

MINUTES OF THE BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING DECEMBER 4, 2019

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A regular meeting of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Board of Education was held on Wednesday evening, December 4, 2019 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:

Marion Blane, Board of Education President  
Gina Piskin, Vice President  
Edward Corona  
John Ferrara  
Janet Goller  
Dr. Nancy Kaplan  
Nina Lanci  
Tracey Miller

Also present:

John DeTommaso, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Mara Bollettieri, Deputy Superintendent of Personnel  
Kate Freeman, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Michael Harrington, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  
Eric Arlin, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services  
Eric Caballero, Director of Physical Education/Health Ed/Athletics/Driver Education  
Mikaela Coni, Administrative Assistant for Business  
Cheryl Fontana, Director of Music/Fine and Performing Arts and Adult Education  
Joseph Innaco, Director of Administrative & Instructional Technology and Data Protection/Security  
Jon Simpkins, Director of School Facilities and Operations  
Tom Volpe, Supervisor of Transportation  
Ken Zisel, Brookside Assistant Principal  
Christopher Powers, School Attorney  
Pattianne Guccione, District Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Blane, Board President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education entered into executive session to discuss the school calendar.

RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci seconded by Mr. Ferrara and carried 8-0, the Board of Education reconvened into public session at 8:14 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Mr. Ferrara and carried 8-0 the Board of Education approved the minutes from the November 6, 2019 meeting.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the Treasurer's Report dated October 31, 2019.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. DeTommaso welcomed everyone and said this is the time of year when you see our students reaching out and doing things inside and outside of the district. He thanked David Seinfeld who is temporarily replacing Katelyn Dunn as Principal at Merrick Avenue Middle School and he congratulated Katelynn Dunn on the birth of her baby Riley Ann. Mr. DeTommaso congratulated Matthew Hegi and stated that becoming a scholar athlete is very hard to accomplish.

A. **Presentations**

News 12 Scholar Athlete

Ms. Lanci presented Matthew Hegi with an Award of Honor certificate for being chosen as the Fall News 12 Scholar Athlete. Ms. Lanci said that Matthew is a young man who is relentless in his pursuit of excellence through conscientious effort and dedication. He is a three-sport athlete and maintains a high Honor Roll status in our schools most rigorous academic program. He is an excellent role model for our younger students.

Student Representatives

Stefanie Simone of Mepham High School said last month, students raised money for the Feal Good Foundation at the annual Battle of the Classes and she congratulated students that were honored at the Fall National Honor Society Induction Ceremony. She said the drama club's performance "A Christmas Carol" was outstanding and the blood drive collected 95 pints of blood. She congratulated several of her peers for various accomplishments and asked everyone to attend the Winter Festival and to donate to the Community Cupboard.

Mariana Mora of Meadowbrook Alternative Learning Program (MAP) said that the annual veteran visit went well and they presented their 100-year old honored guest with a special birthday cake and video. Students enjoyed a wellness week and participated in various activities designed to relieve stress. They also enjoyed two field trips this month and attended presentations about cyberbullying and "Stop the Bleed".

Daniel Iskols said Kennedy High School students organized a food drive and a tremendous amount of food was donated. He also said that HOPE club members helped clean up litter and refurbished the grounds of Cammans Pond. The drama club presented "The Laramie Project" and said everyone was profoundly impacted by the performance. The English Department is piloting a community read in which the Kennedy community will read a book simultaneously. At High School Orientation night, student government senators welcomed members of the class of 2024.

Gabriella Giobardo said that Calhoun High School hosted the District's Choral Showcase and each group was amazing. Calhoun students enjoyed a Thanksgiving dinner and raised over \$1,100.00 for the Community Cupboard. Students also enjoyed the SADD talent show and had a successful toy drive for the Bellmore Lions. They are hosting a coat drive and art expo this Friday. She asked everyone to come see the Holiday Concerts.

B. **Future Dates**

Mr. DeTommaso mentioned the future dates and asked everyone to attend the winter concerts. He said there are concerts at every school and please see at least one show. He saw the District's Choral Program where all of the choral groups performed, which was a preview of the winter concerts, and said the shows are fantastic. He thanked Ms. Fontana and congratulated the students and staff.

Mr. DeTommaso thanked Dr. Bollettieri and the team of ambassadors for working hard getting ready for the MLK Day of Service. Mr. DeTommaso said the Bellmore-Merrick Electrical

Program is doing incredibly well and he thanked Mr. Harrington for having the vision to put this program in place. He said yesterday they had Parent/Teacher conferences and parents were very appreciative of what their children were doing and learning.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS– *Agenda Items Only*

Dr. Kaplan spoke on behalf of the Board of Education and said that they will not be making a decision on the 2020-2021 school calendar tonight and it will be addressed at next month's meeting. She thanked her fellow board members and said that they have looked at this issue over the past 18 months and the only other issue they have looked at so much has been security. She said it is reassuring to sit with good people and thinks we are all trying to do the right thing. She thanked Mr. DeTommaso for answering their questions, and for his patience. She thanked Mr. Powers for providing the Board of Education with so much information. Dr. Kaplan addressed the audience and said that the best thing about this process is that it has given us is the opportunity to connect with people we may not have had a chance to connect with before. She said that your children are our children, and we are tabling this for another month because we are trying to make the best decision for everyone. We ask that you trust that we are doing the best that we can do and the last thing we want to do is rush into a decision that we didn't have to rush into. She said your presence is appreciated, you have been heard, you have been understood, and hearing from you is a pleasure. We will take comments on any other agenda items at this time.

