

**FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL**  
**NEW JERSEY 08868**  
***Board of Education***  
**SPECIAL MEETING**

***June 12, 2017- 6:00 p.m.***

1. **Call to Order – Mr. Burdick, President called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.**  
Open Public Meeting Announcement  
*“In accordance with requirements of the Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., adequate notices have been given of tonight’s meeting in area newspapers, which include the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Express-Times and have been posted on the bulletin board by the main office of the Franklin Township School, sent to the Township Clerk, and to all Board of Education members on May 24, 2017.*
  - 1.01 Roll Call – Rose Kasperkoski, Acting Board Secretary recorded the roll and determined a quorum was present.  
  
Present – Mr. Burdick, Mr. Cama, Ms. Crielly, Mr. French, Mrs. Homulak, Mrs. Luciano, Mr Yasunas  
Also Present – Dr. Carol Fredericks, Superintendent, Janelle Winters, Board Counsel, Rose Kasperkoski, Acting Board Secretary
  - 1.02 Flag Salute – Mr. Burdick led all assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance
2. Discussion of Regulation 5131 – Conduct and Discipline **(attachment)**  
Mr. Burdick explained that the board will be taking public comments on the new policy/regulation 5131, Code of Conduct. The public comment process and time limit was explained. The public will be given the opportunity to speak a second time.
3. Public Comments  
Katrina Mani – Mrs. Mani spoke about HIB incidents. She feels students should be taught at a young age and we need to come together as a school and community.  
Neil Surgenor – Mr. Surgenor shared his personal experience regarding HIB. He feels there are too many layers before coming to a consequence. He also stated that he feels there are too many rights for the offender and no rights as victim.  
Mr. Burdick went over the regulation, explaining that there are no more minors and majors, no reductions for good behavior, progressive discipline is now optional and that the goal is to have discipline fit the violation.  
Lynne French – Mrs. French made a reference to Regulation 5131R A.3. *Appropriate Language and Profanity*. She has heard casual use of slang terms. She feels there needs to be more teachable moments and that we need to be proactive.  
Melissa Costine – Mrs. Costine expressed that she feels there is a lack of misbehaviors being noticed. Children know when they can get away with things and when no one is looking.  
Mr. Joubert – Mr. Joubert spoke about HIB incidents. He feels young kids don’t have social skills and need to be taught and not everything needs to be a HIB.

Marybeth Forbes – Mrs. Forbes thanked the Board for revising the code of conduct. She had a couple questions regarding the HIB Investigation portion of the regulation. She spoke about a personal HIB incident. She feels that parents need to respect each other and set a good example. She stated that she loved Franklin Township School.

Ms. Winters, Board Attorney, explained the law and definition of HIB.

Mr. Surgenor – Mr. Surgenor commented on other comments and is pleased to hear that behavior correction needs to start at home. He repeated that the victim has no rights and that there needs to be quicker consequences for the offender.

Mrs. Huebscher – Mrs. Huebscher spoke about the HIB incidents and how they all fall on the Counselor to investigate. She feels there should be a panel for HIB. She spoke of a minor incident involving her child that she thought was settled and a week later it was a HIB investigation. Her child was confused. She said that children need to make mistakes to learn.

Mr. Burdick, Board President, explained how the BOE works. He talked about the code of conduct list of behaviors, HIB being one of them. He explained the process of how incidents are reported to the Board.

Ms. Winters, Board Attorney, said the HIB incidents are confidential. HIB is broad. The severity of consequences depends on the severity of the incident.

Dr. Fredericks, Superintendent, stated that the district does not have a choice in investigating HIB complaints. When certain behaviors are reported that fall in the definition of HIB, an investigation must be done. There may be a finding or no finding. There will be no finding if there are no witnesses. If incident involves conflict, there may not be an investigation.

Mr. MacKinnon – Mr. MacKinnon had a question regarding “conflict”. The attorney gave an example.

Mrs. Joubert – Mrs. Joubert talked about HIB. She feels that the counselor is caught in the middle. She compared the number of incidents at our school with another district. She stated that her child wants no part of the HIB investigations because other kids talk about it.

Mr. Burdick, Board President, stated that if the child doesn’t report it, the offender gets off scot-free.

Mr. Surgenor spoke again about the many HIB incidents.

Mr. Joubert talked about the HIB law. He read the law and feels anything could be interpreted as a HIB, but not everything needs to be a HIB.

Ms. Winters, Board Attorney, stated the law is broad. We have to follow it or we are subject to liability. Not every investigation turns out to be a HIB finding.

