

MINUTES OF BABYLON SCHOOL BOARD WORK/STUDY MEETING

DATE OF MEETING: March 27, 2023
PLACE: Babylon Junior-Senior High School, 50 Railroad Avenue, Babylon, NY 11702

Members Present

Mrs. Carol Ann Dell'Erba, President
Mrs. Linda Jurs, Vice President - absent
Mr. Ari McKenzie
Mr. Dominick Montalto
Mrs. Donna Noesi
Mrs. Theresa Patiri
Mr. David Sonkin

APPROVED

Interim Superintendent

Mr. Brian L. Conboy

Central Office Administration

Ms. Deirdre Lunetta, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Ms. Carisa Manza, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

District Clerk

Linda McGarvey - absent

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by C. Dell'Erba, President. A motion to enter executive session by D. Sonkin and seconded by D. Noesi, for the purpose of discussing the employment history of particular individuals and advice from counsel was made. (6-0) Public session resumed at 7:30 p.m. at which time C. Dell'Erba, President, led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Regular Business Meeting of March 13, 2023 were approved on motion by D. Montalto and seconded by D. Noesi. (6-0)

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Conboy first brought attention to Agenda Item #7 announcing that there was a date change on the item. The date on the agenda states March 28 as the head custodian's start date; however, the start date is April 17.

Mr. Conboy also acknowledged and congratulated the five teachers whose retirements were listed on this evening's agenda - Mary Jo Graffagnino, Debra Gandiello, Daily Holzmacher, Marianne Shaw and Mark Malaszczyk. He stated that he added up these teachers' total service to the district, which amounted to 132 years total service to Babylon School District.

Mr. Conboy congratulated all who took part in the wonderful high school musical, "Bye, Bye, Birdie," which was a very special event held this past weekend.

Mr. Conboy stated that it was a very interesting week at Babylon Schools last week and he would go over the facts and fiction. It was St. Patrick's Day on Friday, which was a normal day. Students dressed in green were getting on the train, with their parents, to attend the St. Patrick's Day parade. The attendance showed 89 students absent from the junior/senior high school out of 700 students. This was not unusual. Also, it was a busy week. Wednesday night was the senior-parent dinner; Thursday was the fantastic ALS Assembly and Friday there was a dance scheduled; three big events on the same week as St. Patrick's Day. Late in the day on Friday, some students were experiencing health discomfort, meaning upset stomachs, vomiting and/or diarrhea; some things common with a virus. After school, kids were preparing for the dance and the district learned later that night that kids were getting ill at the dance and may have been ill before and attended the dance regardless. The next day, the custodial staff sanitized the school, which is always done when we suspect a virus. Saturday afternoon a message was sent out to parents. There were a lot of things being speculated such as food poisoning, gas leak, etc. What we knew as administration was that norovirus was affecting Long Island so we suspected norovirus at Babylon and sent a message to the entire community. The symptoms were not only affecting the high school students, but also lower-level students and adults as well (including me). Communication in these situations is helpful. Miscommunication does not help. Speculation does not help. Monday came and people were asking why we were not closing the schools. We did not have the number of absences that would justify closing. However, several parents did keep their children home from school. Two hundred forty-seven students were out of which only 132 were symptomatic of the virus. On

Tuesday, there were 63 students symptomatic; 26 on Wednesday and 23 on Thursday. We put out a message to Newsday that we were thankful students were recovering and returning to school. The Department of Health also thought the illness was viral. And, by Thursday, several media personnel were outside the school in the pouring rain speaking with parents and students. WABC-TV was calling it a "mystery illness." It was not. Mr. Conboy stated that anyone who has questions, to please come forward or email him.

Mr. Conboy reminded all that this Friday, March 31, was the annual Go Home Early Drill and that students would be dismissed 15 minutes early with buses arriving 15 minutes earlier for dismissal. Mr. Conboy spoke about the district's budget planning. He stated that the school calendar lists April 10, the day we are back from recess, as a Board meeting and budget adoption. He said that rather a meeting and budget adoption, a work meeting would take place on that day (April 10) and an additional date of April 17 would be added to the calendar for the business meeting and budget adoption. Mr. Conboy stated that more time was needed to review the proposed budget. He said that there is a great deal of inflation and that costs in this year's budget are higher than expected. The district is trying to get as close to the tax cap as possible. He added that the district is considering piercing the tax cap.

Mr. Conboy wished all an enjoyable recess, Passover and Easter.

Mrs. Dell'Erba reported that she attended this year's Suffolk County Bar Association's mock trial and commended the Babylon High School students for a job well done.

NEW BUSINESS

On motion by D. Sonkin and seconded by A. McKenzie, a motion to omnibus resolution 1-13 was approved (6-0).

On motion by D. Sonkin and seconded by D. Noesi, resolutions 1-13 were approved (6-0).

1. **RESIGNATION: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Mary Jo Graffagnino, Kindergarten Teacher, effective June 30, 2023, with best wishes on her retirement.

