

**NORTH CALDWELL BOARD OF EDUCATION
NOTICE OF PUBLIC SESSION
GRANDVIEW SCHOOL CAFETERIA
VIA ZOOM MEETING**

<https://ncboe.zoom.us/j/91850227241?pwd=WWlXVXJRbUhGaTINTDRQQkdMMkUwQT09>

October 19, 2023

7:30 P.M.

AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**
In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting has been properly advertised in the designated newspaper and the agenda has been posted at the appropriate locations.
- 4. ROLL CALL**
- 5. REPORT ON SPECIAL ELECTION**
- 6. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT**
- 7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**
* NJSLA Presentation
- 8. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**
 - **General Resolutions**
 - G1. Approve Pediatric Assessment**
 - G2. Approve Pediatric Assessment**
 - G3. Approve listed tax shelter annuity companies**
 - G4. Approve facilities use application for NCPE**
 - G5. Approve revised report card**
 - G6. Approve the 2023-2024 Nursing Services Plan**
 - **Business Resolutions**
 - B1. Approve September 19, 2023 Public and Confidential Minutes**
 - B2. Approve listed Payroll[s]**
 - B3. Approve electronic check register[s]**
 - B4. Approve bills and claims**
 - B5. Approve Board Secretary July 2023 monthly financial report**
 - B6. Approve July 2023 Monthly Financial reports**
 - B7. Approve 2024-2025 Comprehensive Maintenance Plan**
 - B8. Approve Bergen County Cooperative Pricing Agreement**
 - B9. Approve Parent Transportation Agreement**
 - B10. Approve Revision on Form DOE-130 New Access Road**
 - B11. Approve Transfer from Capital Reserve**
 - B12. Approve Bid Acceptance Grandview Access Road**
 - **Personnel Resolutions**
 - P1. Approve Instructional Assistant**

- P2. Approve Professional development for listed staff
- P3. Approve listed Substitute Teachers
- P4. Approve Title I Tutors
- P5. Approve hourly custodian
- P6. Approve Child Rearing return date change
- 9. OLD BUSINESS
- 10. NEW BUSINESS
2024-2025 School Calendar
- 11. ADJOURN TO CONFIDENTIAL SESSION
 - ☒ Legal ☐ Attorney-Client Privilege ☒ Personnel
 - ☒ Negotiations ☒ School Security/Public Safety ☐ Student Matter

The next scheduled public meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023.

Posting: Board Members, Principals, NCPE Co-Presidents, NCEA Co-Presidents, Caldwell Progress Press Member, Board Office, Schools, and Town Hall.

The Board of Education of the Borough of North Caldwell in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in public session on October 17, 2023 in person at the Grandview School Cafeteria as well as via an online Zoom Meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Mr. Michael Halik, Business Administrator, indicated that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting had been properly advertised and the agenda had been posted at the appropriate locations.

Roll call by the Business Administrator:

Present: Mrs. Mindy Oppen, President
 Mrs. Jordan Shumofsky, Vice-President
 Mrs. Johanna Stroever
 Mrs. Sapna Patel
 Mr. Eric Finkelstein

Also Present: Dr. Linda Freda, Superintendent
 Mr. Michael Halik, Business Administrator / Board Secretary
 Dr. Michael Stefanelli, Grandview School Principal
 Mr. Frank Bifulco, Grandview School Principal
 Mr. Chris Checchetto, Gould School Principal
 Mr. Robert Brenneck, Computer Network Systems Technician
 Mr. David Blackowski, Computer Network Systems Technician

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Oppen reported that thirty-four (34) people were attending the meeting via zoom. She began by congratulating Dr. Stefanelli on his retirement and said that he was a devoted educator in our district, and he will be missed. Mr. Checchetto then congratulated Dr. Stefanelli on his retirement and wished him well in the future. Mrs. Oppen then presented a gift to Dr. Stefanelli on behalf of the Board of Education as a token of their thanks.