Mr. Morrissey – Mr. Morrissey asked how many years the HIB law was in place. He questioned the HIB process and training required for the specialist and training provided to staff. Dr. Fredericks explained the training requirements and listed the trainings provided to staff.

Mrs. Forbes stated that the school should use discretion in investigating HIB incidents.

Mr. Burdick said that HIB is part of the Code of Conduct. If circumstances are met than we need to act with an investigation.

Mrs. Forbes read a letter she had prepared for the Board of Education.

Mr. Burdick, Board President, commented that the district is looking into a different staff member as possible HIB specialist.

Mr. MacKinnon feels that the counselor should not be the specialist.

Mrs. French stated that K-2, 3-5,6-8 are all different worlds and too much for the counselor. She feels that there should be more staff to support the counselor.

Mrs. Huebscher said that kids are uncomfortable going to teachers. Kids are smart and will make up ways to tease.

Mrs. Muller commented on the number of 6<sup>th</sup> grade parents present. She shared concerns about the counselor being the same as HIB specialist.

Ms. Winters, Board Attorney, clarified that everyone is obligated to report HIB incidents and an investigation would be necessary. A lot has happened over the last few months and there has been a lot of vigilance to have everyone informed, which is why there is an increase in incidents.

Mr. McKowski asked why is HIB on our minds? What changed?

Ms. Winters, Board Attorney, explained that there is more vigilance and the scope of HIB continues to broaden.

Katrina Mani expressed that we need to teach children to be kind starting in Pre-K.

Mr. Joubert expressed that we need to use discretion.

Mr. MacKinnon questioned confidentiality with guidance counselor as the specialist.

Ms. Winters, Board Attorney, went through the procedure, explaining that there are many layers. The guidance counselor was assigned the position as the HIB specialist.

Board members were given the opportunity to comment and did so as follows:

Mrs. Luciano spoke that there is room for improvement in the policy and that there is more that we can do. She appreciates the parents comments. She would like more time with the policy and would like to talk more with the counselor.

Mr. Yasunas is sorry to hear everyone's comments. The BOE is working with administration to improve the process. He thanked everyone and he stated that he takes it very seriously.

Ms. Crielly reported that the NJSCA fought not to have the Anti Bullying Specialist be the same as the guidance counselor. She is concerned about how children treat each other and with rumors amongst parents.

Mr. Cama thanked Mr. Burdick and the policy subcommittee for addressing this issue. He stated that he has been on the Board for 5 years and this is the biggest turnout he has seen and he encouraged the public to attend more meetings.

Mrs. Homulak stated that it is disheartening to hear stories. Her child does not experience this and we need to nip it in the bud.

Mr. French thanked Mr. Burdick for setting up the meeting. He applauded everyone for speaking to this issue. Prior comments at the meeting were the reason for the meeting. He feels that we need to separate the counselor from the specialist. The discussion seemed to be only about HIB but that was only part of the policy. If we determine consequences for behavior, that should help. He compared his 12<sup>th</sup> grader's middle school experience with his 6<sup>th</sup> grader's experience. He feels something is broke and it needs to be corrected.

Dr. Fredericks explained why the Guidance Counselor is the Specialist and quoted the law.

She continued that as troubling as it is for everyone involved, the very first step to fix a problem is to determine that there is a problem. The Board policies are crafted to support the children in the district. We need to support each other in our educational endeavors and we need to find ways to talk to each other even when we don't agree.

Mr. Burdick, Board President stated that his 3 children attended FTS. He asked them what changed. He stated that students make judgments about people without knowing them. Kids actions start at home and things need to improve at home. He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

4. Shared Services Agreement with Hampton Board of Education for Spanish Teacher  
The shared service agreement that was approved at the last board meeting was discussed. There was an issue with the schedule and amount of prep time. The discrepancy in the number of minutes was discussed at length. There was a discussion regarding the Spanish schedule in both scenarios – full time vs. shared time. Different options of offering Spanish to each grade level were discussed. The question was brought up as to how much Spanish instruction is offered in other school districts. Dr. Fredericks





Mr. French	X			
Mrs. Homulak	X			
Mrs. Luciano	X			
Mr. Yasunas	X			
Mr. Burdick			X	
Totals:	5	0	1	1

9. Adjournment

9.01 **Resolved**, to Adjourn from the Public Meeting at 10:03 p.m.

Motion Yasunas	Second Cama	By Voice Vote	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
			6	0	0	1

Respectfully submitted,

Certified by,

Rosemarie Kasperkoski  
Acting Board Secretary

George Burdick  
Board President