

MINUTES OF THE BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING JANUARY 8, 2020

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A regular meeting of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Board of Education was held on Wednesday evening, January 8, 2020 in the Board of Education Conference Room of the Administrative Offices at the Brookside School at 1260 Meadowbrook Road, North Merrick, New York.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Marion Blane, Board of Education President  
Gina Piskin, Vice President  
Edward Corona  
John Ferrara  
Janet Goller  
Dr. Nancy Kaplan  
Nina Lanci  
Tracey Miller

Also present:

John DeTommaso, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Mara Bollettieri, Deputy Superintendent of Personnel  
Kate Freeman, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Michael Harrington, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  
Eric Arlin, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services  
Mikaela Coni, Administrative Assistant for Business  
Cheryl Fontana, Director of Music/Fine and Performing Arts and Adult Education  
Joseph Innaco, Director of Administrative & Instructional Technology and Data Protection/Security  
Emily Paluseo, Assistant Director of Special Education and Pupil Services  
Tom Volpe, Supervisor of Transportation  
Ken Zisel, Brookside Assistant Principal  
Christopher Powers, School Attorney  
Pattianne Guccione, District Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Blane, Board President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0, the Board of Education entered into executive session to discuss a personnel matter and the school calendar.

RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Goller seconded by Mr. Corona and carried 8-0, the Board of Education reconvened into public session at 8:12 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Blane led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Ms. Blane asked for a moment of silence to honor Jason Vitale, a teacher at Mepham High School.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0 the Board of Education approved the minutes from the December 4, 2019 meeting.

IV. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Dr. Kaplan and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the Treasurer's Report dated November 30, 2019.

V. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. DeTommaso said that opening after the break was very difficult due to the passing of Jason Vitale and offered condolences to the Vitale family. He said Jason Vitale was a well-respected teacher at Mepham High School who did a lot for kids and families. Mr. DeTommaso said he is proud of the administration for getting together to deal with this difficult situation. He said he is also proud of the administration from the other schools that sent their people to Mepham. He said that the Mepham staff takes pride in being close and the Mepham family and staff are devastated. They came together to be there for kids and covered classes for each other. He said this was a tragic event and once again, offered condolences to the Vitale family during this difficult time.

Mr. DeTommaso announced that there are three Regeneron semi-finalists from Kennedy High School, which is incredible. He said it is very difficult to be named a semi-finalist but even kids that did not become semi-finalists are doing amazing work. He said it is the dedication from the kids and teachers and the support of the parents that make the Advanced Science Research program so outstanding in the Central High School District.

Mr. DeTommaso congratulated and welcomed Christina Cone, as the new Social Studies Chairperson for Calhoun HS and Merrick Avenue MS. He also congratulated Kate Freeman, Assistant Superintendent for Business on the announcement of her retirement in June. He thanked Ms. Freeman and said she has done an amazing job for the past three years.

Future Dates

Mr. DeTommaso mentioned the future dates and said that schools will be closed on January 20<sup>th</sup> for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. He said that the MLK Day of Service is January 17<sup>th</sup> and explained that each school is collecting different items for those in need. On the MLK Day of Service, every kid will do something like box supplies, write a card or watch a video in honor of the day. Mr. DeTommaso also mentioned that the end of the first semester and midterm exams take place later this month. The Faculty Follies is on January 30<sup>th</sup> and proceeds will benefit the Community Cupboard.

VI. **PUBLIC COMMENTS– *Agenda Items Only***

Ms. Blane announced that the Board will vote tonight on the 2020-2021 School Calendar. The calendar includes a Superintendent's Conference Day on May 13, 2021, which coincides with EID.

VII. **SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Piskin, seconded by Ms. Lanci and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the following resolution:

A. School Calendar 2020-2021

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the recommended 2020 – 2021 school year calendar.

Dr. Kaplan explained to the public that the process that the Board of Education went through was very valuable. This administration was patient and did not rush to make a decision. She said that school counsel's advice was much appreciated and she hopes that the public saw that this Board has people who really care, she could not be more proud. Dr. Kaplan feels that what we are celebrating is that we care about each other and every family. She said our Muslim families can

spend their holiday together without having to miss school and she hopes that they feel the love and respect that the Board has for them.

Ms. Lanci said that it was very difficult for the Board to find the balance between what their hearts wanted, the law and the administration of this. She said input from other Superintendents and Boards went into this decision, and she hopes that everyone is happy with the outcome.

Ms. Piskin thanked the community for being respectful and patient during this process. She said that their children spoke beautifully and she hopes that they can enjoy being home on EID without the pressure of school.

Mr. DeTommaso thanked the Board for caring and working so hard on the calendar. He said all of the component district's Boards and Superintendents are working just as hard. He thanked the Board for how they went through the process and said he is happy to be a part of this group.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Lanci, seconded by Mr. Ferrara and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved by a consent agenda items VII.B through VII.C.

B. Policies

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept the following policies for a first reading:

Policy No. 4710 – Grading Systems

Policy No. 4741 – Class Rank and Weighting of Grades

2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following policy for a second reading:

Policy No. 5420.1 – Concussion Management

C. Special Education

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following Special Education placements as recommended by the Committee on Special Education (CSE): 000011047, 000011946, 000012026, 000012449, 000013017, 000511906, 033450001, 043570000, 090910005, 090930000, 091680001, 110210003, 131261633, 131262027, 181910009, 201800050, 201900049, 201900108, 201900115, 201900116, 992450184.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Goller, seconded by Mr. Ferrara and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the Personnel Report as follows:

VIII. PERSONNEL REPORT – January 8, 2020

- A. Termination
- B. Resignations
- C. Appointments
- D. Recommendation for Continued Employment
- E. Recommendation for Permanent Employment
- F. Leave Requests
- G. Salary Reclassification
- H. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics – Cancellations
- I. Assigned Services – Non-Athletics
- J. Assigned Services – Athletics
- K. Assigned Services – Athletics – Continued

IX. BUSINESS AND FINANCE

A. Bills and Corresponding Warrants – January 8, 2020

The Board of Education reviewed the Summary of Bills and the corresponding warrants.

B. Bids

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Miller, seconded by Mr. Ferrara and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the bids as stated in the agenda.

C. Budget Summary – December 31, 2019

The Board of Education reviewed the Budget Summary.

X. CORRESPONDENCE

The Board of Education did not receive correspondence.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rania Elbaz thanked the Board of Education for approving the school calendar with EID as a Superintendent's Conference day. She is glad that her children got the opportunity to learn that perseverance will pay off.

Iman Umar thanked the Board of Education for approving the school calendar with EID as a Superintendent's Conference day.

Sabana Oza thanked the Board of Education for approving the school calendar with EID as a Superintendent's Conference day.

XII. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Lanci said that on December 7, 2019, over 500 underprivileged children were served at the Polar Express Holiday party. She thanked everyone for the support and said it was a great day of giving.

XIII. POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Education did not enter into Executive Session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Pattianne Guccione  
District Clerk