

MINUTES OF THE BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING FEBRUARY 3, 2021

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A regular meeting of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Board of Education was held on Wednesday evening, February 3, 2021, via Zoom video conference in accordance with Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1 for alternative means for public entities to conduct public meetings.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Gina Piskin, President  
Edward Corona, Vice President  
Marion Blane  
Janet Goller  
Melissa Cmar-Grote  
Dr. Nancy Kaplan  
Tracey Miller

The following member of the Board of Education arrived at 8:18 p.m.:

Nina Lanci

Also present:

John DeTommaso, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Mara Bollettieri, Deputy Superintendent of Personnel  
Mikaela Coni, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Michael Harrington, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  
Joseph Innaco, Director of Administrative & Instructional Technology and Data Protection/Security  
Christopher Powers, School Attorney  
Pattianne Guccione, District Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Education met in Executive Session at 6:29 p.m. to discuss personnel matters, remote learning, high-risk sports, the amended school safety plans and the 2021-2022 school calendar and budget.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Piskin, Board President at 8:10 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Piskin led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Blane seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 7-0 the Board of Education removed the Public Comment sections from this meeting only and changed the order of business accordingly.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a **MOTION** Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 7-0 the Board of Education approved the minutes from the January 6, 2021 meeting.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Blane and carried 7-0, the Board of Education approved the Treasurer's Report dated December 31, 2020.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Presentations

Mr. DeTommaso was excited to announce that we will honor some students tonight for their incredible accomplishments. He said that we recognize students and staff every month but have not been able to recognize them as we normally would, but we hope to have some in-person presentations in the future. He explained that the Advance Science Research (ASR) Program is a difficult program that requires passion. He congratulated all of the students, their parents, their teacher Ms. Frank, Science Chairperson Mr. Soel, all of the teachers and the entire staff for their partnership in supporting these students. Mr. DeTommaso also congratulated Mr. Sardo and Ms. Fontana for their support with the Fine and Performing Arts and said he looks forward to listening to Jack Parr and his classmates in all of the high schools.

Regeneron Science Competition Scholars

Callie Burns of Kennedy High School

Ms. Piskin said that Callie is a distinguished young lady who carries herself with poise and confidence and is always striving to do her best. In addition to participating in the ASR Program, she is the President of Mock Trial and plays lacrosse.

Tara Fussillo of Kennedy High School

Ms. Cmar-Grote said that Tara is a multi-talented, creative, passionate and empathetic student who has an incredible work ethic and drive to succeed. In addition to her passion and commitment to the ASR Program, Tara is the first chair for viola in the Kennedy Orchestra.

Danielle Kacaj of Kennedy High School

Dr. Kaplan said that Danielle is meticulous, trustworthy and unafraid to challenge herself inside and outside of the classroom. A devoted Girl Scout whose Gold Medal project focuses on health, nutrition and mental-health awareness, Danielle truly yearns to help others.

Jordyn Krinsky of Kennedy High School

Ms. Miller said that Jordyn makes it a habit to achieve at the highest possible level across every walk of her life with determination, poise and a breezy wit. She is extremely passionate about the science

Julia Levine of Kennedy High School

Ms. Goller said that Julia is a well-rounded individual who excels at everything she puts her mind to. She sets high goals for herself, and is able to take on challenges as she works towards achieving those goals.

NYS School Music Association - All Eastern Division

Jack Parr of Calhoun High School

Mr. Corona said that Jack has established himself as one of the top 105 high school vocalists in New York State. In addition to being selected to All-Eastern, Jack was selected to this year's All-State Mixed Choir and has been a part of the NMEA All-County since 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Mr. DeTommaso said that we continue to monitor COVID-19 cases every day in all of the schools. We continue to send out information to parents regarding the cases, even if we do not have to quarantine students. Mr. DeTommaso said that we are now in the second semester, third marking period and he is incredibly proud of the staff for what they do for kids every day. Mr. DeTommaso said that we are one of a few districts to have in-person classes. He thanked the parents for supporting the district, for supporting their kids and for following safety protocols. He said that we are doing the best we can and asked that everyone please continue to work with us and keep safe by wearing masks and socially distancing, including outside of school. Mr. DeTommaso mentioned that there have been a lot of no impact cases and on average we have about 65% capacity in the schools due to students being remote, hybrid and in quarantine.

Mr. DeTommaso discussed the winter and high-risk sports and thanked Mr. Caballero and the building athletic coordinators. He said that we are one of only a few districts to have fall and winter intramurals. He assured everyone that our plan is in place and that kids are practicing and coaches know what they are doing, we are doing everything we can to keep everyone safe. We have ATC Testing and Screening Services, LLC providing weekly PCR COVID-19 swab testing for our athletes. Mr. DeTommaso said that the district recently sent out an email regarding Frequently Asked Questions and reminded everyone that the athletic coordinators are here to help and answer any questions. Another email was recently sent to parents regarding sports and transportation. The district encourages families to transport their own child to and from away contests and we are not permitting carpooling. Mr. DeTommaso reminded everyone to complete the transportation waivers. Regarding attendance at games, Mr. DeTommaso explained that two parents would be allowed to attend home games but there will be no fan attendance at away games. Unfortunately, there will be no student fans permitted at any of the games. He further explained that there have been some inquiries about students switching to remote learning during the sport season, which is an option for families but not a requirement.

Mr. DeTommaso discussed the use of the snow days and explained that one snow day was built into the calendar and we have used the remaining snow days. School will be in session on May 28<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> and should we need to use another snow day we will have to re-evaluate the school calendar.

