

RAMAPO INDIAN HILLS REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Oakland, New Jersey 07436

SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
August 1, 2023
Ramapo High School, Auditorium, 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call- Regular Public Meeting

Upon roll call at 7:00 P.M., the Board members responded as follows: Mmes. Ansh (remotely via zoom), Emmolo, King, Koulikourdis (remotely via zoom), Mariani, and Sullivan. Messrs. Bogdansky, DeLaite and Lorenz. Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Dora E. Zeno, Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary was also present. Ms. Sullivan confirmed that Ms. Koulikourdis and Ms. Ansh's remote participation was in accordance with By-Law 155.01.

The meeting was called to order by the Board President at 7:00 P.M. Ms. Zeno announced that the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the rights of the public to have advance notice of and to attend meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. She also announced that in accordance with the provisions of this act, the Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-8(b), and guidance from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services. She read a public statement advising the public to be aware that employees of the Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District retain the right of privacy and shall retain all rights regarding defamation and slander according to the laws of New Jersey. Ms. Zeno further stated that the Board shall not be held liable for comments made by members of the public and, in order to protect the privacy rights of employees in the District, the Board shall not respond to statements made by the public of or about District employees.

Ms. Sullivan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DeLaite motioned and seconded by King, unanimously carried, to extend the first public comment section from thirty minutes to one hour.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Sullivan, referring to the July 24, 2023 resolutions: E7, E8 and E 11, read a statement regarding the mental health and counseling resolutions that did not pass at the July 24, 2023 board meeting. In her opinion, the resolutions did not prevail due to insufficient and untimely information received by the Board related to these services.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Dionisio reported that this special meeting was held to revisit the agenda items that support the students' social and emotional safety, well-being, and education. Dr. Dionisio read a statement on how best to maintain focus on the District's core mission of addressing the needs

of the students. He also reviewed the process that was followed in ensuring that the Board was prepared to vote on these agenda items.

INTERIM BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT - No report

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS - No reports

PUBLIC COMMENT

Moved by BOGDANSKY, Seconded by MARIANI, unanimously carried to open the meeting to public comments,

- Nearly two dozen members of the FLOW community, staff and students commented in support of providing mental health and wellness services to students.
- A member of the public, Oakland, commented on the District's social emotional failures. That individual also commented on board members, due process and parental rights.

Moved by BOGDANSKY and seconded by MARIANI, and unanimously carried, to close public comments and resume the Regular Public Meeting, 8:27 PM.

OPEN BOARD DISCUSSION

- Each Board member referred to the rationale as to why he/she voted on the July 24th mental health services resolutions that did not pass at that meeting. Of those members who voted against the July 24 E7, E8 and E11 motions, each stated that at this juncture he/she had a better understanding of the services rendered and were now in a position to reconsider the prior vote.
- The public was thanked for coming forward to voice their concerns related to mental health services.
- Administration was thanked for answering all their questions.
- References were made to the guidance contained in Robert's Rules of Order and how they could be interpreted.
- There was back and forth dialogue between Board members referencing alleged statements and alleged personal attacks.

REINTRODUCING EDUCATION AGENDA ITEMS THAT DID NOT CARRY AT THE JULY 24 BOARD MEETING

- E7. Move to approve, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools, the Agreement between Sage Thrive Inc. and the Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District Board of Education to provide school-based counseling and related counseling services in the amount of \$370,500. Effective for the 2023-24 School Year.

- E8. Move to approve, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools, the Agreement between Sage Thrive Inc. and the Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District Board of Education to provide school based mental-wellness training, coaching and certification to the Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District in the amount not to exceed \$60,000. Effective for the 2023-24 School Year.
- E11. Move to approve, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools, the Agreement between Care Solace, Inc., and the Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District Board of Education for a website providing access to mental health treatment providers to school district staff, students and parents in the amount of \$8,433.00. Effective for the 2023-24 School Year.

Items E7, E8 & E11 were **Moved** by **KING** **Seconded** by **LORENZ** and **unanimously carried for the consent agenda**

RC) *=Yes:

RC): Bogdansky*

DeLaite*

Emmolo*

King*

Koulikourdis*

Lorenz*

Mariani*

Ansh*, NO E11

Sullivan*

PUBLIC COMMENT

Moved by **BOGDANSKY**, Seconded by **LORENZ**, unanimously carried to open the meeting to public comments, 9:32 PM.

- Over a dozen members of the public commented on the discourse that emerged since the original mental health resolutions were defeated. All supported the sentiment that it was a worthy effort to reinstate these services.

Moved by **BOGDANSKY** and seconded by **MARIANI**, and unanimously carried, to close public comments and resume the Regular Public Meeting @ 10:18 PM.

BOARD COMMENTS

Discussion followed regarding the Board Comment section being missed and whether or not the Board can reopen the meeting. Mr. Disler noted that someone can make a motion to make Board comments and then follow the vote for adjournment.

Motion made by **SULLIVAN**, seconded by **MARIANI** to follow the agenda as prescribed by policy to have the second Board Comment.

RC) *=Yes:

RC): Bogdansky NO
DeLaite NO
Emmolo*
King NO
Koulikourdis NO
Lorenz NO
Mariani *
Ansh*
Sullivan *

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Monday, August 28, 2023 Proposed Curriculum Changes Public Hearing/Regular Public Meeting, Ramapo High School Auditorium.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by **BOGDANSKY**, Seconded by **MARIANI**, unanimously carried to adjourn at 10:26 PM

RC) *=Yes:

RC): Bogdansky*
DeLaite *
Emmolo*
King*
Koulikourdis*
Lorenz*
Mariani *
Ansh*
Sullivan NO



Dora E. Zeno
Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary