



NORTH BELLMORE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 14, 2019

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 Thursday evening, November 14, 2019, in the All Purpose Room of the Martin Avenue School at 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, New York.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Nina Lanci, President
John Ferrara, Vice President
Melissa Cmar-Grote
Rosemarie Corless
Jo-Ann Erhard

Also present:

Marie Testa, Superintendent of Schools
Carol Eskew, Deputy Superintendent (present for early executive session only)
Janet Pollitt, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Jason Fischetti, Director of Technology, CIO
Christopher Powers, District Counsel
Jeanne Canavan, District Clerk

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Motion was made by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, seconded by Mrs. Erhard to adjourn the public portion of the meeting and convene an executive session for the purposes of discussing negotiations. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 8:04 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mrs. Lanci led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Corless read the District’s mission statement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes from the business meeting of October 3, 2019. Mrs. Erhard seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

Mr. Ferrara moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the special meeting of October 29, 2019. Mrs. Corless seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

Mrs. Cmar-Grote moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the special meeting of November 4, 2019. Mrs. Erhard seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION
DISTRICT MISSION
AWARD**

Mrs. Testa stated that it is a special honor to recognize Miss Abigail Ptacek this evening for her passion, vision, and generosity. Abigail has been donating backpacks replete with all types of school supplies for the students of North Bellmore for the past seven years. Mrs. Testa thanked Abigail for gracing North Bellmore students with her humanitarian efforts and presented her with a district Mission Award.

Mrs. Lanci, on behalf of the Bellmore Lions Club, presented Abigail with a donation of a check to help her to continue with her generous efforts next year.

**STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVES**

Mr. O'Brien introduced the following sixth grade Board of Education representatives from Saw Mill Road School to report at this evening's board meeting: Nicole Saraceni, Samantha DiFranco, Avery Betancourt and Hallie Gillison. The students spoke about what they learned from attending the Anti-bullying conference at Hofstra University on October 7 where they learned about different types of bullying and discussed how to be up standers. They spoke about spreading their message about promoting kindness, and that bullying is not acceptable. They ended their presentation with a quote from Maya Angelou, *"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*

Mrs. Testa thanked the students for their report and presented them with a Leadership Award.

**SCHOOL BOARD
RECOGNITION**

Mrs. Testa congratulated the board members and thanked them for their outstanding service and support over the years to the North Bellmore School District and for continuing to strive to bring North Bellmore forward in terms of being the best district we can be.

Mr. Rosof, on behalf of the NB Principals' Association, also thanked the Board for their support and commitment to the mental health of the students and staff of North Bellmore and stated that a donation to the LI Crisis Center was made in the Board's name. Mrs. Kafka, on behalf of the NBTAs, read a poem to the Board and stated that a donation of Stop and Shop gift cards is being made to the families around the district in the

**SCHOOL BOARD
RECOGNITION**

Board's honor. Mrs. Paolillo, on behalf the NB Paraprofessionals Association, thanked for Board for helping all children in the district and stated that they are making a donation of Stop and Shop gift cards for families in need this holiday season, in honor of the Board.

Mrs. Wessel, on behalf of the Coordinating Council of PTAs, stated that a subscription to National Geographic Kids Magazine is being donated to each school in honor of the Board. Mrs. Testa added that the Martin Avenue PTA presented baked goods to the Board and thanked all the groups for their contributions.

The meeting recessed at 8:35 PM for a cake break and conversation in honor of Board Appreciation Month. The meeting reconvened at 8:55 p.m.

VISITORS

There were no agenda item related questions.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Lanci advised that correspondence was received and will be addressed by the Board.

**TREASURER'S
REPORT**

Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer's report for the month ended September 30, 2019. Mr. Ferrara seconded and the motion and was carried 5-0.

**HIGH SCHOOL
REPORT**

Mrs. Lanci reported that at last week's Board meeting the Board was honored in recognition of Board appreciation month. The Board enjoyed art presentations and a vocal performance by the students, which tied in the district's theme this year, *Closer to Their Hearts*. Two high school teachers were recognized as a NYS English Council Educator of Excellence. The External Auditor gave a favorable presentation on their audit ending June 30, 2019. The Board approved the date of May 19, 2020 for the Annual Budget Vote for the 2020-21 school year. High school graduation date was set for June 14, 2020, at NYCB Theatre at Westbury. The next meeting will be on December 4.

