

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
June 5, 2025 – Beach Street Middle School

PRESENT: Mr. Tussie, Mr. Antonello, Mr. Bedell, Mr. McCann

ABSENT: Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Marks

ADMINISTRATORS: Dr. Romanelli, Mrs. Morrison, Mrs. Pellati, Mr. Cameron

ABSENT: None

ATTORNEY: Mr. Volz

Meeting called to order 7:32 p.m. followed by the Pledge.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Tussie congratulated Dr. Romanelli for being newly appointed as a Board member for the Cradle of Aviation Museum.

Student Representative Report: Taylor Riley and Krista Williams stated that the students are excited for school to end, however it is bittersweet for the graduating seniors and thanked the Board for having them as the Students Representatives.

Mr. Tussie gave a heartfelt thank you to Taylor and Krista, expressing his confidence that they have a bright and successful future ahead.

Robotics Team Presentation:

Coach Dan Varney stated that this upcoming school year marks the team's 25th season and that this is a perfect opportunity to reflect on the incredible impact this program has had on the students. This team gives the students real world, hands-on experiences and shapes them into future engineers and leaders.

Coach Andy Baranec stated that he has had the opportunity to coach the team for 15 years and is proud of the students and volunteers. The growth that he sees and the continued success that they experience after graduating is a testament to their hard work, the dedication of the mentors, and the incredible support from the school board and community.

Students Patience Jesia, Emily LaBella, Jayden Baker, Veronica Ramos, Kaylee Barbieri and Luke Christensen took the opportunity to share their personal experiences and reflections, providing unique insights into the impact the program has had on their growth.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Mr. O'Farrell congratulated the top 10 academic leaders in the West Islip High School Class of 2025 and their hard work and persistent dedication earned them a spot as one of the top students in the graduating class.

Class of 2025 Top Academic Leaders:

Ava Gabrell, Shane Henke, Abigail Lam, Kevin McCabe, Aidan Okurowski, Ella Oliveri, Emily Podolska, Taylor Riley, Marissa Romeo, Lucas Scourtos

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello , and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2025 Planning Session Meeting.

PERSONNEL

Dr. Romanelli congratulated all of the 22 candidates up for tenure recommendation and spoke briefly about each candidate highlighting the many contributions they have made to the district thus far.

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve TENURE APPOINTMENT: A-1, T-1, and TA-1 as listed below:

ADMINISTRATIVE

A-1 TENURE APPOINTMENT

Justin Arini, Director of Counseling
Effective June 14, 2025

David Rubano, Assistant Principal
Effective August 31, 2025

TEACHERS

T-1 TENURE APPOINTMENT

Dara DePouli, School Counselor
Effective August 17, 2025

Alexandra Ragin, School Counselor
Effective August 17, 2025

Alysha Cannon, Elementary
Effective August 29, 2025

Megan Rooney, Special Education
Effective August 29, 2025

Carly Aponte, Social Worker
Effective August 31, 2025

Grace Bolin, Elementary
Effective August 31, 2025

Gabrielle Cameron, Elementary
Effective August 31, 2025

Kasey Connelly, Special Education
Effective August 31, 2025

Jaimee Connors, Elementary
Effective August 31, 2025

Nicole Devine, Elementary
Effective August 31, 2025

Daniel Gschwind, Social Studies
Effective August 31, 2025

T-1, continued TENURE APPOINTMENT, continued

Brendan O'Connell, Social Worker
Effective August 31, 2025

Cara Stern, Elementary
Effective August 31, 2025

Daniel Varney, Science
Effective August 31, 2025

Tiffany Kallman, Elementary
Effective September 19, 2025

Annmarie Katzer, Reading
Effective October 18, 2025

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

TA-1 TENURE APPOINTMENT

Jennifer Dolan, Teaching Assistant
Effective August 31, 2025

Pamela Gaffney, Teaching Assistant
Effective August 31, 2025

Lisa Minozzi, Teaching Assistant
Effective September 29, 2025

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve agenda TA-2, CL-1, CL-2, as listed below:

TA-2 LEAVE OF ABSENCE (unpaid)

Ariana Stubbmann, Reading
Effective August 27, 2025 through June 30, 2026
(Udall)

CIVIL SERVICE

CL-1 RESIGNATION

Barbara Tricoukes, Paraprofessional
Effective June 30, 2025
(Paul J. Bellew)

CL-2 RETIREMENT

Debora Holland, Paraprofessional
Effective June 30, 2025
(26 years)

CL-2, continued RETIREMENT, continued

Victoria Passarelli, Senior Office Assistant
Effective July 4, 2025
(28 years)

OTHER

SPECIAL EDUCATION – ESY RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS SUMMER 2025

Aides
Sabina Collins
Courtney Kuzmiak
Catherine Lamotte
Jean Pozzini
Annette Rossi
Kathleen Slayback

CLUBS/ADVISORS 2024-2025

OQUENOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Fitness Club, Melinda Monahan and Deborah Throo (shared)

CURRICULUM REPORT

Mrs. Morrison congratulated the High School Seniors that were recognized for a wide variety of academic achievements at the Senior Awards ceremony held on 6/4/2025. From our academic leaders and Seal of Bi-literacy recipients, to students recognized for demonstrating excellence in individual subject areas and attaining recognition as four-year honor students, along with distinguished awards in the areas of arts and music and various trade courses. The event truly highlighted the countless accomplishments of this senior class and the bright future that awaits the Class of 2025.

