

In the Matter Of:

NORTH BELLMORE SCHOOL DISTRICT - BOARD OF ED MEETING

June 01, 2020



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NORTH BELLMORE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

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JUNE 1, 2020

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VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

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2 NINA LANCI: -- to order. At this
3 time, we will convene into our budget hearing,
4 and then we will proceed later into our regular
5 monthly meeting. Thank you.

6 JACQUELINE REHAK: Good evening,
7 everyone.

8 NINA LANCI: Thank you, Jackie.

9 JACQUELINE REHAK: Thank you. This
10 has truly been a challenging time for all, but
11 I'm very proud to present the 2020/'21 school
12 budget to our community. This budget continues
13 to meet the District's mission and reflects our
14 core values. It reflects our continued focus
15 on academic, social, and emotional, and the
16 arts and education. It strives to provide
17 services that meet our goals and to continue to
18 improve and strengthen programs across the
19 district.

20 The tax levy increase for the
21 proposed budget is 2.71 percent, and the over
22 all budget-to-budget increase from the prior
23 year is 1.05 percent. We've kept the tax levy
24 within the allowable levy limit under the tax
25 cap, and, as always, we will continue to look

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2 for outside revenue sources to lessen the
3 burden on the community. The District has
4 already secured financing for adding security
5 cameras to all buildings throughout the
6 districts through state aid, and we have
7 applied for two additional grants to enhance
8 District security. One of the awarded grants
9 is from Senator Brooks to upgrade fencing,
10 install video surveillance, provide two-way
11 radio communication, and to install outdoor
12 speakers. The second grant awarded is from
13 Legislator McKeivitt to install security
14 vestibules in all district buildings.

15 A few factors that are driving the
16 2020/'21 budget are enrollment, security, and
17 state aid. With respect to enrollment, we
18 currently have 95 sections. The budget
19 reflects 97 sections. This is a result of
20 projected enrollment. The budget includes a
21 deconsolidation in third grade at Saw Mill Road
22 and a deconsolidation in fourth grade at Park
23 Avenue. We have one potential consolidation as
24 well.

25 For special education costs, we

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2 have budgeted in contingencies for unknown
3 student needs while also reducing other costs
4 related to special education for
5 out-of-district placements being brought back
6 into the District.

7 As I previously mentioned, we have
8 secured state aid for security cameras. As
9 such, we've included adding security cameras at
10 all District buildings, as this will be a
11 fully-aidable project. With respect to state
12 aid, there are currently several unknowns.
13 This budget reflects a 10 percent decrease in
14 state aid revenue. I'm going to discuss this
15 in more detail in a little bit. I just want to
16 go over some of the appropriations first. I'm
17 going to try and share my screen here so you
18 can see the slides. So here, as you can see,
19 the District's overall budget -- as you can
20 see, the District's overall budget increase is
21 1.05 percent. This is broken down as follows:
22 There is a 2.88 increase in general support.
23 This is mostly related to central services,
24 which includes utilities, buildings and
25 grounds, and security. Another component of

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2 this increase is insurance expense, so that --
3 we have increases in insurance that we're
4 showing of about \$32,000 in the budget.
5 There's a .8 percent increase in instruction,
6 which is predominantly contractual increases.
7 As you see, the increase in administration and
8 improvement relates -- that looks like 6.72
9 percent, but that actually relates to movement
10 in our coding system. Last year was the first
11 year the District was required to file
12 transparency in asset reports. These reports
13 required us to do a lot of recoding in our
14 systems, so there was not actually an increase
15 of 6.72 percent, but rather items that were
16 included as teaching in the prior year were
17 moved to administration and improvement for the
18 2020/'21 budget. So while that increased over
19 there, it decreased on the teaching side. So
20 it was really just a movement, and that
21 happened a lot in this instruction category, so
22 it makes it difficult for comparison purposes,
23 but hopefully next year you'll see these items
24 match up more evenly. So this really should be
25 looked at more in total where you see the total

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2 instruction budget of .8 percent increase. You
3 will see the decrease in special ed, and that
4 is largely, in part, to moving students from
5 out-of-district placements back to in-district.

6 For transportation, you'll see that
7 the expenditure of budget remained pretty flat.
8 This is because we look to consolidate a couple
9 of our buses that were being underutilized, and
10 that offset the increase in our contractual
11 obligations.

