

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

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

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

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 Services
Eric Caballero, Director of Physical Education/Health Ed/Athletics/Driver Education
Cheryl Fontana, Director of Music/ Fine & Performing Arts/Adult Ed
Joseph Innaco, Director of Instructional and Technology Services
Helen Kanellopoulos, Assistant Director of Special Education and Pupil Services
Jon Simpkins, Director of School Facilities and Operations
Tom Volpe, Transportation Supervisor/Health and Safety Coordinator
Kate Freeman, School Business Administrator
Christopher Powers, School Attorney
Claire Neufeld, District Clerk

The regular meeting was called to order at 8:11 p.m. Mr. Haile led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed everyone.

CALL TO ORDER

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

MINUTES

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer's report dated September 30, 2015. Mrs. DeLauter seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. DeTommaso stated it is a great night and thanked everyone for coming. October is Board of Education Recognition month but it is done in November in Bellmore-Merrick. He stated he is pleased, honored and privileged to work with this board. They make decisions for and about kids. On behalf of himself, the administrative team, teachers and the entire staff, he thanked the Board for making this an incredible place.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT**

**SCHOOL BOARD
RECOGNITION**

Ms. Cheryl Fontana, Director of Music/Fine & Performing Arts/Adult Ed, stated every year we present the Board of Ed with gifts. On behalf of the Art and Music Departments, we are very grateful. She introduced Ms. Amanda Cantwell.

The Board was treated to a musical presentation by Grand Avenue MS's "Grand Voices," a select vocal ensemble, under the direction of Ms. Cantwell. They performed "At Last" by Harry Warren and Mack Gordon and "Treasure" by Bruno Mars.

Merrick Avenue MS Art students, under the direction of Ms. Federici and Ms. Steiding, presented Board members with student drawings of the six district buildings for display in the Board Room.

Ms. Lohr's and Ms. Scott's Calhoun Prep Art students presented Board members with artwork displaying "One Voice, One Message" in large puzzle pieces. Ms. Lohr thanked Melissa Joy and Beth Johnson, Calhoun English teachers, for collaborating with them on this project. Ms. Lohr and Ms. Scott thanked the Board for their support of the arts and added their appreciation to have Ms. Fontana as the first Director of Music/Fine & Performing Arts.

Ms. Peri Hoffer-Hinden, President of the PTA Coordinating Council, presented a check to the Board of Education stating that a \$50 donation is given to each of the District's six libraries in recognition of the Board members' dedication and service to the students and parents of the Bellmore-Merrick community.

Mr. DeTommaso mentioned BMCHSD students' activities that are not related to the classroom, testing and grades but are about the community and creating connections in Bellmore-Merrick. He mentioned Calhoun's "Destination Doom" room created by ENL students, Kennedy's "Safe Halloween" and Mephram's Field of Honor.

**NYS ENGLISH
COUNCIL (NYSEC)
EDUCATOR OF
EXCELLENCE**

Mrs. Goller stated she has the pleasure of recognizing two teachers for making a human connection. She stated the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District is proud to announce that English teachers Meredith Levine and Daniel Sheffield have both been recognized as NYSEC *Educators of Excellence*. The application process included a letter of nomination, a letter of recommendation from colleagues, several letters of recommendation from former students, and submission of several lesson plans and instructional materials. Ms. Levine and Mr. Sheffield were formally honored at an awards ceremony at the NYSEC Annual Conference held in Albany on October 16. Meredith Levine, a 21-year veteran, teaches eighth grade at Grand Avenue Middle School. Each day she challenges her 8th grade students with rigorous, meaningful lessons that push children to reach their fullest potential. In her nomination packet, one student perfectly stated, "She creates a warm, comfortable environment in her classroom, and makes every one of her students feel special. As a result, she has earned her nickname, "Mama Levine." Ms. Levine is a true leader in classroom and an invaluable member of both the English department and Grand Avenue community.

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Mr. Dan Sheffield has been teaching at Kennedy High School for 14 years. He is also the drama club advisor, directing and coordinating all of Kennedy's student productions. As one former student wrote so eloquently in her recommendation letter, "Mr. Sheffield has opened my eyes not only to the arts world but also to teaching and education. Seeing him teach and interact with his students makes me feel like I want to try harder in school and in life and be a better person." He is a true "staple" in the English department as well as the entire Kennedy school community. On behalf of the Board of Ed, Mrs. Goller congratulated them both on their well-deserved recognition.

