



**NORTH BELLMORE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES – OCTOBER 14, 2021**

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, October 14, 2021, 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:

Rosemarie Corless, President
Jo-Ann Erhard, Vice President
Melissa Cmar-Grote
Nina Lanci
Christine Malloy

Also present:

Marie Testa, Superintendent of Schools
Janet Pollitt, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Jason Fischetti, Executive Director of Technology, Data and Information Services
Leyna Malone, Executive Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education
Christopher Powers, District Counsel
Laurice Gunnels, District Clerk

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m. Motion was made by Mrs. Erhard at 6:40 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote to move into an executive session. Motion was carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 8:02 p.m.

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

Mrs. Cmar-Grote read the District’s Mission Statement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Business meeting of September 9, 2021, and Special Meeting of September 21, 2021. Mrs. Erhard seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

- SPECIAL PRESENTATION** Mr. Michael Nawrocki presented the fiscal June 30, 2021, year-end Audit Presentation to the Board of Education. He expressed his gratitude to the Board for the opportunity to work with the District, to Mrs. Testa, Mrs. Rehak and Mrs. Filios, and the entire Audit Committee on their timely closing, and complimented all on their excellent cooperation. There were no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control, and no adjustments were necessary. A detailed Audit Report reflect a clean or unmodified opinion on the financial statements. The reports will be sent electronically to Albany tomorrow. Mr. Nawrocki inquired of the Board if there were any questions, and no questions were asked. Mrs. Corless thanked Mr. Nawrocki for his presentation and expressed her gratitude on behalf of the Board to Mrs. Rehak and the Business Office.
- PUBLIC COMMENTS** None.
- CORRESPONDENCE** Mrs. Corless advised that the Board received correspondence and it was discussed in Executive Session.
- TREASURER’S REPORT** Mrs. Erhard moved that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer’s report for the month ended August 30, 2021. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.
- BOARD COMMITTEE / HIGH SCHOOL REPORTS** Mrs. Lanci reported that the Board met last Wednesday, October 6. Mrs. Lanci began by honoring those students from Mepham, Calhoun, and Kennedy High Schools who were selected to participate in the 2021 NYS School Music Association All State Music Festival, Helena Fu from Mepham High School, the 2021 National Merit Semi Finalist, and Sofia LaSpina, also of Mepham High School, the first woman on Long Island to have completed a touchdown pass during a varsity football game. Mrs. Lanci on behalf of all congratulated those students on their accomplishments. Mrs. Lanci was also proud to announce that Calhoun High School has been named a 2021 National Blue Ribbon High School and congratulated Ms. Hollings and the staff of Calhoun for receiving that distinctive recognition. She concluded her report by noting that BMCHSD will be closed to students on November 2, Election Day/Superintendent’s Conference Day. The next Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 3.
- CONSENT AGENDA** Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 5-0 for the following consent agenda items: Nos. 10.1 – 10.6.
- FINANCE**
- 10.1 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent Schools, accept the Audit Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021, as presented by Nawrocki Smith, LLP, Certified Public Accountants.
- 10.2 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby accepts the 2020-21 Internal Audit Risk Assessment Corrective Action Plan.
- 10.3 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby accepts the 2017-18 Claims Auditing Process Internal Audit Corrective Action Plan.

**FINANCE
(continued)**

10.4 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby accepts the 2020-21 System to track and account for Children (STAC) Internal Audit Corrective Action Plan.

10.5 The Board of Education acknowledges the review of the warrants that have been approved by the Claims Auditor for the month of September 2021.

10.6 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the budgetary transfers dated October 14, 2021.

The Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of all resolutions included in 11.1 through 16.6.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT**

Mrs. Testa wished all a Happy October, and welcomed those Community members who are in-person as well as those attending online via live stream.

Mrs. Testa began with a report on Safety and Security. She expressed her gratitude to our Principals, the Facilities Department headed by Mr. Russo, and the faculty and staff for coordinating and participating in District wide safety drills (fire, lockdown, and hold in place drills), and holding debriefing sessions with the Safety Teams to review the protocols and make changes where necessary. The buildings and grounds were walked and inspected by Mr. Russo with Administrators and Principals. The Nassau County Police continue to patrol the area. Mrs. Testa reported that she, as a member of the Nassau County Councils School Superintendent's Safety Team, met with Homeland Security and was pleased to say that the North Bellmore School District adheres to all expected safety protocols and standards.

