



**NORTH BELLMORE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES – MAY 8, 2023**

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Business Meeting	Martin Avenue School 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, NY 11710	7:30 PM
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The Business meeting of the North Bellmore Union Free School District Board of Education was held on Monday, evening, May 8, 2023, in the All Purpose Room of the Martin Avenue School at 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, New York, and via Zoom Video Conference.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Melissa Cmar-Grote, President  
Christine Malloy, Vice President  
Rosemarie Corless  
Nina Lanci  
Christopher Nardo

Also present:

Marie Testa, Superintendent of Schools  
Janet Pollitt, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Christopher Powers, District Counsel  
Laurice Gunnels, District Clerk

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. Motion was made by Mrs.Lanci at 6:37 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Malloy to move into an executive session. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 8:06 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mrs. Cmar-Grote led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Malloy read the District’s Mission Statement.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:  
*Newbridge Road: 6th Grade  
BOE Representatives***

Ms. Lucci, the Principal of Newbridge Road, was happy to share the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade BOE Representatives met together to plan their vision for this evening’s presentation and described their desire to illustrate a tribute of their time attending Newbridge Road with the BOE and the community. Ms. Lucci then opened the floor to the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade BOE Representatives.

Alyssa Brunetti  
Hadley Gross  
Jeremiah Mejia

***Newbridge Road: 6th Grade  
BOE Representatives  
(continued)***

The students introduced themselves, and invited all to view a video presentation depicting memories of those past and present in attendance at Newbridge Road School. The video illustrated the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade BOE Representatives interviewing fellow classmates who spoke of their happiest memories from Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade including stories involving classroom and trip experiences, and from the faculty, some of whom graduated from Newbridge themselves, decades of memories and lifelong friends.

In closing, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade BOE Representatives offered their gratitude on behalf of their classmates for their amazing memories, and shared their excitement on making more memories as they move onto middle school. Mrs. Testa congratulated each student and presented them with the Board of Education Leadership Award certificates.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:  
*Computer Science***

Mr. Fischetti proudly introduced the world of Computer Science instruction in North Bellmore, and extended gratitude and appreciation to the BOE for their support in building this program and making this vision a reality. Mr. Fischetti described Computer Science as a science and a language, an ever-changing program, and spoke to its growth here in North Bellmore from the one-to-one I-Pads, to the expansion of instructional staff, and now a 21<sup>st</sup> century technological program including coding, robotics and 3-D Printing.

Mr. Fischetti shared a quote *“everyone should learn to program a computer because it teaches you how to think”*, and explained in coding the students are learning to think in a creative manner, a life tool that can be utilized in a multitude of areas developing problem solving skills, thinkers, designers, and engineers. Mr. Fischetti indicated students are developing real world skills, i.e., teamwork, how to work productively in group settings, and building on skills in a team environment.

In furtherance, Mr. Fischetti described the behind the scenes work of the Technology team, developing and changing the curriculum from year to year, investigating new ideas, and introducing new equipment. On the front end, he happily shared their enthusiasm and excitement of working with the students on a daily basis and viewing firsthand the academic success of this program. Mr. Fischetti proudly introduced his instructional team:

Michael Bevilacqua  
Kerry Penteck  
Catherine Schlaich

A slide presentation was prepared and narrated by the Technology Instructional team. The BOE, Administrators, and those in attendance were invited to walk among the displays while students demonstrated and described the process involved in their Exhibits:

**Computer Science  
(continued)**

PRESENTING THE OZOBOTS

Jameson Calderone  
Veronica Calise

PRESENTING GOOGLE CS FIRST

Dhruv Das  
Cole Marullo

PRESENTING LEGO SPIKE

Keria Ferris  
Claire Jerchau  
Luke Matchekosky  
Athena Quinn

**MOTION TO CONVENE TO  
PUBLIC HEARING:  
2023-2024 School Budget**

On a motion made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Malloy, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education convened into a Public Hearing of the 2023-2024 School Budget at 9:03 p.m. Mrs. Cmar-Grote on behalf of the BOE expressed gratitude to all the teachers in recognition of Teacher Appreciation Week.

