



Roger León  
Superintendent

# Newark Board of Education

Where Passion Meets Progress

## Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting Thursday, January 25, 2024

President Council convened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. The meeting was held at Newark Vocational High School, 301 West Kinney Street, Newark, NJ 07103 with audio and video access provided to members of the Board and the public.

**I. Call to Order (Reading of Statement) Ms. Valerie Wilson**

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by advertising in the Star-Ledger, Haiti Progress, Luso Americano and La Voz newspapers and by distribution to administrative offices of the Newark Public Schools. Electronic notice was provided by posting on the Newark Board of Education website. A copy of this meeting notice was forwarded to City Hall for posting.

**II. Flag Salute**

**III. Roll Call**

**Board Members Present:**

Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council

**Administrative Staff President:**

Mr. Roger León, Superintendent  
Ms. Valerie Wilson, Board Secretary  
Ms. Brenda Liss, General Counsel  
Ms. Nancy Deering, Director of Board Relations

**IV. Appointments and Oath of Office**

Board Secretary Ms. Valerie Wilson, swore in Ms. Kanileah Anderson and Ms. Helena Vinhas.

**V. Roll Call**

**Board Members Present:**

Ms. Anderson, Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, Ms. Vinhas and Mr. Council

**VI. Greetings from Principal**

Principal DeSantis of Newark Vocational School welcomed the Superintendent, board members, staff, and the public. Principal DeSantis spoke about the unique educational programs offered at Newark Vocational which consist of culinary arts, hospitality and tourism, and graphic design. The four-year programs provide the students with the credentials and the necessary certificates to set them up for success. Students participate in community partnerships and are exposed to all possibilities for life after high school. The students presented the board members with gifts made by the graphic design students. Also, dinner was prepared by the culinary students and presented by the hospitality and tourism students.

**VII. Recognitions**

Superintendent León recognized the following students:

- Holiday Basketball Tournament
- Brick City Showdown Basketball Classic
- Shani Baraka MLK Classic Games
- East Side and University High School Girls Basketball Players Achieve 1,000 Career Points
- AIA Newark and Suburban Architects Holiday Student Art Contest
- MLK Day of Service
- 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Belford V. Lawson Oratorical Competition
- 3<sup>rd</sup> New York Global Music Competition
- Columbia University Model UN Conference and National Competition
- Governor Murphy 2024 State of the State Address
- Utah Sundance Film Festival 2024

**VIII. Approval of Minutes**

There was a motion made by Ms. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Santana to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on December 19, 2023.

**Moved:** Ms. Garcia

**Seconded:** Ms. Santana

**Roll call vote:**

**Yeas:** Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Santana,  
Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 7

**Nays:** None 0

**Abstentions:** Ms. Anderson and Ms. Vinhas 2

Motion carried.

**IX. Board President's Report**

President Council reported on the following:

- Board Recognition Month
- High School Redesign
- School Board Election Packets
- Change in Voting Age
- Senate Bill 4209
- Board Member Terms
- Newark Enrolls
- Board Retreat
- Bill A1181/S2054
- FAFSA Challenge
- Board Certification
- School-Based Budget Meeting
- Parent/Teacher Conference
- Business Meeting - February 27, 2024 at 765 Broad Street
- Regular Board Meeting - February 29, 2024 at Malcolm X Shabazz High School

**X. Superintendent's Report**

The Superintendent reported to the Board on the following:

- Attendance December 2023
- Newark Enrolls
  - o Reinstated Bilingual Programs at Malcolm X Shabazz High School
  - o Council of Great City Schools Enrollment Report
- The Next Decade: 2020-30 Strategic Plan
  - o Financial Aid Application
- Budget: SY 2024-25

Superintendent León answered board members' questions.

**XI. Public Participation**

Ms. Wilson reviewed the guidelines for the public participation. The comments of the following speakers can be found on the Newark Board of Education's website under Board Meeting video archives:

- David Allen
- Sani Scott
- Divine Kibe
- Patience Roberts
- Afrika Ibiang
- Patience Lewis
- Anthony Santana
- Deborah Smith Gregory
- Che Colter
- Yvette Jordan
- Karl Schwartz
- Misan Oroye-Lane
- Lyndon Brown
- Whitney Strub
- Sherry Wolf
- David Letwin
- Sol Salazar
- Richard Whitten
- Karima Echols
- Jamal Ali
- Raynice McNight
- Mary Rizzo
- Geoff Johnson
- Alexandra Jameson
- Sarah Alaeddin

**XII. Board Resolutions**

There was a motion made by Ms. Haynes, seconded by Ms. Santana, to approve Board Resolutions items 11.1 – 11-3.

**Moved:** Ms. Haynes

**Seconded:** Ms. Santana

**Roll call vote:**

**Yeas:** Ms. Anderson, Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison,  
Ms. Santana, Ms. Vinhas, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

**Nays:** 0

**Abstentions:** Ms. Anderson 11.1 1

Motion Carried.

**XIII. Finance & Operations - Votes**

There was a motion made by Mr. Gonzalez, seconded by Ms. Garcia, to approve Finance & Operations items 12.1 – 12.21.

**Moved:** Mr. Gonzalez

**Seconded:** Ms. Garcia

**Roll call vote:**

**Yeas:** Ms. Anderson, Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison,  
Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

**Nays:** None 0

**Abstentions:** Ms. Vinhas 1

Motion Carried.

**XIV. Personnel – Votes**

There was a motion made by Ms. James-Frison, seconded by Ms. Haynes, to approve Personnel items 14.1- 14.7.

**Moved:** Ms. James-Frison

**Seconded:** Ms. Haynes

**Roll call vote:**

**Yeas:** Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Santana,  
Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 7

**Nays:** None 0

**Abstentions:** Ms. Anderson, Ms. Vinhas 2

Motion Carried.

**XV. Instruction & Programs – Votes**

There was a motion made by Ms. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Haynes, to approve Instruction and Programs items 16.1 to 16.5.

**Moved:** Ms. Garcia

**Seconded:** Ms. Haynes

**Roll call vote:**

**Yeas:** Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Santana,  
and Mr. Council 6

**Nays:** None 0

**Abstentions:** Ms. Anderson, Ms. Vinhas, and Ms. Williams 3

Motion Carried.

**XVI. Adjournment**

There was a motion made by Mr. Gonzalez, seconded by Ms. Ms. Garcia to adjourn the meeting.

**Moved:** Mr. Gonzalez

**Seconded:** Ms. Garcia

**Voice vote:**

**Yeas:** Ms. Anderson, Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison,  
Ms. Santana, Ms. Vinhas, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 9

**Nays:** None 0

**Abstentions:** 0

Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 pm.

Submitted by:

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Ms. La Shon Blake, Office of Board Relations

Reviewed by:

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Ms. Valerie Wilson, Board Secretary

Approved by:

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Mr. Roger León, Superintendent