

VIRTUAL - Reorganization Meeting - May 3, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

The Annual Reorganization Meeting was held on Wednesday, May 3, 2023. This meeting was called to order by the Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary, Reggie Lamptey, CPA, followed by a flag salute.

Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary Reggie Lamptey reported that in accordance with P.L. 1975 Chapter 231, adequate notice of this meeting was posted in the Administration Building and copies of said notice sent to the Irvington Herald, the Star Ledger and the Township Clerk.

**RESULTS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF IRVINGTON SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION – APRIL 25, 2023**

Budget Question –

<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
388	92

Three (3) Year Term Board Members Results:

Syeshia Benbow	Audrey Lyon	Jordan Geffrard
526	526	495

One (1) Year Term Board Member Results:

John Brown
488

**OATH OF OFFICE**

The Oath of Office was administered by Reggie Lamptey, Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary to Syeshia Benbow, Jordan Geffrard, Audrey Lyon and John Brown. All were given an opportunity to speak. They all expressed appreciation for once again being trusted with the tasks of serving the scholars of the Irvington Public School District.

Present were: Annette Beasley  
Syeshia Benbow  
John Brown  
Ronald Brown  
Jordan Geffrard  
Janelle Lowery  
Audrey Lyon

Excused: Luis Antilus  
Joseph Sylvain

Others: Dr. April Vauss, Superintendent of Schools  
Reggie Lamptey, Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary  
Roger Monel, Associate School Business Administrator  
Farrah Irving, Human Resource Manager

Ronald Hunt, Board Attorney  
Several administrators, other interested citizens and newspaper reporters.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

a. President

Nominee(s) Syesha Benbow

Nominated by: Annette Beasley, Seconded by: Janelle Lowery

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

b. Vice-President

Nominee(s) Janelle Lowery

Nominated by: Syesha Benbow

Seconded by: Ronald Brown

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll.

Annette Beasley congratulated the new Board President and Vice President stating she knew they were going to do a fantastic job because it was a job where they all worked together to benefit the scholars.

Newly elected Board President Syesha Benbow thanked the former Board President Audrey Lyon and Vice President Annette Beasley. She stated if it were not for the two of them she would not be sitting there, being elected the president. She thanked them for their support and the leadership they showed her. She said she appreciated that and them and now they had work to do.

**8. RESOLUTION REGARDING BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING NOTICES**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Board of Education shall send notices including annual notices giving a time, date, location and to the extent known, the agenda of any regular, special or rescheduled meeting to either or both of the following newspapers; the Irvington Herald, the Star Ledger; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the official newspapers of the Irvington Board of Education shall be the Irvington Herald and the Star Ledger; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Board of Education shall file all notices of any regular, special or rescheduled meetings with the Township Clerk for the Township of Irvington; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Board of Education shall post all notices of any regular, special or rescheduled meeting on the District website and in the Administration Building; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Board of Education shall send all notices to any individual requesting to be placed on a mailing list as provided by law in accordance with Board Policy.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Annette Beasley

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**9. RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING DATES FOR BOARD MEETINGS**

BE IT RESOLVED, that meetings of the Irvington Board of Education will be held VIRTUALLY until further notice at 6:00 pm on the following dates. **(Subject to change)**

- Wednesday, August 16, 2023
- Wednesday, September 20, 2023
- Wednesday, October 18, 2023
- Wednesday, November 15, 2023
- Wednesday, December 20, 2023
- Wednesday, January 17, 2024
- Wednesday, February 21, 2024
- Wednesday, March 20, 2024
- Wednesday, April 17, 2024
- TBD - Re-Organization
- Wednesday, May 15, 2024
- Wednesday, June 12, 2024
- Wednesday, June 26, 2024

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Jordan Geffrard, Seconded by: John Brown

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**10. RESOLUTION FOR DESIGNATION OF DEPOSITORIES FOR FUNDS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

