

**Passaic Valley Regional High School
District**

MINUTES

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Tuesday, February 27, 2024**

**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, February 27, 2024**

The minutes for the regular meeting of the Passaic Valley Regional High School District #1 in the County of Passaic on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 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 MS. BRIGATI, BOARD PRESIDENT,
AT 7:00 P.M.**

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. DeMarco - Yes

Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

Also Present:

Dr. 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 issued notice of this meeting on January 10, 2024, by having the date, time and location of the meeting posted on the bulletin board of Passaic Valley Regional 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.

IV. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

None.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Monahan read correspondence from the Totowa, West Paterson, Little Falls Fire Department Holiday Parade association on behalf of the Totowa, Woodland Park and Little Falls Holiday Parade committee extending thanks for helping with the event.

Dr. Cathcart entered the meeting at 7:10 PM.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr. D'Ambrosio made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 30, 2024, Regular and Executive meetings; seconded by Mr. DeMarco.

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. DeMarco - Yes

Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

VII. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Healy stated Senior Yastika Singh scored a perfect 1600 on her SATs, 5/5 on Aps, Valedictorian and Presidential Scholar nominee, which is the highest award the White House offers to seniors who have achieved the highest level of academic excellence.

Dr. Healy stated Indoor Track won the Passaic County Championship, another incredible season for them. Tavi Victoria, De'ziyah Carswell, Brian Pizzaro, Mackenzie Beasley and Karim Elsaadany all won individual League and County titles.

Dr. Healy congratulated our Consumer Bowl team for their second-place finish. This is the highest they placed in the last several years. Team members include Carlos Regalado, May Billek, Yastika Singh, Rajan Rana and Massimo Gencarelli.

Dr. Healy congratulated the wrestling team who recently won Districts. Coach Wassel was named Coach of the Year and Frank Martino, William Capizzi and Brandon Veneziano all qualified for the State tournament this weekend in Atlantic City.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Healy read the following statement:

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing a comprehensive and relevant education, we are constantly assessing student needs and preferences regarding current elective course offerings. After analyzing the data, the recommendation was made to restructure our course catalog for the 2024-2025 academic school year to include additional elective courses in the fields of business, marketing, advertising and entrepreneurship to align with the evolving interests and aspirations of our student body.

These new courses will create a broader array of choices for our students. Despite this expansion, it is crucial to note that every art elective currently offered will remain accessible to any student seeking enrollment in these courses. By providing our students with additional options, it will naturally distribute class enrollment across various elective areas, mitigating the necessity for multiple sections within the art department.

The expansion of our elective course offerings is a proactive measure to assure today's educational programming is relevant to tomorrow's college and career employment expectations. We are confident that these adjustments will enhance the overall educational experience for our students while promoting a well-balanced distribution of enrollment across elective courses.

Ms. Torres – Director of Student Counseling stated that our students are trending toward Business Major career paths. There is a need to expand our business offerings to meet students' needs instead of directing them into their second and third elective choices.

VIII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

IX. CALL FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Mr. Joseph Pugliese of Totowa spoke on behalf of Ms. Demsey. He stated that he owes his professional life in Graphic Design to Ms. Demsey and the photography class he took at PV. He said all electives are important and should not be cut.

Angelo Di Blasio of Totowa, Student Ambassador for the Freshman Class of 2027 spoke about the want for more Business focus classes that would be available for all grades. Business learning classes spread across a variety of topics and will help students in multiple job types as well as carry over into college study.

CALL FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Lily Wheeler of Little Falls, Junior at PV spoke on behalf of Ms. Czepiel and Ms. Demsey. She stated that both of these teachers' classes are at capacity and that letting these teachers go will negatively impact students as the remaining teachers who will be left to teach these courses do not have the same experience and training.

Trich Crozier of Woodland Park, Senior at PV spoke about her art class being very full. She did not have Ms. Czepiel as a teacher but went to her for help and said she went above and beyond to help her and any other student who needed help. She thinks letting these teachers go will be a drastic change for students.

Faith Umstead of Totowa, Senior at PV spoke about being home schooled for 2 years. She has returned to school but is anti-social. The teachers that were the most welcoming were Ms. Czepiel and Ms. Demsey. They would let her sit in their classroom and talk to them about anything. They give her courage and motivation. She and Lily created an on-line petition that has over 200 signatures.