FINANCE

The Board of Education acknowledged the review of the warrants that have been approved by the Claims Auditor for the month of October 2019.

BUDGETARY TRANSFERS

Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve the Budgetary Transfers dated November 14, 2019. Mrs. Cmar-Grote seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

AUDIT REPORT

Mr. Ferrara moved that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, accept the Audit Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019, as presented by Nawrocki Smith, LLP, Certified Public Accountants. Mrs. Corless seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT**

Mrs. Testa thanked the Bellmore Lions Club for hosting their Annual International Peace Poster Contest, *Journey of Peace*. Mrs. Testa expressed her gratitude to the art teachers and students for their participation. One winner will be selected from each school and a grand prize district winner will be selected to move on to the International level.

Mrs. Testa reported that moving to a central registration process, has allowed the administration to keep a closer eye on the total district enrollment and class sizes. Currently, we are monitoring the following cohorts: Newbridge - grade 2, Park Avenue - grade 4, and Saw Mill- grade 3.

Mrs. Testa indicated that the average class size districtwide for general education is 20.66, which includes 95 sections. All schools, except for Saw Mill, are within the average. The average class size at Saw Mill is 22.28. The administrators continually watch the larger cohorts to determine if they require additional support.

After reviewing feedback from the administrators of the larger cohorts, Mrs. Testa learned that instruction was going well, however, asked the Board to consider adding the following support which has been the model used by the district in the past:

Saw Mill grade 3 and Newbridge grade 2- academic support for purposes of increasing opportunities of small group instruction. Implementation of the support will be overseen by the principals and adjusted according to need within classrooms.

Park Avenue, grade 4 – Mrs. Testa met with the principal and determined that additional support is not necessary at this time, as confirmed by the teachers.

Mrs. Testa asked the Board to approve the above-mentioned support for the cohorts at Saw Mill and Newbridge. The Board agreed. Mrs. Testa thanked the Board of Education for their support.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Mrs. Cmar-Grote moved that the Board of Education approve the Personnel Report dated November 14, 2019. Mrs. Corless seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

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

**STAFF
DEVELOPMENT**

Mrs. Cmar-Grote moved that the Board of Education approve the Staff Development Report dated November 14, 2019, as presented. Mrs. Corless seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

**BUSINESS DEPARTMENT
REPORT**

Mrs. Rehak gave the following updates:

Central Registration: Along with the new policy, we are revamping the District's registration process and packet. The District worked hard to centralize this process and these efforts are continuing. All requests come through the Business Office first to determine school placement and transportation requirements. We are also looking to make sure the District gets all the information we need to determine residency, but looking to reduce any redundancies.

Comptroller's Audit – We finalized the CAP, and filed it timely with the State Comptroller's Office and the Office of Audit Services which was due today.

nVision Conversion: Since we converted to nVision in August, everything seems to be running more smoothly, and BOCES has been a huge help to the District in this process. This week we implemented a new module for the District which includes accounts receivable. This will give the District a better handle on receivables at any given time, and it will reflect those items directly in our books and records, which is a best practice. It will also assist the District in any collection efforts throughout the year as we can produce aging schedules. Mrs. Rehak thanked Barbara Fillios in taking the initiative and learning this new module and getting it all set up for us.

Transportation: While it is much slower than in the beginning of the year, the District is constantly striving to make the routes better and more manageable for the students. Mrs. Rehak thanked Linda Van Name for all her persistency in getting things changed and updated accordingly.

Banking Needs/Rates: Mrs. Rehak met with Chase Bank and informed them she was not pleased with our current rates and costs of supplies. As reported last month, they have removed any costs associated with supplies on a go forward basis; however, she still was not satisfied with the rate. She then met with Sterling Bank, who was able to give the District a higher rate, and they reduced the required balance as compared with Chase. Based on our average balances, this increased rate and reduction in required balance should generate an additional \$55K in interest. We are moving forward with opening an account at Sterling.

