

THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 21, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

N.J. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act the Woodland Park Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted on the door of the Woodland Park Board of Education Administration Building and was provided to the North Jersey Record & Herald News

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

Members Present – Kim Galbraith, Shannon Marren, David Amanullah, Glen Grimes, Gina McQuin, MaryAnn Perro, Mark Salemi, Joe Giammarella

Members Absent – Julissa Rodriguez

Also Present – Michele Pillari, Dwayne Ortiz, Adam Weiss

Mr. Scholtz, CO Principal, presented awards to CO students as part of the new CO Hero program.

Mrs. Tomback presented Access Scores for ELL.

PUBLIC HEARING –EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT FOR DR. MICHELE PILLARI, SUPERINTENDENT

Please remember that this is a public meeting. Anything you say will be public record. As a result, pursuant to law, the Board Members cannot respond to you publicly concerning certain matters, such as those regarding an individual student. If there is a matter that you wish to remain private concerning personnel or students, please contact the Superintendent's office. In accordance with Bylaw 0167, statements will be limited to 3 minutes in duration.

Teri Carbonelli – Co-President WPEA

Mrs. Carbonelli pointed to the 60 balloons that were placed throughout the chambers and stated they represented the 60 certificated staff that have left the district between 2020 & present. This number includes new and veteran staff. She stated that only a small percentage left for financial reasons. Most left because of internal influences that affected them. She finds this very concerning and thinks the Board should too.

Karen Criscione – Co-President WPEA

Mrs. Criscione stated that teachers spend the summer getting ready for the school year. They're excited to set up their classroom in anticipation of the start of school. In June they leave their classrooms ready for cleaning; all items packed and stored, all surfaces clear. In mid/late August they were sent a rather passive/aggressive email, stating that research has shown that the placement of furniture affects how your child learns, though the research was not provided. The administration took it upon themselves to move furniture, remove items from the classroom they felt were not conducive to a learning environment and left the rooms in disarray. The email further stated that the furniture must remain in place all year and was not to be moved. When teachers arrived to set up their classrooms, they were in tears at the condition of their rooms, but they did what they had to do and got everything done. She stated this year the district has been plagued with overwhelming negativity, lack of support and they do not feel valued or respected. She said the staff would not be allowed to treat or say to a student the things that are said to them. Expectations put on staff are unrealistic, along with the amount of time taken up on student assessments.

Training is not consistent. Teachers are not asked for their opinions on new programs, etc., until after the fact. Switching staff positions at the last minute is a big problem, along with pulling specials teacher to sub in classrooms when a teacher is out. Mrs. Criscione stated that everything she is saying has been bought up to administration but has either been "band aid" fixed or fallen upon deaf ears.

Teri Carbonelli – Co-President WPEA

Mrs. Carbonelli stated something has to change or Woodland Park will continue to lose good teachers. Time for leadership, both administration and BOE members to take meaningful action to support and retain the talent that is our schools success.

Karen Criscione – Co-President WPEA

Mrs. Criscione stated Woodland Park used to be a career school. Teacher came here and didn't leave unless they moved out of state, retired or unfortunately passed away. The last few years we have been a revolving door, 60 teachers in 4 years. A small percentage do leave for financial reasons but the majority do not. If you are happy in your job, you don't leave. Another problem is teachers are told they can only use district approved and provided resources. When you go into the resources and what you need is no longer there, what are your options if you can't bring in anything of your own? Why are resources that are needed not provided? She told the board they need to help to see what can be done to make our schools better. We need to do something to retain our teacher. She said a lot of the staff are unhappy. Mrs. Criscione stated that not everyone feels this way that she can only speak on behalf of those who reached out to her as Board President.

Stephen Scholtz – CO Principal, Co-President WPPSA

Mr. Scholtz state that the union presidents meet with Dr. Pillari bi-weekly to try to hash out any concerns the schools/staff have. He wanted to let the Board know that they have open communication with Dr. Pillari and work well together.

Karen Criscione – Co-President WPEA

Mrs. Criscione stated she was surprised that Dr. Pillari's contract was on the agenda since there was still two years left on it. She respectfully asked the Board to maybe pause voting on the contract at this time and give it another year before extending. She stated that teachers don't quit jobs, they quit bosses.