12 Lastly, there was a 1.1 percent
13 increase in total other budgeted items, which
14 is mostly related to employee benefits like
15 health insurance, the teacher's retirement
16 system, employee retirement system, and other
17 benefits of the like. Our total projected
18 revenue reflects a 2.71 percent increase in tax
19 levy, which, as I mentioned earlier, is within
20 the cap. A few major factors that went into
21 the revenue budget are state aid, reserve fund
22 transfers, and appropriated fund balance.

23 You'll notice on the state aid line
24 a decrease of 1.6 million in state aid. We
25 came to this number by taking the state's

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2 lessen the burden on the community of that 10
3 percent reduction in state aid. With that
4 said, it's important to note that all districts
5 across the state may be faced with
6 unprecedented state aid reductions closer to 20
7 percent in the weeks and months ahead. If that
8 should happen, it will directly impact our
9 proposed 2020/'21 budget. In addition to
10 Proposition 1, which is the school district's
11 budget, we have Proposition 2 this year, which
12 is for voters to authorize the District to
13 create a capital reserve. This is a 10 million
14 capital reserve to be funded over ten years.
15 This is funded by the transfer of
16 unappropriated fund balance from the general
17 fund to be extended as available at the end of
18 any year during that 10-year period. That
19 means if funds are not available, the reserve
20 is not funded. It will not increase tax levy.
21 It has no effect on the taxpayers' tax levy.
22 So by approving this proposition, it will not
23 increase your real estate taxes.

24 The purpose of this proposition is
25 to fund capital improvements, including the

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2 pavement of high areas for the students and the
3 parking lots and to install ceiling
4 replacements in each building. We really
5 appreciate the community's support on this.
6 This is something that has come up in our
7 building survey and something we're excited to
8 get done; however, we do understand the burden
9 that doing capital projects place on the
10 community. As such, we look for ways to do
11 this with the least impact to the community,
12 and we feel this is the best way to do it. By
13 having a capital reserve we're not increasing
14 the tax levy. We'll only be able to do it if
15 the funds are available at the end of each
16 year. If not, then it won't be funded. We
17 could have -- we talked about going out for a
18 bond or putting it in the budget, but all of
19 those items would have increased the taxes to
20 taxpayers, which is not something we wanted to
21 do, so this was the way we're going about it,
22 and we're hoping that the community supports us
23 on this.

24 Going back to the budget for a
25 minute, I want to explain to the Board what

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2 will happen should the community fail to
3 approve the budget. The State has offered no
4 guidance on a possible re-vote, and given the
5 timing, it is possible that a re-vote will not
6 be possible. This would force the Board to
7 adopt a contingency budget. That means the tax
8 levy cannot exceed the '19/'20 level. This
9 would cause a \$1,060,000 reduction in the
10 proposed budget.

11 As I mentioned earlier, we took
12 into account a 10 percent reduction in state
13 aid in the proposed budget, but we could
14 potentially face a 20 percent reduction. The
15 20 percent reduction in state aid can range
16 from 2 to 2.8 million. If you add this to the
17 1,060,000 reduction for a contingency budget,
18 then that amounts to a reduction of 3 to 3.8
19 million in our proposed budget. Programs and
20 initiatives in all schools and all grades will
21 be affected by this. This includes academics
22 and the arts, and reductions in staff at all
23 levels will be required. These reductions will
24 have negative and long term ramifications to
25 the District that will take us several years to

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2 restore.

3 I know there have been a lot of
4 questions regarding the budget vote and
5 election. Last evening, the District sent out
6 a question and answer document that addresses
7 many of the questions we have been receiving.
8 This document is also posted on the District's
9 website at www.northbellmoreschools.org. If
10 you have any other questions regarding the
11 budget vote, the election, the budget itself,
12 please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I
13 can be reached at jrehak -- J-R-E-H-A-K,
14 @northbellmoreschools.org.

15 Lastly, I want to thank the
16 community for its support and patience during
17 these unprecedented times. Please know that
18 our most important goal is to set a financial
19 plan that provides every student with the
20 opportunity to receive an excellent education
21 and to be a confident, passionate learner.

22 I'm going to pass it over to Mrs.
23 Testa. Thank you.

24 MARIE TESTA: Let me just -- good?
25 Thank you, Mrs. Rehak. I appreciate that and

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2 the work that the Board of Education and all
3 that the central team and our building
4 principals put into our budget each year.
5 We've had a five-year plan that we've come to
6 the place where we were able to re-establish
7 our reserves and our fund balance, and because
8 of that, we're able to make that 10 percent
9 reduction that might come in state aid and use
10 that from our reserves; again, very important
11 that that would not be on the taxpayers because
12 we've always worked very hard and not raised
13 our 2 percent tax cap. People think there is
14 still an understanding that the tax cap is 2
15 percent. Here in North Bellmore, the tax cap
16 is 2.71 percent because there is exceptions at
17 each district.

