

# CLOSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Closter, New Jersey*

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING

*Tenakill Middle School*

*March 12, 2026 - 7:30 PM*

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Call to order: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_ P.M.

Roll Call:

Ms. Argenziano	_____
Mr. Choi	_____
Ms. Estrems	_____
Ms. Lee	_____
Ms. Micera	_____
Ms. Ravid	_____
Mr. Shih	_____
Mr. Paldi	_____
Ms. Finkelstein	_____

## NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT - Read by the President:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act 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 Secretary to the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by having the date, time, and place thereof, posted at each school building within the district, district website, the Board of Education office, the Office of the Borough Clerk, and transmitted to *The Record* and *Northern Valley Suburbanite* newspapers.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

## PRINCIPALS' REPORTS

## BOARD COMMITTEES

## SY 2026 - 2027 PRELIMINARY BUDGET PRESENTATION

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ , seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to open the meeting to the public.

*Statements made by individual participants are limited to a duration of three (3) minutes unless otherwise announced at the beginning of the discussion. A maximum of 15 minutes for public input is scheduled as per bylaw 0167. The Board urges large groups to select one person to represent them. The Board reminds those individuals who take the opportunity to speak to please step up, identify themselves by name and address, and to limit their comments to items listed on the agenda.*

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ , seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to resume the regular order of business.

**BOARD OPERATIONS**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ , seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to approve Motions A and B.

Motions were \_\_\_\_\_ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

**A. APPROVAL - Board of Education Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the February 26, 2026, Board of Education meeting minutes.

**B. APPROVAL - Donation of 20 New Soccer Balls to Tenakill Middle School**

Motion to accept the donation of 20 new soccer balls, totaling \$700, from SJ Enrichment to TMS.

**CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE**

*Chairperson: Ms. Lee; Members: Ms. Argenziano, Ms. Estrems*

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ , seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to approve Motion A.

Motion was \_\_\_\_\_ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

**A. APPROVAL - Staff Coursework**

Motion to approve the following courses for the 2025-2026 school year as recommended to the Superintendent by the Principals:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Staff Member:     | Katharine Meyers   |
| Course No./Title: | 1) EDUC 719X Implementing Playful Learning in Pre-K-2 Classrooms                 |
|                   | 2) EDUC 717M Understanding Dyslexia  |
|                   | 3) EDUC 717W How the Brain Learns to Read: Decoding Comprehension and Motivation |
|                   | 4) EDUC 719L Project-Based Learning  |

Institution: University of LaVerne  
Credits: 12 (3 credits each)

Staff Member: Paul Aguirre  
Course No./Title: 1) Spanish Grammar 1  
2) History of the Spanish Language  
3) Resources for the Teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language  
4) Contemporary Spanish Literature  
5) History of Spain  
6) Spanish Culture I  
7) Hispanic Civilization I

Institution: University of Salamanca  
Credits: 16 total credits

**FINANCE AND PHYSICAL PLANT COMMITTEE**

*Chairperson: Mr. Choi; Members: Ms. Micera, Ms. Ravid, Ms. Finkelstein*

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to approve Motions A - M.

Motions were \_\_\_\_\_ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

**A. APPROVAL - Payment of Bills**

Motion to approve payment of bills from March 1, 2026, to March 13, 2026, in the amount of:

General Fund (Fund 10)	\$1,660,755.06
Special Revenue (Fund 20)	\$ 5,388.01
Enterprise (Milk – Fund 60)	\$ 714.27
Total	\$1,666,857.34

**B. APPROVAL - Staff Remuneration**

Motion to approve remuneration to staff members as follows:

Staff Member: Songhee (Joy) Lee  
Course: EDUC 7130 Building Classroom Discipline  
College/University: University of LaVerne  
Remuneration: \$420.00

Staff Member: Megan Weis  
 Course: EDUC 7130 Building Classroom Discipline  
 College/University: University of LaVerne  
 Remuneration: \$420.00

Staff Member: Kaitlyn Yu  
 Course: EDUC 7130 Building Classroom Discipline  
 College/University: University of LaVerne  
 Remuneration: \$420.00

