

SOUTH PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
125 Jackson Avenue
South Plainfield, NJ 07080
Telephone: 908-754-4620

Committee of the Whole Meeting – Thursday, March 15, 2018 – 6:30 P.M.
South Plainfield High School
200 Lake Street
South Plainfield, NJ 07080

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Chapman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. SALUTE TO FLAG

III. ROLL CALL- James Damato

Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Present: Mrs. Anesh, Mr. Both, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Cassio, Mr. Giannakis, Mr. Pennisi, Mrs. Wolak, Mr. Chapman

Also Present: Dr. Noreen Lishak, Superintendent; Mrs. Mary Malyska, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. James Damato, Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary; Mr. Joseph Roselle, Legal Counsel; Mr. Thomas Wiggins, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds

Absent: Mr. Seesselberg

IV. BOARD PRESIDENT

South Plainfield Public Schools Mission Statement:

Students are the focus of the South Plainfield Public Schools. We will provide a dynamic, rigorous, relevant and technology-enriched curriculum, guided by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Our mission is to develop life-long learners who are prepared to succeed in a global and diverse society. We are resolved to educate the whole child, instilling the desire within our students to question and to become divergent thinkers who can achieve their fullest potential.

In accordance with the terms of the Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this meeting was posted in all school buildings, the Administration Building, Borough Clerk's office, Police Headquarters, Public Library, four newspapers, and W.C.T.C. on January 8, 2018.

Please be advised:

- There is no smoking on school grounds - inside or outside - at any time.

- Please silence all electronic devices.
- Pursuant to District Policy #0167, each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes' duration and no participant may speak more than once on the same topic.

Mr. Chapman announced that the Board needs to go into executive session for student matters and it is expected to last approximately 20 minutes. Mr. Chapman asked for a Motion to adjourn to executive session.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 8-0

Mr. Chapman called the meeting back to order at 6:45 p.m.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lishak said that last night she had the pleasure of attending the 33rd Annual Student Recognition Program sponsored by the Middlesex County School Board Association and the Association of School Administrators. The program honored outstanding juniors and seniors in Middlesex County high schools who are our unsung heroes. The two representative from South Plainfield High School were Brandon O'Leary and Litzy Suazo. Both are amazing students and we are very proud of their accomplishments. Dr. Lishak also recognized Mrs. Boyle who is the Middlesex County School Board Association President and one of our board members who worked very hard to put the programs together. Dr. Lishak said that it was a wonderful program and she thanked Mrs. Boyle.

Next, Dr. Lishak asked the Board and the members of the public to turn their attention to the white board. She said that our district has garnered some attention regarding the student march which took place yesterday. Our students worked with the student council, preparing a video tribute to the victims of the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting. Students were invited to the auditorium to view the video. The moving tribute led into a presentation by Borough Council President Bengivenga on how students can become involved in the process and affect change locally, on the county level, state and national level. Students who are of age were provided the opportunity to register to vote and begin to use their voting voice to affect change. In addition, all Social Studies classes centered around a civics lesson on understanding legislature, creating laws and affecting change politically. Dr. Lishak thanked the students who participated in the production and asked everyone to take a moment to watch the video.

Following the video, Dr. Lishak thanked the Broadcast teacher, Mr. Cassio for working with the students to facilitate this video.

Dr. Lishak read the following statement:

“Additionally, it would be remiss of me not to address the students who also took a stance

and marched outside of the building yesterday. Although some do not agree on the logistics and consequences for the walkout, I have to take the time to commend these students for their strong commitment to the cause. These students held strong to their convictions, knowing the consequences for leaving the school building. I want to be clear to these students and the public. We have been working to ensure your children, our children, are safe in our school district. Over the past few weeks, our district experienced a number of threats, all unfounded, but threats that raised concerns for our students, faculty, staff and parents. These lead to many lengthy discussions regarding school safety, both inside and outside of our schools. We held a joint public meeting with the South Plainfield Police Department, Mayor, and Council President as well as our school district, addressing numerous changes made to our security procedures, all in an effort to keep our students as safe as possible.