BE IT RESOLVED, that Investors Savings Bank, Bank of America, PNC Bank, TD Bank and Wells Fargo/Wachovia Bank be designated as depositories for school monies of the Irvington Board of Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the funds of the Irvington Board of Education deposited in the above-cited depositories be subject to withdrawal and warrants or other orders for the payment of money when signed on behalf of the Board of Education by the President, or Vice President, the Board Secretary and the Treasurer of School Moneys; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that available funds may be invested in certificates of deposits in the above-cited depositories; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary is directed to deposit all such funds in the aforementioned banks or the State of New Jersey Cash Management Fund and a copy of this resolution is sent to each of the institutions herein designated.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Janelle Lowery

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**11. INTERNAL SCHOOL ACCOUNTS**

BE IT RESOLVED, that two signatures are required, the Principal, Vice Principal, Assistant Principal and the principal's designee of each school be authorized to sign checks or documents necessary to continue the Internal School Accounts of each school in the banks or savings and loan institutions wherein school funds are deposited. Such funds need to be in an Interest-Bearing account.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that two signatures are required on each authorized check. The signors must be the Principal and either the Vice Principal, Assistant Principal or the principal's designee.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: John Brown, Seconded by: Annette Beasley

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**12. BOARD POLICY BOOK**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Policy and Regulation Manuals of the Irvington Township Board of Education be re-adopted. The Board Policy Book can be reviewed in the Office of The Board Secretary.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: John Brown, Seconded by: Jordan Geffrard

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on roll call vote.

**13. IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the mission of the Irvington Public Schools is to inspire and instruct all students to think critically, creatively and responsibly embrace diversity and pursue their dreams with purpose.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: John Brown

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**14. REQUEST FOR TAXES FROM THE TOWNSHIP**

RESOLVED, that the amount of District taxes including the debt service requirement needed to meet the obligations of this Board of Education for the 2023-2024 school year is \$17,459,529.00, and the Township of Irvington was hereby requested to transfer the proceeds to the Irvington Board of Education as listed: Funds are due by the 1st day of each month.

July, 2023	\$ 1,454,960.75
August, 2023	\$ 1,454,960.75
September, 2023	\$ 1,454,960.75
October, 2023	\$ 1,454,960.75
November, 2023	\$ 1,454,960.75
December, 2023	\$ 1,454,960.75
January, 2024	\$ 1,454,960.75
February 2024	\$ 1,454,960.75
March, 2024	\$ 1,454,960.75
April, 2024	\$ 1,454,960.75
May, 2024	\$ 1,454,960.75
June, 2023	<u>\$ 1,454,960.75</u>
	<b>\$17,459,529.00</b>

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Annette Beasley, Seconded by: Ronald Brown

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**15. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL OF BILLS**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2, approved authorizing the Chief School Administrator or her designee to administratively approve the payment of bills for students' needs, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:19-4.1. Payments approved by the Chief School Administrator or her designee shall be reported to the Board, ratified and duly recorded in the minutes at a subsequent meeting of the Board.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: John Brown, Seconded by: Jordan Geffrard

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**16. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICE THROUGH STATE AGENCY FOR THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR**

WHEREAS, TITLE 18A-18A-10 provided that the Board of Education, without advertising for bids may by resolution purchase any goods or services pursuant to a contract or contracts for such goods or services entered into on behalf of the state division of purchase and property; and

WHEREAS, the Irvington Board of Education desires to authorize its purchasing agent for 2023-2024 to make any and all purchases necessary to meet the needs of the school district throughout the school year;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Irvington Board of Education does hereby authorized the district purchasing agent to make purchases of goods and services entered into on behalf of the State by the Division of Purchase and Property by utilizing the various vendors approved by the state.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Janelle Lowery

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**17. AUTHORIZATION FOR PURCHASING OF GOODS AND SERVICES**

WHEREAS, the Irvington Board of Education, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(a), designated, Reggie Lamptey, CPA, Assistant Superintendent/Board Secretary, as the Qualified Purchasing Agent for the Board of Education and authorized him to award contracts, in full accordance with the law, for purchases that do not exceed in the aggregate in a contract year the total sum of \$44,000.00, (bid threshold) without public advertising) for bids. Furthermore, is authorized to solicit competitive quotations pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-37(a) and to award contracts pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-37(c).

