

RIVER VALE BOARD OF EDUCATION
River Vale, New Jersey 07675
SPECIAL MEETING
Roberge Annex
NOVEMBER 10, 2020 VIRTUAL MINUTES

Ms. Ippolito welcomed everyone to the virtual board meeting and explained how the meeting would run.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 P.M.

Mrs. Waldes called the Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, the Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting has been sent to all school offices, officially designated newspapers, filed with the Township Clerk and posted in the Board of Education Office, forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting.

MEMBERS

PRESENT VIA

TELEPHONE:

**Mrs. Pintarelli, Mr. Puccio, Mr. Rosini, Mrs. Rothenberg,
Mrs. Senande, Mrs. Waldes, Mr. Schlereth (arrived at 7:19pm)**

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT:

**Dr. Alvarez, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Ippolito, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Ms. Signore, Woodside School Principal
Mr. Wren, Roberge School Principal
95 members of public**

FLAG SALUTE

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Waldes welcomed everyone to the meeting and hopes that everyone is well.

Mrs. Waldes spoke of the NJSBA's Virtual Workshop where social and emotional learning were the major topics presented. Mrs. Waldes added that she will be attending the NJSBA's Virtual Delegates Assembly on November 21, 2020.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – CHAIRPERSON

- **Buildings & Grounds – None**
- **Communications & Policies – None**
- **Curriculum & Technology – None**
- **Finance – None**
- **Negotiations – None**

➤ **Personnel** – None

Committee Meeting Schedule

Date	Time	Committee
November 17, 2020	6:00 PM	Negotiations
December 15, 2020	6:00 PM	Finance
January 5, 2021	6:00 PM	Finance
January 19, 2021	6:00 PM	Personnel
February 9, 2021	6:00 PM	Buildings & Grounds
February 23, 2021	6:00 PM	Finance
March 2, 2021	6:00 PM	Finance
March 16, 2021	6:00 PM	Finance
March 30, 2021	6:00 PM	Communications & Policies
April 27, 2021	6:00 PM	Personnel
May 11, 2021	6:00 PM	Curriculum & Technology

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Agenda Items Only

THE RIVER VALE BOARD OF EDUCATION IS committed to encouraging the citizens of River Vale and employees of the River Vale School District to speak directly to Board Trustees. In order to facilitate this communication, residents and employees are requested (1) to sign in before speaking; (2) to maintain an appropriate sense of decorum; and (3) to limit their remarks to no more than five minutes. The Board will also take under advisement the written comments and opinions of non-residents that are submitted to the Board Secretary. Being mindful of its responsibility to maintain the orderly conduct of meetings, the Board retains the right to rule on such matters as the speaker’s right to address the Board, as well as the appropriateness of the subject being presented. The Board’s decision in such matters is final.

The Board also reminds all members of the public that while it subscribes, without reservation, to the principle of keeping the community informed, by policy and law, it cannot allow public discussion of personnel matters nor can Trustees comment on any current or pending litigation. If a matter concerning an employee of the River Vale School District is of interest or concern to a resident, the matter should be referred to the responsible building principal or the Interim Superintendent of Schools by telephone, letter or email.

Meeting opened to public comments at 7:05 P.M.

Public comments: None.

Meeting closed to public comments at 7:05 P.M.

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Alvarez made the following statement:

Dr. Alvarez noted that for a number of weeks, the District has been discussing the possibility of returning kindergarten and grade one students to a 5-day per week program. There were

concerns raised by the teachers union that the District was resolving. He announced that kindergarten and grade one students will have the opportunity to return to 5-days per week of instruction beginning Monday, November 16.

He confirmed that all kindergarten and grade one classrooms will require all students to wear masks, as per state mandate; provide each student with an individual desk; provide each student with an individual desk shield; and allow for social distancing. In addition, needlepoint bipolar ionization technology has been installed in all kindergarten through grade 8 classrooms.

Dr. Alvarez reported that a majority of River Vale families have opted to have their children return to a 5-days per week program. He also thanked the Board for their willingness to affirm the administration's recommendation.

In other matters, he noted the Board Resolution to approve a new bylaw regarding *Remote Public Board Meetings During a Declared Emergency* and stressed that the one reading adoption is in compliance with the new emergency regulations regarding remote meetings held during a Governor-declared emergency.

Finally, Dr. Alvarez congratulated Mrs. Pintarelli, Mr. Rosini and Mr. Schlereth on their re-election to the River Vale Board of Education.