Mrs. Oppen then gave the following report in reflection of the referendum efforts:

It's now been 3 weeks since our community failed to pass a referendum that would have provided greater security, educational upgrades and ensured continued educational excellence. I have some thoughts I want to share.

As with any election, there are reasonable people who might vote one way or the other for a variety of reasons. The North Caldwell Board of Education has worked on building expansion since the hilltop area of town was sold. Under then NCBOE president Rob Projansky, a demographic study was commissioned to determine the population impact on our schools. At the time, we were told by the borough that the Hilltop would be age restricted. As we all know, that wasn't the case. I'm going to pause right here- I want to

separate the disaster of a municipal project from the families that moved into that neighborhood. They are treasured members of our North Caldwell community, and I am disappointed when they are treated otherwise.

Moving on, I can speak for me personally, all past and present members of the BOE, and current administration, that we have worked on this for 8 long years. False starts, community forums, a pause, a redesign, and relaunch... and here we are, looking toward how we do more with less. How do we provide the same high-quality education that my kids and your kids received. How do we pay it forward?

This board has a strong track record of transparency. I can confidently say that. Our meetings are open, now over Zoom, allowing people to ask questions in real time and interact with the Board. I am happy to see our Town Council finally moved in that direction, but that is NOT the norm with many boards of ed or town councils. So, I think we are pretty good listeners, but this difficult defeat has given us the opportunity to do some introspection and listen even more. Here is what we have learned:

People are struggling financially in our town. This is real, and something that is often ignored, as many in North Caldwell fancy ourselves an affluent town. In a really wonderful way, we are far more economically diverse than people realize. *I understand if the dollar amount was something that felt unattainable for your family, and you voted no.*

Education has changed in the last 20-30 years. If you haven't had kids in school since then and we didn't adequately explain how those changes affect the use of space, that's on us. Message sent is not always messaged received. Please reach out and let me know how we could have done better.

If you voted no because you thought we didn't explore moving 6th grade up to West Essex, *you voted based on misinformation*. This was initially explored 10 years ago, several times in that time frame, and confirmed as recently as the week before the vote.

If you voted no because you thought there were empty classrooms at West Essex, *you voted based on misinformation*. As those rumors were swirling, we even called West Essex. Not true. There are no empty classrooms.

If you voted no because other elected officials gave you information about the referendum that contradicted what the Board of Ed was telling you, I implore you to ask the question why someone would do that? And commit next time to going to primary sources for information.

If you voted no because a former mayor who no longer lives in town called on a recording, I'd like you to ask why? If you didn't know he had moved, ask why to that also.

If you voted no because you don't support tax increases of any kind, we can agree to disagree, but I can see that as a personal political philosophy. I get it.

If you voted no because you thought we wouldn't build a security access road for Grandview, that has been requested for the last 20 years by our police and fire departments, *you voted on misinformation*. That was removed from the referendum months ago, well known to the planning board and town council, and we are voting tonight to move forward with construction.

If you voted no because you thought the school district was trying to hide this, I beg you to have some introspection of your own. Did we not communicate it or are you not paying attention? We sent a mailer to every address if you didn't get it, can you please give us the benefit of the doubt and call the district or board member and ask for a copy. Assuming something nefarious is not productive- I've been victim to that line of thinking before too though. We held public forums, communicated through what avenues were available through the borough, set up a booth at the color run, had signs in front of both schools, requested the banner over Gould Ave but fire dept was using it for Oktoberfest. If you are not on social media, don't read the paper, aren't on the town communications list, please please reach out. We don't know how to reach you!

And there's the matter of timing. We know interest rates are high. Unfortunately, it takes years to plan a referendum. And as we said multiple times, as interest rates went down, we would refinance our bond.

Let's talk about the town for a minute. Did we know about the water meters? No. Did we know about garbage pickup? No. Is that under the purview of the school district? No. Are we involved in Walker's Pond? No. And here's our civics lesson: town council/borough is different from the board of ed/district. Neither oversees the other. But I think we can all agree our community is better off when we work together. From our end we'll continue to work on that relationship. I challenge the entire town council and mayor to work on that as well.