Mrs. Morrison stated that this year 22 students achieved the Seal of Bi-Literacy; 9 seniors graduating with the IB program where seniors engaged in science research excelled in the areas of biotechnology, environmental science, engineering and coding, 15 seniors graduating from the Alternative High School Program. The Class of 2025 is set up for success and congratulated all the students and their families.

Mrs. Morrison stated that the ELA curriculum review committee selected three programs to pilot throughout the course of the current school year and is pleased to announce that Great Minds Arts and Letters has been selected for the K-5 Literacy Program. The program is aligned with Foundations and the NYSED Science of Reading Literacy briefs. It will complement the structured literacy instruction currently taking place in the areas of word recognition and study by providing rich knowledge and skill building experiences while fostering strong reading and writing skills at every grade level. A comprehensive professional development plan will start this summer and continue throughout the 2025-2026 school year to support the teachers and students through the implementation of the new program. In addition, opportunities will be provided to parents and guardians throughout the fall to learn about the program and interact with the materials utilized to support it.

Mrs. Morrison thanked Mrs. Musso, the Elementary Review Committee and all of the pilot teachers for their amazing work throughout this school year.

Mrs. Morrison stated that secondary summer school will be offered this year through Eastern Suffolk BOCES and taking place at the Bay Shore High School. Information regarding the program will be posted to our district website and

counselors will be contacting parents and guardians of those students at the end of June that may be in need of taking some classes in summer school.

Mrs. Morrison stated that information has been shared via ParentSquare regarding the Internet Enabled Device Policy that the district is required to have in place by August 1, 2025 and in effect for September 2025. We really appreciate all the stakeholders that provided feedback. A community forum is scheduled for 6/10/2025 and will create a draft of the policy which will be shared by August 1, 2025.

Mrs. Morrison concluded the evening by taking a moment to express her sincere gratitude to the Board of Education, Administrative team, teachers, staff, parents, and students for a productive and impactful school year in the area of Curriculum and Instruction. “Together, we have embraced new learning experiences and have elevated the student achievement and advanced our practices. We are flourishing and the district is truly in an unbelievable place where our children are learning” and Mrs. Morrison looks forward to our continued work together next year.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Health and Wellness Committee: Anthony Tussie reported on the meeting that was held on 5/13/2025. Items reviewed included financial reports; Senior Scholarship applications are being reviewed and will be awarded to two students on June 12th; release of the latest Mental Health Sub Committee newsletter and the positive feedback and progress that has been made; 2nd Annual Glow Run will take place on Wednesday, November 5, 2025; 2025-2026 committee meeting dates; Town of Islip community input about potentially legalizing cannabis dispensaries; exploring the dangers of artificial food dyes and educating the community.

Buildings and Grounds Committee: Peter McCann reported on the meeting that was held on 6/2/2025. Items reviewed included High School graduation, addressing the parking concerns on Lions Path during baseball and other non-school activities; summer construction work; approval received from the State Education Department regarding the High School pool.

Education Committee: Richard Antoniello reported on the meeting that was held on 6/2/2025. Items reviewed included selecting Great Minds Art and Letters as the K-5 literacy program; New York State Internet Enabled Device Policy; Curriculum and Instruction overview for 2024-2025 school year; Profile of a Graduate; graduation rate and the English scores.

Finance Committee: Peter McCann reported on the meeting that was held on 6/2/2025. Items reviewed included treasurer’s report; April’s school district funds, payroll summary and financial statements; May’s internal claims audit report and system manager audit trail; payroll certification for 5/14/25 and 5/28/25; review of warrants; approval of budget transfers; approval of surplus; approval of donation resolutions; approval of agreements; approval of leases. School meals will be free for all students in the 2025-26 school year. Similar to this year, breakfast will only be offered at the middle schools and the high school. Due to consistently low participation at the middle school and significant staffing challenges, the district will apply for a breakfast exemption at the elementary level. To ensure no elementary student goes hungry, the district will fund shelf-stable snacks, such as cereal, granola bars, and juice, to be available in the social workers’ offices, where students can grab a morning snack from a small snack station.