Christina Scillieri – former WPBOE employee

Ms. Scillieri addressed the Board and said she was a proud employee for 12 years in the district and never thought she would have ever left. She wanted it known she did not leave because of money or distance to home. She said she it came down to resources, support, work-life balance. She said teachers don't do this for the money, they do what they do for the families & community.

Venous Gunasekera – read a letter on behalf of a former employee.

Mrs. Gunasekera read a letter from former employee, Amy Kivlehan. Ms. Kivlehan stated that she left the district after 15 2/3 years for one reason and that reason is respect. She stated she work in Memorial for 14 years, BG for 1 and CO for 2/3 of the year. She said her certification was in math and for the last 5 years felt she couldn't best benefit the students because she was used as a substitute in different areas. She stated she was micro-managed all the time while working with her students. There was no curriculum for the BSI students and was told she had to make it herself, then was told what she was doing was wrong. She stated that on her last day not one administrator said goodbye. She reiterated that she left due to lack of respect.

Lauren Monaco – CO & BG HSA Board Member

Mrs. Monaco said she was speaking on behalf of parents and they are enraged. The turnover in teachers is outrageous. They also don't like the fact that special ed teachers are being used as substitutes and the students that need their services aren't getting them. She stated that she has bought up to principals and higher administration that some of the programs we are using are not working for every child and there is no adjustment made for the kids who need the help. She said it is not okay to be taking away from special needs students by using their teachers as substitutes in gen ed classrooms. She said she spoke with Dr. Pillari many times on the importance of incorporated home life into school life by involving the parents more and bring the two together.

Melinda Simpson – New teacher at BG

Mrs. Simpson stated she came in very enthusiastic and happy to be here. She loves the staff and building administration, but has decided to leave because of lack of respect and support. She's not leaving for more money or proximity to home. She stated she had no guidance as a new teacher and was not given a mentor until the beginning of October. She is sad to leave but felt she has to for happiness.

225-138-APPROVAL OF EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT FOR DR. MICHELE PILLARI, SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

Motion by MARREN Seconded by GALBRAITH

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve the employment agreement, as previously approved by the Executive County Superintendent for Passaic County, for Dr. Michele Pillari, Superintendent of Schools, from July 1, 2024-June 30, 2029. The Board President, Board Secretary and Board Attorney are hereby authorized and directed to take any and all actions to effectuate this action of the Board.

Roll Call: 7 YES, 1 ABSTENTION-AMANULLAH

Before the vote, Mrs. Perro stated although she knows no situation is perfect, she was very upset that none of the union's issues were brought up before this meeting and stated showing up like this is not effective to the Board. There's supposed to be open communication and wanted to know why this is the first they are hearing all of this. She believes Dr. Pillari's heart is in the right place and is doing the best she can do, as well as all the teachers. She wants to know why there is a breakdown in communication and that is the most important thing.

Dr. Salemi stated he has been on the Board 12 years and cannot believe they were hit like this tonight. He thought that they had an agreement with the union that if there was a problem, they would reach out to the Board and try to work things out. To get hit from left field like they were is very saddening. He said Dr. Pillari came into this district, which was a mess at the time, and has worked tirelessly to move this district forward. He said after listening to all of the unions complaints, to watch the whole WPEA get up and walk out while the board is speaking is unacceptable and is ashamed that this went on in this town tonight.

Mrs. Perro stated that as a Board, by oath, they cannot get involved in the day to day operations of the district. Mr. Weiss confirmed this. She said she is not an educator, that as a Board member she is a voice for the community, so she cannot give the Superintendent advice on education because it is not her background. She said as educators it's important for them to keep the lines of communication open with the Superintendent and hopes they can work their way through this.

Mr. Amanullah stated he has been a part of the district, as a parent and board member for years, and after hearing everything that was said, he is not ready to vote on this at this time. He suggested a committee be formed to address teacher concerns and that bringing them forward the night of a vote was inappropriate.

After the vote, Dr. Pillari thanked the Board for their support and confidence in her as the leader. She said she is hopeful to work with the WPEA, as she has been the last 10+ years, which they have formed a very positive relationship with the union representation. She stated she was very proud of that relationship and hopes that it will continue.

PUBLIC HEARING-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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No one wished to be heard.

225-139 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by GALBRAITH Seconded by MARREN

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2024 workshop and the September 16, 2024 regular meetings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve the Executive Session minutes of the September 23, 2024 workshop and the September 16, 2024 regular meetings.