Mrs. Testa was happy to update the Board that the first grade parents and families who are new to the Community were afforded the opportunity to tour and view the environment their children attend on a daily basis to learn and grow. Mrs. Testa expressed her gratitude to the Principals, faculty, and staff for facilitating this.

In the District's continued movements toward normalcy, Mrs. Testa reported the following:

- The November Parent/Teacher Conference letters were distributed to the North Bellmore families. The parents are given the option to attend in person, via Zoom, or telephonically.
- Music Education – Orchestra and band instruction returned for Grades 4-6. The prospect of hosting concerts in the future is being reviewed.
- Daisies, Brownies, Boy Scouts, etc. are back in our schools. Thank you to Mrs. Lazaar and our Facilities Department for this coordination.
- Field Trips – Project Adventure (6th Grade) and the Newbridge Library field trips are part of the proposed schedule for the fall. Off site, on site, and virtual field trips are being explored as options. Each event will be taken into consideration separately.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT
(continued)**

Mrs. Testa was excited to announce that the Eagle Scout Project at Martin Avenue School is starting this weekend. Thank you to Mr. O'Brien, and especially to Christopher Dubon, former graduate of Martin Avenue School. Christopher is constructing a lending library outside the main entrance of Martin.

Mrs. Testa was pleased to report that there is a downward trend for COVID quarantines among students and faculty. Back in August, when school first began, there were 27 quarantined, and during the week of October 2nd, she was able to report only 2 children. Mrs. Testa also thanked Mrs. Rehak and Mrs. Fisher in providing testing in partnership with our component Districts for our staff members opting out of providing vaccination information.

Mrs. Corless thanked Mrs. Testa for providing all those updates.

PERSONNEL REPORT

11.1 Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci to approve the Personnel Report dated October 14, 2021. Mrs. Cmar-Grote seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

- A. Appointments
- B. Leave Requests
- C. Resignation
- D. Termination

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

11.2 Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci to approve the Staff Development Report dated October 14, 2021. Mrs. Cmar-Grote seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

BUSINESS REPORT

Mrs. Rehak began her report with the completion of the year-end audit. She was happy to report completing the financials in-house yielded a cost savings for the District of \$15,000. Mrs. Rehak noted that the unappropriated fund balance was brought back to the 4 percent statutory limit. She further went on to state that the capital reserve was funded for ceiling replacement and new pavement in parking/play areas, and explained that voters will have the opportunity to approve this capital reserve spending at the Budget Vote in May. If passed, Mrs. Rehak said the District will send a letter of intent to the NYSED for approval, and if approved, the District can start the bidding process with a timeline target for construction beginning in July of 2023 (two buildings per summer).

Mrs. Rehak continued with the following updates:

- 1) Now that the year-end audit is completed, the Financial statements will be uploaded tomorrow to NYSED and a copy will be placed on the website located under the Business Office Department.
- 2) NYS Transparency Report as previously reported was submitted. The State reviewed it and approved the submission.
- 3) Work on the ESSA Report submission will begin this month. This report is due by December 31st.

BUSINESS REPORT
(continued)

4) CRRSA Grant - The District did receive the initial 20 percent payment for GEER as was reported last month, and the initial 20 percent for ESSER was received on September 23rd.

5) ARPA Grant is still under review by NYSED and they were currently unable to provide a timeline for this process. Mrs. Rehak advised she will keep the Board apprised of updates.

6) Security Vestibules – The District went out to BID for the Security Vestibules last week. BID opening is scheduled for October 25th, 11 a.m., at the North Bellmore Public Library.

Mrs. Rehak continued with a report on Transportation. As previously reported there is a nationwide shortage in the industry for school bus drivers. As a result, the District has been experiencing late buses and limited routes causing lengthening travel time for some students. Mrs. Rehak stressed that this continues to be a priority and the District is in regular communication with Guardian on resolving these issues. Guardian has expressed in their discussions that they have all qualified personnel driving including their dispatchers, and are doing everything possible with respect to recruiting drivers. Mrs. Rehak went on further to state that the District will continue to keep everyone apprised when notified of any delays or situations that impact transportation. She again reiterated this is a District priority and expressed her continued appreciation of everyone's patience.

Mrs. Rehak was happy to report the furniture for the Computer Science and Library Media spaces will be arriving at the end of next week. She spoke of the extensive planning by Central Administration, Facilities, and Technology in purchasing furniture and equipment conducive for these programs. With that, Mrs. Rehak expressed the District's overall excitement in seeing this plan coming to fruition.

As a final note, Mrs. Rehak announced that Central Registration for Kindergarten 2022-2023 will commence November 15th.