Special Education Committee: Quinn Bedell reported on the meeting that was held on 6/4/2025. Items reviewed included IEP, CSE and CPSE recommendations from respective committees and will be approved at this evening’s meeting. Ms. Dowling reported on the successful partnership with Effective School Solutions; the Unified Basketball Team’s season and how they are looking forward to next season; planning for summer programs for students.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve 2024-2025 General Fund budget transfers # 4518-4519, 4523-4525, 4527 and Capital Fund #4520-4522, 4526.

Motion was made Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve contract: U.S. OMNI & TSACG Compliance Services, Inc. Agreement Reinstatement 2025-2026.

Motion was made Peter McCann, seconded by Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve lease agreement: After School Kids Under Supervision, Inc. (ASK US) Lease Agreement (9/1/2025-6/30/2030).

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve resolutions re: donations:

1. Donation from the Gene HAAS Foundation ~ \$14,750.00 to the West Islip High School to support scholarships and student fees for participating in competitions for our Science, Technology and Engineering students.
2. Scholarship donation from Suffolk County Association of School Business Officials ~ \$500.00 ~ West Islip High School
3. Scholarship donation from Suffolk Transportation Services, Inc. - \$5000.00 ~ West Islip High School.

WHEREAS, the West Islip Union Free School District is in receipt of \$14,750 from the Gene HAAS Foundation, which has been donated to the West Islip High School to support scholarships and student fees for participating in competitions for our science, technology and engineering students.

WHEREAS, the West Islip Union Free School District is in receipt of donated funds in the amount of \$500.00 from Suffolk Association of School Business Officials, to be awarded to High School students selected by the district.

WHEREAS, the West Islip Union Free School District is in receipt of donated funds in the amount of \$5,000.00 from Suffolk Transportation Services, Inc., which have been donated in recognition of the Section XI championships awarded to girls and boys lacrosse, softball, and girls soccer, to be awarded to students selected by the district.

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve surplus item: Miscellaneous Books ~ Manetuck Elementary School.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve WIASA Memorandum of Agreement: negotiated agreement ~ July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2029.

Mr. Tussie expressed his sincere gratitude to the Administrators, thanking them for everything they do to create a positive and supportive working environment. He shared his appreciation for the opportunity to work collaboratively with them and expressed his gratitude that both sides were able to come together to reach this agreement.

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve the results of the Annual District Meeting held on May 20, 2025.

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve Stipulation of Settlement and Release Student A.

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve resolution re: the Board of Education approves the recommendations of the Special Education Committee of students as listed in the District's backup and authorizes the District to arrange for appropriate services.

Resolution

Be it resolved, that the Board of Education of the West Islip UFSD approved the recommendations of the Special Education Committee of students as listed in the District's backup and authorizes the District to arrange for appropriate services.

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to approve Agreement with SME Educational Foundation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Romanelli gave a heartfelt shout out to the Robotics Team, Student Representatives, and all those who received tenure tonight, stating how proud everyone is of their accomplishments.

Dr. Romanelli reflected on how West Islip is becoming a model for many districts, with people across the educational community talking about the great things happening here. In addition to presenting at multiple conferences, appearing on podcasts, and being featured in publications, the district has hosted several groups to showcase our programs, including the CTE Program at West Islip High School, the Science Research Program, a visit from the Seaford School District to observe our Elementary Math Program, Bayport-Blue Point School District to see our Elementary ICT Program at Bayview Elementary School, and most recently, Plainview Old Bethpage School Districts to view AI in action. A recent presentation about our literacy work also led to two districts requesting meetings to learn how our K-5 literacy framework was developed over the years to align with the Science of Reading, an accomplishment we are very proud of.

The broader community has taken notice as well, with the district featured as the cover story of *On Board* magazine for our partnership with the Maritime Industrial Base, which was approved at tonight's meeting. West Islip is one of only four school districts in the country where students are contributing to the creation of parts for U.S. Navy submarines, an extraordinary learning experience. Additionally, George Couros, an international presenter who has spoken at our Superintendent's Conference Day, recently featured West Islip as a model for innovative practices, generating significant attention.

Dr. Romanelli concluded by stating that there is so much to be proud of in West Islip, and that it has been a great 2024–2025 school year and the future is bright.

Mr. Tussie remarked that in the past, our Board of Education would visit other school districts to learn how they operate, but now West Islip has become the district that others want to visit to see our innovative practices in action. He expressed how exciting, gratifying, and proud the school board and community feel about everything happening here in West Islip. Mr. Tussie thanked and congratulated everyone on a successful school year.

Motion was made by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:41 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel, negotiations, and/or litigation.

Meeting reconvened at 9:09 p.m. on motion by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m. on motion by Peter McCann, seconded by Richard Antonello, and carried when all Board members present voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Elizabeth Davis".

Elizabeth Davis
District Clerk

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