BOARD SECRETARY'S REPORT

Ms. Ippolito advised that the November 17, 2020 Board Meeting could possibly be moved to November 24, 2020.

Ms. Ippolito reminded the Board Members that the BCBSA Meeting is scheduled for December 1, 2020, if anyone plans to attend.

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

**G1. MOTION BY Mrs. Pintarelli SECONDED BY Mr. Rosini
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE RIVER VALE BOARD OF EDUCATION that the Board, upon recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, **approves the following resolution:****

WHEREAS, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor has declared a state of emergency and a public health emergency, and ordered all schools closed for in-person instruction for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year; and

WHEREAS, in response the continued COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor announced re-opening guidance for New Jersey schools for the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, the guidance announces that, absent a change in public health data, public schools will open for in-person instruction and operations in some capacity at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, each district will be expected to develop, in collaboration with community stakeholders, a plan to reopen schools in the fall that best fits the district’s local needs; and

WHEREAS, the District did develop, in collaboration with community stakeholders, a plan to reopen schools in the fall that best fits the District’s local needs;

WHEREAS, the District shall amend the District’s Restart and Recovery Plan a second time, effective November 16, 2020, to accommodate the return of students in grades K and 1 to a 5-day per week program; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves the amendment to the District’s Restart and Recovery Plan which was submitted to the Department of Education on July 29, 2020, amended October 13, 2020, and to be implemented effective November 16, 2020 for the 2020-2021 school year.

	Mrs. Pintarelli	Mr. Puccio	Mr. Rosini	Mrs. Rothenberg	Mr. Schlereth	Mrs. Senande	Mrs. Waldes
AYE	√	√	√	√		√	√
NAY							
ABSENT					√		
ABSTAINED							

G2. MOTION BY Mrs. Pintarelli SECONDED BY Mr. Rosini
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE RIVER VALE BOARD OF EDUCATION that the Board, upon recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of Schools, **approves the first and only reading of the new River Vale Board of Education Bylaw:**

<u>Bylaw #</u>	<u>Bylaw Title</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>1st & Only Reading</u>
0164.6	Remote Public Board Meetings During a Declared Emergency	New	November 10, 2020

	Mrs. Pintarelli	Mr. Puccio	Mr. Rosini	Mrs. Rothenberg	Mr. Schlereth	Mrs. Senande	Mrs. Waldes
AYE	√	√	√	√		√	√
NAY							
ABSENT					√		
ABSTAINED							

PUBLIC COMMENTS – General Items

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Meeting opened to public comments at 7:19 P.M.

Public Comments

Edward Salib, 562 Faletti Way: I would like to participate please. Thank you for allowing, bringing the K-1 grades in 5 days a week, to work.
Was installing the needlepoint bipolar ionization systems in every class room a prerequisite?

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: No it was not.

Edward Salib, 562 Faletti Way: Is there a next step? What is the County Meeting being held in December?

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: Stated that the District will proceed with caution and continue to be guided by the Health Professionals and State guidelines.

School Business Administrator Ms. Ippolito: Stated that there is a County Chapter of the State Board Member Association that hold County Round Table meetings for workshops and continued education for Board Members.

Marla Giummarra: Hi - Please try again. Marla Giummarra. Thank you

School Business Administrator Ms. Ippolito: Maria, please sign off and back on. Thank you.

Marzena Santos, 747 Rolling Hill Drive: Hi, Bergen County is at a 5% increase in positive test rates, today. At what percentage will schools be closed down? As much as I want my kids to go back to school, this is scary.

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: There is no magic number, we are guided by the Health Professionals and State guidelines. The District will make a decision on a case by case basis.

Marla Giummarra: 3 times a charm? otherwise I can just type my questions

Marla Giummarra: Two things - Can you please explain the benefits of the current desk shields? Apparently they are thin, cheap plastic and they fall multiple times a day.... Can you get plexiglass or acrylic like other Bergen schools and every grocery store in the state?

School Business Administrator Ms. Ippolito: The desk shields are for better or worse, sneeze guards and we took into consideration the weight as the plexiglass shields can weigh anywhere between 5-8 lbs and when the students need to lift the tops of their desks to retrieve their materials, the heavy desk shield becomes problematic. We also wanted to balance the cost. We asked the teachers for input and know that other surrounding districts are using these same desk shields.

Marla Giummarra: How are they sneeze guards if they fall every other minute?

Marla Giummarra: Don't the teachers have enough to worry about?

Marla Giummarra: My son is a 5th grader They are garbage and they fall

Marla Giummarra: fall

Marla Giummarra Doesn't a mask hold the sneeze?

