

MINUTES OF THE BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

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A regular meeting of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Board of Education was held on Wednesday evening, September 7, 2022, in the Board of Education Conference Room of the Administrative Offices at the Brookside Educational Center at 1260 Meadowbrook Road, North Merrick, New York.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

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

Also present:

Michael Harrington, Superintendent of Schools  
Scott Bersin, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  
Mikaela Coni, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Eric Gomez, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Administration  
Eric Arlin, Executive Director of Alternative Education  
Emily Paluseo, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services  
Eric Caballero, Director of Physical Education/Health Ed/Athletics/Driver Education  
Cheryl Fontana, Director of Music/Fine and Performing Arts and Adult Education  
Joseph Innaco, Director of Administrative & Instructional Technology and Data Protection/Security  
Maura Kempton, Assistant Director of Special Education and Pupil Services  
Jon Simpkins, Director of School Facilities and Operations  
Tom Volpe, Supervisor of Transportation  
Christopher Powers, School Attorney  
Pattianne Guccione, District Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Lanci called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

On a **MOTION** By Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. Blane and carried 8-0, the Board of Education moved to appoint Michael Harrington as the Acting District Clerk during Executive Session.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Blane, seconded by Ms. Cmar-Grote and carried 8-0, the Board of Education moved into Executive Session to discuss a specific personnel issue, contract negotiations and late transportation requests.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Cmar-Grote, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education reconvened to Public Session at 8:07 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Ms. Lanci asked for a moment of silence to honor those lost and the people affected by the tragic events of 9-11-01.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 5-0-3 the Board of Education approved the minutes from the August 3, 2022 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 July 31, 2022.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. **Presentations**

Opening Day of School

Mr. Harrington welcomed everyone back, saying that we knew that this year was going to be different then the past two and a half years dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, saying he is so happy that we have persevered and we are now all together. He thanked the entire staff for doing a tremendous job opening schools.

Mr. Harrington discussed this year's guiding principle "Pathways, Path, Purpose". He thanked the Board of Education and the entire community for their consistent support, which allows the district to be rich with pathways for students. He explained the many pathways students can choose from such as advanced placement courses, athletics, music, arts, electrical program, cosmetology, broadcasting etc. Mr. Harrington explained that when students find their pathway, it is our responsibility to keep them on their path by giving them support, encouragement and love. He said when students are on a path, they have purpose, and there is nothing stronger than a person with purpose! Mr. Harrington said he looks forward to a great year that gives the students experiences they will remember for the rest of their lives.

Ms. Hollings, Principal of Calhoun High School discussed the opening of school and said it was terrific! She said it was exciting to see kids get the experience of high school the way it is supposed to be. She said kids are already getting involved in clubs and the school has opened their cosmetology room. Ms. Hollings said students had a great first day and are having a wonderful time.

Mr. DeMartinis, Principal of Mephram High School said the opening of schools was picture perfect and the energy was amazing. He said students enjoyed a scavenger hunt, had tours of the school and the PTA very generously handed out snacks. He said the great energy has continued all week and there is a great feeling all around the building.

Ms. Dunn, Principal of Merrick Avenue Middle School said that it has been an exciting few days. She said that the best indicator of the vibe was in the cafeteria where it was loud from the kids, which was very exciting to witness. She thanked Mr. Innaco and the technology department for their support in distributing all of the Chromebooks and said everything is very exciting and we are off to a great start of the school year.

Mr. Conte, Principal of Grand Avenue Middle School said that they had a great opening and what he enjoyed most was watching the growth of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students over the past few

days. From not being able to open lockers and find their rooms, just three days later, students are already finding their way around and getting to class on time. He said it was also nice to see students gathered in the cafeteria, sitting together, meeting new people and making plans to meet after school, it is so nice to watch it all unfold.

Mr. Owenburg, Principal of Kennedy High School said we went into the summer wondering what the opening of schools would look like and planned many new things. Orientation was revamped and it was more about being fun and less about being in the auditorium. They had a barbeque and the freshman class was very engaging. He said things have never been better and he is looking forward to homecoming and an amazing school year.

Mr. Arlin, Executive Director of Alternative Education said that Brookside has always been thought of as home the Meadowbrook Alternative Program (MAP) but it is so much more now. He said the Electrical Program started on the first day of school and students were very happy. He also said Prep Academy has a total of 31 students which includes 15 new students from Calhoun High School and all of the students are thriving. He said MAP students have had full attendance for all three days, which is an indicator that we are off a great start in the new school year, everyone is thrilled to be here.

