



**NORTH BELLMORE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES – December 14, 2023**

Business Meeting	Martin Avenue School 2616 Martin Avenue, North Bellmore, NY 11710	6:00 PM
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The Business meeting of the North Bellmore Union Free School District Board of Education was held on Thursday evening, December 14, 2023, 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:

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

Also present:

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

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| CALL TO ORDER | The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. A motion was made by Mrs. Corless, seconded by Mrs. Lanci to move into an executive session. Motion was carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 6:46 p.m. |
| PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE | Christine Malloy led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. |
| MISSION STATEMENT | Mrs. Corless read the District’s Mission Statement. |
| PUBLIC HEARING –
VOUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS
PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION | Mrs. Rehak described and detailed the provisions associated with the Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a enacted in North Bellmore in 2015 authorizing a partial exemption for eligible volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers with 5 years of service from school taxes. Mrs. Rehak reported on March 28, 2023, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman signed Local Law 2-2023 modifying the Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a from 5 years to 2 years of service. All other provisions remain the same, i.e. exemption up to 10 percent of the assessed value of the real property, lifetime exemption for eligible workers with more than 20 years of service and to a deceased enrolled member’s un-remarried spouse if such member is killed in the line of duty. |

**VOUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS
PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION
(continued)**

Mrs. Rehak indicated BOE approval is required for the district to opt in the new provision reducing the required years of service from 5 years to 2 years, and it must be submitted by January 2, 2024. See Agenda Item 15.8.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS
Saw Mill Sixth Grade BOE
Representatives**

Mrs. Malloy was happy to welcome the Saw Mill Road BOE representatives present this evening. Mr. Rosof, Principal, and Mr. Madden, Vice Principal, of Saw Mill Road School described the unique presentation this evening illustrating the core values of the school district with the variety of cultures comprising the North Bellmore schools and community.

Mr. Madden offered appreciation for the hard work portrayed by the students in preparation for this evening.

Saray Torres Beltran
Edwin Escobar Miranda
Maryam Khan

Mysha Liu
Elijah Marcelin
Anastasiia Nikitina

The student BOE representatives spoke collectively of their homes/families, background and education in a unique and magnificent display of cultural native languages including Spanish, Mandarin, Urdu, Creole, and Ukrainian, and reiterated their messages in English.

Mr. Madden congratulated and applauded the students on their amazing presentation. He then invited the students up one more time, and to the BOE and those in attendance each student offered their gratitude and appreciation for those in attendance by saying “*thank you*” each in their native language.

Mrs. Malloy commended the children for their words beautifully displayed in their respective languages illustrating their strength and courage, and expressed gratitude for the amazing presentation this evening. Mrs. Testa, reiterating the words of Mrs. Malloy, spoke to the greatness of diversity and the overall inspirational message illustrated. Mrs. Testa and Mrs. Malloy presented the students with certificates.

TENURE RECOGNITION

Mrs. Testa opened the festivities this evening by happily congratulating the North Bellmore tenure recipients:

- Jacqueline Johnson, Park Avenue School (Reading) – *Not present*
- Kerry Penteck, Technology Department – *Not present*
- Jeannine Steinert, Martin Avenue School
- Jennifer Toomb, Newbridge Road School

Mrs. Testa spoke to the rigorous observations utilized by the administrators and staff for this esteemed honor and the individualized efforts of each recipient illustrating their workmanship, dedication, and kindness as gifted educators. In furtherance, Dr. Yannucci, Principal of Martin Avenue, Ms. Licci, Principal of Newbridge Road, Ms. Pirozzi, on behalf of the NBTA, Ms. Calvagno of the PTA, and esteemed colleagues and friends offered congratulatory words and sentiments in their celebration this evening.

TENURE RECOGNITION
(continued)

In closing, Mrs. Testa with heartfelt appreciation proudly reiterated the accomplishments, and professed excitement for their future growth as educators in North Bellmore.

The business meeting was temporarily interrupted for cake in celebration of tenure at 7:31 p.m. and the meeting reconvened at 7:48 p.m.

BOE DISCUSSION
Bus Safety

Bus Safety was raised as a topic for discussion specifically the usage of seatbelts especially in light of the multiple school bus accidents that have occurred in other districts/localities. Mrs. Testa reviewed the state law surrounding seatbelts on school buses, i.e. installation and accessibility to passengers of seatbelts is required on all large school buses manufactured after July 1, 1987, school bus drivers are required to wear seat-belts, and the usage of federally approved and properly installed child safety seats. She spoke of annual bus drills the school district performs for teachers and students regarding bus educate and safety rules including the functionality, demonstration, and usage of the seatbelt. Currently she explained New York State does not require passengers on school buses to wear seatbelts, and the institution of policies outside the guidance of New York State by a school district could be a liability issue.

