

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
December 9, 2021 – Beach Street Middle School

PRESENT: Mr. Tussie, Mr. Antonello, Mrs. Brown, Mr. Compitello, Mr. Maginniss (arrived 7:35 p.m.),
Mr. McCann

ABSENT: Mrs. LaRosa

ADMINISTRATORS: Mrs. Burns, Mrs. Morrison, Mrs. Pellati, Mr. Taylor

ABSENT: None

ATTORNEY: Mr. Volz

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Tussie thanked the High School Orchestra for their beautiful performance.

Mr. Tussie addressed the audience regarding his daughter's attendance at a non-district event when she was quarantined. Mr. Tussie apologized and hopes to continue to work with the community to ensure the best education for students.

Mr. Tussie announced that at the 11/23/2021 Planning Session the Board approved and accepted a Memorandum of Agreement with WIASA and articulated the terms: 7/1/2022 - 7/1/2025; insurance contribution will increase to 20%; the orthodontic maximum will increase to \$3,000; building principals will receive a \$10,000 increase to their base salary and other unit members will receive an \$8,000 increase; subsequent years of the contract will increase based on the CPI with a minimum of 1% and a maximum of 2%; terminal pay will increase to \$50,000; and career increments will increase to \$6,000.

Mr. Tussie announced that an update on the Masera Advisory Committee will be addressed by Mr. McCann during the Buildings and Grounds update.

Mr. Tussie announced that the West Islip Boys Soccer Team won the State Championship and congratulated the coaches, players and parents.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the amended minutes of the November 4, 2021 Regular Meeting and the minutes of the November 23, 2021 Planning Session.

RECOGNITION

West Islip Soccer Team ~ Coaches Ed Pieron and Brian Cameron
Joseph Blackton, Jacob Cascio, Nicholas Castellino, Jack Delli-Pizzzi, John Fucci, Derek Gildar Vincent Grieco, Lucas Iacono, Matthew Kessler, Michael Krupski, Christopher Laino, Dylan Latargia, Aidan Lodie, Craig Marino, Brendan McMabon, Aidan McNally, Jesse Palmer-Combs, Vincent Puglisi, Aiden Richter, Zachary Siano, Noel Silva, Jack Stefanak, Joseph Washington

West Islip Association of School Administrators ~ Andrew O'Farrell , President

PERSONNEL:

Mr. Brian Taylor asked for a motion to approve the 12/9/2021 Personnel Agenda as listed in the backup.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the 12/9/2021 Personnel Agenda as listed:

<u>CIVIL SERVICE</u>	
CL-1	<u>PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENT</u>
	*Lauren Kasaba, Cafeteria Aide
	Effective December 13, 2021
	(Paul J. Bellew; Step 1; replacing D. Carere {Pre-K Aide})
CL-2	<u>RESIGNATION</u>
	Michael Nolan, Guard
	Effective December 1, 2021
	(District Wide)
	Catherine Schupak, Special Education Aide
	Effective December 10, 2021
	(Udall)
CL-3	<u>RETIREMENT</u>
	Susan Micucci, Cafeteria Aide
	Effective February 1, 2021
	(18.89 years)
CL-4	<u>LEAVE OF ABSENCE</u> (unpaid)
	Catherine LaMotte, Cafeteria Aide
	Effective December 13, 2021 to January 3, 2022
	(Udall)
<u>OTHER</u>	
	<u>CLUBS/ADVISORS 2021-2022</u>
	<u>BAYVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</u>
	Teaching Mindfulness to Kids Club, Debra Magee

CURRICULUM UPDATE

Mrs. Morrison informed the audience that all K-5 students started their field trips to the high school planetarium. In January, all Kindergarten and first grade teachers will begin to take Foundations Training in preparation for the 2022-2023 school year. Mrs. Morrison reviewed the preliminary information regarding the SEL student survey at the high school and when compared with national data, West Islip students were doing well in each area. Additional information will be shared when it becomes available.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Education Committee: Richard Antonello reported on the meeting that took place 12/7/2021. Items reviewed included the Pre-K program; a pilot math program for grades K-4; the use of Gradebook by the high school; the criteria for the selection of academic leaders; the IB program; and the administration of midterm exams in January.

Finance Committee: Richard Antonello reported on the meeting held on 12/7/2021. Items reviewed included the October treasurer's report; October extra-curricular report; October payroll summary; October financial statements; November internal claims audit report; November system manager audit report; payroll certification forms; and a change order. Mrs. Pellati discussed the ongoing audit by the state comptroller.

Buildings and Grounds: Peter McCann reported on the meeting that took place on 12/7/2021. Items reviewed included the security vestibule at District Office; the installation of solar panels on school roofs; the parking lot expansion at Paul J. Bellew; bond work and capital projects; and other capital improvement projects. The Maser Advisory Committee members were chosen and meetings will begin after the holidays. An independent consultant from ESBOCES will facilitate the committee meeting process.

Special Education Committee: Debbie Brown reported on the meeting that took place on 12/8/2021. Items discussed included upcoming student placements and the 2022-2023 budget.

Safety Committee: Tom Compitello reported on the meeting that took place on 11/16/21. Items discussed included additional door strikes for elementary schools; the lockdown recording; a camera audit; adding a school safety officer for security technology maintenance; the digital radio project; P.J. Bellew parking; building window signs; athletic contests; and COVID protocols.

Audit Committee: Ron Maginniss reported on the meeting that took place on 11/23/2021. Mr. Coffey and Mr. Hoffmann of Cullen & Danowski, LLP reviewed the Annual Risk Assessment report; all was in order. The upcoming area to be tested will be Informational Technology.

