan and students, produced the show, working the cameras and audio. There was only one (1) outside sound person who was paid \$900.00. Mr. Clonan and the students did an amazing job. The PVTV class enrollment is rising and more students are attracted to the PVTV class.

Dr. Healy stated Passaic Valley is heading towards the final new bell schedule. Next year the District will be using a rotating drop schedule which will create a lot more free time for the students and prep time for the teachers. It will also create instances where teams, clubs and activities can meet during the common lunch period; a flex learning period for all our students without losing an academic period; it will cut homeroom down by 15 minutes, which has been placed back into instruction time.

Mr. D’Ambrosio asked how Tutor.com was doing.

Dr. Healy responded it is going well. When he receives more data he will update the Board. There was peak usage in October, November and December. We are over 1000 sessions and it has definitely paid for its worth. Administration will review the data and make a decision on renewal for the next school year.

VIII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

None

IX. CALL FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Mr. Damiano asked for a motion to open the floor to the public.

Mr. D’Ambrosio made a motion to open the floor to the public; seconded by Ms. Brigati.

No one responded.

Ms. Brigati made a motion to close the meeting to the public.

X. EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. Approval/Rescind Home Instruction 2022-2023

The Superintendent recommended approval to rescind the following Home Instruction:

ID	Instruction
2001538	home instruction facility – St. Clare’s Hospital

2. Approval/February 2023 Student Attendance

The Superintendent recommended approval of the February 2023 student attendance.

Possible number of days school has been open	16.00
Possible number of days attendance	16,536.00
Days absent	884.00
Percent of attendance	94.7%
Average daily Enrollment	1,033.50

3. Approval/Resignation, Peter Biddiscombe, Part-Time ABA Paraprofessional

The Superintendent recommended acceptance of the resignation of Peter Biddiscombe, Part-Time Paraprofessional, last day of employment March 17, 2023.

4. Approval/Employee #4717 Medical Leave, Revised

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve the revised leave for employee #4717:

Dates	Coverage	Amount of Time
3/11/23-3/24/23	Paid Sick Leave/Personal Days	9 days
3/27/23-4/1/23		20 days
5/2/23-5/5/23		4 Days
5/8/23-9/29/23	Federal Medical Leave Act	12 weeks
	NJ Family Leave Act	
10/2/23-3/22/24	Unpaid leave	25 Weeks

5. Approval/Professional Day

The Superintendent recommended the Board approve the following staff professional days:

- Jennifer Shue, School Counselor – April 17-19, 2023. As part of the University of Delaware advisory board, Ms. Shue is invited to network with peers and learn about school updates and innovations and tour the campus. Cost \$150.00.

6. Approval/February 2023 Suspensions

The Superintendent recommended approval of February 2023 suspensions.

Education Committee

7. Approval/Darcy Hall, Teacher of English, Retirement

The Superintendent recommended the acceptance of the retirement of Ms. Darcy Hall, Teacher of English as of July 1, 2023.

8. Approval/Johnny Ramos, Part-Time ABA Bus Aide

The Superintendent recommended Johnny Ramos as a Part-Time ABA Bus Aide. Rate \$25.00/hour not to exceed 29.5 hours/week, no benefits. Start date upon receipt of criminal history, sexual misconduct forms, TB test and required paperwork.

9. Approval of Special Education Contracts – Tuition Paying Students for the Passaic Valley/Bergen Autism Program Revised

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommends the Board approve the revised special education tuition paying students for the Passaic Valley/Bergen Autism Program for the 2022-2023 school year:

- Haledon Public Schools: 1 student
- Leonia Public Schools: 1 student
- Mahwah Public Schools: 2 students
- Manchester Regional HS: 1 student
- Montville Public Schools: 1 student
- North Arlington Public Schools: 1 student
- Ramapo Indian Hills Regional HS: 1 student
- Ramsey Public Schools: 1 student
- Ridgefield Park Public Schools (via Little Ferry): 1 student
- Saddle Brook Public Schools: 1 student
- Verona Public Schools: 1 student
- West Essex: 1 Student
- West New York: 1 Student
- Westwood: 1 Student

10. Approval/2022-2023 Out of District Placement

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve the following revised out of district placement(s):

	Student ID	Location	Cost
1	18003	Alpha School 935 Bennetts Mills Road Suite 2 Jackson, NJ	Tuition: \$32,145.72 (prorated) Extraordinary Services: \$11,932.00 Total: \$44,077.72

Education Committee

11. Report of HIB

The Superintendent reported and requested approval of the following HIB investigation(s):

Incident #	Location	Consequences	Intervention	Other Action	Determination
2223-05	Social Media	None	Meetings with Mr. Settembre, Ms. Pasquariello & Ms. Morris	None	Not HIB

12. Approval/Peter Tomasi, Substitute Teacher 2022-2023

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve Mr. Tomasi as a substitute teacher for the 2022-2023 school year starting March 15, 2023.