There were no public comments on agenda items.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

A. School Calendar 2020-2021- **ADJOURNED TO JANUARY 8, 2020**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the recommended 2020 – 2021 school year calendar.

B. Donations

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Mr. Ferrara and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the following resolution:

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$6,000.00 from the Bellmore Merrick Basketball League towards the purchase of speakers for the outdoor field at J.F. Kennedy H.S., and increase appropriations budget for same amount.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the following resolution:

2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$150.00 from the Bellmore Merrick United Secondary Teachers for the Community Cupboard.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the following resolution:

3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of one box of carpenter pencils (approximately 200 pencils) from Jena and Howie Goldmark, to be used by the students in the new Electrical Program.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Lanci and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the following resolution:

4. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$500.00 from the staff at the Brookside building for the CHAMP Program, and increase appropriations budget by the same amount.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Mr. Ferrara and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved by a consent agenda items VII.C through VII.F.

C. Policies

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following policy for a first reading: Policy No. 5420.1 – Concussion Management
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following policy for a second reading: Policy No. 1741 – Home-Schooled Students

D. Adult Education

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the recommended new Adult Education courses for the Spring 2020 semester.

E. Special Education Vendor List

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the revised Special Education vendors list for the 2019-2020 school year.

F. Special Education

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the recommendations of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for the following cases: 000010352, 000011047, 000011352, 000012598, 000012639, 000012906, 000511904, 000512331, 000513588, 000513589, 030420022, 040700005, 050400000, 060130001, 060580000, 060620002, 070740008, 070940013, 080440007, 092030003, 101060000, 101410000, 102380002, 121740000, 131262432, 181911133, 192010789, 201600053, 201700008, 201900106, 370001081, 370001173, 370001244, 370001427, 900010686, 992450202, 999011233, 999011419.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Goller, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the Personnel Report as follows:

VIII. PERSONNEL REPORT – December 4, 2019

- A. Resignations
- B. Appointments
- C. Salary Reclassification
- D. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics
- E. Assigned Services – Athletics – Cancellations
- F. Assigned Services – Athletics

IX. BUSINESS AND FINANCE

A. Bills and Corresponding Warrants – December 4, 2019

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

B. Bids

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the bids as stated in the agenda.

C. Budget Summary – November 30, 2019

The Board of Education reviewed the Budget Summary.

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

D. Security Camera Upgrade

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education declare the unanticipated expense of a district-wide security camera software upgrade an emergency situation undertaken to maintain the safety and security of the district and further that the budget be increased by an amount not to exceed \$150,000 to be funded with Fund Balance.

E. External Audit

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the Corrective Action Plan for the Annual External Audit for the School Year 2018-2019.

F. Obsolete/Surplus Property

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education declare obsolete and approve disposal of the microfiche machine (asset #002083) located in the Registrar Office at Kennedy High School.

G. Inter-municipal Cooperative Food Service Agreement with North Bellmore SD

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an inter-municipal cooperative agreement with the North Bellmore Union Free School District for services of the Food Services Director for the term October 14, 2019 through December 31, 2019 and authorize the Board President to execute said agreement.

H. Settlement Agreement

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve a Settlement Agreement with Patico Corporation d/b/a Alphabetland d/b/a Alphabetland Day School and Camp, and authorize the Board President to execute said agreement.

I. Section 75 Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby withdraws the Civil Service Law Section 75 charges that were filed on November 6, 2019 against a member of the non-instructional staff.

X. CORRESPONDENCE

The Board of Education did not receive correspondence.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nicole Venditti opposes the proposed HPV vaccine mandates. She explained that she is not against the vaccine but is against the mandate. She asked the Board of Education to write a letter to Governor Cuomo and elected officials in opposition of the mandate, continuing this as a parent's choice to vaccinate or not. She submitted letters written by other school districts in opposition of the mandate.

Greg Ziegler opposes the proposed HPV and Flu vaccine mandates. He asked the Board of Education to write a letter to the elected officials in opposition of the mandate.

Amir Ibrahim, a student at Merrick Avenue Middle School requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. He said that if school was closed, students that celebrate won't have an academic disadvantage.

Rania Elbaz requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar and handed in a petition with about 500 signatures. She hopes that the delay leads to a positive vote next month.

Aya Elsayed requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. She said that the issue of numbers keeps coming up but minority means lower numbers. She hopes that the board's decision includes this holiday.

Aneeba Rehman requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. She is disappointed that the focus is on attendance when the children choose to go to school instead of celebrating the holiday. She feels kids are under a lot of pressure and choose school.

Christine Mitkish requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. She said that she thinks it is the right thing to do.

Reza Aziz, a student at Calhoun High School requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. He feels that people will be more accepting of the Islamic religion if the District adds the holiday to the school calendar.

M. Mohammed Nabi requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. He said that his children missed the opportunity and went to school. He asks the board to do the right thing.

Aisha Umar requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. She said if it doesn't happen now, she hopes it does happen.

Alisha Marfani, a student at Mephram requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. She said that she always chooses school over the holiday because she would miss too much school work being in all honors classes.

Summer Marfani, a student at Mephram requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. She feels that if she misses one day of classes she would fall behind.

Daniel Bar-Nahun requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. He feels that a school calendar is like a school budget, it shows value.

Batod Rizvi requested that EID holidays be added to the school calendar. She feels that this is about inclusion and society at large.

XII. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business discussed.

XIII. POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Ferrara, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education entered into executive session at 9:30 p.m. to discuss the school calendar.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education meeting adjourned at 10:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pattianne Guccione  
District Clerk