

School Ethics Commission Meeting Public Session Minutes

April 28, 2026

Chairperson Bender called the regularly scheduled meeting of the School Ethics Commission (Commission or SEC) to order at 9:38 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Present	X	X ¹			X ²	X	X ³	5
Absent			X	X				2

Also, in attendance were Brigid Martens, Director; Dana Jones and Jeannine Pizzigoni, staff members for the Office of School Ethics and Anna Toor and Rachel Kristol,⁴ Deputy Attorneys General (DAG).

II. First Public Comment

There were not any members of the public present.

III. Executive Session

At 9:44 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

¹ Commissioner Carucci attended the meeting virtually.

² Commissioner Roberts attended the meeting virtually.

³ Commissioner Tomko attended the meeting virtually.

⁴ DAG Kristol left the meeting at 9:59 a.m. after presenting the settlement offers in two matters.

litigation: C67-25; C116-25; C122-25; C125-25; C126-25; C127-25; C128-25; C129-25; C132-25; C135-25; C138-25; C01-26; C75-24; C79-24; C87-24; C95-25; C98-25 and C99-25 (Consolidated); C102-25; C103-25; C104-25; C105-25; C106-25; C108-25; C109-25; C110-25; C112-25; C113-25; C114-25; C130-25 and C131-25 (Consolidated); A09-26; A10-26; C19-18; C21-18; C51-20; C63-22; Doctrines of Necessity submitted by the Monroe Township and the Plumstead Township Boards of Education; DAG Rachel Kristol to present a settlement offer in connection with C35-24; DAG Rachel Kristol to present a settlement offer in connection with C82-23; Chairperson to select a nominating committee (3 persons) to select a nominee for the position of SEC Chairperson for the term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027; Adopt a Resolution of 60-Day Suspension in connection with D01-25; Consider whether to place C133-25 in abeyance; Consider whether to place C16-26 in abeyance; Consider whether to place C18-26 in abeyance; Provide an update on the Commissioner of Education’s decision related to C03-21; Provide an update on the Commissioner of Education’s decision related to C89-21; and Discuss potential 2027 SEC meeting dates; 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 Michael Carucci, to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss the matters set forth in the foregoing Resolution.

Vote

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

IV. Return to Public

At **12:20 p.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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

V. Complaints to Review

C67-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C116-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C122-25 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to table the matter because the Commission did not have the statutorily required number of Commissioner to discuss the matter.

Vote

Vote	Robert Bender	Michael Carucci	Mark Finkelstein	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X				X	X		3
No								0
Abstention		X ⁵					X ⁶	2

C125-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

⁵ Commissioner Carucci has a conflict, and therefore, did not participate in the discussion and/or vote related to this matter.

⁶ Commissioner Tomko has a conflict, and therefore, did not participate in the discussion and/or vote related to this matter.

C126-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C127-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C128-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C129-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C132-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C135-25 Motion was made by Richard Tomko, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to place the matter in abeyance.

Vote

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

C138-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C01-26 Motion was made by Richard Tomko, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to place the matter in abeyance.

Vote

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

VI. Decisions to Adopt as Written⁷

C75-24 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

⁷ Director Martens briefed the Commission on each matter.

C79-24 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C87-24 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C95-25 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to adopt the decision as amended.

Vote

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

C98-25 and C99-25 (Consolidated) 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C102-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C103-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C104-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C105-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C106-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C108-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C109-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X		4
No								0
Abstention							X ⁸	1

C110-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

⁸ Commissioner Tomko has a conflict, and therefore, did not participate in the discussion and/or vote related to this matter.

C112-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C113-25 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to table this matter and draft a decision as discussed.

Vote

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

C114-25 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

C130-25 and C131-25 (Consolidated) 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	Patricia Gois	Dennis Roberts	Carol E. Sabo	Richard Tomko	Total
Yes	X	X			X	X	X	5
No								0
Abstention								0

VII. Advisory Opinions

A09-26 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to adopt the advisory opinion as written.

Vote

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

A10-26 Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to draft the advisory opinion as discussed.

Vote

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

VIII. Administrative Dismissals

C19-18 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C21-18 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C51-20 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

C63-22 This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

IX. Other Business

Doctrines of Necessity submitted by the Monroe Township and Plumstead Township Boards of Education. These matters were on the agenda for informational purposes only.

DAG Kristol to present a settlement offer in connection with C35-24. Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to accept the settlement offer.

Vote

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

DAG Kristol to present a settlement offer in connection with C82-23. Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to reject the settlement offer.

Vote

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

Chairperson to select nominating committee (3 persons) to select a nominee for the position of SEC Chairperson for the term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

Chairperson Bender selected Commissioner Finkelstein, Commissioner Roberts and himself as committee members.

Adopt the Resolution of 60-Day Suspension in connection with D01-25. Motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Richard Tomko, to adopt the Resolution.

Vote

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

Consider whether to place C133-25 in abeyance. Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to place the matter in abeyance.

Vote

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

Consider whether to place C16-26 in abeyance. Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded by Carol E. Sabo, to place the matter in abeyance.

Vote

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

Consider whether to place C18-26 in abeyance. Motion was made by Dennis Roberts, and seconded Carol E. Sabo, to place the matter in abeyance.

Vote

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

Provide an update on the Commissioner of Education’s decision related to C03-21.

This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Provide an update on the status of the Commissioner of Education’s decision related to C89-21. This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

Discuss potential 2027 meeting dates. This matter was on the agenda for informational purposes only.

X. 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 March 24, 2026.

Vote

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

XI. Second Public Comment

There were not any members of the public present.

XII. Adjournment

At 12:34 p.m., a motion was made by Carol E. Sabo, and seconded by Dennis Roberts, to adjourn.

Vote

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

Submitted by:

Jeannine Pizzigoni

Approved by:

Brigid C. Martens, Director
School Ethics Commission