

School Ethics Commission Meeting Public Session Minutes

July 22, 2025

Chairperson Bender called the regularly scheduled meeting of the School Ethics Commission (Commission or SEC) to order at 9:32 a.m.

Notice of the special meeting was provided to the State House Press Corps and the Secretary of State and filed as required by the Open Public Meetings Act.

I. Roll Call

Roll Call	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Present	X			X ¹	X	X ²	4
Absent		X	X				2

Also, in attendance were Dana Jones and Jeannine Pizzigoni, staff members for the Office of School Ethics, and Amna Toor, Deputy Attorney General (DAG).

II. First Public Comment

At the start of the meeting, Chairperson Bender explained to the public how the meeting would be conducted. More specifically, Chairperson Bender explained that the public would be afforded the opportunity to provide public comment; the Commission would then adjourn to executive session; the Commission would return to public at approximately 12:00 p.m.; at that time, members of the public would be afforded another opportunity to provide public comment; and then the Commission would vote on matters pertinent to its business.

Dana Jones also advised the public as follows: individuals wishing to provide public comments/statements during Public Comment regarding a matter pending before the Commission are asked not to litigate the merits of their case as the Commission's review of matters is limited to the written submissions; and everyone in attendance is asked to exercise an appropriate degree of decorum as this is a public forum.

9:35 a.m. Giulia Lima, Esq., counsel for Respondents in the matter docketed as C89-24, noted her attendance, but did not offer any public comments/statements.

¹ Commissioner Roberts attended the meeting virtually.

² Commissioner Tomko attended the meeting virtually.

C04-23 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to add the request for Interlocutory Review in connection with C04-23 to the agenda.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

III. Executive Session

At 9:36 a.m., the following Resolution was read:

Whereas, the Open Public Meetings Act (*N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*) authorizes the Commission, a public body, to meet in Executive Session under certain circumstances; and

Whereas, the Open Public Meetings Act requires that the Commission adopt a Resolution at a public meeting to go into Executive Session; and

Now therefore be it resolved that, consistent with the provisions of *N.J.A.C. 10:4-12(b)*, the Commission will adjourn to Executive Session to discuss matters which, by statute, are regarded as confidential and also to discuss matters possibly involving litigation: C75-18; C109-22; C115-22; C88-24; C89-24; C90-24; C91-24; C92-24; C93-24; C94-24; C24-18; C75-21 and C37-22 (Consolidated); C54-22, C43-22, C44-22 and C62-22 (Consolidated); C107-22; C74-23; C79-24; C80-24; C81-24; C82-24; C83-24; C85-24; C86-24; C87-24; A01-25; A02-25; A04-25; A05-25; A06-25; A07-25; A08-25; A10-25; A11-25; C13-25; C32-25; C45-25; C48-25; Doctrines of Necessity submitted by the Southern Regional and the Asbury Park Boards of Education; Update on the Appellate Division matters in connection with C18-23 and C87-23 and Discuss the request for Interlocutory Review in connection with C04-23; and

Now therefore be it further resolved that the Commission will return to open session to conduct business at the conclusion of Executive Session.

Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss the matters set forth in the foregoing Resolution.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

IV. Return to Public

At **11:24 a.m.**, a motion was made by Carol E. Sabo and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to return to public session for the purpose of receiving public comment/testimony, and to vote on matters discussed in Executive Session (as appropriate).

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

V. Complaints to Review

C75-18 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C109-22 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C115-22 Motion was made by Richard Tomko, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C88-24 Motion was made by Richard Tomko, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C89-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to table the matter for future discussion.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X		3
No							0
Abstention						X ³	1

C90-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C91-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

³ Commissioner Tomko had a conflict related to this matter, and therefore, the Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners to discuss it.

C92-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C93-24 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C94-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

VI. Decisions to Adopt as Written⁴

C24-18 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C75-21 and C37-22 (Consolidated) Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C54-22 and C43-22, C44-22 and C62-22 (Consolidated) Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

⁴ Commissioner Sabo was not present at the June 17, 2025, meeting, and therefore, the Commission discussed each matter before adopting a decision.

C107-22 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C74-23 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as amended.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C79-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as amended.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C80-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C81-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C82-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C83-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C85-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C86-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

C87-24 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the decision as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

VII. Advisory Opinions

A01-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A02-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A04-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A05-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A06-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A07-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A08-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A10-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

A11-25 This matter was on the agenda to make public only. The Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners present to make the advisory opinion public.

VIII. Administrative Dismissals

C13-25 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C32-25 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C45-25 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C48-25 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

IX. Other Business

Doctrines of Necessity: submitted by the Southern Regional and Asbury Park Boards of Education. These matters were on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Update on the Appellate Division matters in connection with C18-23 and C87-23. These matters were on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Discuss the request for Interlocutory Review in connection with C04-23. Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to accept the request for Interlocutory Review.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

X. Minutes

Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting (public and executive) conducted on June 17, 2025.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X		X	3
No							0
Abstention					X		1

XI. Second Public Comment

11:35 a.m. Giulia Lima, Esq., counsel for Respondents in the matter docketed as C89-24, again noted her attendance, but did not offer any public comments/statements.

XII. Adjournment

At 11:36 a.m., a motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to adjourn.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X			X	X	X	4
No							0
Abstention							0

Submitted by:

Jeannine Pizzigoni

Approved by:

Dana Jones
School Ethics Commission