Over the course of the past few weeks, I've received numerous calls and e-mails addressing these safety concerns from parents and community members alike. I bring this up to you again because I believe protecting our children is the most important issue that needs to be addressed and the voices of our students, our children, are the voices of change. As such, these young adults will begin to make choices that are paramount in deciding their future. Prior to the march on the 14th, our students were informed of the consequences by the administration of the building. The principal addressed the students on the public address system on Tuesday as well as the morning of the 14th. Additionally, a letter was sent home to parents stating the same. Mr. Spring met with organizers of the walkout and addressed the questions of consequence prior to any action being taken by the students. I realize some may feel any consequence is unjust in this situation, however, I believe our students committed to this cause and were strong and their choice to participate was well thought out prior to participating in the walkout. However, I also realize that life is a compromise and change is inevitable. What I consider to be a genuine concern was brought to my attention late yesterday. As an administrative team, we allowed this particular disciplinary infraction to a student's record not to affect a student's status in the National Honor Society. We continue to have the Gold Card Picnic participation remain as it has always been at the discretion of the High School Administration and address the rumor of the removal of players from sports teams. I took the time today to revisit the consequences of the one-day in-school suspension for walking out of the building and the affect this discipline will or may have on the students' ability to apply for many of the local scholarships. I feel this is too high of a price to pay for the students who did not know or realize what was in consideration. I have decided to amend the consequence to the one day in-school suspension to include the following options:

Students may serve their one-day in-school suspension prior to the beginning of Spring Break, March 30th. Once completed, I will remove the suspension from their student record after receiving a letter from their parents requesting the same. This will allow students to apply for scholarships beginning in early April. A second option will also be offered to allow students to serve their discipline Saturday morning on a date to be determined by the district from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. as a Saturday detention, however,

this detention will not be removed from the students' records as a detention will not affect scholarship opportunities. Mr. Spring and I will meet with the students tomorrow morning to inform them of their option. Please be advised however, as we move forward as a society, additional protests will be planned. My understanding, there is one that is planned and may be larger for April 20th. This March is again planned to occur during the school day and our students may once again choose to engage in actions that are contradictory to our Code of Conduct and Student Handbook. I have to be clear in informing our students and the public, such an option on the disciplinary consequences will not exist again for students who leave the building without permission from our administration. Your choices are yours to make and the consequences are also yours. Discipline will be administered as listed in the handbook. It will be up to you and your parents to discuss all, if any effects, your choice will have on you as a student. Please know, as your Superintendent, I am committed to ensuring you are both successful and secure in our school district. As a citizen of this great country and as a parent myself, I am counting on you to be the voice. Be the change. Make a difference and become part of the political process. You are why I am proud to be here in South Plainfield.”

VI. AGENDA ADDITIONS AND/OR DELETIONS

1. Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

VII. CURRICULUM/STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- A. Approval of Revised 2017/2018 School Calendar

Approve the revised 2017/2018 School Calendar as shown in Tab VII.A. Due to the use of snow days, May 25 and May 29, 2018 are now school days.

Curriculum Update – Administration

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education approve the foregoing resolutions.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis

SECOND: Mr. Pennisi

VOTE: 8-0

VIII. PERSONNEL

Motion by Member Mr. Giannakis, seconded by Member Mr. Pennisi, to accept the recommendation of the superintendent and adopt the following:

RESOLVED, that the South Plainfield Board of Education approve the following:

(NOTE: Approval of this resolution authorizes the superintendent to submit to the county superintendent applications for emergent hiring and the applicant's attestation and proof that he/she has not been convicted of any disqualifying crime pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et. seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 et. seq., or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. This includes background checks and fingerprinting for those employees listed below: (All appointments are contingent

upon receipt of proper teaching certification, and all salary placements are pending receipt of college transcripts verifying degree status and letter stating years of service in other districts, *denotes mentoring required.) *Indicates subject to change contingent upon contract settlement.

VIII.A Resignations, Retirements, Terminations

RESOLVED, that the South Plainfield Board of Education approve the following:

Code	Name	Action	Position	Location	Date Eff.	Discussion
1.	Jakubik, Michael	Resign	Spring Weight Room	High School	02/28/18	

VIII.B Adjustments, Stipends, Degree Changes

Code	Name	Action	Position	Degree/Step/ No. of Hrs.	Salary/ Stipend	Location	Date Effective	Date Term.	Discussion
1.	Cassio, Garrett	Approve	Spring Weight Room	N/A	\$4053.00	High School	03/16/18	06/15/18	Acct#:11-402-100-100-22

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education approve the foregoing resolutions.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 8-0
 Mr. Cassio abstained on item B.1.