Mrs. Rehak presented a detailed power point slide presentation of the budget and provided an explanatory narration. The budgetary slide presentations are available for review on the website under the Business Department. In summary:

- The three main components of the budget are Administrative, Programs, and Capital. Budgetary details comprised within each component was provided.

Administrative	10.54%
Capital	11.97%
Programs	77.49%

- The tax levy increase is 2.00 percent with a budget-to-budget increase of 5.49 percent for a total proposed budget of \$64,588,702.
- The proposal includes budgetary capital projects to upgrade electrical work at three buildings, and at Martin, replacement of fencing, not included in the grant, and a skylight.
- Proposition Two – Expend \$5.7 million from an *existing* Capital Reserve for Phase 2 of the ceilings and pavement reconstruction planned for Saw Mill Road and Park Avenue schools in the summer of 2024. Phase 1 approved last year is scheduled for this summer at John G. Dinkelmeyer and Martin Avenue schools. It was stressed Capital Reserve projects do not add to the tax levy.

As a final note, Mrs. Rehak reminded all of the Budget Vote and Annual Trustee Election to be held on May 16<sup>th</sup> from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Newbridge Road School.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Business meeting of April 4, 2023, and Special Meeting of April 18, 2023. Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS***(Agenda Items Only)*

There were no public comments relating to agenda items only.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs. Cmar-Grote advised that correspondence were received and will be addressed by the Board.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mrs. Lanci requested that the prior month report be included with the current report for comparison and review. She also requested that Mr. Newman, while signing as the preparer at the end of the report, should initial each individual page as does Mrs. Rehak currently. Mrs. Lanci offered her appreciation of their work.

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer's report for the month ended March 31, 2023. Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.

**BOARD COMMITTEE / HIGH SCHOOL REPORTS**

Mrs. Lanci reported that the High School District met last Wednesday, and was excited to share the celebration that evening of twenty-five teachers and administrators who received the honor of tenure. She discussed and reminded all of the upcoming Budget Vote of May 16, and directed community attention to the newsletter mailed to the homes and posted on the website for review. The next Board meeting will be held on June 7.

Mrs. Cmar-Grote announced and extended congratulations to Mrs. Lanci on receiving the Lions International President's Award this past weekend in Buffalo, New York, for her service to the Lion's Club and to this community for over twenty years. In furtherance, Mrs. Testa spoke to the foundation of the district, the mission and core values, and memorialized in over twenty-eight years of her tenure here, ten in her current position, the Lions have been here 24/7 in support of the families of North Bellmore. Mrs. Testa extended congratulations on an award well deserved, and offered a heartfelt gratitude to Mrs. Lanci for her dedication to the North Bellmore community.

**FINANCE**

The Board of Education acknowledged the review of the warrants that have been approved by the Claims Auditor for the month of April 2023.

Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve the Budgetary Transfers dated May 8, 2023. Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.

**PERSONNEL REPORT**

Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve the Personnel Report dated May 8, 2023.

- A. Appointments
- B. Leave Requests
- C. Resignations
- D. Retirement

Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Mrs. Malloy moved that the Board of Education approve the Staff Development Report dated May 8, 2023. Mrs. Corless seconded and motion carried 5-0.

**SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Mrs. Testa congratulated and welcomed the newest member to North Bellmore's probationary staff of teachers, Lauren Fasano. She proudly shared Ms. Fasano's professionalism, maturity in teaching, and intellectually heartfelt manner of speaking exhibited in observations by herself and other Administrators.

Turning districtwide, Mrs. Testa spoke to the following updates:

- Congratulations to all the band, orchestra, and chorus performers who participated in the spring concerts and extended gratitude to them for a phenomenal evening of entertainment.
- The second annual Kindergarten Showcase will be held on the evening of May 16. See the flyer and/or website for the schedule. Thank you to all the teachers, staff, and students under the direction of Mrs. Pollitt in the planning of this event.
- With respect to NYS Testing, gratitude was extended to Mrs. Pollitt for formulating the computerized testing in conjunction with the principals. There was increased participation in the ELA and Mathematics with less than half of the students opting out this year.
- Looking ahead to the summer, the Summer Scholar Backpack Program and book club will be returning. Look for more information to follow with respect to both in the future.
- New for this year is the launch of a reading buddies' program in partnership with the North Bellmore Public Library and the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District. The reading buddy program is for incoming first grade students who will be coupled with BMCHSD juniors and seniors. Participation and scheduling details to follow.
- The Special Education Department under the direction of Mrs. Malone are finishing up on annual reviews and finalizing the IEPs in preparation of the 2023-24 school year.
- Staffing and enrollment districtwide are being monitored closely at the central administrative level and the district will keep the BOE apprised of that.