Roll Call: 8 YES

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Curriculum Office:

G&T: Data is being reviewed for new student qualification. For the students who are already identified, Grade 7 County Quiz Bowl will take place at Memorial School on Monday, October 28th and we are arranging for the other 5-8 students to participate in the Bowls. Additionally, we are hosting the Grade 4 Battle of the Books at Woodland Park and will hopefully attend the Battles at the other schools pending securing of transportation.

ML: The ESL teachers have been working hard to assess all newly enrolled ML students and create schedules to best meet the needs of all ML students. They are collaborating with the general education teachers as well to ensure needs are being met throughout the day.

Interventionists: Ms. Arp, Ms. Bottiglieri, Mrs. Greco, Mrs. Criscione and Ms. O'Donnell have worked closely with the Data Teams and have been combing through the data to identify our most needy students and specific areas of need for the start of the Intervention Support programs. Identified students will be receiving invitation letters this week and next for their targeted interventions. Please note that as of the first week of school, while we awaited the September assessment results, all Interventionists have been pushing into the classrooms of the students who were enrolled in this program last year and providing support.

Preschool Program:

We acknowledged Week of Respect and will be collaborating with the following, School Violence Awareness and Red Ribbon Week.

Preschool Puppy of the Month:

New beginning this Month:

“Calling all preschool students” who practice what PAWS reminds them to do! If a student in your class is being a **PAW-SOME** friend please nominate him or her as the Puppy of the Month. **What is a PAW-SOME friend?** The child plays nicely, is very kind, works together with friends and teachers, and SMILES! Students will be announced on the 2nd week of every month. They will receive a certificate, sticker and pencil. These students will have their photos posted by the entrance door as “Puppies of the Month.”

Thank you to the HSA for organizing the:

Pumpkin Patch for the Preschool Program. (School # 1 10/16, ECC 10/17, ECC 10/18)
First Responders visit (ECC 10/16, School #1 10/22, CO 10/23)

Fall Parade:

Halloween festivities will take place on **Thursday, October 31st**. To ensure that our schools have a safe and successful day, please review the information from each school building.
School # 1 9:30, ECC 9:45, CO 10:30

Health Screenings:

Health Screenings have taken place in accordance with administrative code, 6A:13A-4.5(b)(1), districts are to ensure that basic child health services are provided to all enrolled preschool children. These child health services include at a minimum; vision, hearing, dental, height, and weight screenings.

ECAC Early Childhood Advisory Council:

Mrs. Francisco held the first ECAC meeting for the School Year 2024-2025. The **Woodland Park** School Early Childhood Advisory Council is an advisory group that supports the unique, particular needs of the district's high-quality preschool program and the needs of the preschool children who reside in Woodland Park. Early childhood advisory council or “ECAC” means an advisory group of community stakeholders interested in the education and welfare of children in preschool through grade three that is convened by the school district (N.J.A.C.6A:13A-1.2).

- Please reach out to Mrs. Francisco if you are interested in joining the ECAC. efrancisco@wpchools.org

Preschool Study:

- The preschool classes will be working on their study on balls. There are 5 investigations that incorporate indoor and outdoor activities about the scientific properties of balls-why they bounce, roll and move-and opportunities for children to cooperate. Each investigation explores important concepts in Science and Social Studies and strengthens children's skills in Literacy, Math and the Arts.

CO:

Staff and students participated in Week of Respect activities planned by our guidance counselor
Harlem Wizards anti-bullying assembly was on 10/10
HSA Pumpkin patch 10/18
School Violence Awareness Week 10/14-10/18
Red Ribbon Week - 10/21-10/25

Halloween/Pajama Parade - 10/31 at 10:30am

Memorial:

School Violence Awareness Week: 10/15-10/18

Red Ribbon Week: 10/21-10/25

Yearbooks are currently on sale.

The school community has collaborated to bring daily attention throughout the month of October to Week of Respect, School Violence Awareness Week, and Red Ribbon Week. For more information on our daily plans please review:

[October Weeks at Memorial](#)

Mustangs of the Month- a monthly recognition program returns this year to Memorial. Students were honored with a certificate and will receive a special treat from Pomptonian and board games time with Ms. Socha and Ms. Farraye this month. Mustangs of a Month is a program where two students from each grade level are selected from staff based on their commitment to the Six Pillars of Character, which is the foundation of our House System.