2. **RESIGNATION: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Debra Gandiello, Grade 6 Special Education Teacher, effective June 30, 2023, with best wishes on her retirement.

3. **RESIGNATION: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Daisy Dahlhaus Holzmacher, Grade School Reading Teacher, effective June 30, 2023, with best wishes on her retirement.

4. **RESIGNATION: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Marianne Shaw, High School Spanish Teacher, effective June 30, 2023, with best wishes on her retirement.

5. **RESIGNATION AMENDED: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the amended resignation of Mark Malaszczyk, High School social studies teacher, to reflect the effective date as June 30, 2023, originally approved at the March 13, 2023 Board of Education meeting.

6. **CHILDCARE LEAVE: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the six (6) week childcare leave of Alyssa Brunson, High School Social Studies Teacher, effective March 17, 2023 through May 4, 2023, with congratulations on the birth of her son.

7. **HEAD CUSTODIAN APPOINTMENT: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the appointment of Gregory R. Plansker as Head Custodian, effective March 28, 2023. Compensation for this position to be in accordance with the Custodial Association contract. (Head Custodian, Step 6)

8. **PER DIEM SUBSTITUTE TEACHER APPOINTMENTS: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the appointment of the following substitute teachers, effective March 28, 2023. Compensation for this assignment to be at the substitute teacher per diem rate of pay scale: Days 1-30: \$110; Days 31-60: \$120.00; Days 60-90: \$130.00; over 91 days: \$140.00.

High School

Nicolette Roppelt

Megan Martino – PE/Health Education

9. **STUDENT FIELD TRIP: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves a field trip for Symphonic Winds,

Senior High Band and High School Orchestra students to perform at an adjudicated music festival in Bethlehem, PA, Dorney Park, on Saturday, June 3, 2023.

10. **SECOND READING OF POLICY 5695 – STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education conducts a second reading of Policy 5695 – Students and Personal Electronic Devices; and **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education waives the formal second reading of policy 5695 Students and Personal Electronic Devices, as attached.

11. **ADOPTION OF POLICY 5695 – STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves and adopts policy 5695 Students and Personal Electronic Devices.

12. **APPROVAL OF FEDERAL SINGLE AUDIT: RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts and approves the Federal Single Audit Report for the Babylon Union Free School District as prepared by the external auditing firm of Cullen & Danowski, LLP for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

13. **OBSOLETE RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the discard of the following items:

- o Toro Front Cutting Deck Attachment S/N 30716-30745, no asset tag. It is obsolete and not in working condition. This item will be donated to Babylon Village to use for parts.
- o Toro Snow blower attachment S/N 44910-40139, no asset tag. It is obsolete, no longer working and is being discarded.

WORK/STUDY PRESENTATION

Ms. Lunetta reported that administration has been working over the past couple of weeks to assess the financial situation of the district, looking at the tax cap calculation and what certain areas that have increased due to higher inflation such as health insurance, utilities, BOCES costs, Charter School, TAN interest, salaries and transportation. In previous years Babylon Schools had the lowest bus prices on Long Island, and although Suffolk Transportation has been wonderful and the district had increased the budget for this year's transportation; it will be in excess of that this year. She also reviewed the tax cap, which is 2.84 and the proposal of going 2% above the tax cap. She reported that Babylon receives the lowest amount of State Aid in its cluster.

Mr. Conboy added that this is an analysis of how the district budgeted in prior years by using fund balance and reserves to keep the tax levy low. He said that once you use some of the fund balance for one year, you have to match that the following year. It makes sense to reduce that each year so you no longer need a fund balance to balance a budget. Analysis of that over time is a necessary thing. This is like a new start here in Babylon. You will have a new superintendent and new administration. Things last year brought a great challenge to Babylon, but now we are moving in another direction. With confidence as a district, we need to put together a budget that maintains the integrity of the district that people are very proud of. This will be a reckoning year that is going to set the stage for the next several years so we have to get this right. We have to put everything in the proper drawer so we can build on that with integrity. This has to be precise, and we are going to get it as precise as we can. Further discussion will take place on April 10.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ QUESTIONS

Ms. Brocco spoke regarding the summer education program, which would be taking place in Deer Park this summer. She expressed her concern regarding the change in the program this year.

As there were no questions or comments from the audience, the meeting moved on to the next item on the agenda.

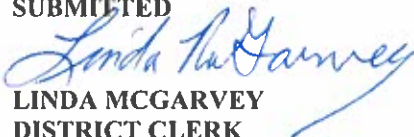
FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Education will hold a Work Study Meeting on April 10, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. and a Business Meeting and Budget Adoption on April 17, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., both in the library of the Babylon Junior-Senior High School.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by D. Montalto, seconded by D. Noesi, the Board adjourned the executive session at 7:58 p.m. Approved (6-0)

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED


LINDA MCGARVEY
DISTRICT CLERK