IX FINANCE

1. Approval of Professional Development Expenditures

Approve the following expenditures (registration, mileage and conference fees), substitutes, and trips, which are compliant with State payment guidelines, employee job responsibilities and critical to the needs of the school district:

	<u>Name of Workshop</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Person Attending</u>
1.	NJSIAA Track & Field Coaches Clinic	3/23/18	\$90.00 11-402-100-500-22	Matthew Connell
2.	NJSIAA Track & Field Coaches Clinic	3/23/18	\$90.00 11-402-100-500-22	Christopher Fish
3.	NJSIAA Track & Field Coaches Clinic	3/23/18	\$90.00 11-402-100-500-22	Bryan Holt
4.	I&RS The Next Generation	3/20/18	\$149.00 11-000-219-580-18	Jacqueline Castronovo
5.	I&RS The Next Generation	3/20/18	\$149.00 11-000-223-580-11	Sam Fierra

6.	I&RS The Next Generation	3/20/18	\$149.00 11-000-223-580-11	Pamela Ackerman-Garcia
7.	Executive Function, ADHD and Stress in the Classroom	3/21/18	\$99.99 11-000-223-580-11	Brittany Lillis
8.	NJSIAA State Wrestling Tournament	3/1-4/18	\$229.96 11-402-100-500-22 Inadvertently left off January agenda	Kevin McCann
9.	NJSIAA State Wrestling Tournament	3/1-4/18	\$229.96 11-402-100-500-22 Inadvertently left off January agenda	Mike Jakubik
10.	NJSIAA State Wrestling Tournament	3/1-4/18	\$229.96 11-402-100-500-22 Inadvertently left off January agenda	Steve Johnston
11.	NJSIAA State Wrestling Tournament	3/1-4/18	\$649.96 11-402-100-500-22 Inadvertently left off January agenda	Bill Pavlak

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education approve the foregoing resolutions.

MOTION: Mrs. Boyle

SECOND: Mr. Pennisi

VOTE: 8-0

X. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

XI. PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS

Buildings & Grounds

Mr. Damato said that roof replacement bids were received a couple of days ago and they were very aggressive. He said that he was impressed to have received 12 bids which is extraordinary in this climate right now. The bids came in under budget so we are in great shape as far as the bond referendum money goes on the roof replacements for Franklin and Kennedy schools. The contract is going to be starting up and the work will be done over the summer and the rest of the jobs are coming along as well. Mr. Damato said that today we finished the STEM lab concept design and all of the orders and are going to be processed over the next couple of weeks. That work will also be done over the summer.

There may be a lead time on some of the equipment but we are going to work our best magic and Mr. Wiggins is going to work his magic to try to get it all done before September.

Mr. Damato said that next week we are going to advertise the bids for the bathroom modifications to make them ADA compliant. That will go into the newspapers next week and we are going to open those bids and report those to the Board and to the community when they come in.

Mrs. Boyle asked for the bid opening dates for the rest rooms. Mr. Damato said that he doesn't have the ad copy. We are going to work on that tomorrow and Monday and we are going to try to get the ad in to be published next Wednesday or Thursday. Mr. Damato said that we won't know the exact date until we get the ad copy worked out with the architect but it will probably be in three to four weeks from the publication date.

Curriculum

Mr. Pennisi said that the committee met with the Assistant Superintendent Ms. Malyska, Mrs. Anu Garrison, himself, Mr. Cassio, Mrs. Wolak and Mr. Both. The items discussed include the Envision Math Pilot Program. Sixth grade is currently doing a pilot and it looks like next year we will do a pilot program with fifth grade. Mr. Pennisi advised the Board that this is at no cost to the district. The resources and professional development is free for the first year.

Mr. Pennisi said that the testing schedule for April and May were reviewed. The testings include PARCC for grades 3-11, NJSLA-S, which is a new science test, for grades 5, 8 and 11, and DLM testing for special needs students for grades 3-8 and 11.

QSAC will have a site visit on Monday, April 9th which is the day we return from spring break.

Also discussed were two overnight trips that are coming up. Those trips include band camp from August 27 – 31st and the Grant School Fairview Lake trip which is broken up into two trips, October 29-30 and November 12-13.

Ms. Malyska said that we are in full blown testing season and we are currently doing our best to prepare for PARCC. She and Mr. Estrada went to the State training and they will be turn-keying that to all of the building test coordinators on March 28th and they, in turn, will turn-key to the faculty. Ms. Malyska said that we are on the right track for all of our upcoming testing.