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. S:34-8.3, et seq., the Irvington Board of Education further authorized the Qualified Purchasing Agent to seek either competitive quotations or competitive bids when original determination of aggregation are found to be more than anticipated or incorrect.

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A.18A:18A-2(b), the Qualified Purchasing Agent, is designated to have the power to prepare advertisements, to advertise for and to receive bids. In accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:18A-21(b) is authorized to publicly receive bids, unseal them and announce the contents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that all purchases made by the Irvington Board of Education shall be done through the purchase order system. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A: 18A-2(v), a purchase order is a document issued by the purchasing agent authorizing a purchase transaction with a vendor to provide goods or to perform services.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Jordan Geffrard

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**18. APPOINTMENT OF TREASURER OF SCHOOL MONIES 2023-2024**

RESOLVED, that the Irvington Board of Education approved the appointment of Julyana Ortiz, 440 Shearer Avenue, Union, NJ 07083 as the Treasurer of School Monies, to complete bank reconciliations for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, at a fee of \$2,500.00, per month, not to exceed \$30,000.00. Said services are to be paid from account number 11-000-230-339-00-31, in accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract to be executed by the firm and the Irvington Board of Education.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Annette Beasley, Seconded by: John Brown

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**19. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR SAMUEL KLEIN AND COMPANY 2023-2024**

BE IT RESOLVED, that Samuel Klein and Company of Newark, New Jersey be appointed to audit the school district's 2023-2024 accounts and financial transactions in accordance with federal and state auditing requirements and to perform other special services as required and authorized by the Board in accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract to be executed by the firm and the Irvington Board of Education for the 2023-2024 school year. Amount not to exceed \$91,000.00 to be paid from account number 11-000-230-332-00-31.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: John Brown, Seconded by: Jordan Geffrard

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**20. APPOINTMENT OF HUNT, HAMLIN & RIDLEY AS GENERAL AND LABOR COUNSEL TO THE IRVINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION 2023-2024**

WHEREAS, the Irvington Board of Education is desirous of retaining General Counsel and Labor Negotiations Counsel to represent the school district in a variety of legal matters; and

WHEREAS, the Irvington Board of Education is desirous of appointing the law firm of Hunt, Hamlin & Ridley in the capacity of General Counsel and Labor/Negotiations Counsel in the amount not to exceed \$425,000.00, for all matters related to the duties and responsibilities as General Counsel and Labor/Negotiations Counsel in accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract to be executed by the firm and the Irvington Board of Education;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Irvington Board of Education approved the appointment of the law firm of Hunt, Hamlin & Ridley as General Counsel and Labor/Negotiations Counsel for an amount not to exceed \$425,000.00, for all matters related to the duties and responsibilities as General Counsel and Labor/Negotiations Counsel in accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract to be executed by the firm and the Irvington Board of Education effective July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Total cost not to exceed \$425,000.00, to be paid from account number 11-000-230-331-00-31.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Janelle Lowery

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**21. LEGAL EXPENSES – HUNT, HAMLIN & RIDLEY**

RESOLVED, that the Irvington Board of Education hereby approved the allocation of an amount not to exceed \$50,000.00, to cover court fees and expenses, including, but not limited to, filing fees, expert witness fees and depositions and transcripts fees which are directly related to litigation involving the Irvington Board of Education for the 2023-2024 school Year. The payment of expenses to be provided upon the production of an invoice to the Assistant Superintendent for Business. Total cost not to exceed \$50,000.00, to be paid from account number 11-000-230-590-00- 31.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Janelle Lowery

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**22. ELECTION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE ESSEX REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICES COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-61 et seq., the Board of Education of the Township of Irvington must elect one of its members to represent it on the Representative Assembly of the Essex Regional Education Services Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Township of Irvington has held such an election among its members;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Superintendent of Essex Regional Education Services Commission be notified that Annette Beasley has been duly elected as a member of the Representative Assembly of the Essex Regional Education Services Commission;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the minutes indicating such election be forwarded to the Executive Director of the Commission.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Janelle Lowery

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**23. VOTING DELEGATE – NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS**

BE IT RESOLVED, that Luis Antilus shall represent the Irvington Board of Education and be their voting delegate at the meeting of the New Jersey School Boards Association. (18A:6-46) and further;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alternate Delegate shall be Syesha Benbow.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Annette Beasley, Seconded by: Janelle Lowery

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

**24. APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE – ESSEX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION**

The Board President does appoint Ronald Brown as Executive Council Representative to represent the Irvington Board of Education at the Executive Meetings of the Essex County School Boards Association. The Alternate shall be Audrey Lyon.