Dr. Cathcart made a motion to approve Education item #s 1 – 12; seconded by Mr. D’Ambrosio.

Roll Call:

Ms. Brigati – Yes
Mr. Casanovas – Yes
Dr. Cathcart – Yes
Mr. D’Ambrosio – Yes

Mr. Damiano - Yes
Mr. D’Angelo – Yes
Mr. DeLuca - Yes
Mr. Doell – Absent
Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

XI. FINANCE COMMITTEE

13. Approval of Monthly Bill List – February

WHEREAS N.J.S.A. 18A:19, Expenditure of Funds; Audit and Payment of Claims, provides Board of Education to make payments on claims for goods received and services rendered payable to the order of the person entitled to receive the amount after approval by the Board; or in accordance with payrolls duly certified or debt service or when provided by resolution approval by a person designated by the Board, and

WHEREAS the following bill lists are drawn from the Authorization checking account and is being presented to the Board with the recommendation that it be paid:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Check Numbers</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
03/15/23	Pending	\$ 1,177,329.50

WHEREAS each claim or demand has been fully itemized, verified and audited as required by law in accordance with, N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Passaic Valley Regional High School, Board of Education, approved the above bill list from the Authorization checking account, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education authorized the School Business Administrator to pay bills between board meetings if it is determined that a need arises prior to the next board meeting in accordance with Policy 6470 – Payment of Claims.

14. Acceptance of the Board Secretary’s Report, Cash Reconciler’s Cash Report and the Board Secretary’s Certification of Funds for the Month of February 2023

WHEREAS N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 requires the Board Secretary and the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education to certify that no budgetary line item account has been over-expended and that the sufficient funds are available to meet the District’s financial obligation; and

WHEREAS N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 further required the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education receive and accept the monthly financial statements, the Board Secretary’s Report and the Cash Reconciler’s Cash report; and

WHEREAS attached are the Board Secretary’s Report and the Cash Reconciler’s Cash report for the month ending February 28, 2023, for the Board to accept.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education acknowledged receipt of and accepted the Board Secretary’s Report and the Cash Reconciler’s Cash report for the month ending February 28, 2023; and

Finance Committee

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary and the Board of Education certified that no budgetary line item account has been over-expended and that there are sufficient funds available to meet the District’s financial obligation.

15. Approval of Line-Item Budget Transfers – February 2023

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended the Board approve the following line-item transfers to include administrative cost budget transfers for the month of February 2023, as presented.

16. Acceptance of Financial Status Report – February 2023

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board secretary recommended the Board accept the Financial Status Report for the month of February 2023, as presented.

17. Acceptance of Revenue Report – February 2023

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended the Board accept the Revenue Report for the month of February 2023, as presented.

18. Approval of Payment of Cafeteria Invoices

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended the Board approve payment of the following cafeteria invoices:

Vendor	Description	Check #	Amount
Pomptonian	Inv# 671021723	1315	\$16,420.95
Pomptonian	Inv# 671022423	1316	\$13,294.46

Finance Committee

19. Discussion of 2022 Fiscal Year End Audit, Acceptance of Said Audit & Approval of the 2022 Fiscal Year End Corrective Action Plan

WHEREAS The Board of Education of the Passaic County Regional High School District #1 (the Board) caused an annual audit of the district's accounts and financial transactions to be conducted by a public-school accountant for the 2021-2022 fiscal year pursuant to NJSA 18A:23; and

WHEREAS said "Comprehensive Annual Financial Report" and "Auditor's Management Report" for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, will be filed in duplicate with the Office of the Commissioner by March 17, 2023, pursuant to NJSA 18A:23-3; and

WHEREAS a presentation of the audit with discussion of the district's fiscal status, audit findings and recommendations were made to the Board and public by the School Business Administrator at the board meeting of March 14, 2023; and