18 So I appreciate all the work that
19 went into this, and I thank you, all the team
20 members and the Board. I also wanted to take a
21 moment to thank the public for all the support.
22 I am appreciative to the PTA leaders and the
23 SEPTA leaders and the coordinating council
24 leaders who came together with Ms. Rehak and I
25 on a Zoom call recently so that we could go

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2 over the budget, the details of it, and also
3 the ballot vote. So we appreciate the support
4 in communicating the different information out
5 to parents and constituency groups so that
6 everyone understands that we're in such a
7 unique position this year.

8 Out of all the years that I have
9 been in education, which has been over 25 now,
10 amazingly so, I have never seen a time like
11 this in terms of we all know that we're dealing
12 with a worldwide crisis, and what everything
13 else that is currently happening in the world
14 is quite disturbing as well. So I think that
15 we're in these unprecedented times in many
16 areas and that our children are growing up
17 during this time. So our social and emotional
18 piece of our education is something that we've
19 put a tremendous amount of work in. Thank you
20 to Mrs. Pollitt, Ms. McNamara for that, Ms.
21 Eskew for her department of social workers,
22 psychologists.

23 I think it's very important at this
24 time just to remind the Board, ourselves, and
25 the community that North Bellmore's core values

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2 that human life is precious have no more in
3 time been so significant as now. We have the
4 number one prevention department and the only
5 prevention department in New York State which
6 is staffed by nurses, social workers, and our
7 own social work school counselor that we have
8 been teaching mental health and wellness for
9 over 25 years, and it's only increased over
10 this time. Mrs. Pollitt is a liaison to the
11 mental health consortium, which we belong to
12 with Nassau BOCES, and we have been invited to
13 speak at that consortium and share our wellness
14 programs.

15 So if there is anyone in the public
16 that's part of our community that needs any
17 assistance, please call out. We have
18 tremendous resources. We continue to provide
19 our parent universities to help with dealing
20 with what we're concerned with, social and
21 emotional health and wellness, and that's
22 something we will continue to excel at and
23 provide for all our students across all grade
24 levels K through 6. Our students for over 25
25 to 30 years now have had a mental health and

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2 wellness component to their education, and the
3 model has been used at the state level,
4 actually, recognized by the state, to serve as
5 models for other communities, and it only
6 continues to get better, and it only continues
7 to be needed more.

8 We have data that shows from our
9 amazing counselors and our school counselor,
10 Mr. Duffy, that our children at the 6th grade
11 level and below are experiencing much more
12 stress and anxiety in their lives and that
13 they're really looking for trusted adults with
14 whom to speak, so we continue to ensure that we
15 keep our program in our social and emotional
16 health at the best it can be. So I thank
17 everyone that's involved in that.

18 We are facing challenging times
19 that I am going to talk about in a moment, but
20 I thought I would just take a second to go back
21 to Mrs. Lanci. I think that before I continue
22 with my report, would you like to do the pledge
23 and the mission, and then I can go into the
24 report?

25 NINA LANCI: Yes, sure. I'll call

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2 the regular meeting to order this evening for
3 the Board of Education. At this time, please
4 rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

5 (WHEREUPON, the Pledge of
6 Allegiance was recited.)

7 NINA LANCI: At this time, before
8 we continue into our regular Board meeting, our
9 sympathies go out to the family of Mason Black,
10 and I'd ask for a moment of silence today, the
11 child from Park Avenue, the kindergartener,
12 lost his life from a medical illness. Again,
13 our sympathy goes out to the family for this
14 six- year-old young child.

15 (WHEREUPON, a moment of silence was
16 observed, after which the following
17 transpired:)

18 NINA LANCI: Thank you.

19 Mr. Ferrara would you read the
20 mission statement? Thank you.

21 JOHN FERRARA: Our mission is to
22 inspire all students to be confident,
23 passionate learners with the courage and skills
24 to lead their lives with integrity while
25 contributing to our global community with

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2 creativity and compassion.