Mrs. Lanci inquired of Mrs. Rehak about the cash flow (if a TAN would be necessary) and the status of state aid money. Mrs. Rehak responded that the library aid was received in September ahead of the normal timeframe. With respect to a TAN, Mrs. Rehak replied that it would not be necessary, that the cash flow has been very good for the past year and a half year, and she said that is projected out through the end of the year. Mrs. Lanci thanked Mrs. Rehak.

Mrs. Corless thanked Mrs. Rehak for her report and reiterated the savings by the District completing the financials in-house. Mrs. Testa followed up by further expressing her appreciation of Mrs. Rehak, and recognizing her dual qualifications as a Certified Public Accountant and Business Official for the District.

**CURRICULUM &
INSTRUCTION REPORT**

Mrs. Pollitt began her report by providing an update on the virtual language classes currently scheduled after school. The 5th/6th Grade sessions have 37 students in 5th grade and 37 students in 6th Grade with a maximum of 40 students per session. Mrs. Pollitt was happy to say that all students who registered have been afforded placement. More sections will be added if the demand requires.

Mrs. Pollitt then shared with the Board that she had communications from parents both telephonically and via e-mail regarding the possibility of returning language classes in person during school time. She explained the current platform utilized affords us the opportunity to offer multiple languages such as those offered at the Middle School level. She further went on to state that staffing for that in-house would be difficult. With that being said Mrs. Pollitt did express an understanding also of those parents who wish their children to concentrate on one language in a classroom environment. Mrs. Pollitt said she explored many new ideas with those parents and will take into consideration their suggestions for future planning.

Mrs. Pollitt continued by updating the Board with a report on ENL Services.

- There are currently 67 ENL students which is three percent of the total student population in North Bellmore.
- Earlier in the week our faculty and staff met with those teachers who have English Language Learners in their classrooms to assess and review practice rules and technology tools for bridging communication.
- Mrs. Pollitt, Mrs. Brugge, the Principal Liaison for the ENL Group, and the ENL Staff, will be hosting new for this year an ENL Family Orientation meeting on Monday, October 18th, at 7 p.m. at the Dinkelmeyer School.
- Microsoft Translator App – Mrs. Pollitt was excited to say that the usage and training of this app will now be expanded to the students enhancing their ability to translate thus further bridging communications.

Mrs. Pollitt informed the Board that the Policy Committee met this month. Policy items to be read and re-adopted are consolidation of the BOE Board Meeting procedures into Policy No. 2300 and 1230; and updates to Policy 1530/Smoking, Vaping, and other Tobacco Use; Policy 8505/Meal Charge and Prohibition against Meals; and Policy 5420/Student Health Services Regulation.

Mrs. Pollitt concluded by informing the Board of the following scheduled events:

- Saturday, October 23rd, is Drug Disposal Day. Mrs. Signorelli will be there representing North Bellmore.
- Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences - November 1st, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., and November 2nd, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Parents will have choice of in-person, zoom, or telephonically. School closed to students on November 2nd.
- Thursday, November 4th, Orientation Curriculum Meeting at the High School District. North Bellmore 6th Grade parents are invited to attend. Virtual and in-person options are available.

**CURRICULUM &
INSTRUCTION REPORT
(continued)**

Mrs. Corless inquired of Mrs. Pollitt regarding the language program - can a student take one language in the fall and a second in the spring. Mrs. Pollitt thanked Mrs. Corless for that question and replied that students do have that option enabling them to further explore their options prior to Middle School. Mrs. Corless thanked Mrs. Pollitt for that information.

Mrs. Malloy followed up with another question regarding the Kindergarten students and screening, and overall how the students were adapting to being back in school full time. Mrs. Pollitt thanked Mrs. Malloy for the inquiry and responded by expressing her gratitude to the teachers on their phenomenal job of welcoming the students back and addressing the number one priority which is social and emotional needs. Mrs. Pollitt informed the Board that K-screening went well taking into consideration most of the children due to the pandemic may not have had the typical Pre-School experience over the past year. She did say some acclimated very well while others are still making adjustments, but day by day it is getting better. Mrs. Pollitt again expressed her gratitude to the Teachers and Principals for the successful reopening and creating a very welcoming environment to aid the children in their transition.

TECHNOLOGY REPORT

Mr. Fischetti began by updating the Board on the District Staff and Student Data Reporting for 2021. He reported a timely submission and there were zero issues.