In addition, the process in the District was to deposit money into a Checking account and move it from time to time into an interest bearing account

**BUSINESS DEPARTMENT
REPORT**

depending on warrants and payroll. We are changing this practice to have all money deposited into an interest bearing account and move it to payroll and checking on a bi-weekly basis to maximize the interest. With this change as well, we should generate an estimated additional \$75K per year in interest.

ESSA: It is time to get ready for the next wave of reporting. This will be a project for the next couple of months as it includes reporting actual 2018-2019 expenditures by building. Transparency we reported in 2019-20 budgeted expenditures by building. This was a project, but a little less daunting because we already had broken out some of the District's account codes by building. For the 2018-19 school year, nothing was broken out. As such, it will require a lot of research and analysis. In addition, how things are reported, i.e. regular education, special education, different program expenses, etc., is very different from Transparency. Therefore, this is a completely new template. Mrs. Rehak stated that she is confident we will get it done, but it will be a time consuming project nonetheless.

FOIL: We have received several FOIL requests over the last couple of months, and we have been very diligent in responding.

Food service: As we do not currently have a Food Services Director, the Business Office has taken over many of the responsibilities including all the monthly and annual reporting that are due to NYS Child Nutrition, submitting requests for reimbursement of our free and reduced meals served, working directly with the cooks and food servers, etc. We also sent in health inspection requests from the DOH as required by Child Nutrition. We recently hired a school lunch account clerk, and she has been terrific.

In hopes of replacing the director, we first pulled the civil service list, and there was no one on it. As such, we are now posting to hire a Director provisionally. Hopefully, next month I can report that we filled the position.

Vision and Life Insurance: We are up for renewal of our visions and life insurance policies. Life insurance and vision insurance was set to increase, but we were able to find another company to offer the same policies at our previous rate.

There is a new requirement to report not only the 180-day calendar, but now the instructional hour calendar as well. This is a new daily calendar with start, dismissal times, lunch, recess, and passing time. We are required to meet a 900-hour requirement for grades K-6. The Business office created the calendars, we met the requirement, and we filed the schedules. Thank you so much to Barbara Fillios for helping me put this together.

**BUSINESS DEPARTMENT
REPORT**

In addition, we filed a waiver to meeting this requirement. Even though we met it, the waiver covers 2018-19 through 2021-22. It was important to file this as it protects us for future years in case something happens that prevents us from meeting the requirement, like a hurricane Sandy or something similar.

ERS Audit: As part of the Comptroller's Audit, the State performed an ERS audit as well. This generated only two discrepancies and one was determined to be immaterial by NYSLRS and they dropped it. We sent a response earlier in the week as this was due in the current week as well. The other related to a specific employee, but it was also minor and fixed.

GASB 75 Full Valuation: Questar is starting to gather information for GASB 75 as we are in a full valuation year. This is the accounting and financial reporting for postemployment benefits other than pensions (i.e. healthcare benefits, life insurance, disability, etc.) In order to do the valuation and actuarial study, they require a lot of information from the District. Our benefits coordinator and payroll supervisor are working to get everything together quickly so we do not hold up the report in any way, as this gets incorporated into our year-end financials.

**CURRICULUM AND
INSTRUCTION REPORT**

Mrs. Pollitt gave the following updates:

Mental Health & Wellness: Youth Mental Health Parent University, hosted by Jo Ann Signorelli and Laura Campbell from LI Crisis Center, was a big success—approximately 75 attendees, parents and teachers. Thank you to Mrs. Lanci, Mrs. Cmar-Grote and Mrs. Corless for attending.

The first meeting of the Mental Health and Wellness Committee took place on November 6. Thirty teachers volunteered for the committee, along with our central administration, principal, parent and Board representatives. We reviewed standards, Board Policy, what programs we already have in existence, shared resources, and set goals for the committee. We are in the process of planning our 90-minute professional development on Mental Health for January and February.

Parent University: Approximately 12 families participated in the three-week Active Parenting NOW course in October.

Kindergarten Math Game Night is planned for Monday, November 25--- already 99 families are registered to attend.

Mrs. Pollitt and Mr. Fischetti are in the process of planning a Technology Parent University with the technology teachers.

**CURRICULUM AND
INSTRUCTION REPORT**

Professional Development: Mrs. McNamara, Ms. Speidel and Mrs. Malone attended a workshop last week with renowned author, Donalyn Miller, discussing the importance of student access to books and classroom libraries. A few teachers attended the after school session with her—Invest in Children’s Reading Lives all Year—home school connection, creating positive reading identities.