3 NINA LANCI: Thank you, Mr.
4 Ferrara. You have certainly served this Board
5 well, and for many years you've lived up to
6 this mission with us, and I'd like to thank
7 your family for your service for giving us to
8 you for many evenings and many, many hours of
9 your time. And thank you as we return you to
10 your family.

11 JOHN FERRARA: Thank you, Nina.

12 NINA LANCI: At this time, I'll ask
13 for approval of minutes of the regular meeting
14 of April 2, 2020 and the special meeting of
15 April 21, 2020.

16 Do I have a motion from the board?

17 ROSEMARIE CORLESS: Motion.

18 MR. FERRARA: Second.

19 NINA LANCI: Any discussion?

20 (WHEREUPON, no response was heard.)

21 NINA LANCI: All in favor?

22 (WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous,
23 affirmative vote of the members present.)

24 NINA LANCI: Thank you.

25 Just for a note, the regular

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2 meeting minutes of May 7 were not -- they were
3 not ready this evening, so that's why they were
4 not approved on the agenda.

5 At this time, I'll
6 ask for an approval of the treasurer's report.

7 ROSEMARIE CORLESS: You need a
8 motion for that one?

9 NINA LANCI: Yes.

10 ROSEMARIE CORLESS: Motion.

11 NINA LANCI: Do I have a second?

12 MELISSA CMAR-GROTE: Second.

13 NINA LANCI: Any discussion?

14 (WHEREUPON, no response was heard.)

15 NINA LANCI: All in favor?

16 (WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous,
17 affirmative vote of the members present.)

18 NINA LANCI: Item 7 is Finance.

19 The Board of Education acknowledges the review
20 of the warrants that have been approved by the
21 claims order from May 2020.

22 Superintendent's Report, Mrs.
23 Testa.

24 MARIA TESTA: Thank you, Mrs.
25 Lanci.

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2 I'd like to begin with a little
3 piece of writing that we put together on behalf
4 of the board and the administrative team to
5 thank Mr. Ferrara for the years of service.
6 Thank you, Mr. Ferrara for all your support and
7 for always questioning as to whether or not our
8 decisions were going to bring the children to
9 the next level, and were we going to be better
10 than we were before. I think that's something
11 that we'll always associate with you, is that
12 question. So, Mr. Ferrara, as the
13 vice-president of the Board, you've come to the
14 end of your term. It's bittersweet, I know,
15 and we feel it as well. You've held various
16 leadership roles on committees such as the
17 District Safety Team, Security and Facilities,
18 Improvement Change across the board. You've
19 always maintained a steadfast vision for
20 continuous improvement across all aspects of
21 the District. You've been an integral member
22 of the Administrative Search and Financial
23 Planning committees, and you have lent your
24 expertise in the improvement of buildings and
25 grounds. Much appreciated. As your term comes

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2 to a close, I know that you've decided to move
3 on, and I already know that you're considering
4 various volunteer opportunities, Mrs. Lanci,
5 with Lion's, I know. So I'm not sure if you're
6 going to have free time, John, or not, but I
7 hope that you do, and I hope that you return to
8 your family. I think that your love of
9 students has been evident to all. Your
10 commitment to the professional development of
11 the teachers, to ensuring that the taxpayers
12 received the best education while keeping the
13 taxes down. You had very, very good financial
14 questions to ask us, and maybe what the public
15 doesn't know is how quick and adept you are
16 with mathematical skills, and that always
17 served us well in the boardroom as well.

18 So I want to take this time as the
19 superintendent to thank you for your
20 relationship and your support of us, for your
21 adherence to all that is good, and the mission
22 in making sure that we were always going toward
23 or goal, and your collaboration with our entire
24 faculty, staff and community. I wish you
25 continued happiness and success. I know the

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2 Board does as well, and thank you for
3 volunteering your time for nine years, because
4 while we see you publicly once a month here at
5 the Board when we're together, we know that the
6 work behind the scenes is much more than what
7 we see in present.

8 So as someone who lives closely
9 with that with you, I thank you for that and
10 for always being there no matter what time of
11 night it was or what time it was on the
12 weekend. I appreciate that, and I know the
13 Board does, too, and I know I speak for my
14 administrative team as well when they celebrate
15 who you are, John Ferrara. Thank you.

