

School Ethics Commission Meeting Public Session Minutes

October 28, 2025

Chairperson Bender called the regularly scheduled meeting of the School Ethics Commission (Commission or SEC) to order at 9:36 a.m.

Notice of the 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	X ²	5
Absent		X					1

Also, in attendance were Brigid Martens, Director; 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.

Director Martens 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.

¹ Commissioner Finkelstein attended the meeting virtually.

² Commissioner Tomko attended the meeting virtually.

9:38 a.m. Elena Chow and Robert Campbell, Respondents in the matter docketed as C23-25, C43-25 and C44-25 (Consolidated), noted their attendance, and offered public comment/statement. More specifically, Respondents expressed their concerns with the consolidated Complaint, noted that they have been members of the board of education for more than 20 years and further noted that they have only the best intentions for the district that they serve.

III. Executive Session

At 9:50 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: C82-22; C18-24; C14-25; C15-25; C16-25; C17-25; C18-25, C19-25 and C21-25 (Consolidated); C23-25, C43-25 and C44-25 (Consolidated); C35-21; C51-22; C76-23; C22-24; C37-24; C102-24; C103-24; C03-25; C04-25; C05-25; C08-25; C10-25; C11-25; D01-25; D02-25; D03-25; A20-25; A21-25; A01-25; A02-25; A04-25; A05-25; A06-25; A07-25; A08-25; A10-25; A11-25; A12-25; A13-25; A14-25; A15-25; A16-25; A17-25; A18-25; A19-25; C63-25; C78-25; D04-25; Provide an update on the status of C51-24; Provide an update on the status of C16-24, C28-24 and C44-24 (Consolidated); Adopt a Resolution of Removal in connection with T03-25; Adopt a Resolution of 60-Day Suspension in connection with T20-25; Adopt a Resolution of Censure in connection with C109-22; 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 Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

IV. Return to Public

At **12:00 p.m.**, a motion was made by Dennis Roberts and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

V. Complaints to Review

C82-22 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						X ³	1

³ Commissioner Tomko has a conflict, and therefore, he did not participate in the discussion and/or vote related to this matter.

C18-24 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			X				1
Abstention							0

C14-25 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C15-25 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						X ⁴	1

⁴ Commissioner Tomko has a conflict, and therefore, he did not participate in the discussion and/or vote related to this matter.

C16-25 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C17-25 Motion was made by Mark Finkelstein, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C18-25, C19-25 and C21-25 (Consolidated) Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Mark Finkelstein, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C23-25, C43-25 and C44-25 (Consolidated) 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

VI. Decisions to Adopt as Written⁵

C35-21 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C51-22 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

⁵ Director Martens briefed the Commission on each matter.

C76-23 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C22-24 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C37-24 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C102-24 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C103-24 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C03-25 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C04-25 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C05-25 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C08-25 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C10-25 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

C11-25 Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

VII. Orders to Show Cause

D01-25 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

D02-25 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

D03-25 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, 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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

VIII. Advisory Opinions

A18-25⁶ Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X	X	X	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

⁶ This matter was on the agenda to adopt and to make public, but the Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners to make it public.

A19-25⁷ Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X	X	X	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

A20-25⁸ Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X	X	X	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

⁷ This matter was on the agenda to adopt and to make public, but the Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners to make it public.

⁸ This matter was on the agenda to adopt and to make public, but the Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners to make it public.

A21-25⁹ Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X	X	X	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

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.

⁹ This matter was on the agenda to adopt and to make public, but the Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioners to make it 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.

A12-25 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.

A13-25 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.

A14-25 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.

A15-25 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.

A16-25 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.

A17-25 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.

IX. Administrative Dismissals

C63-25 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C78-25 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

D04-25 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

X. Other Business

Doctrines of Necessity None.

Provide an update on the status of C51-24.

This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Provide an update on the status of C16-24, C28-24 and C44-24 (Consolidated).

This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Adopt a Resolution of Removal in connection with T03-25. Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to adopt the Resolution.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X	X	X	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

Adopt the Resolution of 60-Day Suspension in connection with T20-25. Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to adopt the Resolution.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X	X	X	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

Adopt a Resolution of Censure in connection with C109-22. Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to adopt the Resolution.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X		X	X	X	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

XI. Minutes

Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting (public and executive) conducted on September 23, 2025.

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				X ¹⁰			1

XII. Second Public Comment

There were not any members of the public present during the second public session.

XIII. Adjournment

At 12:13 p.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	X	5
No							0
Abstention							0

¹⁰ Commissioner Roberts was not present at the meeting on September 23, 2025, and therefore, he did not participate in the vote related to this matter.

Submitted by:

Jeannine Pizzigoni

Approved by:

Brigid C. Martens, Director
School Ethics Commission