The coaches continue to work with our teachers implementing our FPC Reading Workshop resources.

On December 4, the coaches will work with our Grade 1 teachers on the use of student Readers’ Notebook. The District purchased Primary Marble Notebooks conducive to primary writing and the paper choice we provide within Writers’ workshop.

Branching Minds RTI Platform professional development was held at Martin Avenue on October 25 and is scheduled to be held at Saw Mill on November 22. We received very positive reviews from the Martin teachers. Mr. Rosof, Mr. O’Brien and Mrs. Pollitt, along with the two Saw Mill psychologists participated in a planning session today with the consultant who will present next week.

ENL: Samantha Sand was selected to be a presenter at the 49th Annual NYS TESOL Conference tomorrow in White Plains and will be teaching a technology course, “GET APPY With It” In Your Classroom.

Mrs. Pollitt will be attending a conference tomorrow about Restorative Practices to further our work in that area.

90 Minute PD Fall series continues with courses next week.

We are in the beginning stage of planning for the March Superintendent’s Conference Day.

School Counselor: A meeting was held with the component districts on October 25 to share elementary school counseling plans and to discuss ways in which the 6th grade Individual Progress Review meetings (a new state requirement) can be streamlined across all elementary districts, with the ultimate goal of passing along similar forms and information to the middle schools during the transition process. It was decided that all elementary school counselors will meet with the middle school counselors during the spring to share relevant student information, separate and aside from the regular transition meetings that already occur. Their next joint meeting will take place on December 4 where a representative from Naviance, a school counseling digital platform, will be demonstrating the

**CURRICULUM AND
INSTRUCTION REPORT**

use of the program across 6th, 7th and 8th grades. This is a potential resource that we could all consider using if it will serve our joint needs.

The elementary school counseling consortium across Nassau County will meet on November 25. This group will allow the exchange of ideas, information and best practices among participating districts who have also hired elementary school counselors.

**TECHNOLOGY AND CIO
REPORT**

Mr. Fischetti reported on the following updates:

In the ongoing effort to enhance our library media centers, we will be purchasing a set of iPads for each library so that they will have access all day long as required to enhance their instruction. The purchase will be funded by SSBA once we are reimbursed for current purchases. During the next two months of 90 minute PD, Mr. Fischetti will be working with the Librarians to create an iPad based coding curriculum. The Librarians are now in the process of researching apps and testing them independently.

Security initiatives: Intralogic was on site to make multiple repairs and to replace cameras that are beginning to fail after five years. Fortunately, the price of replacements has come down significantly. Our practice has been to replace them as they fail, but a bulk replacement is planned on Smart Bond once approved.

Cyber security: Mr. Fischetti stated that email is the weak point due to the human element. We purchased a new training software that will help all North Bellmore employees with email accounts to recognize phishing and scam related emails.

Tape Backup System is our front line of defense if we are so unfortunate to get encryption virus. Mr. Fischetti has been investigating a new version of a tape backup system, which is far more advanced, where any file written to any of the 40 backup tapes can be located by keyword search, no matter what tape the data is written to.

Mr. Ferrara asked if there were any updates on the security vestibules.

Mrs. Testa stated that we have received a \$250,000 grant from the County through Legislator McKeivitt for the purchase of security booths and we are currently looking at plans and designs.

Mrs. Testa added that we are also applying for \$150,000 grant through Senator Brooks for fencing at the schools, high-powered walkie-talkies and outdoor speakers.

**WOMEN OF DISTINCTION
AWARD RECOGNITION**

Mrs. Testa congratulated Mrs. Lanci on being nominated by Assemblyman McDonough and receiving the Women of Distinction Award, sponsored by the New York State Senate, in recognition of her many contributions, dedication and commitment to the community.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION
CSE/CSE REPORTS**

Mr. Ferrara moved that the Board of Education approve the CPSE and CSE reports dated November 7, 2019. Mrs. Cmar-Grote seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Mrs. Erhard, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote and passed 5-0 for the following consent agenda items: 16.1 – 16.6.

