

**HACKENSACK BOARD OF EDUCATION  
191 SECOND STREET, HACKENSACK, NJ 07601  
ORGANIZATION MEETING  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 8, 2025**

**I. Flag Salute/Sunshine Statement/Call to Order**

In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*, adequate notification of this meeting has been provided by advertising in the Record and posting notice in the Board of Education Administration Building (Padovano Education Center) and filing notice with the City Clerk. I hereby call to order the Organization Meeting of the Hackensack Board of Education, Wednesday, January 8, 2025, in the Hackensack High School Media Center, at 6:21 pm.

**II. Election Results**

**Hackensack School Board (three-year terms)**

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Total Votes</b>
Jennifer Maury Harris*	7,830 ✓
Eugina “Gina” Gilmore	7,048 ✓
Leila Amirhamzeh	6,693 ✓
Marlene Somerville*	5,522
Lancelot Powell*	5,431
Khadija Pollard	5,133

\*Incumbent

**III. Administer the Oath of Office to newly elected Board Members:**

- Eugina “Gina” Gilmore
- Leila Amirhamzeh
- Jennifer Harris

*Assemblyman Benjie E. Wimberly administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Trustee Amirhamzeh, Gilmore, and Harris.*

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#### IV. Nominations/Election of Board President

The Board Secretary will now entertain nominations for the Office of President of the Hackensack Board of Education for the calendar year 2025.

- Mr. Martin nominated Ms. Harris

In the absence of further nominations, the Board Secretary closes nominations and calls the votes for the election of Jennifer Harris to serve in the role as President of the Board of Education for the calendar year 2025.

<i>Motion: Trustee</i>	<i>Second: Trustee</i>			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Ms. Amirhamzeh (Leila)	x			
Mr. Carroll (Demetrius)				x
Ms. Gilmore (Eugina "Gina")	x			
Ms. Harris (Jennifer)	x			
Mr. Martin (Kenneth)	x			
Ms. Pringle (Shivonnie)	x			
Mr. Stein (Mark)	x			
Ms. Cordero-Outen (Lissette)		x		
TBD- Vacancy				

*The nomination to elect Ms. Jennifer Harris to serve as President of the Board of Education for the 2024/2025 school year resulted in a vote of 6 Ayes and 1 Nay. Ms. Jennifer Harris then assumed the seat of the President.*

#### V. Nominations/Election of Board Vice President

The Board President entertains nominations for the Office of Vice President of the Hackensack Board of Education for the calendar year 2025.

- Ms. Pringle nominated Mr. Stein

In the absence of further nominations, the Board President closes nominations and the Board Secretary calls the votes the role for the election of Mr. Stein to serve as Vice President of the Board of Education for the the calendar year 2025.

<i>Motion: Trustee</i>	<i>Second: Trustee</i>			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Ms. Amirhamzeh (Leila)	x			
Mr. Carroll (Demetrius)				x
Ms. Gilmore (Eugina "Gina")	x			
Ms. Harris (Jennifer)	x			
Mr. Martin (Kenneth)	x			
Ms. Pringle (Shivonnie)	x			
Mr. Stein (Mark)	x			
Ms. Cordero-Outen (Lissette)		x		
TBD- Vacancy				

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*The nomination to elect Mr. Mark Stein to serve as Vice President of the Board of Education for the 2024/2025 school year resulted in a vote of 6 Ayes and 1 Nay. Mr. Stein then assumed the seat of the Vice President.*

**VI. Code of Ethics Presentation** pursuant to the School Ethics Act (c.178,P.L.2001) by Matt Lee-Field Service Representative for Bergen County

### **NJSBA Code of Ethics**

The members of the Board of Education recognize that they hold authority not as individuals but as the members of the Board. In order to make a clear public statement of its philosophy of service to the pupils of the district, the Board adopts as its own, the School Board Member Code of Ethics promulgated by the New Jersey School Boards Association on May 10, 1975 and reproduced below:

1. I will uphold and enforce all laws, State Board rules and regulations, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes should be brought about only through legal ethical procedures.
2. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools which meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. I will recognize that authority rests with the Board of Education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action which may compromise the Board.
6. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interests or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
7. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. But 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 schools.
8. I will vote to appoint the best-qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
9. I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.
10. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on such complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

### **VII Public Comments**

Public participation shall be governed by the following rules:

1. A participant must sign the "sign-in" sheet and be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface comments by an announcement of his/her name, municipality of residence, and group affiliation, if applicable;
2. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes' duration during the public session;
3. All statements, questions, or inquiries shall be directed to the presiding officer and any questions or inquiries directed by a participant to another Board member shall be redirected to the presiding officer who shall determine if such statement, question, or inquiry shall be addressed by the presiding officer on behalf of the Board or by the individual Board member; and

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4. All Board and/or Superintendent responses to questions or inquiries shall be held until the end of public participation.

Public comments shall be accepted in the following order:

1. In-person oral comments (if applicable);
  2. Remote oral comments (if applicable);
  3. In-person oral comments of those who have already spoken.
- Congrats to the new trustees.
  - On Behalf of the HEA- condolences for Ms. Whitaker- tremendous instructional leader which began when she was a teacher. Was celebrated for her philanthropy
  - Disappointed in the celebration of Ms. Whitaker after the sad display of Power Point and evaluation of staff members on December 18, 2024. Tearing people apart is not what the community is about.
  - Presentation was loaded by the tech team
  - People could not stand to applaud on the nominations tonight but applauded the degrading presentation of staff members
  - Fondest memories of Ms. Whitaker- acknowledged every student and knew everyone. I hope everyone who operates in a capacity to touch students' lives learns this.
  - Proud of Gina Gilmore- make sure to remember the African American children
  - The shame in the end of year meeting was not the presentation but that the sitting members did not show up.
  - Presentation showed the cowardness of people who sent out emails talking about someone's disability
  - You do not scare me, cannot bully me, I am not the one.
  - Ms. Whitaker was a woman of conviction who stood her ground.
  - Mr. Stein might not remember, but he once told someone if they wanted to hire black teachers wait until they became president
  - Mr. Martin cant stand on his own feet, follows the leader which is a shame to them as a people
  - Blind leading the blind will both fall into the ditch
  - Honor a friend, woman of God, matriarch, role model, and a woman who strived for excellence- Ms. Lilian Whitaker
  - Looking forward to working with board as HASA member.
  - Thank you Dr. McBryde for inviting union members to board to work collectively on honoring Ms. Whitaker's legacy and support the staff, community, teachers, and administrators, all which are suffering right now

#### VIII. Resolutions Consent Agenda for the 2024-25 School Year

**01. Whereas,** the Board Adopted the consent agenda for the 2024-2025 School Year on May 22,2024 as reflected in Section VII items 1-33 of the relevant minutes. The items as adopted remain in place unless amended via Board Action.

**Therefore Be It Resolved,** that the Board affirms the Consent agenda as referenced.

**02. Be It Resolved,** that the Hackensack Board of Education designates the following meeting dates for Regular Public Meetings, for the 2025 calendar year; all meetings shall be held in accordance with the "Open Public Meetings Act" and formal action may be taken at any meeting; all meetings to be held at the Hackensack High School, commencing at 6:15 pm, convening into Executive Session at the approximate time of 7:30 pm and reconvening the Regular Public Meeting; and

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**Be It Further Resolved**, that the Board approves Roberts' Rules of Order, Newly Revised, to govern the Hackensack Board of Education in its deliberations and acts in all cases in which it is not inconsistent with statutes of the State of New Jersey, rules of the State Board of Education, or these Bylaws in accordance with Board Bylaw 0164:

<i>Meeting Date</i>	<i>Meeting Type</i>	<i>Location</i>
<b>January 8, 2025</b>	Annual Organization Meeting	High School
<b>January 22, 2025</b>	Regular Meeting	High School
<b>February 26, 2025</b>	Regular Meeting	High School
<b>March 5, 2025*</b>	Board Meeting Retreat	Padovano Building
<b>March 19, 2025</b>	Regular Meeting	High School
<b>April 23, 2025</b>	Regular Meeting	High School
<b>May 14, 2025</b>	Regular Meeting	High School
<b>June 18, 2025</b>	Regular Meeting	High School
<b>July 9, 2025*</b>	Board Meeting Retreat	Padavano Building
<b>July 23, 2025</b>	Regular Meeting	High School

*\*All meetings are held on the third or fourth Wednesday of the month unless it is a holiday, to meet the statutory Budget Public Hearing Schedule.*

**03. Be It Resolved**, that the Hackensack Board of Education establishes the following Agenda Format to be observed and the order of business conducted at the Regular Public Meetings of the Board of Education; and

**Be It Further Resolved**, that the Board President has sole discretion to change the Agenda Format and order of business in the best interest of the Board of Education.

**REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA**

- I. Flag Salute/ Moment of Silence/Sunshine Statement/ Call to Order/ Roll Call
- II. Executive Session
- III. Approved Minutes
- IV. Presentations
- V. Superintendent's Report
- VI. Public Comment: *Individuals may address the Board once on Agenda and School Matters of Community Interest for three (3) minutes on any item.*

- VII. Committee Reports/Resolutions
  - A. Personnel
  - B. Policy
  - C. Curriculum/Special Education
  - D. Finance/Budget
  - E. Buildings/Grounds

VIII. Board Comments

IX. Adjournment

The Board Agenda was modified by the Board to include;

- Community Relations

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- New Business

*Consent agenda items 01 through 03*

<i>Motion: Trustee Pringle</i>	<i>Second: Trustee Stein</i>			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Ms. Amirhamzeh (Leila)	x			
Mr. Carroll (Demetrius)				x
Ms. Gilmore (Eugina "Gina")	x			
Ms. Harris (Jennifer)	x			
Mr. Martin (Kenneth)	x			
Ms. Pringle (Shivonnie)	x			
Mr. Stein (Mark)	x			
Ms. Cordero-Outen (Lisette)		x		
TBD- Vacancy				

**IX. Board Comments**

- Congrats to new board members, looking forward to working with you.
- Condolences for Ms. Whitaker, known her a long time/worked with her in the trentous.
- Plan on carrying out her wishes for the future of the district.
- Happy New Year
- Congrats to newly elected members, madam president and vice president
- Honor and privilege to serve on the board
- Look forward to working with all
- Thank you all who supported the running of Harris, Gilmore and Amirhamzeh
- The outpouring of grief, love and support since Ms. Whitaker's passing is a testament to the impact that principal Whitaker has had
- Best way to honor Ms. Whitaker is to follow her example
- Good times campaign- got to meet with the community to get to know the community
- 27th year as an elected official of the city of Hackensack- honored to serve community
- Between school board and City Council have won more local elections than anyone in the city
- Makes decisions based on the best interest of the city and schools- no political agenda
- Last month mentioned concerns about the political agenda of other board members. Was attacked and stands by the comment
- Community agreed and voted those members out
- Hopeful with new members on board, personal attacks will be replaced by a spirit of cooperation which students and staff deserve
- Lead by example
- Thank you to residents who attend meeting and their inputs
- Thank you to family and all of the support
- To my parents in Colombia thank you for all your support, love you
- To my latin community I am proud to serve and represent this community
- December 31 we lost a pillar of our community, deepest condolences
- When faced with a difficult situation Ms. Whitaker cried with me and provided support stating she loved all her students as if they were her own

**X. Adjournment:**

*Trustee Amirhamzeh motioned to move into Executive Session, seconded by Trustee Gilmore at 7:40pm*