

SUSSEX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION

February Minutes

February 3, 2025

REGULAR MEETING 7:00 P.M.

ADDED & REVISED

I. CALL TO ORDER BY Mrs. Ross, PRESIDENT

II. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NOTICE

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice and to attend meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Sussex County Educational Services Commission has caused advance notice of this meeting by having the date, time and place published in the NJ Herald, Star Ledger, and at the County of Sussex Clerk's Office. Meeting notice was posted on the door at the Northern Hills Academy.

III. FLAG SALUTE

IV. MISSION STATEMENT

The Sussex County Educational Services Commission is a public agency that seeks to create partnerships with public and nonpublic schools and local communities. The Sussex County ESC develops and provides meaningful programs for young people with unique challenges and their families. Our goals are designed to shape our students into productive independent adults. Sussex County ESC provides opportunities for the professionals in our communities to stay current with their educational practices while supporting districts with both cost effective programs and a wide array of services.

V. OATH OF OFFICE

VI. ROLL CALL

District	Board of Director Member	Present	Absent
ANDOVER	JANE BYRON		X
BYRAM	LAUREN PEDERSEN	X	
FRANKLIN	KATHLEEN CLOHESSEY		X
GREEN	CHRISTOPHER BILIK	X	
HAMBURG	ROBERT JONES	X	
HARDYSTON	CLARISSA MAROTTA	X	
KITTATINNY	DEBRA COOK	X	
LAFAYETTE	SUZANNE ROSS	X	
NEWTON	JOANIE FAYE		X
OGDENSBURG	BRENDAN DONEGAN		X

SPARTA	CHAD WOOD	X	
STANHOPE	CARMEN PICO		X
SUSSEX TECH	GUS MODLA		X
VERNON	STEPHANIE VECHARELLO	X	
WALLKILL VALLEY	TRACI DRESSNER	X	

VII. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion by **Robert Jones**, Seconded by **Chad Wood**, to approve the following minutes:

Regular Meeting

Voice vote: **All present voted in favor. Motion is carried.**

VIII. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

IX. CORRESPONDENCE

1. February Parent Calendar
2. February NHA Lunch Calendar
3. Love the Bus Month Flyer
4. Email from ERC for donation
5. Email thanking ERC for the donation
6. ERC Charities Event Booklet - available upon request

ADDED

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel & Negotiations - None
Buildings and Grounds / Finance - None
Programs and Services / Policy - None

XI. AUDIT PRESENTATION

Matt Wielkots to present the 2023 - 2024 audit report.

XII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Northern Hills Academy

The students and staff at Northern Hills Academy have been resilient in facing the cold weather while maintaining their enthusiasm for learning and engaging in various activities. The students commenced the new year by establishing their goals for the upcoming year. Students studied Martin Luther King Jr. and his significant contributions to promoting acceptance, kindness, and

inclusion for everyone. The topic of Presidents' Day was addressed prior to the holiday, and students gained insights into several of America's notable presidents, including George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Despite the cold weather, students are actively participating in gym class and sports club indoors. They engage in various sports and games that emphasize teamwork, graciously demonstrating both winning and losing while collaborating with their peers. The students and staff at NHA are eagerly anticipating a Valentine's Day event that will celebrate love, friendship, dancing, and baking.

On January 20th, staff engaged in a productive in-service professional development day that addressed key topics including classroom management, data collection, and the health and wellness of both staff and students. Participants reported positive feedback regarding the training and left with valuable insights applicable to their classrooms as well as their personal well-being.

Project Search

Superintendent held two very important meetings with state representatives regarding the financial support being given to Project Search interns this year. One meeting was held with the Sussex and Warren County Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services while the second meeting was held with the Developmental Disabilities office. Both meetings were very successful in securing the funding for the program and for the understanding of how the financial support can be applied to the SCESC, the districts participating and the interns themselves.