In closing, Mrs. Testa was excited to remind all of upcoming events including the Budget Vote and the Kindergarten Showcase on May 16, and the Annual 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Track Meet on May 23 with a rain date of May 24 if necessary.

- CPSE/CSE REPORTS** Mrs. Malloy moved that the Board of Education approve the CPSE and CSE reports dated May 4, 2023. Mrs. Lanci seconded and motion carried 5-0.
- CONSENT AGENDA** Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve Item Nos. 14.1. through 14.9. Mrs. Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.
- NEW BUSINESS CONTRACTS** 16.1 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following contracts for the 2022-23 school year:
- Bellmore UFSD (Health & Welfare)
  - Behavioral & Neuropsychological Consultants, LLP
  - Fontanetta Neuropsychology, PLLC
  - Hempstead UFSD (Health & Welfare)
  - Stephen Perret, MD
  - Seneca Risk Consulting Group, LLC (2023/24)
- NBTA AGREEMENT** 16.2 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve a side letter of agreement between the North Bellmore UFSD and the North Bellmore Teachers' Association for an Extension of Unpaid Childcare Leave of Absence.
- DONATIONS** 16.3 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Coca Cola Give of a check in the amount of \$35.12 to be used towards the Principal Book of the Month Assembly at Saw Mill Road School.
- 16.4 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Newbridge Road School Faculty of a memorial bench in memory of Christine Kropp to be placed at Newbridge Road School (approximate value \$800).
- 16.5 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Clare of a Yamaha Xylophone Bell including stand and sticks. (Approximate value \$199.00) to be used by the music department at Newbridge Road School.
- 16.6 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Mrs. Susan Ptacek of 65 backpacks and school supplies for needy children in North Bellmore School District. (Approximate value \$1625.00).
- BOE REORGANIZATION / REGULAR MEETING DATE** 16.7 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education set the date of the July Board of Education Regular and Reorganization meeting date for July 10, 2023.
- REVISED 2023/24 SCHOOL CALENDAR** 16.8 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education adopt the revised 2023-24 school calendar (originally approved by the Board on January 12, 2023).
- SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANT** 16.9 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve a contract with School Construction Consultants for the 2023/24 school year.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Mrs. Lanci addressed continuation of livestreaming into the future based on the current number of visitors online. Mr. Fischetti reported a downward participation online and indicated this evening registered nine at the height of attendance. Mrs. Testa, in furtherance, reported during the pandemic there was an estimated 150-170 online regularly. Mrs. Lanci reiterated her suggestion and invited the public to come to the meetings in person, enjoy the presentations firsthand, and address any questions they may have directly to the BOE.

Mrs. Cmar-Grote conducted an inquiry with respect to livestreaming. Mrs. Corless was in agreement based on the significantly lower participation. Mrs. Malloy asked if the district could have the option to record the meetings and post them online for viewing. Mrs. Testa directed that question to Mr. Powers for clarification. Mr. Powers in response indicated that the executive orders previously signed by Governor Cuomo and Governor Hochul have expired and, therefore, it is the discretion of the Board to livestream, livestream and take questions, or record the entirety of the meeting and keep it on file. Mrs. Cmar-Grote inquired of Mr. Nardo if he had any comments to share and he agreed that a video recording may be a better option since livestream viewing is at such a low level.

Mrs. Cmar-Grote inquired if a resolution would be necessary to proceed. Mr. Powers indicated based on the feedback he heard this evening, the consensus of the BOE is to continue open public meetings, record them for availability through the District Clerk's office, and discontinue livestreaming and/or receiving questions online. Mrs. Cmar-Grote asked if all were in consensus and no negative responses were heard.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion was made to enter into Executive Session by Mrs. Lanci at 9:41 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Corless for matters pertaining to personnel. Motion carried 5-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Malloy, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 10:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurice Gunnels  
District Clerk