Finance

Mr. Chapman said there was a committee meeting on Tuesday and we reviewed the budget as far as it could stand at that time because our State Aid numbers weren't

released until today. Mr. Chapman asked Mr. Damato if he is going to send information out in this week's board packet. Mr. Damato said that we will be sending out a package to the Board on the budget. He said to remember that these are work papers and they are tentative. Mr. Damato said that we did receive the State Aid numbers. The district got an additional \$81,000 this year over last which is a little disappointing. He said that some of the other towns in Middlesex County received a lot more money, to the tune of millions, than we received. He said that he is not quite sure about how that formula was calculated or worked out but that he is disappointed and unpleasantly surprised. Mr. Damato said that the budget will be sent home and then discussed next Wednesday. It will include an executive summary and a tax impact.

Mr. Chapman asked Mr. Damato for clarification as to whether the number is \$81,000 more than last year or \$81,000 which happens to be more than last year. Mr. Damato said that it is \$81,000 and change more than we received last year. He said that we did receive more debt service aid this year. We didn't receive any debt service aid last year because we received a grant for the Roosevelt project so we don't get debt service aid when a grant is received. In the budget, you will see that the debt service aid for last year was zero and this year it is \$255,000 however that goes to pay for a portion of the debt service on the bond so that's not money that we can use for a program or anything else.

Policy

Mr. Pennisi said that the Policy Committee met on March 13th. In attendance were Dr. Lishak, himself, Mr. Cassio, Mr. Chapman and Mr. Giannakis. He said that they reviewed Bylaw 169.02 – Use of Social Networks. He said that it is a brand new one and districts have yet to adopt it. The committee felt that since it's not a mandatory policy we are not recommending to adopt it at this time so there is no action taken.

The committee also reviewed Policy and Regulations 5331 – Management of Life-Threatening Allergies in Schools. This policy was reviewed and it is in compliance and Dr. Lishak compared it to other districts and we are right on top of everything. No changes were necessary and Mr. Pennisi said that Dr. Lishak ensured the committee that all of the required training will continue.

Policy and Regulation 5611 – Removal of Students for Firearms Offenses. This was reviewed because of the things that have been happening lately in the Nation and we found it to be in compliance so there are no changes necessary. Mr. Pennisi said that there was a concern about people carrying other weapons in the school and asked why they aren't listed. This policy, by statute, is strictly for firearms. If a student does bring other weapons, the Board can also remove these students if they find it necessary to remove them. He said that because it doesn't have a separate policy it doesn't mean that kids are allowed to walk around with knives and do whatever they want. This policy itself is by statute.

Public Relations

Mr. Chapman said there hasn't been a meeting since the last report. The committee will be meeting next Tuesday.

Shared Services

Mr. Cassio said that the committee met on March 6th. In attendance were himself, Dr. Lishak, Mr. Damato, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Both, Council President Bengivenga, Councilwoman Faustini and the town Business Administrator, Glen Cullen. Numerous topics were discussed including: possibly purchasing gas for the district rather than going outside of district to get it from Piscataway; school security and possibly adding another SRO in the district; upcoming grants that are possibly going to come through the State to help offset some of the costs for these officers; and displacement of the summer camp kids due to the projects going on at the elementary schools. Mr. Cassio said that Mr. Damato and Councilwoman Faustini discussed the logistics and took care of that.

Also discussed was the possibility of the DPW assisting with curb and sidewalk repairs around the complex and the poor condition of the Cromwell Place road in front of Grant School where it is crumbling and falling apart. Mr. Cassio said that they did a site visit and Council President Bengivenga agreed to try to have that added to the repaving that is being done on Cedarbrook Road. Mr. Cassio thanked him for that. They also discussed the overpass at Cedarbrook. There are no warning signs of the upcoming crosswalk by Morris Avenue so they also agreed to place some signs alerting crossing ahead coming over that overpass.

Mr. Cassio said that the county is working on some lit signage in front near the PAL by the park. They said that they can't promise a lit crosswalk but some sort of lit signage with a pressure sensitive pad to be put in place.

The committee also discussed the hold harmless agreement that Mr. Damato was looking for from Glen Cullen and they agreed to get that over to him shortly.

Council President Bengivenga offered a land donation on Morris Avenue across from the ball field. They would donate a portion of land and also install two new batting cages through the district so we thanked him for that.