C. **APPROVAL - SY 2026 - 2027 Preliminary Budget, with final figures to be updated following the release of State Aid on March 12, 2026.**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Closter Board of Education, County of Bergen, approves the preliminary 2026-2027 school year budget and authorizes the School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary to submit the preliminary budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	<i><b>Budget</b></i>	<i><b>Local Tax Levy</b></i>
General Current Expense (Fund 11)	\$ 28,502,054	\$ 25,203,081
Capital Outlay (Fund 12)	\$ 1,658,191	
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 30,160,245</b>	<b>\$ 25,203,081</b>
Special Revenue Fund (Fund 20)	\$ 471,107	\$ 0
Debt Service Fund (Fund 40)	\$ 472,275	\$ 56,702
<b>Total Base Budget</b>	<b>\$ 31,103,627</b>	<b>\$ 25,259,783</b>

And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Fund tax levy of **\$25,203,081** is approved to support the Current General Expense, which includes the use of **\$1,096,491** Health Care Costs Adjustment. The total budget tax levy, including Debt Service Fund, is **\$ 25,259,783**

And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education accepts the State School Aid for the 2026-27 school year as follows:

Transportation Aid  
Special Education Aid  
Security Aid

Debt Service Aid  
Less: SDA Assessment

**Total Aid**

And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a meeting will be held at the Tenakill Middle School Media Center on Thursday, April 30, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the SY 2026-2027 budget.

D. **APPROVAL - SY 2026-2027 Preliminary Budget – Adjustment for Health Care Costs**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education approves the use of an adjustment for increase in health care costs, permitting the tax levy to increase above 2% in the amount of **\$1,096,491**. The adjustment will be used to support the rising cost of health benefits for eligible district staff.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Business Administrator/Board Secretary is authorized to submit the preliminary budget with the inclusion of the health care costs adjustment as noted above.

E. **APPROVAL - Capital Reserve Withdrawal (Other Capital Projects) for SY 2026-2027**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Closter Board of Education, County of Bergen, includes in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620, a withdrawal in the amount of **\$1,369,000** from the Board of Education's approved **Capital Reserve Account** to fund Other Capital Projects:

**Hillside Elementary School**

- Phone Systems Upgrade
- Sidewalk and Curb Replacement
- Replacement of Interior Doors

**Tenakill Middle School**

- Phone Systems Upgrade
- Network Infrastructure Phase 4
- Lunch Room/Gym Wall Table Replacement
- Replacement of Interior Doors
- Vertical Unit Replacement (HVAC)

The total cost of the projects represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner of Education as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Any funds

withdrawn from the Capital Reserve and unspent by the end of the school year shall be returned to the Capital Reserve fund.

Another withdrawal from the Capital Reserve Account (Budget Line 625) in the amount of **\$255,000** will be made as a transfer to the Debt Service Fund. This one-time transfer will be used to pay down the principal on the 2023 bond series, thereby reducing the overall tax impact.

The Total Capital Reserve Withdrawal is **\$1,649,000.**

F. **APPROVAL - Maintenance Reserve Withdrawal for SY 2026-2027 Budget**

BE IT RESOLVED that as per N.J.A.C 6A:23A-14.2(d), the Closter Board of Education withdraws **\$340,000** from the Board of Education's approved **Maintenance Reserve Account** for use on required maintenance activities for a school facility as reported in the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan pursuant to N.J.A.C 6A:26-20.5.

G. **APPROVAL - Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement for SY 2026-2027**

WHEREAS, the Closter Board of Education recognizes that school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Closter Board of Education has determined that the maximum travel expenditure amount includes all travel that is supported by state and local funds; and

WHEREAS, the Closter Board of Education established \$35,000.00 as the maximum travel amount for the current school year and has an obligated balance of \$21,929.35 as of this date; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Closter Board of Education hereby establishes the maximum travel and related expense reimbursement for the 2026 - 2027 school year at \$38,000.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Business Administrator/Board Secretary is authorized to track and record these costs to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded.

H. **APPROVAL – Purchase of a Multi-Year License Agreement with Cengage Learning**

Motion to approve the purchase of a multi-year agreement with Cengage Learning for the National Geographic digital access and student workbooks until June 2029, at a total cost of \$40,443.86.