**NYSEC EDUCATOR OF EXCELLENCE
(Continued)**

Mr. Haile stated The Bellmore-Merrick Central High School district is proud to announce that Calhoun and Mepham's Senior Experience Program has been honored as a Program of Excellence by the NYSEC. NYSEC awards well-established, exemplary ELA programs that support creative instruction and learning. The Calhoun and Mepham Senior Experience Class and Internship is an innovative, interdisciplinary program that utilizes a co-teaching model with an English teacher and a social studies teacher. It provides students with hands-on career opportunities outside of the regular classroom setting. Students in the program obtain awareness, first-hand understanding, and appreciation of the knowledge, skill, and educational requirements necessary for various occupations. Calhoun's Kate Caporusso and Jason Elias have worked together as co-teachers of the program for the past 12 years, and Peter Palazzo has been the internship coordinator for the past 6 years. Mepham's Marc Achtziger and Sarah Bender have been co-teaching for 12 years as well, and Melanie Sirof has coordinated the internship component for the past 5 years. The application process included a letter of nomination, submission of documentation including a program description, curriculum outline and rationale, and samples of teacher and student work as well as an on-site visit from NYSEC committee members. Teachers from both schools showcased the program at the NYSEC Annual Conference in Albany on Friday, October 16th. We thank the teachers of Senior Experience for their efforts in cultivating a unique and purposeful educational experience whose ultimate goal is to have students leave high school with a skill set that will enable them to become future community leaders. Mr. Haile, on behalf of the Board, thanked each teacher.

Mr. DeTommaso welcomed Derek Baumann back.

Derek Baumann stated he is the Meadowbrook Alternative Learning Program's (MAP) representative to the Board of Education. He stated MAP accepted Mr. DeTommaso's challenge and have added AP classes. 20 MAP students took the PSATs on 10/28/15. MAP students walked to Calhoun for the Safe Driver course. Student trips included Project Care and Jones Beach. Future trips are planned to ACDS and a 3D Art Exhibit at SUNY Farmingdale. Key Club is off to a great start and helped at the Senior Prom. MAP has started a UNICEF Club. Spirit Week was successful. He wished MAP's Safety Officer good luck in his retirement.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

**STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVES
(Continued)**

Mr. DeTommaso mentioned the Bellmore and Merrick Heralds published articles about MAP's 10th Anniversary. He added MAP is truly an alternative learning program and a valuable program. MAP students graduate and go on the college.

Alex Dobosh congratulated the teachers and mentioned Cory Epstein's "Ties for Ties" necktie collection was displayed on Kennedy's athletic field and broke the Guinness Book of World Records record. He thanked everyone involved. Spirit Week culminated in a pep rally followed by a festival and bonfire. The Cougars defeated New Hyde Park in their homecoming game and the king and queen were announced. Fall sports teams did well and have competed and will compete at county and state levels. Kennedy's fundraisers are in full swing. There have been two senior health assemblies. Over 300 kids attended "Safe Halloween" hosted by Participation in Government students. Math, Tri M and National Honor Society members helped during parent-teacher night.

McKayla Cates stated Spirit Week was fantastic. Mepham sports teams became conference champions and are competing in play-offs. Students held the "Out of the Darkness" walk. 120 seniors visited the 9/11 Memorial in lower Manhattan. The 13th Annual Italian Heritage Night was a success. She thanked Mr. DeTommaso, Mr. David Seinfeld and the Board of Education for attending and Dr. Mara Bollettieri for cooking. The Class of 2016's Field of Honor fundraiser was extremely successful and is an impressive sight. The 3rd Annual Mentor Breakfast is next week. SEPTA College and Career Night and Mepham's drama production are the following week.

Jacob Miller stated On-Tour's production is "Love's Labor Lost." Calhoun's Halloween dance was a wonderful night for the prep students. Costumes for A Cause raised money. "Destination Doom" created by Calhoun ENL students was successful. Coltfest was held this past Saturday and the homecoming king and queen were announced at halftime. Students honored a local veteran and purple heart recipient at the opening of his house. Calhoun's sports teams competed at the county levels. There was an assembly on mental illness which was eye-opening for Jacob. Challenge Day for 10th Grade students was held at the beginning of the month. Food, coat and toy drives are coming up.

AUDIT REPORT

Mr. DeTommaso introduced Alan Yu from Cullen and Danowski.

Mr. Yu gave a brief report on the district's financial status for fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 stating that he met earlier with BMCHSD's Audit Committee. He advised his company is issuing an Unqualified Opinion of financial statements which is the highest rating given. Prior year's recommendations have been implemented. The district applied for and received 2.4 million dollars in additional federal and state grants for Special Education programs and Security. District revenues are up to 2.9 million dollars. The district's financial health is stable and consistent, with built in contingencies and a fund balance at 20-21%. He thanked Ms. Strait Régal and her staff along with Mr. DeTommaso.

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Mr. Haile was advised NYSED likes to see at least 10% in fund balance and in comparison with other Long Island school districts, Bellmore-Merrick is not hoarding money. BMCHSD has done a good job upholding the equity between meeting educational needs and maintaining a healthy fund balance. The tax cap makes this tricky. The 2016-2017 tax cap will be below 2% and could be lower than 1%. Contractual obligations and health insurance costs will make budgeting difficult. Over all, BMCHSD has been fiscally responsible.

AUDIT REPORT

Mr. DeTommaso thanked Alan Yu, Ms. Strait Régal and her staff.

Dr. Kaplan moved that the Board of Education accept the Audit Report of Cullen and Danowski, LLP, including the accountant's opinion, financial statements and management letters, for the school year ended June 30, 2015. Mrs. Lanci seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

There were none on agenda items only.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. DeLauter moved that the Board of Education approve the following resolutions:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the 2015-2016 Budget Calendar.

**2016-2017 SCHOOL
BUDGET PROCESS**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept that the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Annual Budget Vote for the 2016-2017 School Year will be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2016.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District sharing budget voter registration and voting costs with each component district when the budget vote for the Central High School District and the component districts are held on the same day.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept that the BOCES Budget Vote/Trustee Election will be held on Wednesday, April 19, 2016.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve that the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District's Annual Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, May 4, 2016.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept Policy No. 5300 – Code of Conduct (Revised) for a first reading.

POLICY

SPECIAL EDUCATION BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following Special Education placements as recommended by the Committee on Special Education (CSE): 103470002, 000512992, 023160000, 030350000, 030430040, 032310000, 050450007, 060130001, 062400010, 062480000, 070250000, 080660008, 370000467, 370000496, 370000890, 992450307, 992450322 and 999011288.

Dr. Kaplan seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

Ms. Gargiulo exited the meeting room.

DONATIONS

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$1,787, for the purchase of six (6) soccer nets, six (6) soccer goal wheel kits, and accessories, from Nassau County PAL Youth Soccer (Merrick Unit) to the BMCHSD and increase the appropriations budget by this amount. Mrs. Goller seconded and the motion was carried 7-0.

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$300 (\$50 to each of the district's six libraries) from the PTA Coordinating Council to the BMCHSD and increase the appropriations budget by this amount. Mrs. Blane seconded and the motion was carried 7-0.

PERSONNEL

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent of Schools' Personnel Report, dated November 4, 2015, as stated in the agenda. Dr. Kaplan seconded and the motion was carried 7-0.

BILLS

The Board of Education reviewed the Summary of Bills, dated November 4, 2015, and the corresponding warrants.

BUDGET SUMMARY

The Board of Education reviewed the Budget Summary Report.

Ms. Blane moved that the Board of Education approve the following resolutions:

**JOINT MUNICIPAL
COOPERATIVE
BIDDING PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, various educational and municipal corporations located within the State of New York desire to bid jointly for generally needed services and standardized supply and equipment items; and

WHEREAS, the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District, an educational/municipal corporation (hereinafter the "Participant") is desirous of selectively participating with other educational and/or municipal corporations in the State of New York in joint bidding in the areas mentioned above pursuant to General Municipal Law § 119-o and Education Law Section 1950; and

WHEREAS, the Participant is a municipality within the meaning of General Municipal Law § 119-n and is eligible to participate in the Board of Cooperative Educational Services, First Supervisory District of Suffolk County (hereinafter Eastern Suffolk BOCES) Joint Municipal Cooperative Bidding Program (hereinafter the "Program") in the areas mentioned above; and

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WHEREAS, the Participant acknowledges receipt of the Program description inclusive of Eastern Suffolk BOCES' standard bid packet and the general conditions relating to said Program; and

WHEREAS, with respect to all activities conducted by the Program, the Participant wishes to delegate to Eastern Suffolk BOCES the responsibility for drafting of bid specifications, advertising for bids, accepting and opening bids, tabulating bids, awarding the bids, and reporting the results to the Participant.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Participant hereby appoints Eastern Suffolk BOCES to represent it and to act as the lead agent in all matters related to the Program as described above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Participant hereby authorizes Eastern Suffolk BOCES to place all legal advertisements for any required cooperative bidding in Newsday, which is designated as the official newspaper for the Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a Participant Meeting shall be held annually consisting of a representative from each Program Participant. Notice of the meeting shall be given to each representative at least five (5) days prior to such meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an Advisory Committee will be formed consisting of five to ten representatives of Program Participants for a term of three (3) years as authorized by General Municipal Law §119-o.2.j.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Agreement with the Participant shall be for a term of one (1) year as authorized by General Municipal Law §119-o.2.j.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Participant agrees to pay Eastern Suffolk BOCES an annual fee as determined annually by Eastern Suffolk BOCES to act as the lead agent for the Program.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an adjusted lease agreement incorporating the additional space requested by the Bellmore-Merrick Child Care Program.

**BELLMORE-MERRICK
CHILD CARE**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an agreement with TEMPO for the use of space in the Brookside building from 9/1/15 – 8/31/16.

TEMPO

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an agreement with TEMPO to provide the services of five (5) social workers to BMCHSD for School Year 2015-2016 at an annual cost not to exceed \$105,408.

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THOMAS REUTERS BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve a twelve (12) month renewal contract with Thomson Reuters for WestlawNext electronic access at a monthly cost of \$256.79 (1% increase) commencing 2/1/2016.

WAIVERS BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the Bellmore Lions and Kiwanis Clubs' use of the Jerusalem Avenue School for their annual Strawberry Festival from 6/1/16 through 6/6/16 and agree to have the \$500 required bond waived inasmuch as the carnival operator, Blue Sky Shows, Bellmore Lions and Kiwanis all have liability insurance.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve waiving the custodial/room fee for the annual Pancake Breakfast in Calhoun HS on Sunday, 11/22/15, hosted by Merrick Kiwanis Club in conjunction with the Calhoun Key Club and Merrick Avenue Builders Club.

Mrs. DeLauter seconded and the motion was carried 7-0.

Ms. Gargiulo returned to the meeting room.

SCHOLARSHIP Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the establishment of the Douglas Smestad Memorial Scholarship in a variable amount funded by donations to be awarded annually to a Calhoun HS student who represents the ideals of scholarship, musicianship and caring for others in significant ways. Mrs. Blane seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

CORRESPONDENCE There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS There were none.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS Dr. Kaplan offered a quick thank you to all of those who worked on posting the sports forms online.

Mr. Haile added his thanks.

Mrs. Lanci thanked the custodial staff at JFK for their work in the Ties for Ties project at Kennedy's athletic field.

Mr. DeTommaso added that was an incredible day. "One Voice, One Message" seems to have taken off and is an example of the power of Bellmore-Merrick. He is proud of the building and the community.

Mr. Haile wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

EXECUTIVE SESSION On a motion by Mrs. Blane, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0, the Board of Education entered into Executive Session to discuss student matters at 9:29 p.m.

On a motion by Mrs. Goller, seconded by Mrs. Lanci and carried 8-0, the Board of Education reconvened at 10:01 p.m.

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**NYSSBA
NOMINATION**

Mrs. Blane moved that the Board of Education nominate Jean Fichtl for the position of New York State School Boards Association Area 11 Director. Mrs. Goller seconded and the motion was carried 8-0.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Gargiulo and carried 8-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Neufeld
District Clerk