

MINUTES OF THE BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING February 4, 2015

A regular meeting of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Board of Education was held on Wednesday evening, February 4, 2015, in the Board of Education Conference Room of the Administrative Offices at the Brookside School at 1260 Meadowbrook Road, North Merrick, New York.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

JoAnn DeLauter, President
George Haile, Vice President
Marion Blane
Wendy Gargiulo
Janet Goller
Dr. Nancy Kaplan
Nina Lanci
Susan Schwartz

Also present:

John DeTommaso, Superintendent of Schools
Cynthia Strait Régal, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Mara Bollettieri, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel
David Seinfeld, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum
Eric Arlin, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services
Joseph Innaco, Director of Instructional and Technology Services
Saul Lerner, Director of Physical Education/Health/Athletics/Driver Education/Adult Ed
Jon Simpkins, Director of School Facilities and Operations
Thomas Volpe, Transportation Supervisor/Health and Safety Coordinator
Michelle Gagnon, Administrative Assistant I
Christopher Powers, School Attorney
Claire Neufeld, District Clerk

The regular meeting was called to order at 8:10 p.m. Mrs. DeLauter led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 7, 2015 Board of Education meeting. Dr. Kaplan seconded and the motion was carried 7-0-1 with Mrs. DeLauter abstaining.

MINUTES

Mr. Haile moved that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer's report dated December 31, 2014. Dr. Kaplan seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. DeTommaso welcomed everyone and thanked them for their cooperation throughout these past days with delayed openings. It was challenging. Once again we are proud to honor students' and teacher's accomplishments. He would like Governor Cuomo to visit and see all the amazing accomplishments in Bellmore-Merrick. Mrs. DeLauter will give a brief introduction before presenting Award of Honor certificates to students.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT**

**INTEL
SEMIFINALIST**

Mrs. DeLauter stated the Intel Science Talent Search (Intel STS) is the nation's most prestigious pre-college science competition. Alumni of Intel STS have made extraordinary contributions to science and hold more than 100 of the world's most coveted science and math honors, including the Nobel Prize and National Medal of Science. Annually, students entering the Intel STS compete for more than \$1.6 million in awards. Only 300 students are announced as semifinalists each year. From this select pool, 40 finalists are then invited to Washington, DC in March to participate in final judging, display their work to the public, meet with notable scientists and compete for three top awards of \$150,000 each. Tonight we are honored to recognize four students from Kennedy High School.

Mrs. Goller presented an Award of Honor certificate to Kennedy High School senior Beatrice Brown for having been chosen as an Intel STS 2015 Semifinalist. Beatrice's standout research project was one that hit close to home. After her family lost their home during Superstorm Sandy, Beatrice dedicated her scientific inquiry to developing more effective means of predicting violent weather patterns on Long Island. Her project was titled "Forecasting Hurricane Hazards for the Long Island Area." She worked with science mentors from the University of North Florida and Ocean Weather Inc. in Cos Cob, Connecticut. Beatrice is a 2015 Presidential Scholar Award and was recently named Semifinalist in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. Beatrice is a member of five honor societies including the National Honor Society. As an accomplished musician, Beatrice was selected to perform with the 2015 All-Eastern Concert Band and has been an All-County Flutist, a NYSSMA All-State Flutist and a NAFME All-National Honors Concert Band Flutist. Beatrice will be attending Yale University in the fall. On behalf of the Board of Education, Mrs. Goller congratulated Beatrice and the Kennedy Advanced Science Research teachers, Mrs. Barbi Frank and Mrs. Barbara Franklin.

Dr. Kaplan presented an Award of Honor certificate to former Kennedy High School student Jayson Chojar for having been selected as an Intel STS 2015 Semifinalist. Jayson completed the majority of his project over the three years he attended Kennedy and via Skype from Connecticut. Although he attends Greenwich High School, we still consider him part of the Kennedy family. Jayson focused on the criminal justice system for his project, titled "Effects of Evidence Evaluation Placement on Juror Sensitization to Non Case-Specific New Jersey Henderson Instructions." The study, conducted with mentors at CUNY John Jay College, found that changing the instructions jurors receive when asked to render a verdict could decrease the rate of false convictions based on mistaken identities and eyewitness testimony. His research aimed to improve the instructions given to jurors. While at Kennedy, Jayson was a member of Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Mock Trial Club, the soccer team and played the Saxophone. Dr. Kaplan thanked Jayson for sharing his award with us and the Advanced Science teachers, Barbi Frank and Barbara Franklin.