- The interns are progressing in their internships at both Newton and Hackettstown locations
- The supervisors, mentors have been great working with the interns assisting them in all aspects of the job required.
- 2nd round of teacher evaluations have been completed
- All Employment Planning Meetings for the interns have been completed
- The PS instructors continue to post pictures on the Atlantic Health website and staff have been commenting how great they look
- Our interns in Newton are continuing serving the Rolling Resilience snack cart to the hospital staff
- Hackettstown Food Services, OT/PT and Environmental Services has really taken to the program and have our intern set up for success
- John O'Hara continue to work with the staff and President of AHS for Newton and Hackettstown and looking for new departments to support our program
- We have set up a meeting for February to talk with the Nursing Department to possibly have them work with our interns. This would open up great opportunities for future interns career options
- John O'Hara participated in the Morris/Sussex Transition partnership meeting and am looking to present at a meeting to promote our program

- The Warren Hills Child Study Team came to tour Hackettstown and were very impressed with the program. They are sending a student already for next year and may have a second student that they are thinking of sending to Project SEARCH
- Sparta Child Study Team toured Newton Project SEARCH with a student and parent and are working on filling out an application to send a student in September
- Our Newton instructor continues to work on and send out our monthly Newsletter each month with the "goings on" in Newton and Hackettstown Project SEARCH!
- John O'Hara continues to work with AHS to conduct training for mentors and any other interested hospital staff in Newton and Hackettstown to better equip them with information and techniques that they may utilize without interns

Non Public

Second marking period progress reports have been completed and shared out with all of the parents of students within non public schools.

Non Public Teacher Cathy Kohansby led district staff in a Chair Yoga professional development activity on the district-wide Professional Development day. All staff reported that this activity was an essential part of our Wellness Initiative. Thank you Cathy!

Preschool Instructional Coaches

Programming continues with the following districts- Hopatcong, Stanhope, Stillwater, Sandyston, Netcong, Oxford and Hampton. Transition with Ms. D'amico has been outstanding and the districts are happy with the programming. Continued professional development activities have kept the PIC's busy. Mrs. Dunnell finished up her PIC training by NJDOE and Ms. D'Amico is starting the PIRS training in February.

XIII. BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

We remain busy in the business office as always, all 1099's and W-2's have been sent out to the employees and vendors. Reports have been submitted and filed to the IRS and the state of New Jersey.

We are currently working on the 2025 - 2026 budget and I will be attending a training in Warren County this week as this is my first budget.

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

XV. BOARD ACTION AGENDA ITEMS:

A. PERSONNEL

1. **RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors

approve the hiring of the following part-time paraprofessionals up to 28 hours, for the **2024-2025 regular school year program** pending completion of all paperwork:

NAME	POSITION	STEP	SALARY	EFFECTIVE DATE	NOTES
Walker Nittolo	PT Paraprofessional	1	\$20/hr	1.28.25	**ADDED**
Morgan Urban	PT Paraprofessional	9	\$25.50/hr	TBD	**ADDED** includes .50 for BD
Danielle Petrosky	PT Paraprofessional	9	\$25.50/hr	TBD	**ADDED**
TBD	PT Paraprofessional	TBD	TBD	TBD	
TBD	PT Paraprofessional	TBD	TBD	TBD	
TBD	PT Paraprofessional	TBD	TBD	TBD	

2. **RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors rescind the following part-time para-professionals contracts for the **2024-2025 regular school year program**:

NAME	POSITION	STEP	SALARY	EFFECTIVE DATE	NOTES
Rasheeda Michel	PT Paraprofessional	2	\$20.00/hr	11/5/24 - 1/13/25	Never started work

3. **RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the following revised stipends for Blue Team (medical crisis team) for the 2024-2025 school year:

Blue Team (medical crisis team) for the 2024-2025 school year:

Role	Team	Stipend Amount	Effective Date
Nurse	Kristina Swyryt /Julia Devore ADDED January 2025 Katie Swanson	No stipend	9/1/24-6/30/25 01/02/25- 06/30/25
Event Recorder	TBD	TBD	9/1/24-6/30/25
CPR Lead/AED	Lia Kondos	Year 2 Stipend \$200.00	9/1/24-6/30/25

Administrator Liaison	Kim Gallagher	No stipend	9/1/24-6/30/25
Runner-Go bag/Oxygen	Brian Wittman	Year 3 Stipend \$300.00	9/1/24-6/30/25
Classroom Support	Wade Dendy Patrick Hanson *removed*	No stipend	9/1/24-6/30/25 9/1/24-01/26/25
Main Office Support	Corrie Pisciotano Jennifer Buckalew	No stipend	9/1/24-6/30/25 ADDED January 31, 2025