16 JOHN FERRARA: Thank you. Thank
17 you very much, Marie. Thank you. It has been
18 my pleasure to work with the administrators and
19 the Board throughout these years and really to
20 really help out our community and to do the
21 right thing. Thank you for our children and
22 all. Thank you. Thank you very --

23 MARIE TESTA: You're welcome.

24 Thank you, John.

25 Moving to -- some special

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2 announcements as well that I'd like to
3 highlight since this is our last meeting of the
4 year before we start our 2020/'21 year, which
5 is amazing to me. I'd like to highlight just
6 some of our retirees who are going on and
7 taking the next step in their careers. We
8 usually do have that celebration for the
9 retirees, but this evening I'd just like to
10 read the names of those who are moving forward
11 and to congratulate them and to wish them the
12 best. I've known many of them for so many
13 years and have grown up with them through the
14 educational process, and I thank them for their
15 service, for their kindness, and for their love
16 and compassion of students. I think that each
17 one of them has shared with me or with their
18 principal some of the highlights in terms of
19 how they feel leaving North Bellmore.

20 It's -- I never did realize when I
21 became superintendent that one of the most
22 poignant moments that I have as an
23 administrator with my faculty is when they come
24 and they share that they're moving on to their
25 retirement. When you speak to these retirees,

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2 they remind you of why they went into this
3 field, and the passion that they're going out
4 with is equal to the passion they came in with.
5 It is a very unique group of retirees.

6 So with complete privilege and
7 wishes for the best from all the administrative
8 team and the board, please let's honor Loretta
9 Curcio, Lorraine Doyle, Deb Edgerly, Sue
10 Mescal(phonetic), and Susan Wells. So to
11 Loretta, to Lorraine, to Deb, to Sue, to
12 another Deb, here's what we have for you. I
13 have a saying that Denise Fisher gave me, and I
14 keep it on my desk. Always believe that
15 something wonderful is about to happen. So for
16 you, here's your next step to wonderful, and
17 thank you for your years of service to the
18 North Bellmore School District.

19 I also want to take a moment now to
20 recognize our graduates, our 2020 graduates.
21 By the time the next meeting comes around,
22 you'll already be considered middle schoolers.
23 Today, all our principals gave out the gowns
24 and the diplomas to our graduates, and the big
25 graduation parade and honoring of our graduates

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2 listen to the inner voice. That little voice
3 that talks to you when you have a question,
4 listen to that. It will guide you in the right
5 place. We will miss you, we love you, and
6 congratulation to our graduates.

7 We're going to move on a little bit
8 now just to reiterate a little bit of what Mrs.
9 Rehak talked about. We're facing several
10 challenges, as Ms. Rehak told us, and just to
11 put in a little bit of perspective, we have an
12 excellent budget right now. We have a budget
13 that maintains programs that will take us to
14 the next level. It goes with all the goals
15 that we've set for ourselves. There's growth
16 built into that with instruction, and we're
17 hoping that it passes.

18 I know that part of our -- a little
19 bit of our -- the unknown in the challenges is
20 that the ballots were absentee ballots this
21 year, and the -- just by the sheer fact that
22 we're sending out or we sent out, I'm sorry,
23 21,000 ballots and we typically receive 1,600,
24 the odds of the changes in how those ballots
25 come out could be the way that we're not hoping

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2 for, but we do respect everyone's opinion. But
3 the District is geared up and is ready whether
4 -- if it passes, the budget passes, we're full
5 steam ahead. If it doesn't pass, we're full
6 steam ahead as well.

7 We've been spending time planning
8 to see what it is we would do. We know that
9 there would have to be reductions, and we're
10 looking at those with the Board seriously, and
11 we will continue to do that. Once we have
12 information, we'll be back to the public. We
13 may not have that information on June 10, on
14 June 9 or June 10, when we have the results
15 from the budget vote. We will take time to get
16 back together and to look very carefully, very
17 pensively, and very strategically at the
18 decisions we'll be making for the future.

19 So while we have, one, the budget
20 vote, how will that come out; two, we have the
21 state aid that we're looking at considering.
22 What will happen with Governor Cuomo? And,
23 three, we have the impact of COVID-19 and the
24 additional costs that that will present to the
25 budget and to us financially as we move

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2 forward. Those costs have to do with many
3 things, personal protective equipment, what is
4 it that the District will be required to do
5 when we reopen, how will we reopen.

6 So at this time, I'll take you a
7 little bit into what we're talking about and
8 discussing here in terms of reopening. Before
9 I do that, I want to thank the PTAs for their
10 support again. We shared the budget and ballot
11 information with their leadership, and we met
12 with them on Zoom, and we do appreciate that
13 because this way there are just more voices
14 that can explain if there's questions. I also
15 want to thank the PTA coordinating council for
16 hosting the meet and greet for the candidates.
17 They did a wonderful job, along with the League
18 of Women Voters, and thank you, Mr. Fischetti,
19 for supporting that with the Zoom webinar.
20 That's much appreciated. The League did not
21 have the ability to do that.