Mr. Cassio said that he also brought up the faded crosswalks across the district especially along Maple Avenue. All of the streets that need to be repaved with the water company will have crosswalks put back in. Other crosswalks to be addressed include Kenyon and Rahway, Morris and Cedarbrook, Cedarbrook and Kenyon and Church and Lakeview.

Mrs. Boyle asked what the hold harmless agreement is for. Mr. Damato said that Mr. Roselle prepared an agreement between the town because we have so many arrangements between the town and the Board of Education. It is in both or our best interest to have an

agreement that holds each other harmless for anything that they do on our property and we do on their property. It is a very common thing and we sent it over for review by their attorney and hopefully it will get back to us soon. Mrs. Boyle said that was done multiple years ago and it should be on file. Mr. Damato said that may be true but it's not effective right now. Those things need to be updated and readopted by the governing bodies because they don't go on in perpetuity.

Special Education

Mr. Chapman said that there is no updated report. They were supposed to meet on Wednesday but Mrs. Castronovo had a conflict and she had to reschedule the meeting. We do not have that date set yet but will hopefully have one set tomorrow.

Transportation

No Report

Traffic Liaison

Mr. Cassio said that he spoke with Officer Delaire last week as he finalized his traffic study. Officer Delaire put up speed signage on Wickford near Grant because there were concerns of cars going too fast around corners. He did studies with the sign both on and off and it showed that cars were slowing down. Mr. Cassio said that they brought up concerns at the shared services meeting and Council President Bengivenga agreed to put two yield to pedestrian divider signs at the corner of Wickford and Cromwell as well as at the corner of Strafford and Cromwell to slow down the cars approaching the school.

SEPAC Liaison

Mr. Both said that there was a well-attended meeting on February 28th with an attorney presentation on IEPs.

Legislative Liaison

Mrs. Boyle said that Dr. Larry Feinsod, Executive Director of School Boards, is pleased with the education funding provision of Governor Murphy's proposed budget. The proposal establishes a four year timeline for achieving full funding of school finance systems. It focuses on the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education in preparing our children for the future. It also expands pre-kindergarten programs and essential components to ensure the academic success of all children. While the proposed budget will increase financial support for the underfunded school districts, it would not reduce education aid in any community. That's critically important to provide program cuts that can hurt our children and the proposed budget would increase formula aid to school districts by \$283 million. Overall, 93% of the State's school districts would experience an increase in funding. It also provides additional 57 million for expansion of

pre-kindergarten programs as well as start-up funds for STEM focused high school programs.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Margarita Jimenez, 1509 Central Avenue, said that she had a statement prepared and although Dr. Lishak already spoke to this and put a lot of our anxiety at peace, she had the statement prepared and would like to take a moment to read it. She started off by congratulating the South Plainfield Education System for molding exceptional students that participated in the National Walkout yesterday. She commended all of our teachers that have taught our children the history of this country and have truly taught them the meaning of empathy. Due to all of that, we have courageous young adults that stepped up, along with the entire nation, to rally for safety. Ms. Jimenez said that it saddens her that people belittle them and call them stupid kids that don't know what they are talking about or what they are walking out for. She said that these kids are passionate, intelligent, driven and will be or are 18. This is just a stepping stone in what they will do in the future when they can vote and make the necessary changes at the polls.

Ms. Jimenez said that it is unfortunate that the district has decided to punish these individuals for taking a stand on a national issue that has brought pain and tears to so many families. As she watches the news and sees all of the beautiful tributes that other towns created for the 17 students at Stoneman Douglas, it saddens her to think that our exceptional district couldn't come together to make something beautiful. She said that the only thing that the district was able to cause was divide between the student body and our township. The horrific comments trending on multiple news articles and South Plainfield social media pages were disgusting and appalling. All of our kids were courageous and they knew the consequences (prior to Dr. Lishak speaking) that their scholarships were at play and that was just a low blow to them. Their future was in jeopardy and, as a parent, we know that a lot of us don't have the luxury of paying for our children's college tuition. She wishes she does but said it is not in her budget to do so. Mrs. Jimenez said that this is why she pushes her child to strive and be an exceptional student and one day have the possibility of receiving financial scholarships.

Ms. Jimenez thanked Dr. Lishak for working with our student body and with the high school representatives. She said that it puts her at ease that they were able to accomplish something that is their given right. They voiced their concerns and they participated. Thank you.