**25. APPOINTMENT - URBAN BOARDS COMMITTEE**

The Board President does appoint Luis Antilus to represent the Irvington Board of Education on the Urban Boards Committee of the New Jersey School Boards Association. The Alternate shall be Syesha Benbow.

**26. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The President of the Board does designate the following Board Members to be Members of the **Buildings and Grounds/Athletics Committee** with the first named Board Member as Chair:

Joseph Sylvain  
Luis Antilus  
John Brown  
Syesha Benbow

The President of the Board does designate the following Board Members to be Members of the **By-Laws and Policy Committee** with the first named Board Member as Chair:

Luis Antilus  
John Brown  
Jordan Geffrard  
Janelle Lowery

The President of the Board does designate the following Board Members to be Members of the **Curriculum/Technology Committee** with the first named Board Member as Chair:

Ronald Brown  
Sysha Benbow  
Jordan Geffrard  
Janelle Lowery

The President of the Board does designate the following Board Members to be Members of the **Finance Committee** with the first named Board Member as Chair:

Audrey Lyon  
Ronald Brown  
Jordan Geffrard  
Janelle Lowery

The President of the Board does designate the following Board Members to be Members of the **Negotiations Committee** with the first named Board Member as Chair:

Annette Beasley  
Jordan Geffrard  
Joseph Sylvain  
Sysha Benbow

The President of the Board does designate the following Board Members to be Members of the **Personnel Committee** with the first named Board Member as Chair:

Annette Beasley  
Ronald Brown  
Audrey Lyon  
Sysha Benbow

The President of the Board does designate the following Board Members to be Members of the **School/Community Relations Committee** with the first Named Board Member as Chair:

Syesha Benbow  
Annette Beasley  
Jordan Geffrard  
Audrey Lyon

**27. ADOPTION OF CODE OF ETHICS**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education understands and adopted the Code of Ethics for School Board Members as defined in Title 18A: 12-24.1, read and discussed the following:

**18A:12-24.1 Code of Ethics for Board Members.**

A school board member shall abide by the following Code of Ethics for School Board Members:

- a. I will uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.
- b. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex or social standing.
- c. I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
- d. I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.
- e. I will recognize that authority rests with the board of education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.
- f. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
- g. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its school.
- h. I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
- i. I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.

- j. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

**ACTION:**

Motion by: Ronald Brown, Seconded by: Jordan Geffrard

Roll Call: Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

Board Vice President Janelle Lowery thanked the members of the Board and the Board President for their support and confidence stating she was looking forward to the upcoming school year.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mayor Tony Vauss congratulated the elected members to the Board as well as the President and Vice President. He expressed it was a thankless job which he knew from having served on the Board for nine years but he knew how important what they were doing was. He said the former President and Vice President epitomized what leadership was taking on the role of mentor to show the younger members on the Board what it meant to be a public servant and how to get things done. He once again said congratulations to all and “God Speed”.

Council President Jamillah Beasley congratulated the Board Members recently reelected. To Board President Benbow and Vice President Lowery she stated she knew they would do a wonderful job working well together with the other board members in moving the district forward. She was looked forward to the continued programs and events the School Board would bring to the Township. Once again she said congratulations!

**CLOSED SESSION:**

“In accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act, be it hereby resolved that the Irvington Township Board of Education meet in closed session on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. to address matters of personnel and attorney/client privilege.

It is expected that the matters discussed will be made public at the time that the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

Upon the motion by Ronald Brown seconded by Jordan Geffrard and unanimously approved on a roll call vote, the Annual Reorganization Meeting of the Irvington Board of Education held Virtually adjourned at 6:47 pm.

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Reggie Lamptey, CPA  
Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary

RL/rcs