Mr. DeTommaso said he had received a question regarding student use of lockers. He said that locker use was examined very closely and unfortunately, we are not able to come up with a safe plan for students to use the lockers. He explained that to keep kids safe, they must keep moving in the hallways between periods to avoid additional quarantining as per the Nassau County Department of Health. He reminded everyone that they do not have to wait for a Board of Education meeting to ask a question and that we are available to answer your questions or concerns at any point.

Mr. DeTommaso said that earlier today there was a severe internet and phone outage at Grand Avenue Middle School due to a line break between Mephram High School and Grand Avenue Middle School. He said Lightpath worked to restore services and he thanked Mr. Innaco and his team, students, parents and staff for their support.

B. Future Dates

February 15-19

Winter Recess – **Schools Closed**

March 3

Board of Education Meeting

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – *Agenda Items Only*

There were no public comments for this meeting.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Corona, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved agenda items VII.A and VII.B.

A. Policies

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following policies for a second reading:

Policy No. 8625 – Privacy and Security for Student, Teacher and Principal Data (New)

Policy No. 8635 – Information Security Breach and Notification (Revised)

B. School Calendar 2021-2022

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the recommended 2021 – 2022 school year calendar.

C. Donations

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved agenda item VII.C.1.

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$100.00 to the Robotics Club of Calhoun High School on behalf of a former student, Andrew Ackerman who is a current employee of Schweitzer Engineering Firm and increase appropriations budget by the same amount.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Blane, seconded by Ms. Cmar-Grote and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved agenda item VII.C.2.

2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$1,000.00 from Long Island Cares Inc. for the Community Cupboard.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Lanci and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved agenda item VII.C.3.

3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of 64 kits of Personal Protective Equipment from the Town of Hempstead via CARES Act Funding.

Ms. Piskin and Mr. DeTommaso thanked everyone for their donations.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Ms. Blane and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved items VII.D through VIII.I.

D. Special Education

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following Special Education placements as recommended by the CSE: 000011687, 000011957, 000012061, 000012656, 000012838, 000013045, 000013225, 000014905, 000512136, 000512510, 000512918, 000514076, 053490003, 061430001, 092030004, 131261650, 131263295, 131264095, 192010789, 201700008, 201700033, 201700156, 202000031, 202110594, 370001247, 370001263, 370001387, 370001431, 370001604, 370001952.

VIII. PERSONNEL REPORT – February 3, 2021

- A. Resignations
- B. Appointments
- C. Recommendation for Continued Employment
- D. Salary Reclassification
- E. Leave Requests
- F. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics – Cancellation
- G. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics
- H. Assigned Services – Athletics – Cancellation
- I. Assigned Services - Athletics

IX. BUSINESS AND FINANCE

A. Bills and Corresponding Warrant – February 3, 2021

The Board of Education reviewed the Summary of Bills and the corresponding warrants.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved agenda items IX.B through IX.G.

B. Bids

The Board of Education approved the bids as stated in the agenda.

C. Budget Summary – January 31, 2021

The Board of Education reviewed the Budget Summary.

D. Undue Burden Independent Evaluator Hardship Waiver

WHEREAS, the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District has an approved Annual Professional Performance Review (“APPR”) Plan in place, effective for the 2020-2021 school year;

WHEREAS, the District has submitted an Undue Burden Independent Evaluator Hardship Waiver application to the State Education Department since compliance with the independent evaluator requirement would create an undue burden on the District;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby approves and ratifies the District’s February 3, 2021 submission of the Undue Burden Independent Evaluator Hardship Waiver application to the State Education Department.

E. CARES Act Funding - Town of Hempstead

BE IT RESOLVED, that the President of the Board of Education is authorized to execute a Grant of Funds Agreement and a Town of Hempstead Claim Form for reimbursement by the Town of Hempstead under Title V of the CARES Act for necessary expenditures in the amount of \$150,000 that were made by the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOVLED that the Superintendent of Schools or his designee is authorized to take all appropriate and necessary steps to secure the grant of funds from the Town of Hempstead.

F. Depository for School Funds

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following bank as depository for school funds:

Metropolitan Commercial Bank, New York – Operating and Investment Accounts

G. Memorandum of Agreement

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District hereby approves and ratifies the attached Memorandum of Agreement dated 3rd day of February, 2021 by and between the negotiation representatives of the CSEA Bellmore-Merrick Custodial/Cafeteria Unit Local 865 and the negotiating representatives of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District.

The Board of Education did not convene into a Public Hearing on the School Safety Plan and they did not vote on the resolution. These items were adjourned to the March 3, 2021 Board of Education meeting.

X. MOTION TO CONVENE PUBLIC HEARING – SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN – **ADJOURNED to March 3, 2021.**

A. School Safety Plan

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education adopts the revised district-wide safety plan, originally approved on August 5, 2020, to be in compliance with the new NYSED regulations and directs that the district-wide plan be filed with the Commissioner of Education within 30 days of the adoption of this Resolution. – **ADJOURNED to March 3, 2021.**

XI. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business discussed.

XII. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Piskin stated the Board of Education did not receive correspondence.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments for this meeting.

XIV. POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Education entered into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 8:47 p.m.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Mr. Corona and carried 8-0, the Board of Education reconvened to Public Session at 10:05 p.m.

Appointment of new Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Goller, Seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, Scott Bersin was appointed as the new Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment effective July 1, 2021.

Ms. Piskin, on behalf of the Board of Education congratulated Mr. Bersin on his appointment. Mr. DeTommaso and Mr. Harrington also congratulated Mr. Bersin.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pattianne Guccione  
District Clerk