Barbara Cantamessa said that she is up there as a parent today. She said that she is disappointed that the district did not come together as a community to support our children. She said that our children learn educationally and they learn to be adults and we have to support them. She said that she is not a great speaker and does not like speaking in front of public but she is compassionate about what happened. Ms. Cantamessa said that she knows that we are not prepared if someone comes into this school. She said that she doesn't know how we could be prepared but we need to support our children who

could be victims and we need to let them have a voice and not penalize them. She said that it could have been handled differently. We could have had something in the gym for those kids that didn't want to go out and we could have supported those children outside. Ms. Cantamessa said that she feels that we did a disservice. She said that we need to support our kids, let them become adults, let them become politicians, let them be a part of government and don't penalize them.

Diana Joffe, SPEA and teacher at the high school, said that we certainly did support our kids yesterday. The Board, the Administration and the teachers all supported our kids and were extremely prepared for this. Mrs. Joffe said that we were more prepared than ever before. She said that these kids acted like adults. She expected a lot less than what she saw and she was very proud of the way they organized, their maturity and their knowledge of the cause. Mrs. Joffe said that she walked out in the 70s because they wouldn't let them wear bell bottoms with fringe on the bottom. These kids were adults. They acted like college students and were prepared.

Mrs. Joffe said that we did have a presentation in the auditorium and other kids could be in their classrooms where their teachers were teaching so they had three choices and they chose as adults. Mrs. Joffe said that she told her classes to make their decision. She said that she isn't going to tell them what to do but to base their decision on their beliefs and their conviction and base it on your facts. She told them not to go out there to hang out with your cell phone or your ipods. She told them not to go out there to hang and they didn't. She said that the students made her so proud when they came back into the building. She was there to meet the 67 students in the media center. She said that the students were proud and they spoke and she was amazed at the maturity of the students. She added that these weren't just honor roll students they were everyday kids, kids that she sometimes gets frustrated with and they were making her and the whole school proud.

Mrs. Joffe said that Dr. Lishak and Mr. Damato were there. Whoever said on social media these kids are stupid, they have no idea what they are talking about and as a teacher, and she's not just speaking for herself, she is speaking for every teacher in this building. We were proud of those students and they knew the consequences. We have to have consequences. We can't let them go out every single time there is an issue. We have a school. We have to teach. We have safety issues so there have to be consequences. They know them. They know what they are. They are mature enough. She was awed by them. She was never so proud of your children and whatever you have done as parent, you did well because they made us proud. Thank you.

Kim Lacross, Franklin Avenue, said that her children did not participate in the walkout so she has no vested interest except that this is her community and her school district. She said that she is not plying for your support except that she is a human being. She said that she thinks what you all understand as adults and about this event specifically because it is your domain and this happened last month and it's just the tipping point. She said that it started a movement and that she doesn't know what made this one different. She said that maybe those kids said that they are not taking it anymore and the rest of the country

is at a point where they feel that way as well. Ms. Lacross said that with multiple children in the district she knows that she is. She said that the issue is not about those 17 kids and the walkout had a specific purpose to show nationwide solidarity amongst this generation, amongst the kids who are directly affected. Those who are old enough to understand to be afraid and to cause change and that's what this was about. It wasn't about those 17 kids. It was about showing communities, school district and the news media that this is not going to be something that we are going to allow to be swept under the rug and then just hold our breath and wait for it to happen again.

Ms. Lacross said that she does appreciate the measures that are in place. There are some things that she would prefer. She does not want guns in our schools. She doesn't think that is something that we should invite in but that is just her personal opinion and she's sure that will be discussed further along, both this year and in the future. She said that the nationwide event was not for those 17 victims, those 17 people was just the straw that broke the camel's back. They are proportionate to this issue but the issue is not them and she said that she thinks you all understand that.

Ms. Lacross said that being said, she is very upset that the video was shown because it's not about them. Hearing that the student received an acceptance letter the day after she was killed in such a violent manner was nauseating to her and that's not what this is about and she thinks that obviously this is not something that our children should have to worry about but this is a district issue. Ms. Lacross said that she does appreciate what the social studies spoke about and she would have liked to see more than that in the assembly. There should have been more content specific to what they can do and note commemorating the terrible things that happened but instilling in them more knowledge on what their next step is, help them organize. That is what she would like to see our district do. She said that we want to raise future leaders.