4. **RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the following REVISED stipends for Green Team (crisis team) for the 2024-2025 school year:

Role	Team	Stipend Amount	Effective Date
Leader	Wade Dendy	No Stipend	9/1/24-6/30/25
Teacher	Joe Leone	Stipend Year 1 \$100.00	9/1/24-6/30/25 REMOVED September 30, 2024
Occupational Therapist	Noah McGowan	Stipend Year 2 \$200.00	9/1/24-6/30/25
Teacher	Brian Wittman	Stipend Year 3 \$300.00	9/1/24-6/30/25
Paraprofessional	Melanie Radice	Stipend Year 3 \$300.00	9/1/24-6/30/25
Paraprofessional	Elias Batista	Stipend Year 1 \$100.00	9/1/24-6/30/25
School Social Worker	Patrick Hanson	No Stipend	9/1/24-6/30/25 REMOVED January 26, 2025
Paraprofessional ADDED	Nick Short	Stipend Year 1 \$100.00	10/15/24- 6/30/25
Paraprofessional ADDED	Rachel Vorce	Stipend Year 1 \$100.00	10/15/24- 6/30/25

MOVE: Robert Jones		2ND: Lauren Pedersen	
Andover	Byram Y	Franklin	Green Y
Hamburg Y	Hardyston Y	Kittatinny Y	Lafayette Y
Newton	Ogdensburg	Sparta Y	Stanhope
Sussex Tech	Vernon Y	Wallkill Valley Y	

Motion passed

B. FINANCE

1. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the payment of the following bills:

January Payroll	\$436,615.95
Jan & Feb(1-4) (Fund 10)	\$103,402.18
Jan & Feb(1-4) (Fund 20)	\$243.52

2. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the Board Secretary's Reports and Treasurer's Reports for October 2024 (as attached).
3. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the attached list of budget transfers for January 2025.
4. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the following budget increase in the amount of \$4,000.00 for January 2025.
5. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors accept the 2023 - 2024 annual audit report and presentation from Wielkottz & Company.
6. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors accept the donation from Elite Retirement Consultants in the amount of \$10,000.00. ***REVISED***
7. **RESOLVED**, upon recommendation of the Superintendent that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission approve the updated rate sheets to revise the cost of Speech and Language evaluations for non-member districts and the dates for the ESY program for the 2025-2026 school year, as attached.

MOVE: Christopher Bilik		2ND: Traci Dressner	
Andover	Byram Y	Franklin	Green Y
Hamburg Y	Hardyston Y	Kittatinny Y	Lafayette Y
Newton	Ogdensburg	Sparta Y	Stanhope
Sussex Tech	Vernon Y	Wallkill Valley Y	

Motion passed

C. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

1. **Resolved**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the following professional development activities:

Staff Member	Date	Workshop	Location	Cost	Transportation/ Mileage Cost
Nancy Daly	1/15/25	Beyond the IEP: Are Special Education Services Meeting the Literacy Needs of K-12 Students	webinar	\$0	\$0
Lindy Powell	1/16/25	Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act	webinar	\$0	\$0
Andrea Romano	3/10/25- 3/14/25	NJDOE Winter Institute	Webinar Series	\$0	\$0
Andrea Romano	1/15/25	Screen Time Insights to Behaviors	webinar	\$0	\$0
Dawn Kuncken	3/13/25 - 3/14/25	Treatment of Motor Issues in Children with Sensory Dysfunction	Webinar	\$213	\$00
Lia Kondos	3/13/25 - 3/14/25	Treatment of Motor Issues in Children with Sensory Dysfunction	webinar	\$213	\$00
Anthony DeFelice	2/3/25	Sussex County SBA Virtual Meeting - The Role of a School Board Administrator/Board Secretary	Webinar	\$0	\$0
Andrea Romano	2.21.25	Connecting the Dots: Designing Intervention Referral Pathways and Risk Assessment and Response Protocols to Support Student Mental Health	Virtual Rutgers	\$0	\$0
Andrea Romano	2.7.25	Fearless Alternatives	Virtual	\$0	\$0
Andrea Romano Lindy Powell	2.13.25	New year, new administrations: Leading HR in a time of change	Virtual Eightfold AI	\$0	\$0
Corrie Pisciotano	2.20.25	Stop Overthinking & Eliminate Decision Fatigue	Webinar	\$0	\$0
Andrea Romano	2.26.25	School Health: Understanding Evolving Legal Obligations and Empowering School Nurses and School	Monroe NJPSA	\$150.00	n/a