Mr. Fischetti introduced a new State requirement. Data for this submission will be obtained via *The Digital Equity Survey* to be completed by the parents. He explained the survey will contain questions in reference to availability and supplier of equipment, WIFI usage, etc. Mr. Fischetti reported the survey will be uploaded to the Parent Portal for completion and the results are to be submitted to the State in mid-December. Further details regarding the survey will be sent to the parents within the next two weeks.

Mr. Fischetti also reported that he is currently updating the three-year Technology Plan. This plan he explained incorporates and details what is currently existing (upgrades performed over the past two years since the last report), and projected future planning. This report is due May of 2022.

As an update on I-Pad equipment, Mr. Fischetti was happy to report that distribution of all I-Pads for Grades 2 through 6 was completed today. K-1 I-Pads have been received and the Technology Department is currently working on preparation of that distribution. For K-1, crossover instruction between Library Media and Technology is being explored.

In closing, Mr. Fischetti reported on the new Computer Science Program. He informed the Board he is currently working with Syntax to create a space on the website to house the curriculum for the program and share photos of the exciting and new student experience.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION
REPORT**

Mrs. Malone began her report by addressing the North Bellmore Special Education Plan on the Agenda for Board approval this month. The plan details District policies, procedures, and practices pertaining to Special Education. Mrs. Malone recognized Ms. Eskew and Dr. Rich for their tremendous work on this plan prior to her arrival. The report has been updated for this school year.

As a follow-up to last month, Mrs. Malone provided a status report on student vaccination. All students are in school and vaccination reporting is up to date. Mrs. Malone expressed her gratitude to the Building Nurses for their extensive follow-up.

Mrs. Malone continued with an update on in-service training for the Special Educators. Next week, as part of the October Professional Development, she reported the Special Educators will participate in "Data Collection and Progress Monitoring". This program is designed to teach educators how to collect and utilize data to analyze a student's progress.

Mrs. Malone, also in line with training (expressing her gratitude to Mrs. Politt), was happy to report that the District Reading Teachers are participating in the Wilson or the Orton-Gillingham Practicums. She reminded the Board of the difficulty this past summer in securing Wilson certified teachers for the ESY Program. Mrs. Malone was happy to share at the conclusion of this training the District will have certified teachers in the Reading Department.

Looking ahead, Mrs. Malone reported she met with the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District along with the component Districts regarding transitioning 6th Grade students to the Middle School. She informed the Board that on December 13th, there will be a Parent Workshop focusing on this transition.

Mrs. Malone concluded her report with an update on upcoming SEPTA meetings.

- Monday, October 25th – Presentation on *Anxiety in Children*. All Community members are welcome. The Zoom is scheduled to start 7:30 p.m.
- In November there will be a meeting regarding transitioning to the high school/middle school level. Mr. Arlin, Executive Director of Alternative Education at BMCHSD, will be presenting.

CPSE/CSE REPORTS

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the CPSE and CSE reports dated October 7, 2021. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Erhard, and carried 5-0 for the following consent agenda items: Nos. 16.1 – 16.7.

NEW BUSINESS CONTRACTS

16.1 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the following contracts for the 2021-22 school year:

- Bellmore UFSD
- Bowen Speech Therapy
- Caring Hands Home Care, Inc. (Nursing services)

**NEW BUSINESS CONTRACTS
(continued)**

- Hagedorn Little Village School
- Harmony Hearing & Speech Center
- Island Trees School District (Tuition - summer 2021)
- Lawrence Public Schools (Health and Wellness 20/21)
- Rockville Centre UFSD (Tuition - summer 2021)
- South Shore Country Day School (UPK)
- TLC Day Care (UPK)

DONATIONS

16.2 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Stop & Shop A+ Rewards in the amount of \$308.84 to be used to purchase recess equipment to benefit the students of John G. Dinkelmeyer School.

16.3 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Stop & Shop A+ Rewards in the amount of \$1,299.93 to be used to enhance future needs of students at Newbridge Road School.

**SECOND READING/
ADOPTION:**

- Policy Nos. 2300
- 1230
- 1530
- 8505

- 16.4 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept the following policies for a reading and re-adoption:
- Policy No. 2300: Board of Education Meetings-Types, Agendas, Procedures and Minutes
 - Policy No. 1230: Public Participation at Board Meetings
 - Policy No. 1530: Smoking, Vaping and Other Tobacco Use On School Premises Regulation No. 5420-R: Student Health Services Regulation
 - Policy No. 8505: Meal Charge and Prohibition Against Meal Shaming Policy

**CONSOLIDATION:
POLICY NO. 2300**

- 16.5 **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education abolish the following policies that have now been consolidated into Policy No. 2300:
- Policy No. 2210: Board Reorganizational Meeting
 - Policy No. 2310: Regular Meetings
 - Policy No. 2320: Special Meetings
 - Policy No. 2330: Executive Sessions
 - Policy No. 2340: Notice of Meetings
 - Policy No, 2342: Agenda Preparation and Dissemination
 - Policy No. 2350: Board Meeting Procedures
 - Policy No. 2360: Minutes

**NBUFSD PLAN OF SERVICE
FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

16.6 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education adopt the North Bellmore School District Plan of Service for Special Education.