Ms. Lacross said that she was pleased to hear about the modifications that Dr. Lishak spoke of tonight, however, she doesn't feel like that adequately supports the gravity of this cause. She said that the South Plainfield Police Department handled themselves wonderfully from all accounts. They had the roads shut down and there was a missed opportunity in that because they were so prepared and they were so ready the district could have used them to assist with the protest. She said that she understands that you don't want to encourage kids to cut class but this is a monumental movement. This was not about cutting class and the district needs to recognize that better. That is what she would like to see in the future.

Ms. Lacross said that while she has the Board's attention, there are trees in front of the Middle School that are precariously broken and she really does not want to see a child passing that sidewalk get injured in any way. So that is something that the district needs to take care of as well. Thank you.

Georgia Lambert, 1131 Thompkins Avenue, thanked Dr. Lishak for making the modifications to the consequences for the walk out. She said that we are here because we

were very stressed out today when we started getting the phone calls and started worrying about our kids. She said that her daughter wasn't going to walk out and then she got a phone call that she was outside so she changed her mind. Mrs. Lambert said that she had told her daughter not to walk out unless you really believe in this cause and she did it on her own.

Mrs. Lambert said that she knows that Ms. Jimenez said something about social media and some of the South Plainfield pages and she agreed and that our kids are being talked about on these pages. They are being called stupid. There are a couple of police officers in town that are calling them names on social media which is completely inappropriate. Instead of praising them for what they did, they are being called names and their parents are being called names for supporting them. She said that it is very sad that in a small town where everybody knows everybody that this is occurring right now.

Mrs. Lambert said that these kids really took a stand and she is very proud of them. She is proud of the student that chose to go see the video as well. She said that the students had choices but that she wished the town did a little bit more to facilitate the kids that actually chose to do what the movement was about which was to walk out. Mrs. Lambert said that as Ms. Lacross said, it wasn't to talk about the 17 kids but it was about sending a message to the people, to everybody that was watching, that there needs to be changes made and there's all kinds of issues with gun control and other issues that we can go all day talking about but there has to be some kind of changes made because these things can't keep happening and they wouldn't be happening if there was changes made. The only way to bring that message across is to not silence them in the auditorium where nobody can hear them, it is to let them go outside and have a voice.

Mrs. Lambert said that although this was great and the kids got to see something they chose to do, they were silenced. They couldn't speak. Nobody could see the kids inside they could only see the 67 students that chose to go outside. Those are the ones we are talking about right now. Those are the ones that had a voice and Mrs. Lambert said that a lot more kids wanted to walk out but once the coaches started threatening with not allowing them to play in a scrimmage or not allowing them to go to a practice or pulling them off the team the students thought that was more important to them. She said that to her daughter it was more important to walk out although she was afraid she might not run track or be pulled from whatever club she is in. Mrs. Lambert said that it is sad and she understands the concerns about not wanting them to protest every little thing. This was a nationwide movement and not just a little protest. Mrs. Lambert added that Somerville did something amazing. They took all their students out to the football field, had the clock run down 17. They spoke about each victim and they were all able to express themselves. We could have handled it a little better. She said that she feels that you know they need to be commended for what they did because it really took a lot. These kids were afraid to walk out that door because they didn't want to be punished. She said that she knows that her daughter, who has never served detention, was afraid. She put that fear aside and did what was right and she is very proud of them.

XIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Boyle said that the Cultural Arts Talent Show took place on March 4th. It featured many of our students and they all did a great job.

Mrs. Boyle said that she received a parent letter that she would like to acknowledge. They had many valid points and agreed or disagreed, it was their opinions. She said that they felt that each time there is an issue that they feel empowered to march with, is this going to happen over and over again? They felt that the administration and the staff pushed the students to feel that they needed to do this march. They also wanted to know if there was a march for abortion rights, would they be able to do that without punishment. Mrs. Boyle said this was their opinions and they wrote the letter.

Mrs. Boyle said that Career Day was a tremendous success. It was hosted by the South Plainfield Business Association and the Director of Guidance, Sam Fierra. We hosted a panel of various life careers for the 11th grade students.