Town Hall Concept/Ideas

Discussion ensued regarding the potential townhall meeting including the timeframe, i.e., early spring, etc., and topics for discussion to be considered. Recommendation was made to speak to Coordinating Council from each building regarding potential topics, i.e. safety, playgrounds, construction, etc.

Potential Work Session to Discuss BOE Survey

The usage and goals for a possible BOE survey, and a potential work session including the timeframe for discussion surrounding same was raised. Concerns of outreach to the community regarding the survey outside of the school community included the possibility of placing the survey in the local newspaper and/or the school newsletter which is distributed locally to all residents.

Revised BOE Goals 2023/24

Mrs. Malloy confirmed and the BOE approved the revision under Goal No. 1, Item 2, the word "analysis" to "presentation" as recommended by Mrs. Testa and previously discussed with the BOE. Mrs. Testa confirmed the revision in the text and informed the BOE that the BOE Goals for 2023/24 will be uploaded to the website tomorrow.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a Motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Corless, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education approved the minutes of the Business meeting of November 2, 2023.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
(Agenda Items only)

Guidelines for Public Comments was communicated by Mrs. Malloy on behalf of the Board of Education. There were no public comments relating to agenda items only.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Malloy advised that the Board received correspondence and a discussion was held during the executive session.

TREASURER'S REPORT

On a Motion made by Mrs. Corless, seconded by Mrs. Lanci, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education approved the Treasurer's report for the month ending October 31, 2023.

BOARD COMMITTEE / HIGH SCHOOL REPORTS

Mrs. Lanci indicated the high school district met last week and proudly reported that BMCHSD has been named the 2023 College Board Advance Placement District of the Year for medium sized school districts. She explained that out of 12,000 districts in the United States and Canada, this distinction is awarded to one school in each size category, i.e. small, medium, and large. She congratulated the BOE, the Administrators, and the teachers on this great honor. Mrs. Lanci reported a donation was accepted on behalf of the Community Cupboard and she offered gratitude to those families who are continuing to donate. With respect to upcoming events, she reminded all of the upcoming schedule of winter concerts at Kennedy, Calhoun, and Mephram. The next Board meeting is January 4.

FINANCE

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

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Testa happily introduced Kristina Spithogiannis, the new RTI Coordinator. She spoke to the extensive search, and congratulated Kristina on her appointment and welcomed her to the North Bellmore School District community.

Moving on, Mrs. Testa informed the BOE of districtwide updates:

- The steam traps district wide requiring replacement were completed, a maintenance performed through the Facilities Department under the direction of Mr. Russo.
- With respect to Security, the district sent a community outreach notification regarding the implementation of Text 911 communication with the Nassau County Police Department for emergency situations.
- Congratulations to the music teachers and students on the winter concert performances currently occurring districtwide.

In closing, Mrs. Testa proudly reiterated the sentiments of Mrs. Lanci regarding the esteemed distinction the BMCHSD received and reported Mr. Harrington invited the component elementary school districts to the celebration. Mrs. Testa spoke to the outstanding achievement of the High School district, and shared equally her pride in the elementary districts. She spoke of appreciation and gratitude of the work performed collaboratively among the districts strengthening the bond of communication and curriculum ultimately measured by the success of the students.

PERSONNEL REPORT

On a Motion made by Mrs. Corless, seconded by Mrs. Lanci, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education approved the Personnel Report dated December 14, 2023.

- A. Appointments
- B. Change of Status
- C. Leave Requests
- D. Resignations

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

On a Motion made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education approved the Staff Development Report dated December 14, 2023.

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mrs. Rehak preparation for the 2024/25 proposed budget has begun, and the Business Department is working with the buildings and the various departments on their respective budgets. She provided a copy of the Budget Calendar to the BOE and indicated it will be posted on the district website.

Mrs. Rehak recapped for the BOE the School Lunch Excess Fund Balance Plan for the last fiscal year which included the purchase of cafeteria tables and chairs for the Newbridge Road, Martin, and Park Avenue schools, new ovens for all district school kitchens, and two reach-in freezers. She explained while all items were ordered prior to 6/30/2023, they were not ready for delivery until after the fiscal school year ended. Since the money was not expended prior to the end of the fiscal year, Mrs. Rehak indicated the district had to submit an updated Excess Fund Balance Plan.

In furtherance of this work, the plan moving forward was to purchase the table and chairs at the two remaining buildings. Prior to ordering, Mrs. Rehak detailed for the BOE an issue with the Newbridge Road kitchen floor. Temporary repairs have been performed but the floor will have to be inspected and replaced. The purchase of additional cafeteria equipment may need to be curtailed depending upon the scope of the work involved. Mrs. Rehak indicated she will keep the BOE apprised as more information becomes available.

Moving forward, Mrs. Rehak was excited to say the plans for Phase II, ceiling and pavement replacements at the Park Avenue and Saw Mill Road schools, were received and under review in preparation for submission to the State. Phase III of the project for Newbridge Road and Gunther Schools will be on the May 2024 ballot projected to start in the summer of 2025. Mrs. Rehak indicated more information with respect to this will be discussed in the budget meetings over the upcoming months.

CPSE/CSE REPORTS

On a Motion by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, seconded by Mrs. Lanci, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education approved the CPSE and CSE reports dated December 7, 2023.

**CONSENT AGENDA
(Item Nos. 15.1 to 15.7)**

On a Motion made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Corless, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education approved Item Nos. 15.1 through 15.7.

BUSINESS CONTRACTS

15.1 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the following contract for the 2023-24 school year:

- Dorothy Ahl
- Association for Children with Down Syndrome, Inc.
- Bellmore UFSD
- Locust Valley CSD
- Malverne UFSD
- Mid Island Therapy Associates, LLC DBA All About Kids
- Wee Friends Too Nursery School

POLICIES FOR SECOND READING:

*Policy Nos. 6640
4321.12*

15.2 The Board of Education accepted the following policies for a second reading:

- Policy 6640: Capital Assets Accounting
- Policy 4321.12: Timeout and Physical Restraint (All Students)

ADOPTION OF POLICIES:

*Policy Nos. 6640
4321.12*

15.3 The Board of Education adopted the following policies for a second reading:

- Policy 6640: Capital Assets Accounting
- Policy 4321.12: Timeout and Physical Restraint (All Students)

AMENDMENT TO TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT

15.4 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby approved the Amendment to the July 1, 2023 agreement with Guardian Bus Company Inc for the provision of transportation services to the School District for the 2023-2024 school year in accordance with a written agreement and Amendment with Guardian Bus Company, Inc.; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education President is hereby authorized to sign said amendment.

DONATIONS

15.5 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepted a donation from the Park Avenue School students and families, Class of 2023, of two fence liners, 4 ft. x 20 ft., Park Pride Forever and Park Avenue School (Approximate value \$924.00).

15.6 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepted a donation from the Bellmore Lions Club of a check in the amount of \$1,500 to the School Lunch Fund to supplement lunch cost for two students as scholarship.

EXCESS AND SELL TECH EQUIPMENT

15.7 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education excess and sell 325 6th Generation iPads to Refreshed TECH that will no longer accept IOS updates which are required for our applications. (See attached list.)

NY REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW SECTION 466

On a Motion made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 4-0, the Board of Education approved Item No. 15.8. Mrs. Corless abstained from the vote due to immediate family/personal association with the volunteer service.

**NY REAL PROPERTY TAX
LAW SECTION 466
(continued)**

15.8 WHEREAS, New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a was enacted to provide eligible volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers with a real property tax exemption from school taxes on real property owned by the eligible volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker so long as the school district in which the real property is located, after public hearing, adopts a resolution authorizing the exemption subject to the requirements of New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a; and

WHEREAS, New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a provides for the additional benefits conferred by the statute applicable to the exemption from school taxes so long as the School District which has authorized the exemption under Section 466-a adopts a resolution authorizing such additional benefits;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District hereby authorizes the application of the Volunteer Firefighter and Ambulance Worker Real Property Tax Exemption as contained in New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a in the amount of ten percent of assessed value; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, pursuant to New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a(2)(d), the Board of Education establishes a minimum service requirement for each applicant to be two years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, pursuant to New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a(2)(d), the Board of Education requires that application be made to local agency responsible for assessment to certify the individual as an enrolled member of a volunteer fire company, fire department or volunteer ambulance service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, pursuant to New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a(6), the Board of Education designates that application for exemption must be made to the local agency responsible for assessment of real property in the School District; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Bellmore Union Free School District, does hereby continues an exemption granting an otherwise eligible volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker the exemption provided for in this resolution for the remainder of his or her life if the eligible volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker accrues more than twenty years of active service and is so certified by the authority having jurisdiction for the incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department or volunteer ambulance service; and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Bellmore Union Free School District does hereby continues an exemption claimed pursuant to New York Real Property Tax Law 466-a to a deceased enrolled member's un-remarried spouse if such member is killed in the line of duty, subject to the requirements set forth in New York Real Property Tax Law 466-a(4); and

**NY REAL PROPERTY TAX
LAW SECTION 466
(continued)**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Bellmore Union Free School District, does hereby continues an exemption claimed pursuant to New York Real Property Tax Law 466-a to a deceased enrolled member’s un-remarried spouse, subject to the requirements set forth in New York Real Property Tax Law 466-a(5).