**NEW BUSINESS
CONTRACTS**

16.1 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the following contracts for the 2019/20 school year:

- Bowen Speech Therapy
- Center for Developmental Disabilities
- Helping Hands Consultation Services (Skilled Nurse Staffing)
- Helping Hands Consultation Services (Academic Tutoring)
- Helping Hands Consultation Services (Related Services)
- Seaford UFSD (Health & Welfare)
- Tutoring Service of Long Island, LLC

EXCESS OF EQUIPMENT

16.2 **BE IT RESOLVED**, to excess an Audiometer from Dinkelmeyer. It was old and beyond usefulness: Model MSA84-1, Serial # 23408.

DONATIONS

16.3 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept a donation from the Saw Mill Road School PTA of funds to be used to purchase of a second water bottle refilling station for the students of Saw Mill Road School.

16.4 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept an anonymous donation of a classroom carpet for Ms. Panchyn's classroom. (approximate dollar value \$297.14) to be used by the Saw Mill Road students.

STAFFING

16.5 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the North Bellmore Board of Education approve the Superintendent's recommendation to increase the Business Office staff by one part time Supervisor of Transportation position, effective January 2, 2020.

DONATION

16.7 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the North Bellmore Board of Education accept a donation from James Calderone of a check in the amount of \$200.00 to be used to provide resources for the Park Avenue School Community Garden.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

VISITORS

Mrs. Malloy (Pierce Ave.) asked if each class getting a certified teacher in the larger classes.

Mrs. Testa stated that, based on the principal's assessment, a certified teacher will be brought in to the classes as soon as we can to increase the amount of time in small groups. The instructional coaches will also

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continue to support the classes. She added that there would be no additional cohorts at Saw Mill, Newbridge Road or Park Avenue schools.

Mrs. Ianniello (W. Shelly Rd.) asked if the district would look at balancing the cohorts next year and when will the additional support start in the classrooms this year.

Mrs. Testa stated that the administrators are assessing the classes on a daily basis and that the extra support staff will be added as soon as possible. Planning and re-evaluation for next year's cohorts will begin in April and May.

Mrs. Lanci asked the Board's attorney to clarify religious holiday observance.

Mr. Powers explained NYS Education Law § 3210(1)(b)(ii) that gives the school boards the authority to close one or all of their schools on a particular day of religious or cultural observance, based on a determination that keeping the schools open would result in a waste of education resources because a considerable proportion of the student population is unlikely to attend school on that day.

The following community members expressed the importance of the EID holidays to the Muslim community and their families and requested that the district add the EID holiday to the school calendar for next year: Mrs. Moughal (N. Pierce Ave.), Mrs. Jafri (Peapond Rd.), Mrs. Umar (Queen St.).

Mrs. Umar stated that she made a FOIL request and the response was missing data. Mrs. Umar requested the missing data before the December Board meeting.

Mrs. Testa explained that, as per FOIL, she provided the only data that we had at that time.

Mr. Powers explained that the district is only responsible for providing documents that are already in existence in response to a FOIL request.

Mrs. Umar questioned why the district will be closed on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and requested that day be moved to recognize EID.

Mr. Powers stated that the Board has the authority to use their discretion on closing the school for the day.

Mrs. Testa stated that the component districts work collegiately with the high school district on the developing of the school calendar. She explained

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that the calendar changes every year depending on when the holidays fall. Mrs. Testa explained that, rather than placing a vacation day on the end of the winter recess this year, the day was assigned to the day before Thanksgiving. The Wednesday before Thanksgiving is not guaranteed going forward.

Mrs. Umar asked if the calendar decision will be made at the December Board meeting. Mrs. Testa said that it will be on the agenda.

Mrs. Peoponakis (Atlantic Ave.) and Mrs. Radigan (Montgomery St., Wantagh) stated that the children in third grade at Saw Mill need extra support and stated that it needs to happen soon.

Mrs. Testa stated that Mr. Rosof and Mr. O'Brien will have teachers in place for the next six months—not just for ICT, but also for all classes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mr. Ferrara, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote and carried 5-0, to adjourn the public portion of the meeting and convene an executive session for the purpose of discussing the employment history of a particular person at 10:46 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mrs. Corless, seconded by Mrs. Erhard and carried 5-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 12:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Canavan
District Clerk