22 So here's where we are. I am sure
23 that the parents, the faculty staff, and
24 students are wondering what our schools will
25 look like in September and how will our

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2 children be educated. Of course, as we know,
3 living in these uncertain times, it causes
4 undue stress, and not knowing when our schools
5 will reopen and what model will be implemented
6 when they do is quite unsettling. I want to
7 assure you that we are in full planning mode
8 for the fall. We are considering all different
9 models that have been talked about and
10 discussed, whether they be models that were
11 implemented in Denmark or models in China or
12 models here in Upstate New York in the Capital
13 Region.

14 As I wrote in a letter dated to the
15 community May 15, the Board of Education, the
16 administrators, and I continue to plan for
17 various reopening scenarios. While no decision
18 has been made yet on how schools will reopen in
19 September, we have been advised that Governor
20 Cuomo is going to provide guidance to us this
21 month. We've also been advised that by July we
22 will have to have plans to New York State
23 regarding our reopening. What those plans
24 entail we do not know. However, we're using
25 these other models, Capital Region BOCES model,

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2 information for the centers of disease control,
3 and we're looking at putting together a
4 guideline or framework for what we will need to
5 look at as a district in order to create
6 different models and scenarios.

7 One of the items we're looking at,
8 and I thank Mr. Russo for his support in this,
9 is before we do anything, we have to look at
10 some of the social distancing requirements that
11 are being shared, and we're mapping out model
12 classrooms. So, for example, in each of our
13 schools we'll look at the square footage in our
14 classrooms, all our classrooms, including
15 general areas, to see what our square footage
16 is so that we can build model classrooms that
17 meet the social distance requirements.

18 The challenge right now is that's
19 being recommended, but we don't absolutely know
20 what's required. So once we have our state
21 guidelines and they're received and our
22 educational framework takes place, we will
23 convene a group of parents, teachers, staff
24 members, community members, clinicians, safety
25 officials to join us and to provide input to

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2 investigate options for the fall 2020 opening.
3 We're going to call the team the North Bellmore
4 Reopening Team; again, the North Bellmore
5 Reopening Team. Shortly I'm going to send out
6 correspondence, along with Mrs. Pollitt, that
7 includes a -- sorry, a parent survey so we can
8 find out how we're doing across all areas, home
9 learning, social and emotional support. We're
10 going to look at our programs through questions
11 and ask for feedback, so that will help to
12 inform our future decisions. So we really ask
13 when that survey comes, please tell us how
14 you're feeling. Honestly put down on paper
15 your answers to questions. It will serve us
16 and provide immeasurable information for us as
17 we build these different scenarios.

18 Along with that, in a couple of
19 weeks, when we do have further information from
20 the Governor, and when we can solidify a
21 framework more, there will be an invitation
22 that goes out to the community to search for
23 representation from the various schools to
24 serve on the North Bellmore Reopening
25 Committee. So I hope that members will come

1 6-1-20

2 families to utilize these reports to help the
3 students maintain their skills. And we also
4 have a kindergarten orientation that will be
5 coming to you virtually. More information to
6 follow on that.

7 Turning to special education, Mrs.
8 Eskew has been very busy with her staff and
9 planning the special education summer school.
10 She's looking at the staffing, looking at how
11 the instruction will take place. It's remote,
12 completely remote this year. So she's meeting
13 with her staff to ascertain information and
14 feedback on how we can best structure the
15 special education remote learning summer
16 school. Ms. Eskew has also been working
17 closely with our school nurses.

18 Again, Ms. Eskew, congratulations,
19 graduate of Johns Hopkins in contact tracing
20 for COVID-19, which we are thrilled about
21 because we are going to need that when we
22 reopen because we know that the contact tracing
23 is key to finding out what we need to do in
24 terms of quarantine, and we are suggesting and
25 moving forward that our nurses also take the

1 6-1-20

2 similar course and that Ms. Eskew is working
3 with our nursing personnel -- thank you to our
4 nurses to re-envision and reimagine what it may
5 look like when students return to school and
6 what responsibilities we have at District of
7 keeping good care; our students, our faculty,
8 and our staff safe.