Mr. Shawn Mc Ateer of Pompton Lakes (formerly from Totowa) spoke about Ms. Czepiel being his class advisor and him taking her art course. He said it sends a bold message if you sacrifice 1 discipline to prop up another. The Arts are a way for people to express themselves and shouldn't be sacrificed. He asked for this to be looked into further.

X. EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. Report of HIB

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

Incident #	Location	Determination
2324-17	Hallway/social media	Not HIB

2. Approval / January 2024 Suspensions

The Superintendent reported and requested approval of suspensions for January 2024.

3. Approval / Field Trip(s)

The Superintendent recommended approval for the following field trip(s):

	Department	Teacher/ Advisor	Event	Date/Time/Location	Purpose
1	Drama Club	Shue	Go to dress rehearsal of Washington Park production of Annie	April 24, 2024 / 9:15am-12:30pm / Washington Park School, Totowa NJ	To support the lower school's drama productions. Approx 40 students, 4 staff. Cost: 3 substitutes
2	English	Lubrano	Live production of Romeo & Juliet	May 13, 2024 / 8:50am-1:15pm / Pax Amicus Castle Theatre, Budd Lake, NJ	To experience Shakespeare, live and further aid in their comprehension of the play. Approx 140 students, 3 staff. Cost: transportation + 3 substitutes
3	Honors Senior English	Picarelli	Broadway production of Great Gatsby	April 24, 2024 / 12:00pm-6:00pm / Broadway Theater, NY, NY	Experience a modern interpretation of the American classic. Approx 20 students, 2 staff. Cost: 2 substitutes
4	The Ocean Course	Sanders	Hands on field study	April 29, 2024 / 7:00am-3:00pm / Rutgers Marine Field Station, Tuckerton, NJ	Provide students with real world experiences in marine sciences and field practices. Approx: tbd students, 2 staff. Cost: 2 substitutes

4. Approval / In School Event

The Superintendent recommended approval of the following event(s):

	Department	Teacher/ Advisor	Event	Date/Time/Location	Purpose
1	Future Medical Professionals	Iobst, S.	Blood Drive	March 12, 2024 / All day / Farrell Gym	

Education Committee

5. Approval / Home Instruction

The Superintendent recommended the approval of home instruction for the following student(s):

ID	Date On	Instructor or Program
20481	1/22/24	Educere
33064	2/1/24	Educere

6. Approval / 2023-2024 Substitute Teachers

The Superintendent recommended the approval of the following substitute teachers at the per diem substitute rate for the 2023-2024 school year. Start date pending receipt of issued substitute certificate, criminal history and TB test.

- Jenna Anevski (start date 2/21/24)

7. Approval / Rescind 2023-2024 Out of District Contracts

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve to rescind the following out of district contracts:

	Student ID	Location	Cost
1	2001701	Chancellor Academy 157 West Parkway PO Box 338 Pompton Plains, NJ	\$79,773.36 Tuition <i>*Notice sent on 2/5/24. Tuition to end on 2/6/24.</i>
2	2002689	Venture Program (via BCSS)	\$92,160.00 pro-rated as of 1/2/24 \$7,000.00 out of county fee pro-rated <i>Total \$99,160.00 pro-rated as of 1/2/24 *Notice sent on 2/2/24. Tuition to end on 2/5/24.</i>

8. Approval / Reduction in Force

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, did hereby abolish for reasons of economy, reorganization, programmatic downsizing and other good cause, two (2) Teacher of Art positions.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that as a result of the abolishment of these positions, the following individuals were notified that their employment in the District will cease effective June 30, 2024: Employee #4110 and Employee #4096.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any tenured staff member impacted by this reduction in force shall be placed on the preferred eligibility list for recall in the event that their position is re-established in the future or a vacancy occurs in the future.

Education Committee

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

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, recommended the Board approve one (1) additional student from the Clifton Board of Education and one (1) student from the West Orange Board of Education to attend the Passaic Valley / Bergen Autism Program for the 2023-2024 school year.

10. Approval / Termination from Employment

The Superintendent recommended the approval of the termination of Ms. Yaneris Cordova, PV ABA Paraprofessional. Last day of employment 2/1/24.

11. Approval / 2023-2024 Revised Academic Calendar

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve the revised 2023-2024 academic calendar.

12. Approval / 2024-2025 Academic Calendar

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve the 2024-2025 academic calendar.