		Physicians to Support Students			
Anthony DeFelice	2/6/25	Budget Training	Washington County Business Office NJDOE	\$0	\$32.06
Nancy Daly	1/30/25	Teach Truth: The struggle for Antiracist Education	Montclair State University Webinar	\$0	\$0
Kim Gallagher	4/2/25	IXL Live for Administrators	Eventbrite	\$179.00	\$34.88
Anthony DeFelice Kim Gallagher	2/13/25	Understanding Evolving Legal Obligations for Schools and Law Enforcement	Legal One / NJDOE	\$0	\$0
Andrea Romano ADDED	3/28/25	Bridging Educational Theories and Practice -Emphasizing Practical Applications of Educational Theories through Workshops and Interactive Sessions	Bergen County Special Services School District/ Paramus NJ	\$0	\$0
Cristina D'Amico Andrea Romano ADDED	2/6/25	PIRS Seminar Supervisor Meeting	NJ Pyramid Virtual	\$0	\$0

2. **RESOLVED**, that Sussex County ESC Board of Directors approve an unpaid intern from Abilities of Northwest NJ to participate 2 days per week in clerical responsibilities at Sussex County ESC.

ADDED

MOVE: Debra Cook		2ND: Clarissa Marotta	
Andover	Byram Y	Franklin	Green Y
Hamburg Y	Hardyston Y	Kittatinny Y	Lafayette Y
Newton	Ogdensburg	Sparta Y	Stanhope
Sussex Tech	Vernon Y	Wallkill Valley Y	

Motion passed

D. Buildings and Grounds

1. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the acceptance of the lawn maintenance

proposal from Grecco in the amount of \$718.56 per month billable in 9 months for a total of \$6,467.04.

MOVE: Laren Pedersen		2ND: Christopher Bilik	
Andover	Byram Y	Franklin	Green Y
Hamburg Y	Hardyston Y	Kittatinny Y	Lafayette Y
Newton	Ogdensburg	Sparta Y	Stanhope
Sussex Tech	Vernon Y	Wallkill Valley Y	

Motion passed

E. Policy

1. **RESOLVED**, that the Sussex County Educational Services Commission Board of Directors approve the second reading of the following policy:

P 0141	Board Member Number and Term
P 0141.1	Board Member Number and Term – Sending District
P 0141.2	Board Member Number and Term – Receiving District
P 0164.6	Remote Public Board Meetings During a Declared Emergency (M) (Abolished)
P 2200	Curriculum Content
R 5200	Attendance
P 5337	Service Animals
P 5350	Student Suicide Prevention
P 7231	Gifts From Vendors (M) (Abolished)
P 8420	Emergency and Crisis Situations
P & R 8467	Firearms and Weapons
P 9181	Volunteer Athletic Coaches and Co-Curricular Activity
P 5111	Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students
P & R 5512	Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying
P 5460	High School Graduation

- P & R 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices
- P & R 5533 Student Smoking – Policy & Regulation
- P & R 5701 Academic Integrity
- P 5710 Student Grievances - Policy
- P & R 7441 Electronic Surveillance in School Buildings and on
School Grounds
- P 8500 Food Services
- P 9163 Spectator Code of Conduct for Interscholastic Events
- R 9320 Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies

MOVE: Robert Jones		2ND: Debra Cook	
Andover	Byram Y	Franklin	Green Y
Hamburg Y	Hardyston Y	Kittatinny Y	Lafayette Y
Newton	Ogdensburg	Sparta Y	Stanhope
Sussex Tech	Vernon Y	Wallkill Valley Y	

Motion passed

XVI. OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Please ensure you complete your disclosure statements and submit them to the School Ethics Commission by 2/13/2025.

XVII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Meeting was called to adjourn by **Christopher Bilik** and Seconded by **Robert Jones**, all voiced in favor.

At 7:33 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,



Anthony DeFelice
Business Administrator / Board Secretary

Important dates:

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Important dates:

Full Representative Assembly Meeting

March 3, 2025

7:00pm

Northern Hills Academy 10 Gail Ct Sparta, NJ 07871