WHEREAS the presentation allowed for a public discussion of the audit results including the district's overall financial position, reserved, unreserved and excess surplus fund balances, and the two (2) audit findings and recommendations, at the board meeting of March 14, 2023; and

WHEREAS the synopsis of the CAFR was available to the public at the March 14, 2023, board meeting with copies of the synopsis available at the offices of the school business administrator upon request; and

WHEREAS a Corrective Action Plan is presented in this resolution addressing each of the two (2) audit recommendations presented in the Auditor's Management Report in response to their recommendations; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Board of Education of the Passaic County Regional High School District #1 accepted the June 30, 2022, audit and approved the Corrective Action Plan for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby incorporates the Synopsis of the Audit with each specific audit recommendation and the resulting Corrective Action Plan as part of the minutes of this meeting of March 14, 2023, and notes public discussion of same for the minutes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the school business administrator be directed to upload to the NJ Homeroom CAFR Repository the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), Auditors Management Report (AMR), Peer Review (PR), Corrective Action Plan (CAP), and certified board minutes adopting the above items; and

Finance Committee

(7 Cont.)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED in accordance with the directive from the Department of Education, listed below are the audit findings and the corrective action of each audit recommendation:

I. Administrative Practices and Procedures
There are none.

II. Financial Planning, Accounting and Reporting
It is recommended that:

1. Payroll deposits be made in exact amounts on a monthly basis.

Corrective Action

The business administrator will work with the payroll assistant and bank reconciler to review payroll deposits are made in exact amounts on a monthly basis.

It is recommended that:

2. Federal and State food service reimbursements be properly posted and recorded to the subsidiary ledger.

Corrective Action

The business administrator will work with the bank reconciler to properly post and record all Federal and State food service reimbursements to the correct subsidiary ledger.

III. School Purchasing Program
There are none.

IV. School Food Services
There are none.

V. Student Body Activities
There are none.

VI. Scholarship Fund
There are none.

VII. Application for State School Aid
There are none.

VIII. Pupil Transportation
There are none.

IX. Facilities and Capital Assets
There are none.

Finance Committee

Status of Prior Years’ Audit Findings/Recommendations

A review was performed on all prior years’ recommendations and corrective action was taken on all.

20. Approval of Adoption and Submission of 2023-2024 Tentative School Budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended the Board adopt and submit the 2023-2024 tentative School Budget.

BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2023-2024 School Year using the 2023-2024 State Aid figures and the Secretary to the Board of Education be authorized to submit the following tentative budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL
2023-2024 Total Expenditures	36,391,366	734,221	661,165	37,786,752
Less: Anticipated Revenues	7,954,914	734,221	225,439	8,914,574
Taxes to be Raised	28,436,452	0	435,726	28,872,178

And to advertise said tentative budget in the North Jersey Herald News in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a public hearing be held in the Adra Suchorsky Library of the Passaic Valley Regional High School, located on East Main Street, Little Falls, New Jersey on April 25, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2023-2024 School Year.

Finance Committee

21. Approval of Maximum Travel & Expense Reimbursement

WHEREAS the Passaic Valley Regional High School District Policy # 6471 and NJAC 6A:23B-1.2 (b) provided that the Board of Education shall establish in the annual school budget a maximum expenditure amount that may be allotted for such travel and expense reimbursement for the 2022-2023 school year.

WHEREAS the Passaic Valley Regional High School District appropriated \$13,250.00 for travel during the 2022-2023 school year and has spent \$3,996.00 as of February 28, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education hereby established the school district travel maximum for the 2023-2024 school year at the sum of \$20,250.00; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the school business administrator shall track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

22. Approval of Legal Costs

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary recommended the Board approve and acknowledge the school district exceeds 130% of the statewide average for legal costs. The school district will implement internal controls for the reduction of costs or to provide evidence that such procedures would not result in a reduction of costs.

23. Approval of Capital Reserve Withdrawal for the 2023-2024 Budget

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended the Board approve the use of Capital Reserve funds in the amount of \$416,000.00 in the 2023-2024 budget.

Dr. Varcadipane made a motion to approve Finance item #s 13 – 23; seconded by Mr. D’Ambrosio.

Roll Call:

Ms. Brigati – Yes

Mr. Casasnovas – Yes

Dr. Cathcart – Yes

Mr. D’Ambrosio – Yes

Mr. Damiano - Yes

Mr. D’Angelo – Yes

Mr. DeLuca - Yes

Mr. Doell – Absent

Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

XII. OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

24. Approval of Use of Facilities

The Superintendent recommended the following use of facilities requests: all outside organizations (not school related) must file proof of insurance with Passaic Valley Regional High School before the commencement of their designated event, including any preparation before, if necessary.