Health and Wellness: Peter McCann reported on the meeting that took place on 11/16/2021. Items discussed included the financial report; Color Run; Health and Wellness Newsletter; essential needs pantry; family connect night; and the PTSA social. The West Islip Staff Breast Cancer Awareness Fundraiser donated \$1,930 to the West Islip Breast Cancer Coalition. The next meeting will take place virtually on Tuesday, January 4 at 9:30 a.m.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The treasurer's report for October was presented: beginning balance \$43,055,299.36; ending balance \$30,904,019.51.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve General Fund budget transfers 4104-4114 and Capital Fund budget transfer 4107.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve Change Order - A1 Construction Services, Inc. (\$10,000) West Islip High School.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve Winkler Real Estate Amendment #11 to Contract.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve resolution re: destruction of unused and full ballot booklets from the May 18, 2021 election.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Burns informed the audience that the concert season is in full swing and encouraged residents to check out the district's Facebook page to see the High School Wind Ensemble performance. Two high school students represented West Islip in Rochester at the NYSSMA All State Winter Concert.

Mrs. Burns advised that a letter was sent to Governor Kathleen Hochul regarding the universal mask mandate, weekly COVID testing for staff and the possibility of a vaccine mandate.

Mrs. Burns wished everyone a joyous and festive holiday season.

The following residents wished to speak during an “Invitation to the Public”:

Tyler Burnett – Tyler is a 5th grade student at Oquenock Elementary and spoke about the implication of a New York State vaccine mandate.

Ruth Mineo/Grace Mineo – Mrs. Mineo and Grace spoke about the recent All State NYSSMA event and thanked Mrs. Burns and the Board for the opportunity extended to students to participate.

Lori Koerner - Mrs. Koerner spoke about the need for the community to come together during these difficult times and discuss options that are in the best interest of children and to celebrate gratitude.

Karen Phillips - Mrs. Phillips congratulated the Boys Soccer team for their achievements. Mrs. Phillips asked why the district’s quarantine rules are contrary to those of some local physicians. Mrs. Burns advised that the district must follow the local department of health guidelines which do not recognize testing out of quarantine.

Veronique Wallrapp - Mrs. Wallrapp expressed appreciation for what teachers do but feel some teachers do not support parental involvement in the classroom.

Amanda Barbara - Mrs. Barbara spoke about the youth mental health crisis and strings attached to ARP- ESSER funding and the protocols the district followed to obtain the funding. Mrs. Burns explained the process, that there is a link on the district website for feedback, and the district will provide more information in the next Lions Pride newsletter.

Catie Florea - Mrs. Florea feels it is not fair that parents have to be tested before entering schools when other districts only require that parents wear a mask. Mrs. Burns explained this is consistent with all others who work closely with students in the school environment.

Kristin Calder – Mrs. Calder questioned why the Department of Health updated nursing home guidelines but not school guidelines. Mr. Tussie advised that the current district protocols will continue through the holidays.

Nicole Winn - Mrs. Winn spoke about parents freedom of choice related to vaccines and that if vaccines are mandated, parents will pull their children out of school. Mrs. Winn spoke about Mr. Tussie’s choice to allow his daughter to attend an event although quarantined; Mr. Tussie advised that he did not intentionally break the rules.

Cassandra Sottile - Mrs. Sottile thanked Mrs. Burns and the Board for sending the letter to Governor Hochul. Mrs. Sottile shared concern about mandates and asked the Board to support parent choice to keep students in school.

Viktoria Evangeliou – Mrs. Evangeliou spoke about the need for parent involvement in the classroom.

Kevin Bolin – Mr. Bolin had questions regarding where data regarding mandates is obtained. Mrs. Burns advised that the data comes from the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, to which everyone has access. Mr. Bolin had questions regarding district reserves; Mrs. Pellati will follow up.

Toni Abbatiello - Mrs. Abbatiello spoke about the importance of having students learn from different perspectives and the importance of a diversified curriculum.

Kathryn Abbatiello - Mrs. Abbatiello spoke about Operation Shoe Drop, and while had no problem with parents protesting, took issue that the protest drew an offensive comparison between loss of civil liberties and the holocaust. Mrs. Abbatiello feels the DEI curriculum needs to be expanded and spoke about the effects and results of bullying. Mr. Tussie advised that the district will continue to work in the best interest of all students.

Claudia Worley - Mrs. Worley had concerns about the gates at Udall and Manetuck and asked why they are left unlocked. Mrs. Burns advised that the gates are a recurring problem and are deliberately cut when locked and will follow up with the Director of Buildings and Grounds. Mrs. Worley asked that the district be more transparent when threats occur in schools.

Doreen Hantzschel - Mrs. Hantzschel spoke about the destructive nature of bullying and the critical role of teachers. She spoke about teaching resilience to children and that prayer is important to their emotional and social development.

Lisa Curley – Mrs. Curley thanked the Board and Mrs. Burns for sending the letter to the Governor Hochul but asked why it was not shared in ParentSquare. Mrs. Curley requested that children be able to attend athletic events; Mrs. Burns explained that there are capacity limitations in the middle school gyms. Mrs. Curley advised the audience that on 1/6/2022 a bill will be on the legislature floor regarding COVID vaccine mandates.

Valerie Rivera - Mrs. Rivera spoke about COVID statistics and that 99.9 % of children are fine. She expressed concern about people being overly fearful and children’s mental health. Mrs. Burns stated that the district’s goal is to keep schools open and not to revert to hybrid or remote learning.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all members present voted in favor to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:42 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel, negotiations, and/or litigation.

Meeting reconvened at 10:46 p.m. on motion by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all members present voted in favor to approve attendance waiver for Student 1.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all members present voted in favor to approve attendance waiver for Student 2.

Meeting adjourned at 10:48 p.m. on motion by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by,



Mary Hock
District Clerk

All correspondence, reports or related materials referred to in these minutes are on file in the District Office.