

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
January 6, 2022 – Virtual Meeting

PRESENT: Mr. Tussie, Mr. Antonello, Mrs. Brown, Mr. Compitello, Mrs. LaRosa,
Mr. Maginniss, Mr. McCann

ABSENT: None

ADMINISTRATORS: Mrs. Burns, Mrs. Morrison, Mrs. Pellati, Mr. Taylor

ABSENT: None

ATTORNEY: Mr. Volz

Meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Tussie wished everyone a Happy New Year and advised that due to the high Covid numbers and in an abundance of caution, it was decided to hold the meeting virtually to keep everyone healthy and safe.

Mr. Tussie congratulated everyone who participated in the winter concerts and expressed pride in how well the students performed.

Mr. Tussie announced that the Masera Committee will meet in February.

Mr. Tussie announced that the Board would like to praise everyone involved in keeping schools open for the students.

DISCUSSION

Public Hearing on the Smart Schools Preliminary Investment Plan Phase Two - presented by Mrs. Pellati

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2021 Regular Meeting.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Brian Taylor asked for a motion to approve the 1/6/2022 Personnel Agenda as listed in the backup.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the 1/6/2022 Personnel Agenda as listed:

TEACHERS

T-1 RETIREMENT
Salvatore LoSardo, Guidance
Effective July 1, 2022
(24 years)

T-2 CHILD-REARING LEAVE OF ABSENCE (unpaid)
Jaclyn Jacobs, English
Effective January 7, 2022 through June 30, 2022
(Udall)

T-3

REGULAR SUBSTITUTE

Matthew Sullivan, Special Education
Effective November 23, 2021 through June 30, 2022
(Beach; Step 1A¹; replacing Marissa Villiani {LoA})

Paige Fogarty, Elementary
Effective December 13, 2021 through June 30, 2022
(Paul J. Bellew; Step 1A⁴; replacing Paul Pekurney {LoA})

Catherine Brudi, English
Effective January 7, 2022 through June 30, 2022
(Udall; Step 1A¹; replacing Jaclyn Jacobs {LoA})

CIVIL SERVICE

CL-1

RESIGNATION

Devyn Antolini, Special Education Aide
Effective January 15, 2022
(Paul J. Bellew)

Tyler Bell, Special Education Aide
Effective January 24, 2022
(Paul J. Bellew)

Paige Fogarty, Permanent Substitute Teacher
Effective December 13, 2021
(Paul J. Bellew)

Antoinette Knice, Part-Time Food Service Worker
Effective December 11, 2021
(Beach Street)

Courtney Kuzmiak, Part-Time Food Service Worker
Effective January 6, 2022
(Udall)

Christie Rendino, Special Education Aide
Effective January 20, 2022
(Manetuck)

CL-2

PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENT

Stephen Casella, Maintenance Mechanic III
Effective January 7, 2022
(Maintenance: Step 1; replacing T. Lommel {resigned})

Courtney Kuzmiak, Building Aide
Effective January 7, 2022
(Manetuck; Step 1; replacing K. Zelaya {Security/Receptionist Aide})

OTHER

PERMANENT SUBSTITUTE TEACHER (\$150 per diem)
Melissa Davies, December 20, 2021 through June 24, 2022

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER (\$130 per diem)

Ashley Antippas, effective December 23, 2021
Devyn Antolini, effective January 15, 2022, *student teacher*
Amber Aveli, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Patrick Briody, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Morgan Connolly, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Gianna Covello, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Kayla Covello, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Ariana Distefano, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Shayla Entin, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Kristi Garrovillas, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Glenys Gil, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Alec Gonzalez, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Michael Grieco Jr., effective December 17, 2021
*Shannon Nicole Horan, effective December 23, 2021
Danielle Kramer effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Nolan Makely, effective December 23, 2021
Cassandra McGinn, effective December 23, 2021
Ryan O'Connell, effective December 23, 2021
Nicole O'Donnell, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Delia O'Farrell, effective December 23, 2021
Meghan O'Farrell, effective December 17, 2021
Molly Perrone, effective December 23, 2021
Nicholas Pfeiffer, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Amber Raggio, effective December 23, 2021
Bryce Robertson, effective December 23, 2021
Alexa Rodriguez, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*
Madeline Schaefer, effective December 17, 2021
Sedric Tello, effective December 17, 2021
Gianna Wheeler, effective December 23, 2021
Kimberly Zappella, effective December 17, 2021, *student teacher*

CURRICULUM UPDATE

Mrs. Morrison asked for a motion to accept a course proposed title change.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve Course Title Change - Music Technology to Music Technology and Innovation Lab.