Our Mustangs of the Month are:

Grade 6: Sophia Ramos & Micayla Torres

Grade 7: Carlos Lopez Perez & Kayla Wojnicz

Grade 8: Sebastian Gomez & Eva Fallaha

We also recognized our artists of the month thus far:

September- Ashia Chowdhury Grade 6

Mustang Ambassadors have been selected! Students will work as ambassadors with the 5th grade students at BG. Their first meeting will be towards the end of the month. We are excited about this collaboration with BG. Dean Douglas will support the program.

Congratulations to all our students who ran for student council officers and representatives. We look forward to a productive, fun year.

President- Destiny Romero

Vice President- Layla DeLuca

Secretary- Mia Pena

Treasurer- Braxton Miller

Clubs have started and we have increased participation this year. Health, Animal, Yearbook, and Newspaper Club are underway. We are excited to provide the students with the opportunity to be part of our clubs. Student Council elections have concluded and the first meeting occurred last week as well.

K-8 Mathematics

We had a very special guest join us for our Fall i-Ready Kickoff Assemblies at CO and BG. “Snargg” one of the exciting mascot’s on the i-Ready platform, came to our assemblies to get our students excited about math! Our students are working on completing 2 lessons a week during math centers. Teachers have created their own incentives for our students to meet this goal. Data has shown that if students are behind in mathematics and pass 2 math i-Ready lessons a week, they will meet grade level expectations within the course of 2 years.

While meeting with teachers during our PLC’s, we have been looking at our curriculum and making sure our lessons are aligned with the NJ Standards, taking a deeper look into their individual student data and analyzing areas in need of improvement. We are also using this data to assess students in number sense and work to close the learning gap in numbers and operations by strategic interventions.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

The following items have been deemed to be non-controversial in a matter of routine business and will be voted on by one motion.

Motion by MARREN Seconded by GALBRAITH to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following consent agenda numbers 225-140 through 225-143.

Roll Call: 8 YES

225-140 - SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORTS

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, receives and accepts the attached reports of the Secretary and Treasurer for the month of August 2024 “Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6: 20-2.12©, we certify that as of August 31, 2024 the Board Secretary’s monthly financial reports (appropriations section) did not reflect any over expenditure in any of the major accounts or funds, and based on the appropriation balances reflected on this report and the advice of district officials, we have no reason to doubt that the district has sufficient funds available to meet its financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year”

225-141 - APPROVAL OF BILL LIST

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve the attached list of bills in the amount of \$932,875.63, approved by finance committee chairperson, MaryAnn Perro.

<u>Bill List No.</u>	<u>Amount</u>
#64	\$807,459.75
#65	\$ 61,861.52
#L64	\$ 63,554.36

225-142- HIB DECISION

BE IT RESOLVED THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, hereby affirms the Superintendent’s decision in HIB Investigation #2025-01, for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent’s decision to the student’s parents.

225-143-HIB GRADES AND APPROVAL OF SELF ASSESSMENT

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve the submission of the school self-assessment for determining HIB grades for each school for the 2023-2024 school year.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

The following items will be voted on by separate motion for each item.

PERSONNEL:

The following personnel items have been deemed to be non-controversial in a matter of routine business and will be voted on by one motion. Any item deemed controversial can be removed and voted on as a separate agenda item.

Motion by SALEMI Seconded by GALBRAITH to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following personnel agenda numbers 225-144 through 225-153.

Roll Call:

225-144 - ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION – D. FARRELL

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept the resignation of Donna Farrell, district art teacher, effective 12/13/2024.

225-145 - ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION – M. SIMPSON

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept the resignation of Melinda Simpson, 5th grade teacher at BG, effective 12/11/2024.

225-146 - ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION – M. BENJELLOUN

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept the resignation of Majdouline Benjelloun, lunch aide at BG, effective 10/11/2024.

225-147 - APPROVE TO RESCIND RESOLUTIONS 225-131 & 225-132– APPOINTMENT OF HIRE – N. MESSINEO

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, under the recommendation of the Superintendent, to rescind the appointment of Nicholas Messineo, as a floating substitute teacher and Phys. Ed leave replacement, previously approved at the 10/7/24 meeting.