Finally, many of you may not know that according to case law, BOE members are only able to *educate* the public about a referendum. We cannot tell people to vote yes. It is hard to compete with people telling you to vote no when *we* cannot tell you to vote yes.

Young families who were shocked and let down by the news. Who feel like your decisions around education for your children is a bit of a bait and switch. Let's talk about what's next. Register to vote. Request a mail in ballot, so your voice being heard isn't predicated on your commute home from the city or a sick child.

When can we put another referendum before voters, you ask?

A lot of resources go into a bond referendum, in terms of funding, planning, effort and time. Even if we committed funding, planning and effort, we have very little control over the timeline.

Some school districts move through that process faster by cutting one section of their plans and putting the chopped-down version before voters a few months later. We can't do that -

all the pieces of our plan were interwoven as an intentional comprehensive approach to address North Caldwell's needs.

So, what's next? The district will reevaluate our building needs, prioritizing maintenance projects we put on hold hoping to get state aid. The referendum was not about deferred maintenance. It was about creating additional classrooms, learning spaces, and security upgrades. However, we did defer some maintenance in anticipation of state aid and hoping to avoid "new maintenance" being in the way of construction demolition.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Freda expressed her disappointment that the referendum did not pass as school security and educational needs in the classroom are priorities. She thanked the NCPE for hosting a fantastic Healthy Harvest Day at Grandview and Gould. She welcomed the new Director of Buildings and Ground, Ralph Chappell. Dr. Freda also expressed her gratitude to Dr. Stefanelli for his devotion to Grandview School for the last 17 years and stated how much she will miss him.

The Board took a break from 7:54pm to 8:01 pm.

The Board returned from break and Dr. Freda presented a report on the results of the NJSLA (New Jersey Student Learning Assessment) test. The complete report can be viewed on the Districts' website www.ncboe.org.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Alba Pennisi, 7 Soder Road – Mrs. Pennisi expressed her dissatisfaction with the referendum reflection presented by the Board President.

The following people made comments in person pertaining to the Access Road Project at Grandview Elementary School:

Mrs. Cathy Klein, 62 Beachmont Terrace

Mr. Henry Sobotka, 55 Beachmont Terrace

Mr. Sean Glasser, 61 Beachmont Terrace

Mr. Dennis Klein, 62 Beachmont Terrace

After the in-person comments about the Access Road at Grandview Elementary School, the following public comment on zoom was made:

Mr. Peter Kraft, 10 Wildwood Drive, spoke about the Referendum Committee's time and efforts that they put into the Referendum planning and also thanked Dr. Stefanelli for his service.

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

- G1. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the following Developmental Pediatric assessment for listed student:

Student #	8005538
Provider:	Dr. Rina Goldberg
Service:	Developmental Pediatric Assessment
Facility:	Institute of Neurology and Neurosurgery at St. Barnabas Hospital L.L.C
Date:	1/30/2024
Fee:	\$975.00

Moved: Mrs. Stroeve Seconded: Mr. Finkelstein

Yes: 5 No: 0

- G2. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the following Developmental Pediatric assessment for listed student:

Student #	8006120
Provider:	Dr. Rina Goldberg
Service:	Developmental Pediatric Assessment
Facility:	Institute of Neurology and Neurosurgery at St. Barnabas Hospital L.L.C
Date:	2/7/2024
Fee:	\$975.00

Moved: Mrs. Stroeve Seconded: Mr. Finkelstein

Yes: 5 No: 0

- G3. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the modified listed **403B & 457 Tax Shelter Annuity Companies:**

Security Benefit
Equitable (Traditional and Roth Plans)

Lincoln Life
 Valic Financial
 Fidelity Investment*
 (*only for Accounts Established Prior to Jan 2020)

Moved: Mrs. Stroever Seconded: Mr. Finkelstein

Yes: 5 No: 0

- G4. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the following facilities use application as per North Caldwell Board of Education Policy 7510:

Organization:	NCPE
User Class:	Class 1
Activity:	Outdoor Movie night
Facility:	Grandview School field
Dates:	5/10/2024 ; rain date 5/16/2024
Time:	6:30pm -10:30pm
Fee:	No Fee

Moved: Mrs. Stroever Seconded: Mr. Finkelstein

Yes: 5 No: 0

- G5. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the revisions to the third-grade report card.