13. Approval / Professional Day

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

Staff	Dates	Event/Destination	Purpose	Cost
Jason Tiseo	Mar 20-22, 2024	Fort Pierce, Florida	Baseball spring training trip	Previously approved (plus substitutes)
Stephen Smith	Mar 20-22, 2024	Fort Pierce, Florida	Baseball spring training trip	Previously approved (plus substitutes)
Jennifer Shue	Feb 23, 2024	Ramapo College Counselor Information Session	Information session about new programs, admissions and networking	None
Brendon Clonan	Mar 15, 2024	2024 TV and Film Education Conference/ Montclair Film, NJ	Discuss curriculum, techniques, student-centered projects, software, live streaming and video competitions	Cost: substitute
Daria Leidig	Feb 29, 2024	Bergen/Passaic County Association of School Librarian meeting / Paramus, NJ	Topics include: AI tools, battle of the books, Creative ways to promote libraries	None

Education Committee

14. Approval / Morgan Carter, Clinical Placement

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve the clinical placement (observation); Morgan Carter, BCCC. 10 observation hours. R. Sanders supervising. Dates TBD on or after 2/28/24.

15. Approval / Fundraisers

The Superintendent recommended approval of the following fundraisers:

	Department	Teacher/ Advisor	Event	Date/Time/Location	Purpose
1	Class of 2027	Feinstein / Joseph	Apparel Sale	On-Line through Pierce Apparel	Raise funds for cotillion and other class events
2	Softball	Hill	Dine and Donate	March 19, April 17, May 22, 2024 / Wendy's, Wayne NJ	Raise funds for end of year fees (gifts and dinner)
3	Drama & Music	Shue / Deluccia	Apparel Sale	March 1-31, 2024 / On-line through College Mania	Raise funds for Performing Arts Department trips
4	Track and Field (Boys and Girls)	Bleuler / Getz	Dine and Donate	March 26, 2024 / 5-8pm / Wendy's, Wayne NJ	Raise funds for end of year dinner, awards and equipment
5	Class of 2025	Thornton, E / Mulcahy	Dine and Donate	February 29, 2024 / 5-8pm / Chick-fil-A, Wayne, NJ	Raise funds for Senior Prom
6	Dance	McMahon	Candy/ Refreshment sale	March 20, 2024 / 7:00pm / Auditorium	Raise funds for dance program

16. Approval / January Student Attendance

The Superintendent recommended approval of the January 2024 student attendance:

Possible number of days school has been open	20.00
Possible number of days attendance	21,121.00
Days absent	1,145.50
Percent of attendance	94.6%
Average daily enrollment	1,057.00

17. Approval / Employee #5016 Maternity Leave of Absence

The Superintendent recommended the Board of Education approve the following maternity leave for employee #5016.

Dates	Coverage	Amount of Time
4/29/2024-5/3/2024	Paid Sick Leave/Personal Days	5 days
5/6/24-6/30/24	Federal Medical Leave Act	8 weeks
	NJ Family Leave Act	
	Unpaid leave	

Education Committee

18. Approval / Sept. 1 – Dec. 31, 2023, Student Safety Data Report

The Superintendent recommended approval of the Sept. 1 – Dec. 31, 2023, Student Safety Data Report.

19. Approval / “Power of Youth” Presentation

The Superintendent recommended approval of the student presentation - Pedro Medina, MADD, "Power of You(th) High School Edition. All grade 10 PE classes during regularly scheduled class time. April 17-18, 2024. No cost to District.

Mr. Casasnovas made a motion to approve Education #s 1 - 19; 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. DeMarco - Yes

Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

XI. FINANCE COMMITTEE

20. Approval of Monthly Bill List – February

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:19, Expenditure of Funds; Audit and Payment of Claims, provides the 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>
02/28/24	Pending	\$ 1,443,133.55

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.

21. Acceptance of the Board Secretary’s Report, Cash Reconciler’s Cash Report and the Board Secretary’s Certification of Funds for the Month of January 2024

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 requires 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 January 31, 2024, 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 January 31, 2024; and

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.

22. Approval of Line-Item Budget Transfers – January 2024

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 January 2024, as presented.

Finance Committee

23. Acceptance of Financial Status Report – January 2024

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary recommended the Board accept the Financial Status Report for the month of January 2024, as presented.

24. Acceptance of Revenue Report – January 2024

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary recommended the Board accept the Revenue Report for the month of January 2024, as presented.