School Business Administrator Ms. Ippolito: Yes, however we decided to provide an extra layer of protection for the staff and students.

Marla Giummarra: For the spike after Thanksgiving are you providing or requiring teachers and students COVID testing?

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: No we are not.

Marla Giummarra: What are you doing to proactively plan for this?

Marla Giummarra: Why

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: The District will proceed with caution and continue to be guided by the Health Professionals. Guidelines are changing depending on the number of cases.

Marla Giummarra: So you are just expecting a spike with no plan?

Board Trustee Puccio: It is my understanding that you can't just unilaterally decide to shut down the schools. Isn't that the case Dr. Alvarez?

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: That is correct. We need to follow the protocols from the Department of Education and Health Professionals

Jody Edwards, 603 Westwood Avenue: Students are not as vulnerable how does this work?

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: Average class sizes are 10-13 students with one class having 19 students. We feel we can provide a safe environment for staff and students.

Jeff, No Last Name or Address: Hi-as a new family to the district with a child in kindergarten, we just wanted to send our sincere thanks for listening to our concerns. It is refreshing to know that we are being heard and our voices are valued. We know our kindergarten student will greatly benefit from the 5 day in person instruction. (no need to call on us)

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: Thank you

Erica Ban, 521 Track Lane: Just want to inquire about the afternoon schedule at Holdrum. Is there any possibility of having some sort of academics after lunch? Even if it is not a formal class but some sort of enrichment academic club.

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: We are continuing to look at all aspects of our schedules. Teachers are still working and provide support to students after lunch. Not all students need the time with teachers but we are continuing to review and modify as necessary.

Marla Giummarra: Is it fair to be given report cards in these atypical times? How accurate can they really be?

Ines Fajardo: why are people being so rude

Amy Dahl, 608 Abbe Ct: What is the policy for when parents have Covid? What do you do with the children? Do you send them in?

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: IF the parent is ill, we advise keeping the students home. If it is a confirmed COVID case, the student must quarantine for 14 days.

Joe Levinson, 268 Rockland Avenue: It has become evident this board had NO plan, and just reacts to events.

Joe Levinson: They could have huge liabilities in the legal sense by having no plan.

Ines Fajardo: ok, got it. thank you

Jody Edwards, No Address: what about remote kids?

Interim Superintendent Dr. Alvarez: Teachers are involved and students will continue with their regular classroom teacher.

Edward Salib: 100% safety is not possible. Thank you for making measured decisions in the best interest of our children and remaining flexible with your plans.

Edward Salib: *best

Board President Waldes: Understand that this is a hot button item. I assure you that we are doing all that we can to keep your children safe. Never doubt the sincere concern and commitment we have to do what is best for children.

Meeting closed to public comments at 7:58 P.M.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

MOTION TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION

MOTION BY Mrs. Senande SECONDED BY Mr. Rosini
that the **November 10, 2020 Closed Session Special Meeting** be closed to the public at **8:00 P.M.**

	Mrs. Pintarelli	Mr. Puccio	Mr. Rosini	Mrs. Rothenberg	Mr. Schlereth	Mrs. Senande	Mrs. Waldes
AYE	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
NAY							
ABSENT							
ABSTAINED							

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b), the Board of Education of the Township of River Vale may exclude the public from that portion of a public meeting at which the Board discusses any of the matters described at N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) (1)-(9);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education shall forthwith enter into closed session to discuss matters relating to:

8. Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance of, promotion or discipline of any current or prospective officer or employee, unless all individual employees or appointees request in writing that such matter be discussed in public, specifically, the following matter:

- Superintendent Search

MOTION BY Mrs. Senande SECONDED BY Mr. Puccio
that the **November 10, 2020 Closed Session Special Meeting** be opened to the public at **9:04 P.M.**

	Mrs. Pintarelli	Mr. Puccio	Mr. Rosini	Mrs. Rothenberg	Mr. Schlereth	Mrs. Senande	Mrs. Waldes
AYE	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
NAY							
ABSENT							
ABSTAINED							

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY Mrs. Senande SECONDED BY Mr. Puccio
that the **November 10, 2020, Special Meeting** be adjourned at **9:05 P.M.**

	Mrs. Pintarelli	Mr. Puccio	Mr. Rosini	Mrs. Rothenberg	Mr. Schlereth	Mrs. Senande	Mrs. Waldes
AYE	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
NAY							
ABSENT							
ABSTAINED							

Respectfully submitted,



Ms. Kelly Ippolito
Board Secretary/School Business Administrator