Moved: Mrs. Stroever Seconded: Mr. Finkelstein

Yes: 5 No: 0

- G6. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the **2023-2024 Nursing Services Plan.**

Moved: Mrs. Stroever Seconded: Mr. Finkelstein

Yes: 5 No: 0

BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS

- B1. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the **Public and Confidential Minutes of September 19th, 2023**

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B2. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the following **Payroll:**

Payroll Date:	Payroll #	Amount:
September 29 th , 2023	7	\$380,250.55
October 15 th , 2023	8	\$407,812.70

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B3. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the following **Electronic Check Register(s):**

Date	Starting check #	Ending Check #	Total Amount
July 1-July 31, 2023	E00089	E00091	\$15,305.95

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B4. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the following **Bills and Claims:**

Date	Starting check #	Ending Check #	Total Amount
October 10, 2023	001088	001090	\$253,752.73
October 17, 2023	TBD	TBD	\$272,308.40

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B5. WHEREAS** pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c) 3, the Board Secretary does certify that as of **July 2023**, no budgetary line-item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8 and 18A:22-8.1; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c) 4, the Board of Education does certify that as of **July 2023**, the Board Secretary Monthly Financial Report, did not reflect an over expenditure in any Major Account or Fund, and based on the Appropriation Balances reflected on this report and on the advice of District Officials, that sufficient funds are available to meet the District's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B6. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the attached Board Secretary's and Treasurer's **Monthly Financial Reports** for **July 2023**.

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B7. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the attached School Facilities Annual Maintenance Budget worksheet for 2024-2025 (Form M-1) together with the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan.

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeve

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B8. WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(5) authorizes contracting units to establish a Cooperative Pricing System and to enter into Cooperative Pricing Agreements for its administration; and

WHEREAS, the County of Bergen, hereinafter referred to as the "Lead Agency " has offered voluntary participation in the New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Alliance # CK04- a Cooperative Pricing System for the purchase of goods and services;

WHEREAS, on October 17, 2023 the governing body of the North Caldwell Board of Education, County of Essex, State of New Jersey duly considered participation in a Cooperative Pricing System for the provision and performance of goods and services;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

TITLE

This RESOLUTION shall be known and may be cited as the Cooperative Pricing Resolution of the North Caldwell Board of Education.

AUTHORITY

Pursuant to the provisions of *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(5)*, the Business Administrator is hereby authorized to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the Lead Agency.

CONTRACTING UNIT

The Lead Agency shall be responsible for complying with the

provisions of the *Local Public Contracts Law* (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 *et seq.*) and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage.

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B9. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve the following **Parent Transportation Agreement**.

Student id#	To/From	Cost per day	Total Days	Total
8005610	Pompton Lakes School District	\$60.00	180	\$10,800.00

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B10. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education revises the Form DOE-130 for Project 3630-060-13-3630 New Access Road at Grandview Elementary School to reflect revised project costs as attached.

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B11. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approve transferring \$1,447,800.00 from the Capital Reserve Fund to Fund 30 (Capital Projects) to fund the Access Road Project at the Grandview Elementary School State Project Number 3630-060-13-3630, with any remaining funds being returned to Capital Reserve at the completion of the project.

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeve

Yes: 5 No: 0

- B12. WHEREAS**, a recommendation was made by the Superintendent of Schools to the **North Caldwell Board of Education** ("Board") to seek a contract for construction services for the New Access Road at Grandview School ("Project"); and

WHEREAS, the Project was properly advertised to prospective bidders in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4; and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2023 the Board received the following bid from potential bidder in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1, et seq.;

Bidder	Base Bid
PMY Construction Corp.	\$1,826,555.00
Mike Fitzpatrick Contractors, Inc.	\$1,987,927.00

WHEREAS, upon review of the bid submitted by the bidder, PMY Construction Corp. ("PMY"), the Board has determined that the bid submitted by PMY contains material non-waivable defects, and

WHEREAS, the bid submitted by Mike Fitzpatrick Contractors, Inc. is responsive to the bid specifications and compliant with N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq., and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board hereby rejects the bid submitted by PMY Construction, LLC for being unresponsive, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED hereby awards the Project to Mike Fitzpatrick Contractors, Inc. at a total contract of \$1,987,927.