225-148 – APPOINTMENT OF HIRE-FULL TIME CUSTODIAN- A. LIJOI

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the appointment of Arnold Lijoi, as a full time custodian, (currently part time), for the 2024-2025 school year, at \$49,010, pro-rated, in accordance with the current WPEA contract. Effective 11/1/2024.

225-149- APPOINTMENT OF HIRE – PART TIME CUSTODIAN – J. HENDERSON

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the appointment of Joseph Henderson, as a part time custodian, for the 2024-2025 school year, at \$28.99/hr., not to exceed 27.5 hrs. per week, in accordance with the current WPEA contract, effective pending receipt of proper paperwork.

225-150 - APPOINTMENT OF HIRE – SUBSTITUTE CUSTODIAN – D. DIDY

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the appointment of Drugueston Didy, as a substitute custodian, at a rate of \$20/hr., effective pending receipt of proper paperwork.

225-151 -APPOINTMENT OF HIRE – SUBSTITUTE CUSTODIAN – C. OCCHIUZZI

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the appointment of Carmen Occhiuzzi, as a substitute custodian, at a rate of \$20/hr., effective pending receipt of proper paperwork.

225-152 - RATIFY APPROVAL OF STAFF STIPENDS

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve stipend payments for the 2024-2025 school year in accordance with current WPEA contract, as listed:

Title	School	Name	Amount
Morning Duty (M-W-F)	BG	Amanda Samra	\$924 (pro-rated)

225-153 - WORKSHOP/TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT APPROVAL

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve/ratify approval the attendance of and costs of attendance including registration fees and statutorily authorized travel expenditures for the following listed district employees for the 2024-2025 school year.

Name	Activity	Date	Fee	Travel/Hotel	Total
Rasha Najim	Interpreting Access for ELL Score Reports	11/6/24	\$150	NA	\$150
Suzanne Socha	Using the MTSS Model for Social, Emotional & Behavioral Supports	11/13/24	NA	NA	NA
Sharon Tomback	Gifted & Talented Education in NJ	11/14/24	\$75	NA	\$75
Krystina Reilly	Integrating Tools for Powerful Learning w AI	10/9/24	NA	NA	NA
Teri Carbonelli	Stop the Bleed	12/12/24	NA	NA	NA
Teri Carbonelli	Suicide Prevention	10/29/24	NA	NA	NA
Dwayne Ortiz	24-25 Academy – Purchasing Basics	10/28/24	\$50	NA	\$50

225-8A- APPOINTMENT OF HIRE – 5th GRADE SUBSTITUTE – B. DAVIS

Motion by MARREN Seconded by GALBRAITH

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the appointment of Brittany Davis, as a substitute in 5th grade at BG, effective December 10, 2024 – the end of the school year, at a rate of \$175 per diem, no benefits.

Roll Call: 8 YES

FINANCE:**225-154 - ACCEPTANCE OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

Motion by GALBRAITH Seconded by MCQUIN

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to accept the settlement agreement between the WPBOE and the WPEA, regarding DCRP contributions, as attached.

Roll Call: 7 YES, 1 NO-GRIMES

225-155 - RATIFY APPROVAL OF SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT- SPECIAL CLASS II OFFICER-ESY

Motion by MARREN Seconded by MCQUIN

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to ratify approval of the Interlocal Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of Woodland Park, to provide a Special Class II Officer to the Woodland Park Board of Education for the 2024 ESY program, effective July 8, 2024-August 15, 2024, at a cost to the Board of Education not to exceed \$4,800.48, plus \$3,675.00 for Police Training Commission State Certification course, as per attached shared services agreement.

Roll Call: 8 YES

225-156 - RATIFY APPROVAL OF CONTRACT – GEESE POLICE

Motion by GALBRAITH Seconded by MCQUIN

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to ratify approval of contract with Geese Police, to provide geese control at Memorial Field, Memorial Middle School and School 1, effective April 1, 2024-March 31, 2025, at a rate of \$505 per week.

Roll Call: 8 YES

225-157 -APPROVAL -NRESC –TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT – 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

Motion by MARREN Seconded by GALBRAITH

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve the transportation contract with NRESC for the following 2024-2025 bus routes:

Route#	School (s)	Contractor	# of Students	Estimated Cost per Route (+ surcharge)	Starting Date
Q3685	Allegro School	Omar Tours	1	13,530.00+811.80	9/27/24-11-29-24

Roll Call: 8 YES

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:**225-158 - DISPOSAL OF DAMAGED, UNFIXABLE TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT**

Motion by MARREN Seconded by MCQUIN

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, to approve disposal of assorted damaged, unfixable technology equipment, as per attached list.