- I. **APPROVAL – Purchase of a Multi-Year License Agreement with Riverside Insights**  
Motion to approve the purchase of a multi-year agreement with Riverside Insights for the three-year COGAT testing materials starting SY 2025-2026 until SY 2027-2028, at a total cost of \$17,896.54.
- J. **APPROVAL – Purchase of a Multi-Year License Agreement with EdPuzzle Inc**  
Motion to approve the purchase of a multi-year agreement with EdPuzzle Inc. for the three-year Ed Puzzle subscription for Science & Social Studies, March 2029, at a total cost of \$7,837.50. The contract reflects a 5% discount.
- K. **APPROVAL – Purchase of a Multi-Year License Agreement with Rethink Ed**  
Motion to approve the purchase of a multi-year agreement with Rethink Ed for the three-year Rethink Behavior/Skills Success subscription until October 31, 2029, at a total cost of \$8,397.00. The contract reflects a 10% discount.
- L. **APPROVAL – Purchase of a Multi-Year License Agreement with Learning Ally Inc.**  
Motion to approve the purchase of a multi-year agreement with Learning Ally for the three-year Learning Ally subscription (small district) until June 30, 2029, at a total cost of \$9,117.15. The contract reflects a 5% discount.
- M. **APPROVAL – Purchase of iPad with Apple Care and Case with Apple Inc.**  
Motion to approve the purchase of 24 iPads with Apple Care from Apple Inc. and 24 Logitech Rugged combo cases with keyboards in the amount of \$15,550.80 through the Ed Services Commission of Morris, Apple Contract #1670625. 19 devices are purchased for Hillside and 5 for Tenakill.

**PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*Chairperson: Mr. Paldj; Members: Mr. Shih, Ms. Finkelstein*

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ , seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to approve Motions A - F.

Motions were \_\_\_\_\_ by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

- A. **APPROVAL - Retirement of Scott Greene, Hillside Elementary School Grade 4 Teacher**  
Motion to approve the retirement of Scott Greene, HES Grade 4 teacher, effective June 30, 2026.
- B. **APPROVAL - Allocation of Title I Funds for Ellen Monaghan’s Salary**  
Motion to approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the payment of a portion of the salary for Ellen Monaghan, BSI Teacher at Tenakill Middle School, from Title I funds as follows:

20-231-100-100-060-00-0	\$ 31,000 (26.06%)	Title I
11-230-100-101-060-01-0	\$ 87,933 (73.94%)	District Funds

C. **APPROVAL - Resignation of Tenakill Middle School Paraprofessional Gina Cocca**  
Motion to accept the resignation of TMS paraprofessional, Gina Cocca, effective March 3, 2026.

D. **APPROVAL - Substitute Teachers/Paraprofessionals/Custodians**  
Motion to approve the following substitute teachers/paraprofessionals/custodians for the 2025-2026 school Year:

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Certification</u></b>
Mary Lombino	Substitute Nurse
Malikha Ghauri	Substitute Certificate
Carol Laux	Substitute Certificate
Shireen Bora	Substitute Certificate
Theresa Tejada	Substitute Custodian
Taylor Paster	Substitute Certificate

E. **APPROVAL - Leave of Absence for Ashley Buckley, Hillside Elementary School Special Education Teacher**  
Motion to approve Ashley Buckley, HES Special Education teacher, for a leave of absence from June 13, 2026, through November 24, 2026, as follows:

- Paid sick leave from June 13, 2026, through June 24, 2026, and
- An FMLA and NJFLA child bonding leave from September 1, 2026, through November 24, 2026, with an anticipated return to work on November 25, 2026.

F. **APPROVAL - Leave of Absence for Dana Hollywood, Hillside Elementary School Grade 1 Teacher**  
Motion to approve Dana Hollywood, HES Grade 1 teacher, for a leave of absence from May 26, 2026, through November 24, 2026, as follows:

- Paid sick leave from May 26, 2026, through June 10, 2026;
- Personal leave from June 11, 2026, through June 15, 2026;
- An FMLA leave for personal disability from June 16, 2026, through June 24, 2026;
- An FMLA and NJFLA child bonding leave from September 1, 2026, through November 17, 2026; and
- An NJFLA child bonding leave from November 18, 2026, through November 24, 2026, with an anticipated return to work on November 25, 2026.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ ▾, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ ▾ to open the meeting for public comments.

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ ▾, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ ▾ to close the meeting to public comments.

**CLOSED SESSION MOTION (If required)**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ , seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to approve the following Closed Session Motion.

Motion was \_\_\_\_\_ by a voice vote of the Board:

YEAS:

NAYS:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education will adjourn to a Closed Session to discuss the following:

**HIB**

The matters so discussed will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public.

The Board went into Closed Session at \_\_\_\_\_ PM.

The Board reconvened from Closed Session at \_\_\_\_\_ PM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ , seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ to adjourn the meeting at \_\_\_\_\_ PM.