9 Our Buildings and Grounds have been
10 very busy. They're very connected with the
11 reopening. As I said, they're modeling out
12 classrooms, they're looking at purchases with
13 me of personal protective equipment. We've
14 completed almost all the steam trap cleanings.
15 We're working on all the HVAC systems,
16 reinstalling new filters, cleaning out those
17 systems. We are also close with the LED
18 lighting and our Allied Electric grant, which
19 we received. Thank you to Mr. Russo. So the
20 LED up lighting, it should be completed very
21 soon.

22 Mr. Fischetti has been extremely
23 busy, as you can imagine, in the Technology
24 Department. As the Board knows, over the last
25 several years, we've been very successful in

1 6-1-20

2 writing grants and obtaining funds. We are
3 continuing that. I've been in conversations
4 with Senator Brooks, as has Mr. Fischetti. We
5 are looking to, hopefully -- hopefully, we can
6 obtain a grant for some technology devices.
7 We're looking at the upper grades, in terms of
8 5th and 6th grade next year, continuing on our
9 plan, our five-year plan of the implementation
10 of a one-on-one initiative, and we're now in
11 conversations on what we're working toward to K
12 through 4.

13 The devices that we're going --
14 that we lent out to families will come back
15 shortly. We'll be collecting them, and then
16 it's about 50 to 60 hours of work with our
17 iPads to reformat them, recalculate them, and
18 update them for September, which we will give
19 out again whether we're in school, out of
20 school, or if there is a hybrid model. Those
21 grade levels will be one-to-one. And then as
22 soon as I have information for the Board of
23 Education about our continued plan with our
24 laptops and our other devices for the other
25 grades, we'll bring that forth to you.

1 6-1-20

2 Lastly, I want to just recognize
3 the fact that the building principals have been
4 extraordinarily busy, as you know. They
5 continue with their Spirit Weeks.

6 This week is the Gratitude Week
7 with the final culmination on Friday. The
8 principals have also distributed caps and gowns
9 and diplomas. The teachers worked diligently.
10 Thank you very much to the NBTA and our staff
11 for coming in and working to pack up students'
12 materials. The students' materials have been
13 returned to them. We are also shortly going to
14 be collecting the instruments from our
15 students, and also the technology devices.
16 We've been continuing collecting the library
17 books, and we'll have that all sewn up. The
18 last day of school is June 17.

19 We're very excited about June 3,
20 because our Flipgrid awards ceremony videos
21 will be distributed out to our families in each
22 of the schools, and on June 10 will be our
23 graduation parade, which I think the fire
24 departments in North Merrick, North Bellmore,
25 and Bellmore who have offered to lead the

1 6-1-20

2 parade with one of their trucks and bring some
3 really wonderful festivity to this.

4 So I thank the Board of Education
5 for your continued support. To the teachers
6 who encountered a most challenging year, and to
7 the parents who supported the learning at home
8 this entire time, my sincere thanks to all of
9 you. I'm impressed by you, grateful to you,
10 and I hope that all our families have an
11 amazing summer and get some relaxation and
12 peace, and I look forward to the volunteers who
13 are going to come and join us as we continue to
14 work through the summer to re-envision North
15 Bellmore. And as I always say, I'm certain
16 that the best is yet to come, and that we will
17 prevail, and that North Bellmore will continue
18 to deliver an excellent education with a
19 continued focus on growing ourselves, a growth
20 mindset. So to all our members of our faculty,
21 to our staff, to our parents, to our community,
22 we've seen the best, absolute best in people
23 during this time. You -- people who have
24 stepped up and shown us who they are. That
25 often happens in challenges. Sometimes you

1 6-1-20

2 find a superhero where you didn't think there
3 was one.

4 Today, Mrs. Pollitt and I had the
5 honor, with Mrs. Berube, of watching one of our
6 teachers teach a Zoom lesson. You can see on
7 both ends -- a lesson on literacy, but it was
8 via Zoom -- you can see on both ends how
9 challenging this is for children and parents
10 who are supporting those children, and the
11 children themselves, but the dedication and the
12 patience and the listening skills that these
13 children employed, they were right there with
14 the teacher, and I must say we had one child in
15 a car watching the Zoom lesson and
16 participating. We had children checking in at
17 the end of the lesson, just giving little
18 scenarios of their life to the teacher to keep
19 that connection going. So it's really
20 important that the families take a look at the
21 survey that Mrs. Pollitt and Mrs. McNamara are
22 going to send out because we know -- we know
23 we're ready to grow into what this remote
24 learning will look like, but we also want to
25 make sure that we understand where parents are

1 6-1-20

2 coming from in terms of the need, and also
3 interested in the feedback from our faculty as
4 well as we continue to grow as a community.
5 Thank you.