Mrs. Morrison spoke about the current increase of Covid cases and how it has put a strain on the district's ability to provide homebound instruction to students who are isolated or quarantined. Mrs. Morrison advised that starting January 6, students could temporarily observe classroom instruction using their 1:1 device. Students are encouraged to attend extra-help upon their return to school. The district will return to the homebound instruction model for quarantined and isolated students as soon as it is feasible to do so.

As a follow up to the December board meeting regarding alleged harassment of LGBTQ students, Mrs. Morrison met with Dr. Bridgeman and Justin Arini, Director of Counseling, to review incidents that have taken place since the start of the school year and ensure ongoing communication with the GSA.

Mrs. LaRosa explained that harassment is a larger issue and social emotional education districtwide, inclusive of all stakeholders, is needed.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Education Committee: Richard Antonello reported on the meeting that took place 1/4/2022. Items reviewed included a modified short-term hybrid instruction plan; administration of the Panorama survey to middle school students; the Foundations training schedule; elementary report card revision schedule; a DEI informational meeting; modifications to the high school community service requirements; and the cancellation of mid-terms.

Finance Committee: Ron Maginniss reported on the meeting held on 1/4/2022. Items reviewed included the November treasurer's report; November extra-curricular report, November payroll summary, December internal claims audit report; December system manager audit report, payroll certification forms; surplus; donation; and contracts. Mrs. Pellati advised that the Office of the State Comptroller has finished its first area of testing, Fund Balance Management and Reserves, and will be meeting with central administration on 1/19/22 to discuss its findings. The second area of testing will be Medicaid Reimbursement.

Buildings and Grounds: Pete McCann reported on the meeting that took place on 1/4/2022. Items reviewed included bond work and capital projects: the Beach Street generator project was sent to New York State for approval; fencing on Montauk Highway is almost complete; air conditioning projects; the fitness center upgrade; and the expansion and repaving of the Paul J. Bellew parking lot. The committee discussed indoor permits and the solar roof project. Mr. McCann advised that the Masera Committee will meet on 2/16/2022. The district is working with Kathy Blackburn, an independent facilitator recommended by BOCES. The role of the committee will be to review all options for the property and make recommendations to the Board.

Special Education Committee: Debbie Brown reported on the meeting that took place via teleconference on 1/5/2022. Student placements were discussed and planning is underway for annual reviews.

Health and Wellness Committee: Pete McCann reported on the meeting that took place on 1/4/2022. Items discussed included the financial report; Health and Wellness newsletter; a spring wellness event; districtwide "P.S. I Love You" Day; the essential needs pantry; the state mental health crisis text line; healthy cell phone use; and the COVID hotline. The next meeting will take place virtually on Tuesday, February 8 at 9:30 a.m.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The treasurer's report for November was presented: beginning balance \$30,904,019.51; ending balance \$49,582,709.63.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve General Fund budget transfers 4115-4127 and Capital Fund budget transfer 4120.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve surplus: damaged furniture and materials – Masera.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve Health Service Contract – East Islip UFSD ~ \$2,051.96.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the following 2021-2022 Special Education Contracts: Babylon UFSD; Half Hollow Hills CSD.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve resolution re: donation of aluminum sheet, plate and steel bar from Robert Isoldi @ CPI Aerostructures, Inc. – WIHS – Engineering Technology - \$1,500.

DONATIONS

WHEREAS, the West Islip Union Free School District is in receipt of various lengths and grades of aluminum sheets, plates and steel bars valued at approximately \$1,500 from Robert Isoldi of CPI Aerostructures, Inc. which have been donated to the West Islip High School.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Tussie expressed appreciation for the work done to address student harassment and thanked Mrs. LaRosa for her comments on this topic.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Burns welcomed everyone back and wished them a Happy New Year. Mrs. Burns advised that the district received guidance from the Suffolk County Department of Health reducing the quarantine period for positive cases to five days from ten for both students and staff, assuming certain criteria are met. The district will implement the changes effective Monday, January 10. A home test kit will be available to parents for each student attending district schools. The district is seeking to obtain additional kits for West Islip students attending private schools. Mrs. Burns advised that the district will operate on a delayed opening Friday, January 7 due to the impending snow.