Mrs. Boyle said that the County Student Recognition Dinner that Dr. Lishak talked about took place last evening. They honored students who have met challenges throughout their lives. There were 68 students honored as unsung heroes who may never have the spotlight again. Mrs. Boyle said that we were proud to honor two South Plainfield High School students, Litzy and Brandon. Mrs. Boyle thanked Dr. Lishak, Principal Ronnie Spring Director of Guidance Sam Fierra, guidance counselors and board members for their support of the students. This was a record-breaking turnout of over 400 guests in attendance. Mrs. Boyle also thanked the Old Bridge Superintendent for graciously hosting this best night of the year ever and also to Dr. Larry Feinsod, Dr. Linda Madison and Kevin Ciak who is the National School Board President.

The South Plainfield Education Foundation will host their annual golf outing at Top Golf on March 25th from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. which includes an Italian Dinner.

The South Plainfield High School Baseball Team's used clothing drive will take place this Saturday, March 17th at the PAL pool parking lot. Please bag all gently used clothing and place in the truck. The baseball team receives a check for the amount of poundage that is collected.

The Mayor's Wellness Health Fair will take place on Saturday, April 28th at the South Plainfield Public Library from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and the Mayor's Wellness Committee and the Public Library will host an Autism Awareness Event at the library on Sunday, April 29th from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Please reach out to Danielle Staunton, Jessica Spina, Linda Hanson, Councilwoman Faustini or Mrs. Boyle

Mrs. Boyle congratulated the Riley School Students, Mr. Whalen, Mr. Baldwin and the teachers on hosting a great Grandparents Day today.

Mr. Giannakis said that he agrees with what Mrs. Boyle said, he was at the student recognition dinner as well and it was really fantastic. He said that he disagrees because he saw these students and he thinks a lot of them will be in the spotlight again sooner than later. They were really terrific.

Mrs. Chapman congratulated the students and administration to a job well done on the production of that tribute video. It was very thoughtful and a heartfelt video that they should be very proud of. They've also made our community very proud by doing that. Those who chose to walk out of the schools in expression of their desire to improve gun control, knowing that you faced a consequence but accepted that you personally felt the cause was worth the consequence and you took the courage and demonstrated your true dedication to the cause. Mr. Chapman said that he admires their decision and their courage. Never be afraid to express your opinions but always weigh the options, opportunities and consequences. That's how life works. Those who chose to attend the assembly, your decision was not less important or less noticed than anyone else's decision. There are many different ways in this world to stand up for what you believe in.

Mr. Chapman thanked everybody who came up to the podium and spoke tonight as well. It was very, very important. The entire Board and administration is dedicated to providing a safe and effective educational environment. There is always going to be rules in place to try to ensure that we maintain the integrity of our safety protocols and our educational commitments. It's a good time to be a student and a resident in South Plainfield.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

RESOLVED, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 47-:1A-1 *et. seq.*) that the Board meets in closed session at this time to discuss confidential matters pertaining to: (select one or more)

1. a matter rendered confidential by federal or state law
2. a matter in which release of information would impair the right to receive government funds
3. material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy
4. a collective bargaining agreement and/or negotiations related to it
5. a matter involving the purchase, lease, or acquisition of real property with public funds
6. protection of public safety and property and/or investigations of possible violations or violations of law
7. pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation and/or matters of attorney-client privilege
8. specific prospective or current employees unless all who could be adversely affected request an open session.

9. deliberation after a public hearing that could result in a civil penalty or other loss

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the matters discussed in closed session shall be made public as soon as the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 8-0

Mr. Roselle read in the following resolution:

Approve the Shared Services Agreement between the Borough of South Plainfield and the South Plainfield Board of Education for Police Officer Assignment at District Schools

Resolved, that the Board approves the Shared Services Agreement between the Borough of South Plainfield and the South Plainfield Board of Education for Police Officer Assignment at District Schools, pursuant to the terms and conditions therein, a copy of which is on file with the Board Secretary.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Boyle asked to add in that it is for the year 2017-2018. Mr. Roselle said that we can add it in to the resolution if you want but it says it in the contract. Mrs. Boyle said that is what she means. Mr. Roselle said that it's already there. Mrs. Boyle said, okay but it said it is in light blue and she don't know how it comes out on your copy. Mr. Roselle said that it comes out black.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 8-0

XV. AGENDA APPROVAL

RESOLVED, that the agenda for the regular public meeting on March 21, 2018, as may have been modified, is hereby approved.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 8-0

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business of the Board, there was a motion to adjourn at 9:19 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Giannakis SECOND: Mr. Pennisi VOTE: 8-0

Respectfully submitted,

James J. Damato

Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 15, 2018

Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary