

MINUTES OF THE BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MAY 3, 2023

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A regular meeting of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Board of Education was held on Wednesday evening, May 3, 2023, in the Auditorium 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
Dr. Nancy Kaplan
Tracey Miller
Gina Piskin

The following member of the Board of Education was not present:

Edward Corona

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
Eric Caballero, Director of Physical Education/Health Ed/Athletics/Driver Education
Emily Paluseo, 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 6:34 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

On a **MOTION** By Ms. Blane, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education moved to appoint Michael Harrington as the Acting District Clerk during Executive Session.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. Cmar-Grote and carried 7-0, the Board of Education moved into Executive Session to discuss a specific personnel matter, the school budget and college acceptances.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Blane, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education reconvened to Public Session at 6:51 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Ms. Blane and carried 7-0 the Board of Education approved the minutes from the April 3, 2023 and April 18, 2023 meetings.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Blane, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education approved the Treasurer's Report dated March 31, 2023.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Ms. Cmar-Grote and carried 7-0, the Board of Education changed the order of the agenda and moved the Personnel Report.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Blane, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education approved the Personnel Report dated May 3, 2023.

VIII. PERSONNEL REPORT – May 3, 2023

- A. Tenure Recommendations
- B. Terminations
- C. Resignations
- D. Appointments
- E. Salary Reclassification
- F. Leave Requests
- G. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics – Cancellation
- H. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics
- I. Assigned Services – Athletics
- J. Assigned Services – Athletics – Intramurals

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Presentations

Mr. Harrington welcomed everyone to the meeting and congratulated the twenty-five educators that received tenure by the approval of the Personnel Report. He said they celebrated them earlier in the evening and wished them well.

Mr. Harrington congratulated Ms. Lanci on her receipt of the International President's Award for her outstanding service to the Lions Club International. He said that the month of May is full of celebrations with Principal Appreciation Day, Teacher Appreciation Day and Nurse Appreciation Day. Mr. Harrington also discussed the wonderful events that took place this past weekend. He attended the Calhoun Alumni Association event where he heard stories from different generations of Calhoun students about their experiences while attending Calhoun HS. At the event, a surgeon from California and a highly decorated US Army Colonel spoke about teachers that greatly impacted them and the foundations they built during their time at Calhoun. Mr. Harrington was able to share about everything going on now, such as sport accomplishments, art, and our music department receiving the NAMM 2023 Best Communities for Music award. Mr. Harrington also attended the Kure for Kate event to raise money for a Kennedy student who is currently battling cancer. He said the way the community came together is heartwarming. Finally, Mr. Harrington mentioned the Eid Holiday Coalition of Long Island event to celebrate the end of the month of Ramadan and to honor the Bellmore-Merrick CHSD and other districts. Mr. Harrington said that this community, all of the work and the performance of our students is amazing.

Student Representatives

Jordan Nelson from Meadowbrook Alternative Program/Prep Academy said students had a very busy month filled with activities such as a presentation from Dr. Dewey on addiction. Students also had a presentation from Sari, a Prep Academy student called Turning Disabilities into Abilities, where she spoke about her experience with Autism and how doing pageants helped her overcome her insecurities. Students also experienced recreating a scene from Macbeth, had mock job interviews and started the surf therapy program. He congratulated the Valedictorian Camerin McManus and said he is this year's salutatorian.

Rachel Oppenheim from Kennedy High School said their Student Government has won the National Gold Council of Excellence Award for the third year in a row. The Student Government has also raised over \$1,000.00 to benefit the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to assist them with their humanitarian efforts in helping the earthquake victims in Syria and Turkey. She also said students hosted an orientation program for the ENL students that will be attending Kennedy next year and the Wind Ensemble traveled to the Little Creek-Fort Story military base in Virginia Beach to perform for 2,000 veterans, marking the first civilian band to perform on that base.

Sophia Tripiccione from Calhoun High School said the On-Tour program held three performance of Gypsy that were amazing, the Chorale and Concert Choir had beautiful concerts and the band and orchestra concert will take place tomorrow. She said spring sports are going well, noting the boys baseball team is currently undefeated and the girls track and boys tracked finished their seasons undefeated. She said seniors celebrated Commitment Day on May 1st, by wearing college gear and the leadership class presented to Merrick Avenue MS about the power of hateful symbols and created their own positive symbols.

Andrew Constantino from Mepham High School (filling in for Lily Yopez) said that Ellie Kertnzer was selected to receive the Students Building Bridges Award and the BuildOn Club has raised over \$40,000.00 this year! He also said students attended the Operation Smile event to learn about bilateral cleft lip and palate and the impact the organization has on families and children. In closing, he said the SADD Club hosted a "Senior" prom for the 123 community members and the Mepham Art Show will be open to the public on May 23rd.

Mr. Harrington mentioned the future dates and said he is looking forward to a successful end to the year.

B. Future Dates

May 4	Calhoun Grey Concert Mepham Concert II
May 11	Middle School Concert I Middle School Arts Expo at Grand
May 16	School Budget Vote
May 17	Kennedy Concert II & Spring Arts
May 18	Middle School Arts Expo at MAMS Middle School Concert II
May 19-20	Calhoun On Tour Season Finale
May 23	Mepham Art Show Science Performance Begins

May 24	Mephram Art Show Kennedy ASR Research Symposium Challenge Day at Calhoun
May 25	Middle School Honor Society Inductions
May 29	Memorial Day-Schools Closed
May 31	Senior Awards Night
June 1	Calhoun Spring Arts Calhoun Blue & Grey Awards Cougar Pride Awards Pirates Treasure Awards
June 2	Science Performance Ends On Tour Senior Show Calhoun Bambino Scholarship Show
June 6	Middle School 8 th Grade Awards Calhoun Sports Booster Awards Mephram Varsity Awards Kennedy Spring Letter Ceremony
June 7	Board of Education Meeting

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – *Agenda Items Only*

Ms. Lanci stated:

“The Board of Education encourages public participation on school related matters at Board meetings. To allow for public participation, a period not to exceed 30 minutes shall be set aside during each Board meeting. Any person wishing to make comments or raise questions shall complete an information card. Questions are to be addressed to the Board President, not to individual board members. Personal attacks on individual board members, administrators and staff will not be tolerated and may be cause to adjourn the meeting. There will be no back and forth dialogue. Out of courtesy and fairness to the rest of the audience, it would be appreciated if each visitor would limit his/her remarks to not more than three minutes or ask only one question. Public discussion on matters relating to staff and students, by which their reputation, privacy, or rights to due process, or those of others could be in some way violated, is prohibited.

There were no public comments.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Information Item

We will be honoring our school district’s retirees at our June 7, 2023 regular meeting.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Blane, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education approved agenda items VII.B.

B. Donation

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation of \$250.00 from the BMUST Women’s Committee for the Community Cupboard.

Ms. Lanci thanked BMUST for the donation.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education approved by consent agenda items VII.C through IX.O.

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 recommended Special Education vendors for the 2023-2024 school year.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following Special Education placements as recommended by the Committee on Special Education (CSE): 000010700, 000013269, 000013307, 000014586, 000016495, 000512112, 000513167, 000513633, 131261421, 131261537, 131264162, 81910039, 181910109, 181910118, 202100146, 202200175, 222310717, 222311264, 222311275, 992450312 and 999011399.

IX. BUSINESS AND FINANCE

A. Bills and Corresponding Warrant dated May 3, 2023

B. Bids

C. Budget Summary dated April 30, 2023

D. 2023-2024 Budgeted Reserves and Property Tax Report Card

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the withdrawal of funds from the Employee Benefit Accrued Liability Reserve for the payment of sick leave for retirees in the 2023-2024 school year in an amount up to \$600,000.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the withdrawal of funds from the Employee Retirement Reserve for payment of employer retirement expense to the New York State Employee Retirement System in the 2023-2024 school year in an amount up to \$1,900,000.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the withdrawal of funds from the Teachers' Retirement Reserve Sub-Fund for payment of employer retirement expense to the New York State Teacher' Retirement System in the 2023-2024 school year in an amount up to \$1,000,000.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the withdrawal of funds from the Workers Compensation Reserve for payment of Workers Compensation expense in the 2023-2024 school year in an amount up to \$450,000.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the withdrawal of funds from the Reserve for Tax Reduction to reduce taxes and fund appropriations in the 2023-2024 school year in an amount up to \$1,200,000.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education hereby authorizes the submission to the State Education Department and publication of the 2023-2024 Property Tax Report Card.

- E. Federal Single Audit
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept the Federal Single Audit Report for the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District for the year ended June 30, 2022.
- F. District-Wide Safety Team
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of the District-Wide Safety Team for the 2023-2024 school year.
- G. BOCES of Nassau County-Summer School
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an agreement with BOCES of Nassau County for a “Regional Summer School Program” with a provision for distance learning for Bellmore-Merrick Central High School students and others commencing on or about July 1, 2023 through August 31, 2023 at costs listed therein.
- H. BOCES-Twilight Program
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an agreement with BOCES of Nassau County for a “Twilight Alternative High School Program” at Brookside for Bellmore-Merrick Central High School students and others commencing on or about September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 at costs listed therein.
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorized the Board President to sign said agreement.
- I. Owner-Contractor Agreements
1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an Owner-Contractor agreement with Stasi General Contracting, LLC., for interior and site reconstruction at Grand Avenue Middle School, with a contract sum of \$960,000.00 subject to additions and deductions.
 2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an Owner-Contractor agreement with Stalco Construction, Inc., for interior and site reconstruction at Grand Avenue Middle School, with a contract sum of \$202,000.00 subject to additions and deductions.
- J. Scholarship Establishment
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the establishment of the Vincent S. Romano Italian Language Scholarship. The scholarship of \$1,000.00 will be awarded to a John F. Kennedy High School student who has demonstrate excellence in the study of the Italian language, and who has shown interest in Italian culture.
- K. Health and Welfare Services Agreement
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby authorizes the President of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to execute contracts to provide health and welfare services to specific students who reside in the Bellmore-Merrick CHSD and attend a non-public school in one of the following school districts for the 2022-2023 School Year: Westbury Union Free School District.

L. 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 this 3th day of May, 2023 by and between the negotiation representatives of the Civil Service Employees Association, Inc., Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO – Nassau Educational Local 865 and the negotiating representatives of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District.

M. Denial of Request for Legal Defense and Indemnification

WHEREAS, in accordance with Education Law §3811 and/or Public Officer's Law §18, an individual staff member whose identity is known to the Board of Education, has submitted a timely written request for legal defense and indemnification in an action dated April 24, 2023, and received by the District on April 24, 2023, under index no: 900003/2023; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned legal action contains allegations, inter alia, that such individual staff member, known to the Board of Education, engaged in criminal activity, and engaged in acts which constitutes acts outside of his scope of his duties and responsibilities as a teacher; and

WHEREAS, according to Section 3811 of the Education Law and Public Officer's Law Section 18, under circumstances as stated above, such individual staff member known to the Board of Education, is not entitled to defense and indemnification in the above-referenced legal action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District DENIES and REJECTS such individual staff member's request for defense and indemnification in the above-referenced legal action.

N. Educational Data Services, Inc.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve an agreement with Educational Data Services, Inc. for software licensing and maintenance services for the NY/Island Cooperative supply bids at a cost of \$9,670, and Skilled Trades & Ancillary services at a cost of \$2,100 for the 2023-2024 school year.

O. New York/Island Cooperative Bid

WHEREAS, it would be in the joint interest of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District and the following school districts (*SEE ATTACHED LISTING*) to participate in cooperative bids for the purchase of various supplies, services, materials and equipment, as advertised by and awarded by the Clarkstown Central School District acting as the Lead Agency, as provided by General Municipal Law Section 119-0, and,

WHEREAS, each BOARD retains the legal authority to contract with the successful Vendor(s) and shall not be bound by purchase contracts or other agreements made by the other BOARD(S),

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District hereby agrees to participate with the attached named school districts in such cooperative bids.

X. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

No old or new business was discussed.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

The Board of Education did not receive mailed correspondence and received six emails between March 30, 2023 and April 28, 2023.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Andrew P. is unhappy about a specific lesson taught in his daughter's health science class about gender.

Michele C. thanked the Board of Education and staff for creating an inclusive district that educates kids about diversity.

Vito S. said he thinks it is important for the district to continue these valuable lessons about diversity so that everyone feels safe and included.

Robert C. is proud to be part of a district that educates students about diversity and inclusion. He feels that these lessons are important and hopes the lessons continue.

XIII. **MOTION TO CONVENE TO PUBLIC HEARING – 2023-2024 SCHOOL BUDGET**

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education convened to the Public Hearing on the 2023/2024 School Budget.

Mikaela Coni, Assistant Superintendent for Business thanked the Board of Education, administrators and the community for their continued support. She gave a presentation on the proposed 2023/2024 school budget of \$188,863,521 and explained that the 2023/2024 budget meets all of our budget goals. The 2023/2024 budget will have a 6.64%, (\$11,757,022) budget increase from the current school year due to a large increase in Foundation Aid. The tax levy increase of 2.37% is keeping under the tax cap for the 12th consecutive year. She explained that the budget maintains our special programs and services and offers more opportunities including some enhancements in STEAM, the 1:1 Chromebook Initiative and online learning platforms. She said some of the budget drivers include increases in costs, utilities, transportation, Special Education and technology.

Ms. Coni discussed the component budget comprised of three sections, Administration, Programs and Capital. She explained the Administration component which makes up 11.7% of the budget, the Program component is 75.2% of the budget and the Capital component is 131.% of the budget.

Ms. Coni explained the Capital Reserve Project, which will expend \$1.6M from Capital Reserve. The improvements will include parking lot and sidewalk reconstruction, tennis court reconstruction, track resurfacing/replacement, exterior bleacher reconstruction, and family and consumer science classroom reconstruction at Merrick Avenue Middle School. It will also include district-wide interior alterations, exterior building envelope reconstruction at the middle schools, district-wide replacement of stage curtains and rigging, district-wide sound and lighting upgrades in the auditoriums, district-wide floor/ceiling replacement, district-wide HVAC reconstruction, district-wide electrical reconstruction, district-wide plumbing reconstruction, and district-wide abatements.

Ms. Coni mentioned that the Public Budget Hearing will take place on May 3, 2023 and the budget vote will take place on May 13, 2023. She said thanked the Board of Education, Mr. Harrington and the community for their support and said all of the budget information is available on our website and to please contact her with any questions.

XIV. POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Education did not enter into Executive Session.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 7-0, the Board of Education meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pattianne Guccione
District Clerk