- Little Falls Police Department, Lt. Dawn Gilchrist, requests use of the track and football field on April 12, 2023, from 8am-12pm. Facility will be used to conduct physical assessment testing. Approximately 50 participants plus staff. Proof of insurance will be submitted to the PVRHS business office prior to event.

25. Approval to Lease Revision - Pick-Up Truck & Van

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended the Board retroactively recognize and approve the revision of the name change on the lease agreement from Beyer Ford, Morristown, New Jersey to Nielson Ford, Morristown, New Jersey (2022 Ford F250 XL w/plow 4WD Reg Cab 8' Box Pick-Up Truck N.J. State Contract # 88727 and a Ford Transit Connect Van, ESC Co-Op #65MCESCCPS – ESCNJ 20/21/-09). This purchase is a 5-year lease through Laural Mountain Leasing, D/B/A 911 Leasing & KS State Bank, in the amount of \$15,144.72 per year. This lease will begin March 2023.

26. Approval of Energy Auction/Transparent Energy

WHEREAS the NJ Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, permits public schools to purchase energy supplies through online bidding/reverse auction programs approved by the Division.

WHEREAS Premiere Energy Auctions D/B/A Transparent Energy is an approved program.

WHEREAS an online reverse auction conducted by Transparent Energy will be held on March 14, 2023, to provide electricity supply for a two-year term for the properties owned and operated by the Passaic Valley High School Board of Education.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Passaic Valley High School Board of Education awards contract to the lowest responsible bidder, with All-In Fixed pricing not to exceed \$0.87100/kWh for Natural Gas Supply. The contracted term for Natural Gas will be for a length of 18 Months.

Operations

27. Approval to Sell or Dispose

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary and Supervisor of Building and Grounds recommended approval to sell on NJ Gov Deals or dispose of the following vehicles:

- Chevy Silverado 2003 pick-up truck with Myers snowplow
Vin#1GCHK24U23E194088, Plate #M655290
- Dodge Caravan 2007 Vin#1D4GP25E79B220134, Plate #MG72807

28. Approval/Monmouth-Ocean Educational Services Commission for Transportation

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended approval to enter into an agreement with the Monmouth-Ocean Educational Services Commission (MOESC) for transportation as requested by our Child Study Team for the 2022-2023 school year.

29. Approval Use of Facilities, Autism Walk Revision

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary and Supervisor of Building and Grounds, recommended approval to revise the use of facilities for the Autism Walk on Sunday, April 23, 2023 to include the following volunteers/vendors which will set up in the parking lot.

1. 4horsemen
2. Tandem Traphics
3. Arts and Creations
4. Dimond Floral
5. The Holy bone
6. Iris Rivera
7. Maria Aguire
8. Jersey Mikes
9. Joy Dinardo

Mr. D’Ambrosio made a motion to approve Operation item #s 24 – 29; seconded by Ms. Brigati.

Roll Call:

Ms. Brigati – Yes
Mr. Casasnovas – Yes
Dr. Cathcart – Yes
Mr. D’Ambrosio – Yes

Mr. Damiano - Yes
Mr. D’Angelo – Yes
Mr. DeLuca - Yes
Mr. Doell – Absent
Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

XIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Dr. Varcadipane stated there was a Finance Committee meeting held today. He stated Mr. Rob Lerch reviewed the details of the audit and he presented the summary to the Board of Education this evening.

Ms. Brigati asked if there are any negotiations for next school year.

Mr. Monahan responded next year, in the fall, will be the PVEA contract negotiations.

Attorney's Report

None

Passaic County School Board's Association – Report of Delegate

None

New Jersey School Board's Association – Report of Delegate

None

Old Business

None

New Business

None

XIV. CALL FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Mr. Damiano asked for a motion to open the floor to the public.

Mr. D'Ambrosio made a motion to open the floor to the public; seconded by Ms. Brigati.

No one responded.

Ms. Brigati made a motion to close the meeting to the public.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Damiano asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Brigati made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. D'Ambrosio.

Next Meeting

Regular Meeting:
April 25, 2023
Adra Suchorsky Library
Passaic Valley Regional High School
East Main Street, Little Falls New Jersey