25. 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
J. Valentine Plumbing	Gas Stove Repairs	01380	\$ 445.00
Pomptonian	Inv #671013124	01381	\$14,556.75
Pomptonian	Inv #671012624	01382	\$ 867.90
Pomptonian	Inv #671021624	01383	\$26,623.17

26. Approval / Northern Region 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 Northern Region Educational Services Commission for the 2023-2024 school year as:

Route#	School (s)	Contractor	No. of Students	Estimated Cost Per Route (incl. surcharge)	Date
Q3165	Venture Program BCSS	Ace Transportation	1	\$3,016.00 + 120.64	1/22/24-1/29/24

Dr. Varcadipane made a motion to approve Finance #s 20 - 26; 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. DeMarco - Yes
 Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

XII. OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

27. Approval / 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.

	Group	Date	Facilities/ Area Request	Other
1	Totowa, Little Falls, West Paterson Fire Dept Holiday Parade	Nov 30, 2024	-All parking lots, Farrel gym, Cafeteria. -24 Passenger bus & driver from noon till beginning of parade	For annual holiday parade
2	Monarch Montessori	June 21, 2024 10:00am-12:30pm	Auditorium (security and custodial available)	Graduation ceremony
3	LFPD -Jr. Police Academy	June 27, 2024 11:30am	Field at end of Hobson Ave	Helicopter landing
4	Woodland Park Rec	Mar 18, 2024 6:00-9:00pm	Gris Gym	Basketball Championship games
5	SAT at PV	Mar 9, 2024 7:00am-2:00pm	5 classrooms	Security and custodial staff on duty

28. Approval / Donation

The Superintendent recommended approval of the donation by Mr. Anthony Yelovich of a new Pro-Form Carbon Elliptical (approx. value \$600.00).

29. Approval / Kurt Krause, Custodian Retirement

The Superintendent recommended acceptance of the retirement of Mr. Kurt Krause, Custodian. Last day of employment August 31, 2024.

30. Approval / Anthony Galletti, Custodian Resignation

The Superintendent recommended acceptance of the resignation of Mr. Anthony Galletti, Custodian. Last day of employment is February 27, 2024.

31. Appointment / Operational Staff

The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary and the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, recommended the Board appoint Mr. Daniel Caravelli as a Night Custodial Operations Staff member for the 2023-2024 school year. Mr. Caravelli will begin work on or about February 28, 2024, at a prorated salary of Step-1 \$42,236.00 of the contractual Operational Staff salary guide.

Operations Committee

32. Approval / Mr. Monahan NJASBO Annual Conference Travel Expense

The Superintendent recommended approval for Mr. Colin Monahan, Business Administrator/Board Secretary to attend the annual NJASBO annual conference in Atlantic City, NJ on June 5-7, 2024. Registration fee: \$500.00, Travel, Lodging, Mileage, Meals and Fees.

Mr. Damiano made a motion to approve Operation #s 27 - 32; 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. DeMarco - Yes
Dr. Varcadipane – Yes

XIII. NEGOTIATIONS

33. Ratification of the 2024-2027 Passaic Valley Education Association Contract

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education and the Passaic Valley Education Association ("PVEA") have negotiated a successor to the 2021-2024 Bargaining Agreement. The successor Agreement for the term of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027, is presented by the Negotiations Committee for ratification by the Passaic Valley Regional High School Board of Education. The membership of the Passaic Valley Education Association ratified this Agreement on February 2, 2024.

Mr. D'Ambrosio made a motion to approve Negotiations # 33; seconded by Mr. DeMarco.

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. DeMarco - Yes

Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

XIV. ATHLETICS AND STUDENTS ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

34. Approval / Michael Messina, Volunteer Baseball Coach 2023-2024

The Superintendent recommended approval of Michael Messina as a volunteer baseball coach for the 2023-2024 school year. Mr. Messina has provided his criminal history for this position.

Mr. D'Ambrosio made a motion to approve Athletics and Students Activities #34; seconded by Mr. DeMarco.

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. DeMarco - Yes
Dr. Varcadipane - Yes

XV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

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.

XVI. CALL FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Mr. Damiano asked for a motion to open the floor to the public; seconded by Mr. D’Ambrosio.
No one responded.
Mr. DeMarco made a motion to close the meeting to the public; seconded by Mr. D’Ambrosio.

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. D’Ambrosio made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. DeMarco.

Respectfully submitted,



Colin Monahan

Next Meeting

Regular Meeting:
Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 7:00 PM
Adra Suchorsky Library
Passaic Valley High School
East Main Street
Little Falls, New Jersey 07424