Mrs. LaRosa asked about recent student and staff attendance and class coverage. Mrs. Burns advised that on any day 15% to 20% of students are absent. Mr. Taylor stated that approximately 15% of staff are absent each day but classes are covered and there have been no issues at the secondary level. Mrs. Burns credited the administrators and teachers for this and expressed her appreciation.

NOTES AND REMINDERS

Mrs. LaRosa expressed her apologies for missing some meetings due to a family illness; she thanked the community for their good wishes for her husband. Mrs. LaRosa advised that hopefully she will not have to miss any meetings for the remainder of the year.

On behalf of the board and administrators, Mr. Tussie wished Mrs. LaRosa's husband a speedy recovery.

Mr. McCann thanked everyone for getting students back to school on Monday and stated the importance of in-person instruction.

The following residents wished to speak during an "Invitation to the Public":

Carmela Carminito – Mrs. Carminito asked if virtual learning could be continued for absent students generally, instead of homebound instruction. Mrs. Morrison advised that students learn best when in school and that small group and individual instruction is more effective than using cameras or 1:1 devices.

Mrs. Carminito also asked if newly hired of substitute and student teachers are certified teachers, if they are vetted, and what qualifications they need. Mr. Taylor advised that the substitutes are not all fully certified teachers. Due to staffing shortages, the State Education Department allows districts to hire substitutes with high school diplomas if they have made a good faith effort to hire certified teachers. The district has hired substitutes enrolled in four-year colleges, many of whom are majoring in education, and all with fingerprinting clearance.

Mrs. Carminito advised that she would withdraw her children from school if a test-to-stay protocol is initiated.

Mrs. Burns advised that test-to-stay only affect students and staff who are designated a close contact in the school setting. This protocol would apply to very few staff and students in the district.

Donald Marmo – Mr. Marmo questioned the process for putting a proposition on the May ballot, what qualifies as a proposition, what involvement the district has in the process, and if there is documentation from the district or NYS Department of Education that explains this process.

Mrs. Burns advised that residents can place a proposition on the ballot, subject to school board review. The protocols for submitting a proposition is addressed in District Policy 1260. Petitions relating to an Annual Election must be filed not later than sixty (60) days preceding the election at which the proposition is to be voted upon. The proposition must be unambiguous and feasible, and its purpose must fall within the power of the voters and must specify an amount if an expenditure of money would be required. If it does require

funding, and the expenditure of money would force the budget to exceed the tax levy cap, the budget vote would require approval by 60% of the voters. Further information can be provided upon request to the district clerk, but Mrs. Burns referred Mr. Marmo to the NYS Department of Education for their resources.

Phaeryn Phillips – Mrs. Phillips asked why the Board of Education meeting was switched to a virtual meeting. Mr. Tussie advised that due to the high COVID numbers and in an abundance of caution, it was decided to hold the meeting virtually.

Kathryn Abbatiello – Mrs. Abbatiello was following up from last month's meeting regarding her concerns regarding student harassment. Mrs. Morrison advised that should would be meeting with Dr. Bridgeman and Mr. Arini to continue the plan of action Mrs. LaRosa spoke about.

Mr. Tussie wished everyone a Happy New Year, and is looking forward to keeping students in school and involved as the COVID numbers hopefully decrease.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all members present voted in favor to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:20 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel, negotiations, and/or litigation.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted 7-0 and found probable cause for six charges against Employee "A".

Meeting reconvened at 9:20 p.m. on motion by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor.

Motion was made by Richard Antonello seconded by Tom Compitello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION WEST ISLIP UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education of the West Islip Union Free School District, held remotely on the 6th day of January, a motion was made by Richard Antonello and seconded by Tom Compitello as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the West Islip Union Free School District hereby suspends with pay the employee referenced in Executive Session as Employee "A", effective January 7, 2022.

The Resolution is hereby declared adopted.

Dated: January 6, 2022, West Islip, NY

Meeting adjourned at 9:21p.m. on motion by Richard Antonello, seconded by Tom Compitello and carried when all Board members present voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by,



Mary Hock
District Clerk

All correspondence, reports or related materials referred to in these minutes are on file in the District Office.