Mr. Harrington thanked the Principals and said next month we will welcome our student representative and will showcase our new program with Skudin Surf as we looking forward to starting this program again.

Mr. Harrington mentioned that at 7:30 p.m. on September 8, 2022 the North Bellmore Board of Education will hear a presentation from Superintendent of Schools Marie Testa and Assistant Superintendent for Business Jacqueline Rehak regarding a potential bond referendum. During the meeting, Ms. Testa and Ms. Rehak will present projects to be included for consideration in a December 2022 bond vote. Included in that presentation will be proposed districtwide upgrades to the HVAC system, playgrounds for all six district-owned school buildings, infrastructure upgrades and installation of elevators at schools to be determined.

#### Curriculum and Instruction

Mr. Bersin gave a Powerpoint presentation on 2021/2022 Academic Year in Review and said it is an honor to talk about student success. He said the district gave out 6,000 devices so everyone can work together. Last year, robotics, coding, electrical training and cosmetology programs were added. He explained the learning loss from COVID-19 and the lower regents scores this year from previous years, saying it is lower State-Wide but our students did outstanding compared to NYS and Nassau County averages. Mr. Bersin thinks that our students will do even better this year. He explained the Middle School incredibly high passing rates and said the Principles and Assistant Principles are working very hard and deserve a lot of credit. He explained that regarding AP exams we look at the participation rate relative to Nassau County and in most places our students are experiencing more than average across Nassau County. He said our students have tremendous opportunities and he thanked the Principals, Assistant Principals, Chairpeople and Directors.

Mr. Bersin discussed the summer programs such as the Extended School Year Program, Bridge, Summer School, Regents Examinations, STEAM Camp, BMB Bootcamp and Wellness Centers. He said there was a 50% higher participation in regent exams and many great opportunities were offered to kids. He discussed the future planning from students and said of the 825 graduates, 85% will go to a 4 year college, 10% will go to a 2 year

college and 5% are entering the work force with many of them going into fields they studied in Bellmore-Merrick CHSD. Mr. Bersin thanked the Board of Education for their continued support and said we are excited about the 2022/2023 school year as we want every student to be on a pathway.

Mr. Weinstein asked for clarification on how Bellmore-Merrick CHSD performed in English and Math scores in comparison to NYS averages. Mr. Bersin said that Nassau County generally has the highest averages in NYS and Nationwide and we did very well.

Dr. Kaplan would like to offer more classes that give college credit. She also would like the opportunity for students to take CLEP exams which would give them more college credits.

Mr. Bersin said that the district is looking into a partnership that would add college courses in Bellmore-Merrick CHSD.

Mr. Harrington said the district looked into CLEP exams prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and said we will look into it again.

Mr. Harrington thanked the Board of Education, Administrators, Directors, parents and safety officers for going above and beyond throughout the summer. He mentioned the upcoming dates and said that the college fair will still be virtual.

B. Future Events

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| September 16    | Calhoun Pep Rally & Homecoming  |
| September 17    | Calhoun Coltfest & Homecoming   |
| September 19    | Virtual District College Fair & Financial Aid Night @ Kennedy                       |
| September 22    | High School Back to School Night  |
| September 24    | Kennedy Homecoming  |
| September 26-27 | Rosh Hashanah – Schools Closed  |
| September 29    | Middle School Back to School Night  |
| October 5       | Yom Kippur – Schools Closed   |
| October 6       | Fall Guidance Program 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade   |
| October 7       | Emergency Preparedness Drill – Early Dismissal<br>Calhoun On Tour Evening of Improv |
| October 10      | Columbus Day – Schools Closed   |
| October 12      | Board of Education Meeting  |

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – *Agenda Items Only*

There were no public comments.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved items VII.A

VII. SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR)

WHEREAS, §30-2.9 of the Rules of the Board of Regents requires certification of lead evaluators for purposes of conducting evaluations of teachers and principals in accordance with the requirements under §3012-d of the Education Law, respecting Annual Professional Performance Reviews; and

WHEREAS, Kenneth Zisel has successfully completed a training course that meets the requirements prescribed under the Rules of the Board of Regents;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Nassau County certify Kenneth Zisel as a lead evaluator.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved items VII.B.

B. Donations

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of 900 student planners with a value of \$2,664.00 from the Merrick Avenue PTA for the students to use at Merrick Avenue Middle School for the 2022-2023 school year.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of a Football FlipSled valued at \$3,494.00 and six Premium Weatherproof PVC Backyard Soccer Goals valued at \$959.94 from the Calhoun Sports Boosters for the sports program at Calhoun High School.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of Nikon Film Camera Equipment valued at 2,290.00 from Frank Chillemi for the photography program at Calhoun High School.