TRANSPORTATION

16.7 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve a new transportation contract with Dell Transportation Corp. for the 2021/22 school year.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Reddington (Gunther Place) – Questioned the utilization of Microsoft 365 versus Google Classroom for 5th/6th Grade classrooms. Mr. Fischetti responded that this is a popular question that has been asked prior ... why Google, why not Google. Mr. Fischetti then reflected on a period four to five years ago when the District did pilot Google Classroom in the 6th Grade. Unfortunately, he further explained, there were privacy issues, e-mail usage complications, and features that could not be disabled such as the chat rooms. It was at that point, he said, the decision was made to utilize the I-Pads and Microsoft 365. While Mr. Fischetti did agree that Google Classroom has come a long way, Microsoft 365 is a better platform for the students moving forward especially into the outside world. Mr. Reddington did comment that while it may be helpful for the outside world, the Bellmore Merrick Central High School District utilizes Google Classroom in Grades 7 through 12. Mr. Fischetti reiterated again the problems with Google Classroom when it was first introduced into North Bellmore and the ultimate decision to utilize the I-Pad/Microsoft 365. Mr. Fischetti further stated based on the functionality and the seamless ability of the students to work with it, we stayed on that track.

Mr. Harsenyi (Natta Boulevard) –1) Test site – Why is testing being performed at Martin; why not use an empty building rather than an active building for this. Mrs. Testa replied that currently all buildings are active with children. The time slot for testing is after school between the hours of 3:30 to 4:30. Mrs. Testa did stress this is a screening test and not for diagnostic purposes. With this being said, she further went on to say that other parents have written to her and the Board will consider looking at other options. Mr. Harsenyi expressed his appreciation of that.

Mr. Harsenyi (Natta Boulevard) – 2) Health and Wellness – Where can the teacher's information be located? Mrs. Testa responded that Health and Wellness can be found on the website under "*Prevention*", and she would follow-up with him on how to locate it.

Ms. Vargas (West Shelley Road) What is the plan/timeframe for live learning for students that have to quarantine? Mrs. Pollitt responded that live streaming at the elementary level is not as common as in the high school level, and if live streaming was implemented, it would not be a full day. She further explained though wiring has been completed, implementation of live streaming in any capacity would require training of our staff. The District has not moved toward this model yet and are still evaluating.

Ms. Pascalli (Briggs Street) – Now that testing has commenced for non-vaccinated employees, testing sites are set up inside various elementary schools including Martin Avenue. Can these testing sites be moved outdoors such as drive-by testing ... schools are for educating students and are not health care facilities. Mrs. Corless responded that this test is for screening purposes, not diagnostic, and the students are not in the location where testing is being performed. Mrs. Corless thanked Mrs. Pascalli for her suggestions and noted it would be taken under consideration.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
(continued)

Ms. Zukowski (Oak Street) – 1) When are the next Board of Ed seats opening on the Board and how can someone make the ballot? Mrs. Corless replied that certain members are up each year and the election for those seats is held yearly at the Budget vote. She further stated that you may petition to be placed on the ballot at the end of March, the beginning of April, if you're interested in running.

Ms. Zukowski (Oak Street) – 2) How can we update our ball fields and basketball courts? We also need better lighting to use them. Mrs. Testa responded that the District is presently in conversation with the North Bellmore North Merrick Little League regarding refurbishing the fields at Saw Mill Road and this would be a State project. With respect to lighting, Mrs. Testa did indicate that those updates would have to be done through PSEG. Currently the fields close at dusk and some neighborhoods ordinances do not allow for it. Mrs. Testa indicated she would address this with the Facilities Department and see what options are available.

Ms. Zukowski (Oak Street) – 3) Requested to make a statement and addressed the Board regarding foreign language in the schools, expressing a priority to have it return in-person during school time. Mrs. Corless thanked Mrs. Zukowski for her input for consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 9:37 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 8, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurice Gunnels
District Clerk