**CONSENT AGENDA
(Item Nos. 15.9 to 15.11)**

On a Motion made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Corless, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education approved Item Nos. 15.9 through 15.11.

**JOINT MUNICIPAL
COOPERATIVE BIDDING
PROGRAM**

15.9 SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024 RESOLUTION (A) JOINT MUNICIPAL COOPERATIVE BIDDING PROGRAM

WHEREAS, various educational and municipal corporations located within the State of New York desire to bid jointly for generally needed services and standardized supply and equipment items; and

WHEREAS, the North Bellmore Union Free School District, an educational/ municipal corporation (hereinafter the “Participant”) is desirous of selectively participating with other educational and/or municipal corporations in the State of New York in joint bidding in the areas mentioned above pursuant to General Municipal Law § 119-o and Education Law Section 1950; and

WHEREAS, the Participant is a municipality within the meaning of General Municipal Law § 119-n and is eligible to participate in the Board of Cooperative Educational Services, First Supervisory District of Suffolk County (hereinafter Eastern Suffolk BOCES) Joint Municipal Cooperative Bidding Program (hereinafter the “Program”) in the areas mentioned above; and

WHEREAS, the Participant acknowledges receipt of the Program description inclusive of Eastern Suffolk BOCES’ standard bid packet and the general conditions relating to said Program; and

WHEREAS, with respect to all activities conducted by the Program, the Participant wishes to delegate to Eastern Suffolk BOCES the responsibility for drafting of bid specifications, advertising for bids, accepting and opening bids, evaluating bids, awarding via Eastern Suffolk BOCES Board approval, and reporting the results to the Participant.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Participant hereby appoints Eastern Suffolk BOCES to represent it and to act as the lead agent in all matters related to the Program as described above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Participant hereby authorizes Eastern Suffolk BOCES to place all legal advertisements for any required cooperative bidding in Newsday, which is designated as the official newspaper for the Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a Participant Meeting shall be held annually consisting of a representative from each Program Participant. Notice of the meeting shall be given to each representative at least five (5) days prior to such meeting; and

**JOINT MUNICIPAL
COOPERATIVE BIDDING
PROGRAM
(continued)**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an Advisory Committee will be formed consisting of five to ten representatives of Program Participants for a term of three (3) years as authorized by General Municipal Law §119-o.2.j.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Agreement with the Participant shall be for a term of one (1) year as authorized by General Municipal Law §119-o.2.j.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Participant agrees to pay Eastern Suffolk BOCES an annual fee as determined annually by Eastern Suffolk BOCES to act as the lead agent for the Program.

This Resolution solely applies to the Cross Contact for Bid: Flooring Supply and Installation.

**BUDGET VOTE/ELECTION:
RECORD RETENTION AND
DISPOSITION**

15.10 WHEREAS, on December 8, 2022, the North Bellmore Union Free School District conducted a bond vote; and

WHEREAS, the District Clerk is currently in possession of all voted ballots resulting from the 2022 bond vote; and

WHEREAS, the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule LGS-1 provides for the destruction of such ballots after 1 year from the date of the vote; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore School District order the destruction of all voted ballots resulting from the bond vote of December 8, 2022.

**EMERGENCY RESOLUTION
(Newbridge Road School)**

15.11 EMERGENCY RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on or about November 29, 2023, the School District discovered an electrical fire in the gymnasium at Newbridge Road School causing damage to the ceiling and the gym floor; and

WHEREAS, the School District discovered due to the electrical fire in the gymnasium at the Newbridge Road School, the entire ceiling needed to be replaced as well as sections of the gym floor in order to provide a safe and playable surface, and preserve the health, safety and welfare of the students and staff in the building and to preserve the integrity of the property;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District declares the work to replace the ceiling and parts of the gym floor at the Newbridge Road School to be an emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District authorizes the above referenced work as an ordinary contingent expense and authorizes the Superintendent or his designee to take the necessary legal steps to correct said conditions.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Lanci offered a heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all that participated and volunteered their time in aiding to the success of the Lions Club Polar Express. She thanked the community for their support and reported over 525 children and 190 families were served that day. In furtherance, Mrs. Testa offered her gratitude to Mrs. Lanci, herself, and on behalf of the Lions Club, for the continual generosity and support year-round, and reported nearly \$200,000 in donations to the North Bellmore community for families in need and/or those who have experienced unanticipated hardship or tragedy throughout the years.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Guidelines for Public Comments was communicated by Mrs. Malloy on behalf of the Board of Education. There were no public comments.

POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Education did not enter into executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

On a Motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m. Mrs. Malloy on behalf of the BOE wished all a happy holiday season. The next Business Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 11, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurice Gunnels
District Clerk