Ms. Lanci thanked the Merrick Avenue PTA, the Calhoun Sports Boosters and Mr. Chillemi for their generous donations.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved items VII.C through IX.H.

C. Special Education

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the revised recommended Special Education vendors for the 2022-2023 school year.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following Committee on Special Education recommended placements: 000011352, 000011729, 000512136, 000512697, 000513088, 062360003, 070940016, 131261273, 131261607, 131262857, 131263708, 192010274 and 370001256.

VIII. PERSONNEL REPORT dated September 7, 2022

- A. Resignations
- B. Appointments
- C. Salary Reclassification
- D. Miscellaneous – Cell Phone Reimbursement
- E. Leave Requests
- F. Assigned Services – Athletics
- G. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics – Cancellation
- H. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics

IX. BUSINESS AND FINANCE

- A. Bills and Corresponding Warrant dated September 7, 2022-*Information Only*
- B. Budget Summary dated August 31, 2022 - *Information Only*

- C. Surf for All Corporation Agreement  
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an agreement with Surf for All Corporation, to provide Surf Therapy Services from September 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 at a cost of \$49/student for each session.
- D. Obsolete/Surplus Equipment/Property  
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education declare obsolete and approve the disposal of two woodshop tool cabinets located at Merrick Avenue Middle School.
- E. Budget Transfers  
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Bellmore-Merrick CHSD approve the following budget transfers to cover 2021-2022 school year expenses:
- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| From: A9060.800-00-0000 (Employee Benefits-Health Ins) | \$ 50,000.00 |
| To: A1310.400-08-0000 (Contractual-Business Office)    | \$ 50,000.00 |
| To cover costs for ACME Bus Settlement Agreement.      |              |
| From: A9060.800-00-0000 (Employee Benefits-Health Ins) | \$70,000.00  |
| To: A2110.130-00-0000 (Teachers Salary Instr District) | \$70,000.00  |
| To cover costs for year-end salary clean-up.           |              |
| From: A2250.150-02-0000 (Spec Ed Instr-Grand Ave)      | \$274,000.00 |
| To: A2250.400-08-4300 (Contractual Sp Ed-Rel Serv)     | \$274,000.00 |
| To cover Special Ed related services costs.            |              |
- F. SEQRA  
WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District desires to embark upon the proposed 2022-2023 Capital Improvement Projects for Grand Avenue Middle School as listed in the attachment hereto (hereinafter the “Project”); and
- WHEREAS, said capital improvement is subject to classification under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA); and
- WHEREAS, maintenance or repair involving no substantial changes in an existing structure or facility are classified as Type II Actions under the current Department of Environmental Conservation SEQR Regulations (Section 6 NYCRR 617.5 (c)(1)); and
- WHEREAS, replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a structure or a facility, in kind, on the same site, including upgrading buildings to meet building or fire codes, unless such action meets or exceeds any of the thresholds in section 617.4 are classified as Type II Actions under the current Department of Environmental Conservation SEQR Regulations (Section 6 NYCRR 617.5 (c)(2)); and
- WHEREAS, the SEQR Regulations declare Type II Actions to be actions that have no significant impact on the environment and require no further review under SEQR; and
- WHEREAS, the Board of Education, as the only involved agency, has examined all information related to the capital improvement projects and has determined that the Projects are classified as Type II Actions pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(1) and (2) of the SEQR Regulations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby declares itself lead agency in connection with the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, after a review of the proposed action and the opinion provided by J.C. Broderick & Associates, Inc., hereby declares that the Projects are Type II Actions, which requires no further review under SEQR; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby shall forward an official copy of this Resolution to the New York State Education Department together with a copy of the correspondence from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in connection with its request for approval of the listed project from the New York State Education Department.

G. Memorandum of Agreement – Association of Building Administrators

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 this 30<sup>th</sup> day of August 2022 by and between the negotiation representatives of the Association of Building Administrators and the negotiating representatives of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District.

H. Center for Forensic and Clinical Psychology Agreement

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby approve an agreement with the Center for Forensic and Clinical Psychology, P.C. to provide threat assessment consulting at a rate of \$325.00 per hour.

X. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

No old or new business was discussed.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

The Board of Education received six emails between July 29, 2022 and September 2, 2022.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Ms. Lanci announced that going forward all Board of Education meetings will begin with executive session at 6:30 p.m. and the public portion of the meeting now starting at 7:30 p.m. This will begin at their next meeting on Wednesday, October 12, 2022.

XIII. POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Education did not enter into executive session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,