Roll Call: 8 YES

COMMITTEE REPORTS

EDUCATION: Mrs. McQuin said the Education committee met prior to the meeting and Mrs. Tomback shared the results of the Access testing and they were pleased that student's progress in this area.

FINANCE: Mrs. Perro said the Finance committee also met prior to the meeting and discussed items on the agenda, including the certification and training for the Class II officers and modification of the Geese Police contract. They also discussed the year ahead facilities and programming issues.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Marren thanked all involved in the CO Hero's program and was happy to see all the students and families at the meeting. She also stated that at the last Sweets with the Superintendent they met with BG families & students and at the November 4th meeting they will be meeting with Memorial families.

Mr. Ortiz stated that although no situation is perfect, after tonight's meeting, he wants to make sure that the focus continues to stay on moving things forward. He stated the lines of communication have been and will continue to stay open with both administration and staff.

NEW BUSINESS

The Borough approached Dr. Pillari and the Board with the request to dedicate and rename Memorial's gym in honor of Lou Taylor Sr., a resident who dedicated many years to programs and youth sports in Woodland Park. The Board will see if we have a policy regarding this and will discuss at a later meeting.

Ms. Marren stated the town is accepting donations for the family in town who recently lost their home in a fire.

PUBLIC HEARING

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Karen Criscione – WPEA Co-President

Mrs. Criscione stated she was in favor of renaming the gym after Lou Taylor. She said that no child in the town was ever denied being able to play a sport because of financial reasons. Mr. Taylor always made sure they had what they needed to play that sport. She then stated that they felt Mrs. Perro was admonishing them when she asked why they hadn't come forward sooner regarding their issues. Mrs. Criscione asked where the transparency was regarding this contract. She said she knows the Board did their due diligence by publishing it in the newspaper but asked why it wasn't posted on the website and that they only found out about it when the agenda went out. She stated that they felt this was such an important decision that the Board had to make and was surprised that they had the forum and vote on the same day. She agreed that Dr. Pillari and the WPEA do have open dialogue and usually work well together. She said it has gotten to the point that she can't just sit back and watch teacher after teacher resign; something needs to be fixed. Mrs. Criscione stated she was a little disappointed by the Board's decision and wished the whole thing wasn't so rushed.

Mr. Weiss stated that the way they proceeded with the Superintendent contract was the same as it has always been done in Woodland Park since he started. The public hearing and the vote were done at the same meeting. Everything that was done was in accordance with statutes and laws as it relates to the 30 day notice prior to the hearing and tonight's vote as well.

Mrs. Perro stated she has nothing but the utmost respect for the WPEA and Dr. Pillari. She said she thinks teachers have one of the hardest jobs to do and if her tone came across that way, she completely apologized. What her expression was meant to be was that she was so surprised by such a reaction because she thought there was open communication and didn't know there was a need to have so much discussion about it. That was what her reaction was meant to reflect. She hopes they can find a way to move forward and figure out a way to keep our teachers here and make a climate where people want to come to work.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION

The Open Public Meeting Act, authorizes a public body to meet in Executive or Private Session under limited circumstances and WHEREAS said law requires the Board to adopt a resolution at a public meeting before it can meet in such Executive or Private Session. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BOROUGH OF WOODLAND PARK THAT:

- 1) It does hereby determine that it is necessary to meet in Executive Session to discuss a personnel and/or litigation matter or contract matter.
- 2) The matter(s) discussed will be made public when confidentiality is no longer required.
- 3) Meeting will be resumed at conclusion of Executive Session.
- 4) The board does/does not expect to take action after Executive Session.

Motion to go into Executive Session at 8:44 p.m. by MARREN, seconded by GALBRAITH
Voice Vote: 8 YES

Motion to return to Regular Session at 9:29 p.m. by GALBRAITH, seconded by PERRO
Voice Vote: 8 YES

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:29 p.m. by MCQUIN, Seconded by GALBRAITH
Voice Vote: 8 YES

WOODLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Superintendent discussed HIB cases 2025-02, 2025-03 & 2025-04.