Moved: Mrs. Malige Seconded: Mrs. Stroeve

Yes: 5 No: 0

PERSONNEL RESOLUTIONS

P1. RESOLVED that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve **Joan Ganton** as an Instructional Assistant at a prorated salary of \$ 32,758.00 (Inst Assist Step 4) effective October 2, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Moved: Mrs. Shumofsky Seconded: Mrs. Stroeve

Yes: 5 No: 0

P2. RESOLVED that the Board of Education , upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Professional Development Workshops/Conferences costs for the following teachers:

Name	Date	Workshop	Cost
Boag, M.	9/28,11/3,3/19,1/18	Conquer Mathematics	\$720.00
Boag, C.	10/19,12/6,2/1	Conquer Mathematics	\$590.00
Williams, K.	10/9	NJSMA Elem Workshop	\$60.00
Castiglia, A.	12/2	NJIDA Fall Conference	\$183.27
Clutterbuck, S.	12/2	NJIDA Fall Conference	\$183.27
Norton, L.	2/7	Help Students to Write Well	\$180.00
Monks, S.	12/2	NJIDA Fall Conference	\$183.27
			\$219.56
Keenan, A.	12/1	NJIDA Fall Conference	+\$26.32 (Travel) \$245.88
Norton, L.	12/2	NJIDA Fall Conference	\$188.58
Egan, E.	12/2	NJIDA Fall Conference	\$183.27
Clutterbuck, S.	10/27	Fall Synergy Meeting	\$ 0.00
Thomas, C.	10/27	Fall Synergy Meeting	\$ 0.00
Halik, M.	11/14, 12/12,3/21,4/11	NJASBO Classes	\$ 650.00

Moved: Mrs. Shumofsky Seconded: Mrs. Stroeve

Yes: 5 No: 0

- P3. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following as substitute teachers for the 2023-2024 school year.

Henry Gehman
Janice Alvarez

Moved: Mrs. Shumofsky Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- P4. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following teachers for Title I Tutoring to be paid through The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Grant at a rate of \$75.00 per hour effective for the 2023-2024 school year:

<u>Title I Tutor</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>AM RATE</u>	<u>PM RATE</u>
Mac Donald, Lacy	Before/ After School Tutor	\$50.00	\$75.00
Lagattuta, Jillian	Before/ After School Tutor	\$50.00	\$75.00

Moved: Mrs. Shumofsky Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

- P5. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following as an hourly Custodian, not to exceed 20 hours per week, effective October 18, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Ramoncito Vidallon Diaz \$22.75/hour

Moved: Mrs. Shumofsky Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

P6. RESOLVED that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the change in date of return from Child Rearing Leave for **Laura Grimaldi** from January 2, 2024 to December 1, 2023.

Moved: Mrs. Shumofsky Seconded: Mrs. Stroeveer

Yes: 5 No: 0

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Freda discussed the draft version of the 2024-2025 school calendar. It will be placed on the Board agenda for approval at the November Board meeting.

Mr. Halik advised the Board that they will need to change the date of the December board meeting.

The following resolution was called at approximately 7:51 pm.

RESOLVED that in accordance with section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, the Board has the authority to adjourn to closed session to discuss matters pertaining to: Legal/Negotiations, School Security/Public Safety and Personnel. Said matters will be made public upon their disposition.

Moved: Mrs. Shumofsky Seconded: Mr. Finkelstein

Yes: 5 No: 0

As there was no further business to discuss, the Board adjourned at 9:41 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Halik

Michael Halik
Business Administrator / Board Secretary