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Mr. Haile presented an Award of Honor certificate to Kennedy High School senior Justin Shapiro for having been chosen as an Intel STS 2015 Semifinalist. Justin worked with the researchers at Harvard University for his project titled “An Analysis of Corporate Response to Climate Change.” His project studies whether or not corporations experience any revenue benefits from their efforts to mitigate climate change. Justin’s interest in global warming started when he was only 12 years old and read Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Truth.” Justin currently gives presentations on behalf of The Climate Reality Project throughout the community. Justin was recently named one of only two students in New York State as a United States Senate Youth Delegate. He was a semifinalist in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program and is a member of four honor societies. He is the lead prosecuting attorney for the Mock Trial Team and a member of Kennedy’s Jazz Band and Pit Orchestra. Justin’s future plans include majoring in government or history and attending law school. On behalf of the Board of Education, Mr. Haile congratulated Justin and the Kennedy Advanced Science Research teachers, Mrs. Barbi Frank and Mrs. Barbara Franklin.

INTEL SEMIFINALIST

Mrs. Schwartz presented an Award of Honor certificate to Samuel Epstein, a senior at Kennedy High School, as a 2015 Semifinalist in the Intel STS. She stated however, we have an even greater privilege; recognizing him as a 2015 Finalist in the Intel STS. Sam is only one of three students in Long Island and one of 40 nationwide to be chosen for this prestigious honor. Finalists will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., March 5-11, 2015 where they will undergo a rigorous judging process, talk with leading scientists, display their research to the public at the National Geographic Society and meet with national leaders. Finalists typically meet with the President of the United States and various Nobel Laureates. Sam completed hundreds of hours of research in the ASR program and his project was titled “The Effects of the Modulation of TOR Signaling and Microbial Exposure on Feeding Behavior in *Drosophila Melanogaster*.” His research observed the dietary patterns of fruit flies in an attempt to see whether microbes introduced to the TOR (target of rapamycin) pathways, more commonly the cellular path found in all living organisms, would affect their appetite. His premise that controlling caloric intake reduces the risk of disease and potentially slows the aging process was confirmed as the reduced food consumption resulted in longer life of fruit flies. Sam worked with mentors from Long Island University – CW POST. Sam is an AP Scholar with Honor and a member of the Spanish, Science, Math, and National Honor Societies. He is President of the Science Olympiad Club and founder of Make an IMPACT – a foundation for IDF (Israel Defense Forces) veteran scholarships. On behalf of the Board of Education, Mrs. Schwartz congratulated Sam and the Kennedy teachers, Mrs. Barbi Frank and Mrs. Barbara Franklin.

INTEL FINALIST

Mr. DeTommaso stated this is truly amazing work. He mentioned there are other teachers and students involved in Science Research in all the District schools and thanked those teachers and staff. He mentioned Kim Serpe, Matt Melillo, Rob Soel, Eileen Connolly and Lorraine Poppe. He thanked the middle schools for laying the groundwork. He added these students represent all of our students in all of our schools who participate in Science Research.

**NEW YORK STATE
MASTER TEACHER
OF SCIENCE**

Mrs. Schwartz presented an Award of Honor certificate to Ms. Alexis Vandergoot, John F. Kennedy High School, who was recently named as a 2015 Science Master Teacher. Ms. Vandergoot is one of 70 master teachers selected on Long Island since the program was created in 2013. There is a very rigorous application process which requires submitting a personal statement, letters of recommendation, completing a content exam in her discipline, and undergoing a lengthy interview process that included developing and presenting innovative lesson materials in STEM. Ms. Vandergoot has been teaching in the District since 2009. She has a B.S. in Biology with a minor in Chemistry and her M.A. in teaching. She teaches Chemistry, Living Environment, College Anatomy, Marine Biology and Collaborative Environmental Science. She is the Science Club and Science Olympiad Advisor and was the Girl's Lacrosse Assistant Varsity Coach from 2010-2013. Ms. Vandergoot developed and coordinated an 8th grade interactive summer Forensic Science Camp at Stony Brook University. She is now a member of a state-wide network of the highest performing STEM teachers that are dedicated to sharing expertise with peers and attracting the brightest minds to a career in STEM. Mrs. Schwartz congratulated Ms. Vandergoot on behalf of the Board of Education.

**ONE VOICE, ONE
MESSAGE, ONE RUN**

Ms. Einbinder, Dr. Netto and MAP Principal Mrs. Ellinghaus gave an overview of the 5K Run/Walk scheduled for March 21, 2015. The run was the idea of student ambassadors and will benefit pediatric cancer research at Memorial Sloan-Kettering. It will begin at Grand Avenue Middle School, loop through Merrick Avenue and end at Grand Avenue. Sloan-Kettering and many organizations, businesses and local merchants, Bellmore Lions, Pepsi, Bellmore Merrick Child Care, Panera Bread, Dunkin Donuts and Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Food Services, have made donations. There is a \$20 entry fee and you can register before or the day of the run/walk. The event begins at 9:00 a.m. Mr. DeTommaso thanked all those involved in this event.

**STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVES**

Derek Baumann, Meadowbrook Alternative Learning Program (MAP) representative to the Board of Education, stated MAP draws students from the three high schools. MAP has been involved in many charity drives over the past months. Key Club worked with Kiwanis wrapping gifts at Roosevelt Field Mall, students held bake sales to purchase and donate baby items, ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, wrote to soldiers and sponsored a coat drive. MAP students also held a cleaning supply drive for Ronald McDonald House. A MAP senior has committed to attend SUNY Albany. MAP students intend to perform more charity work in the future.

Griffin Miller stated he has enjoyed the delayed openings. Tri M Honor Society's induction of 40 new students was live streamed on CCD website. Students committing to play sports in college were announced at a recent press conference. Leadership classes held Teacher Swap Day and raised over \$1,300. DECA Regional competition went well and Kennedy students qualified to compete in the States. The performance of *Great Expectations* was excellent and the spring musical will be *Mary Poppins*.

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Mr. DeTommaso commented on the Delayed Openings and thanked Mr. Innaco, Director of Technology as the “Voice of Bellmore-Merrick” and Mr. Simpkins, Director of Facilities, and his crews for the great job they did. He added one year ago, the District transitioned to a new bus company and congratulated Mr. Volpe, Director of Transportation, for the job he has done.

**STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVES**

Mara Friedman congratulated the Kennedy students who were honored by the Board tonight for their accomplishments in the Intel STS and the Science Research team. Teams at the recent Science Olympiad held a 7th place finish which qualified them for the State competition. JFK earned medals in eleven events. She congratulated Ms. Vandergoot. Two students participated in the Long Island Psychology Fair. Two JFK teams made the final rounds in the Virtual Enterprise Competition. FBLA students placed in various categories and are also going to the State competition. Boys Wrestling won their conference. A Jam-the-Gym night was successful. Poetry Out Loud produced two students who will attend the regional competition. Awards were distributed and fundraisers were held. The annual talent show and class night are coming up soon. JFK can be followed on twitter.

Mr. DeTommaso noted a rather prevalent theme throughout the night, science. Mr. Soel advised three Calhoun teams, two Kennedy teams and one Mephram team, 90 students, competed in the Western Region Science Olympiad. Approximately 150 students District wide are involved in Science Research. Science is alive and well in Bellmore-Merrick.

Kara Ognibene advised Mephram’s team placed 16th overall in the Science Olympiad held in Wantagh High School and took home medals. Mephram’s Kickline Team participated in the recent Kickline competition. The team hosted a Kick line seminar for younger students. Also, Mephram’s diving champion qualified for the States. The ice hockey team, Bulldogs, held fundraisers. Testing and applying to college discussions were held with 10th and 11th graders. Junior Varsity and Varsity Bowling teams won their conference. Two team members were named All Conference and finished third in the Nassau County Championship. Girls Basketball is having a successful season and may make another play-off run. The sixth annual Mr. Mephram Pageant will be held on Thursday, 2/12/15.

Mr. DeTommaso stated this District, as evidenced at each and every Board of Education meeting, is all about academics, community service, striving for and achieving excellence. The administration and Board of Education have railed against high-stakes testing. Mr. DeTommaso is disheartened and appalled by the Governor’s stand on education. When APPR came about, it was as if APPR was a plane being built in flight. He feels strongly that what Governor Cuomo said in his State of the State address is an assault on public education. The governor has lumped all school districts together. Mr. DeTommaso stated he cannot answer for what happens in New York City, Buffalo or upstate school

**SUPERINTENDENT’S
COMMENTS**

districts, but can answer for what happens in Nassau County schools and certainly in Bellmore-Merrick. One size does not fit all. The State's graduation rate is around 76%. Long Island's graduation rate is 90%. Bellmore-Merrick's graduation rate is 98%. In the governor's proposal, educators do not have a say. Bellmore-Merrick's administrators and the Board of Education are responsible to the community for putting together a budget. There is school funding in the State Budget only if the legislature agrees to follow the Governor's plan. The State Aid runs are not coming, making it too difficult to put together a school budget. Mr. DeTommaso stated we are operating at this point with zero increase in state aid. The District will have to wait for the resources we need. We work to improve every day; that is our job and mission. As a group, we support our teachers, administrators and community so that our children will receive a superb education, second to none. He invited Governor Cuomo to come to Bellmore-Merrick.

Mr. DeTommaso encouraged everyone to take a few minutes and view the Grand Avenue Middle School artwork on display in the Central Office corridor.

