

MINUTES OF THE BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING NOVEMBER 3, 2021

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A regular meeting of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Board of Education was held on Wednesday evening, November 3, 2021, in the Auditorium of the Administrative Offices at the Brookside Educational Center at 1260 Meadowbrook Road, North Merrick, New York.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Edward Corona, President
Nina Lanci, Vice President
Marion Blane
Melissa Cmar-Grote
Janet Goller
Dr. Nancy Kaplan
Tracey Miller
Gina Piskin

Also present:

Michael Harrington, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Mara Bollettieri, Deputy Superintendent of Personnel
Mikaela Coni, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Scott Bersin, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Eric Arlin, Executive Director of Alternative Education
Emily Paluseo, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services
Eric Caballero, Director of Physical Education/Health Ed/Athletics/Driver Education
Cheryl Fontana, Director of Music/Fine and Performing Arts and Adult Education
Joseph Innaco, Director of Administrative & Instructional Technology and Data Protection/Security
Maura Kempton, Assistant Director of Special Education and Pupil Services
Jon Simpkins, Director of School Facilities and Operations
Tom Volpe, Supervisor of Transportation
Christopher Powers, School Attorney
Pattianne Guccione, District Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Corona at 6:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Corona led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. Lanci and carried 8-0, the Board of Education moved to appoint Michael Harrington as the Acting District Clerk during Executive Session.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. Cmar-Grote and carried 8-0, the Board of Education moved into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation, a specific personnel issue and the Annual Audit Report.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. Piskin and carried 8-0, the Board of Education reconvened to Public Session at 8:05 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Corona led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a **MOTION** Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0 the Board of Education approved the minutes from the October 6, 2021 meeting.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Cmar-Grote and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved the Treasurer's Report dated September 30, 2021.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Presentations

Mr. Harrington welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that this meeting will include school board appreciation. He thanked the Board of Education for their for their service and explained that by being appointed to the high school district, they each serve on two different school boards. He added that collectively they have served our high school district for 72 years. With pride and appreciation, Mr. Harrington thanked the Board of Education for their service and the tremendous growth that the school district has accomplished.

School Board Recognition

Ms. Fontana thanked the Board of Education for their selfless dedication to our kids and the community and for being one of the only districts on Long Island to maintain our music and art programs during the COVID-19 pandemic last year.

Merrick Avenue and Grand Avenue Middle School art students presented the Board of Education with a collaboration art piece based on the book "The Three Questions".

Calhoun High School Prep Art students presented individual art pieces specifically designed for each member of the Board of Education.

The Calhoun Rock Band gave a musical performance to the Board of Education in honor of their hard work and dedication to the school community.

Mr. Harrington thanked Ms. Fontana, Mr. Giordano, Ms. Lohr and Mr. Tumminelli and the staff and students for their presentations tonight.

Annual External Audit Review

Alan Yu of Cullen and Danowski, LLP gave a presentation on their audit of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District's finances ending June 30, 2021. They found no material weaknesses and is issuing an unmodified opinion, which has the highest level of assurance possible. He was pleased to report that there are no reportable findings and the District's financial health is stable and consistent. He added that the District maintains the proper fund balance and properly appropriated a portion of the fund balance to offset an increase in the tax levy. He reported that the previous recommendations were implemented and the District continues to be financially stable.

Mr. Harrington thanked Ms. Coni and her staff on the audit report. He congratulated the Calhoun High School Boys Cross Country team for winning the Nassau County Championship and the Girls Cross Country team for taking second place in the County Championships. He also announced that it was the 6th birthday for the Community Cupboard and mentioned the tremendous accomplishment of the cupboard serving so many families in need, biweekly, for six years.

Mr. Bersin discussed the Superintendent's Conference day, which took place yesterday saying it was a great success. The District's goals were discussed some of which are the 1:1 Chromebook Initiative and mental health. He discussed the many workshops that the teachers were able to take part in and thanked the entire staff.

Mr. Harrington welcomed the new student representatives to the Board of Education

Student Representatives

Julie Moehringer of Calhoun High School said that everyone is happy to be back to a normal school environment without barriers and with clubs and sports. She congratulated the girls volleyball team, boys cross country and girls cross country on their accomplishments. She said that homecoming was exciting and spirit week was very successful. She said that the money raised from the trunk-or-treat event would be donated to Music Never Stops: The Tyler Seaman Foundation. Students also joined in on the Community Cupboard birthday celebration with a big turnout to help the cupboard. Finally, she happily reported that Calhoun has been named a Blue Ribbon School and that everyone is very excited about the school year.

Amanda Montalbano of Meadowbrook Alternative Program (MAP) and Prep Academy said that the school year is off to a great start, students and staff are excited to be back and she welcomed Mr. Arlin as the new Principal of MAP. She welcomed MAP's sixteen new students and said they seem to be transitioning smoothly. She said that MAP students are taking challenging AP courses and will be hosting Veterans next week in honor of Veteran's Day. She also mentioned that Prep Academy students have been learning new skills, going into various work sites and have enjoyed surfing school with Skudin Surf in Long Beach.

Nicole Rosen of Kennedy High School said that they hosted the first new student luncheon to help new students find comfort in this new community. She said that the homecoming dance, spirit week and homecoming festival were all a great success. She said that money raised from the annual Halloween event benefited Hope for Youth and the entire event was a great success. She congratulated the Honor Society inductees, Principles of Engineering students, boys and girls soccer and volleyball teams, the tennis team and the varsity cheerleading team for their various accomplishments.

Anthony Scotto of Mepham High School said that since the beginning of the school year, Mepham has been a very busy place focused on Pirate Pride, academic engagement and school spirit. He mentioned the homecoming, senior sunrise and trunk-or-treat, saying how successful they were. He added that Mepham is looking forward to the Annual Flag Field of Honor to benefit Tuesday's Children, an organization that helps families who have suffered losses due to the events of 9/11 or other acts of mass violence. He congratulated the Honor Society inductees, the National Merit Scholarship Commended students and Amokrane Aouchiche our County Champion Cross Country runner.

Mr. Harrington congratulated the new student representatives on their wonderful presentations and said he looks forward to hearing from them every month throughout their senior year. Mr. Harrington mentioned the future dates and thanked everyone for the privilege of serving as the Superintendent.

B.	<u>Future Dates</u>	
	November 4	Middle School 6 th Grade Curriculum Orientation Night
	November 5-6	Calhoun On Tour Shakespeare
	November 11	Veteran's Day – Schools Closed
	November 16	High School Parent-Teacher Conferences Afternoon/Evening – Half Day for High School Students High School National Honor Society Induction
	November 18	Mephram Drama Productions
	November 19	Kennedy and Mephram Drama Productions
	November 20	Kennedy & Mephram Drama Production
	November 23	Middle School Parent-Teacher Conferences Afternoon/Evening – Half Day for Middle School Students
	November 25-26	Thanksgiving Day Recess – Schools Closed
	December 1	Board of Education Meeting

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – *Agenda Items Only*

Mr. Corona stated the Board of Education encourages public participation on school related matters at Board meetings. To allow for public participation, a period not to exceed 30 minutes shall be set aside during each Board meeting. Any person wishing to make comments or raise questions shall complete an information card. Questions are to be addressed to the Board President, not to individual board members. Personal attacks on individual board members, administrators and staff will not be tolerated and may be cause to adjourn the meeting. There will be no back and forth dialogue. Out of courtesy and fairness to the rest of the audience, it would be appreciated if each visitor would limit his/her remarks to not more than three minutes or ask only one question. Public discussion on matters relating to staff and students, by which their reputation, privacy, or rights to due process, or those of others could be in some way violated, is prohibited.

Tara Casimano urged the Board of Education to pass the NFHS Network School Broadcast Program, which is on tonight's agenda so that families can watch the district's games livestreamed without paying a fee. She also would like an in-person option for parent/teacher conferences.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved item VII.A.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Donation

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Lee Mandel for \$2,000.00 to be used towards the purchase of two outdoor picnic tables to be placed on the patio next to the Lorraine Poppe Pavilion at Kennedy High School and increase the appropriations budget by the same amount.

Mr. Corona thanked Lee Mandel for the generous donation.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved items VII.B through VIII.J.

B. 2022-2023 School Budget Process

1. Budget Calendar

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the 2022-2023 Budget Calendar.

2. Date of Budget Vote

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Annual Budget Vote for the 2022-2023 School Year be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022.

3. Registration and Voting Costs

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District sharing budget voter registration and voting costs with each component district when the budget vote for the Central High School District and the component districts are held on the same day.

4. BOCES Budget Vote/Trustee Election – Tuesday, April 26, 2022

5. Annual Public Hearing – Wednesday, May 4, 2022

C. Special Education

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the revised Special Education vendors for School Year 2021-2022.

2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following Special Education placements as recommended by the Committee on Special Education (CSE): 000010279, 000012522, 000012555, 000012906, 000012972, 000013128, 000512099, 000512136, 000512716, 000513190, 000513502, 000513507, 000513989, 103210000, 131261154, 131261164, 131261687, 131261996, 131262390, 131263295, 131264161, 201700005, 201700017, 201700050, 201700231, 202000034, 202100046, 202100052, 202100067, 202100083, 202100132, 202100133, 202100166, 370001835 and 370001850.

VIII. PERSONNEL REPORT – November 3, 2021

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

IX. BUSINESS

A. Bills and Corresponding Warrant – November 3, 2021

The Board of Education reviewed the bills and corresponding warrant.

B. Budget Summary – October 31, 2021

The Board of Education reviewed the budget summary.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Kaplan, seconded by Ms. Cmar-Grote and carried 8-0, the Board of Education approved items IX.C through IX.D.

C. Audit Report

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept the Audit Report of Cullen and Danowski, LLP, including the accountant's opinion, financial statements and management letters, for the school year ended June 30, 2021.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the Corrective Action Plan for the Annual External Audit for the School Year 2020-2021.

D. NFHS Network School Broadcast Program

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve a contract with NFHS School Broadcast Program, powered by 2080 Media, Inc. d/b/a Play On! Sports, for livestreaming services of Bellmore-Merrick CHSD sporting events on our home fields for the remainder of the 2021-22 school year at a cost of \$9,000.00.

X. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Corona stated that the Board of Education has just approved the livestreaming of the sporting events and the district will now be covering the costs. He also explained that events which do not take place on school property are not included in this contract but that the District would look further into it making that possible as well.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Corona stated the Board of Education did not receive correspondence.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Corona stated:

“The Board of Education encourages public participation on school related matters at Board meetings. To allow for public participation, a period not to exceed 30 minutes shall be set aside during each Board meeting. Any person wishing to make comments or raise questions shall complete an information card. Questions are to be addressed to the Board President, not to individual board members. Personal attacks on individual board members, administrators and staff will not be tolerated and may be cause to adjourn the meeting. There will be no back and forth dialogue. Out of courtesy and fairness to the rest of the audience, it would be appreciated if each visitor would limit his/her remarks to not more than three minutes or ask only one question. Public discussion on matters relating to staff and students, by which their reputation, privacy, or rights to due process, or those of others could be in some way violated, is prohibited.

Having said that, please note that the Board is here to listen. The public comment period is not designed to be a discussion. Accordingly, please do not expect the Board to respond to your concerns and questions tonight. This is because we take your concerns and questions seriously and want to have sufficient time to process and research issues, if need be. We will, however, respond to your questions and concerns at a future meeting, or have the proper staff member get back to you at the appropriate time.

I also want to point out that under state and federal privacy laws we are unable to entertain any comments or questions about school personnel. Please know, however, that we take personnel concerns very seriously. On these matters, we would ask you to go through the appropriate administrative channels.”

Lisa Katz feels that members of the Board of Education should not use their personal office for gain and be careful about giving advice.

Diane Seaman thanked the Board of Education for everything they do for students and families. She thanked Mr. Harrington for his work in Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and thinks he is doing a fantastic job as the new Superintendent. She thinks that masks should be worn in school and the libraries should contain books that support all students.

Kellie Shuart thanked Mr. Gomez and Ms. Geller from Mepham High School for supporting her daughter's fundraising benefiting a sick horse. She also stated that she is against mandatory vaccines.

Kimberly Stahl handed in a petition against COVID-19 vaccine mandates and wants parental choice.

Angie Katsamanis thanked the Board of Education for having things open and for removing the barriers. She would like to know the Board of Education's position on vaccine mandates and stated that she is against a COVID-19 vaccine mandate.

Jane Novello stated that students should not have to purchase the required calculators to participate in certain classes. She said that the law states that the District is required to supply them and feels that parents who purchased calculators should be reimbursed.

Christine Mitkish thanked the Board of Education for in-person assemblies and for their continued support on DEI. She also said that this community has a wide variety of opinions and feels that nobody should expect everything go towards one opinion.

George Demetriou is against a mask mandate and asked for the barriers to be put back on the desks in the classrooms so that students are able to remove their mask during class.

Rosemary Garofolo said she supports the Board of Education and their hard work. She is upset about what is going on in the community and feels that the anger towards the Board of Education is misdirected. She suggested that people take their issues to the appropriate party.

Mr. Corona thanked everyone and wished a Happy Diwali to those that are celebrating the holiday.

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. Goller and carried 8-0, the Board of Education meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pattianne Guccione
District Clerk