FUTURE DATES

Mrs. DeLauter advised members of the audience to consult the school calendar for important upcoming events.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

POLICIES

The Board of Education accepted the following policies for a first reading:
Policy No. 5150 – School Admissions (revised)
Policy No. 8520 – Free and Reduced Price Meal Services (revised)
(renumbered from 3546.1)
Policy No. 3545 – Transportation (revised)

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve revised Policy No. 4326 – Programs for English Language Learners (2nd reading). Mr. Haile seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mrs. Schwartz moved that the Board of Education approve the following Special Education placements as recommended by the Committee on Special Education (CSE): 000511025, 000511688, 000511792, 000511793, 000511884, 000512091, 000512381, 030760002, 041250000, 050450007, 112450003, 362844555, 370001154, 370001163, 37000577, 992450205, 992450315 and 999011150. Dr. Kaplan seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

DONATION

Mr. Haile moved that that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$150.00 to the Family Project at Grand Avenue MS from Adam and Sarah Durst on behalf of the Asman family in memory of their son Shawn and increase the appropriations budget by this amount. Mrs. Gargiulo seconded and the motion was carried 8-0. Mrs. DeLauter thanked Mr. and Mrs. Durst.

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Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent of Schools' Personnel Report with revisions, dated February 4, 2015. Mrs. Gargiulo seconded. Mrs. Goller stated that Ms. Connolly's and Mr. Lerner's retirement is noted in the report. Their retirements are accepted with tremendous regret and sadness. The motion was carried 8-0.

PERSONNEL

The Board of Ed reviewed the Summary of Bills, dated February 4, 2015, and the corresponding warrants.

BILLS

The Board of Education reviewed the Budget Summary Report.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Mrs. Schwartz moved that the Board of Education approve a budget transfer of \$113,034 from A2825 150 to A2820 150. Mr. Haile seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

BUDGET TRANSFER

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education declare obsolete and approve the disposal of Kennedy's Convertamatic Auto Scrubber, Model #32b, bar code 002448, inasmuch as replacement parts are no longer available. Mrs. Gargiulo seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

**OBSOLETE/SURPLUS
PROPERTY**

Mrs. Schwartz moved that the Board of Education declare a 1999 Ford Explorer, VIN 1FMDU34E1XZB06343, obsolete for the purposes of disposal as the cost of repairs exceeds the value of the vehicle. The District has solicited offers for the Explorer and will accept the most favorable one. Mr. Haile seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

Mrs. Schwartz moved that the Board of Education declare obsolete and approve the disposal of Brookside Curriculum Library textbooks and curriculum writing. Mrs. Gargiulo seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

Mrs. Gargiulo moved that the Board of Education approve the hiring of a consultant, Stagelight Entertainment, for Kennedy's spring musical and concerts, for 22 sessions at \$98.00 per session, total compensation not to exceed \$2,156, funded by Kennedy Building Student Activity fund. Mr. Haile seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

CONSULTANT

Mrs. Schwartz moved that the Board of Education approve Mrs. DeLauter's attendance at the Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association's "Stand Up 4 Long Island's Public Schools" conference on Thursday, 1/29/2015, at the Hilton Long Island/Huntington, at a cost of \$75 per person. Mrs. Blane seconded and the motion was carried 8-0. Mrs. Schwartz thanked Mrs. DeLauter for attending.

BOARD CONFERENCE

There was none.

CORRESPONDENCE

Lisa Katz thanked everyone for the One Voice, One Message, One Run event planned throughout the District and expressed the hope that the component districts will bring it back to their districts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

OLD/NEW BUSINESS Mrs. DeLauter advised the conference was interesting and there was a lot of discussion concerning the Governor's State of the State address. Dr. Johnson of Rockville Centre stated we need to be part of the discussion. We have educators to decide how to educate our children.

Mrs. Schwartz stated she would like the District to invite Governor Cuomo to Bellmore-Merrick events and to repeat the invitation until he hopefully does attend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION On a motion by Mrs. Gargiulo, seconded by Mr. Haile, and carried 8-0, the Board entered into Executive Session to discuss a student matter at 9:10 p.m.

On a motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Gargiulo, and carried 8-0, the Board of Education reconvened into Public Session at 9:47 p.m.

**RESCIND
RESOLUTION** Mrs. Blane moved, that the Board of Education rescind the January 7, 2015 Board of Education approved Agreement of Settlement in a Contemplated Due Process Impartial Hearing resolution moved by Mrs. Gargiulo which was seconded by Mrs. Schwartz and carried 7-0. Mrs. Schwartz seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

**REVISED AGREEMENT
OF SETTLEMENT** Mrs. Gargiulo moved that the Board of Education approve a revised Agreement of Settlement in a Contemplated Due Process Impartial Hearing. Mr. Haile seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

ADJOURNMENT On a motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Neufeld
District Clerk