6 NINA LANCI: Thank you, Mrs. Testa.
7 And I think you were very eloquent when you
8 said it's been a challenging time. We rise to
9 the occasion. The parents, you know, and the
10 community have risen to the occasion. Our
11 students miss our teachers. They miss coming
12 to school. They can't wait to come back. We
13 want to open the doors in September, and we
14 hope we get them all back in.

15 COMMITTEE MEMBER: Yes.

16 NINA LANCI: A computer does not
17 replace that human connection that a teacher
18 and the support staff bring to the table every
19 day, and the social/emotional skills, and I'm
20 sure the Board -- we've talked about this --
21 it's not the same. This isn't the Bill Gates
22 way of education. We don't believe in that as
23 a Board, and it's evident from the human
24 connection this year that everyone's missing
25 that all here. So with that in mind, thank

1 6-1-20

2 you, and thank the administrative staff, the
3 teachers again, administration. We are in very
4 unchartered territory and trying times, but we
5 have made the best of it, and we will continue
6 to make the best of it for our community and
7 our children, and we will persevere.

8 At this time, I will ask the Board
9 to approve 8.1, the Board of Education, the
10 Personnel Report dated June 1, 2020 as
11 contained in the Agenda.

12 ROSEMARIE CORLESS: Motion.

13 MELISSA CMAR-GROTE: Second.

14 NINA LANCI: All in favor?

15 (WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous,
16 affirmative vote of the members present.)

17 NINA LANCI: Thank you, everyone.

18 At this time, 9.1, be it resolved that the
19 Board of Education approved the CPSE and CSE
20 Reports dated May 28, 2020.

21 MELISSA CMAR-GROTE: Motion.

22 ROSEMARIE CORLESS: Second.

23 NINA LANCI: Any discussion?

24 (WHEREUPON, no response was heard.)

25 NINA LANCI: All in favor?

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2 (WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous,
3 affirmative vote of the members present.)

4 NINA LANCI: At this time, I'll ask
5 for a consent agenda under the New Business
6 Items 10.1 through 10.17.

7 JOHN FERRARA: Motion.

8 ROSEMARIE CORLESS: Second.

9 NINA LANCI: Any other discussion?
10 (WHEREUPON, no response was heard.)

11 NINA LANCI: All in favor?

12 (WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous,
13 affirmative vote of the members present.)

14 NINA LANCI: There will -- there is
15 no need tonight for an additional Executive
16 Session, so at this time, before we adjourn, we
17 have any other business from any of the Board?
18 Otherwise, we will adjourn the meeting until we
19 meet again in July, and we will again see each
20 other after the budget vote sometime, and
21 hopefully, we have very promising results for
22 our community and our children.

23 ROSEMARIE CORLESS: Mrs. Lanci, I'd
24 just like to say thank you for the donations
25 listed in the Agenda.

1 6-1-20

2 NINA LANCI: Very generous
3 donations.

4 MARIE TESTA: Yes. And the Agenda
5 is also located, as you know, on the website as
6 has been our practice, so if anyone wants to
7 check that out, they can go right to the
8 website. Also, the budget information is on
9 the website also if -- as Mrs. Rehak mentioned
10 earlier, you can email Mrs. Rehak, or you can
11 email me at mtesta@northbellmoreschools.org
12 with any questions. Again, the ballot box, if
13 you want to hand deliver, is located right
14 outside Martin Avenue School, or you can drop
15 the ballots in the U.S. mail. And June 9th, at
16 5 p.m. is when we'll take a look and we'll get
17 started with all that.

18 NINA LANCI: And thank you to our
19 Business Office and Mrs. Rehak for the trash
20 bag cooperative bid. That was pretty
21 extensive. I see (inaudible) agency, something
22 very different, trash bag, okay. We're usually
23 hitching onto everybody, but this was exciting,
24 and I'm sure, knowing Jackie Rehak, that we
25 probably got the best price in the state. So

1 6-1-20

2 -- but thank you, and thank you, Chris Powers
3 and your firm this year. It's been
4 challenging. We look forward to your input and
5 continued support. You're a great asset to
6 this Board and the District.

7 MR. POWERS: Thank you, Nina.

8 NINA LANCI: And please, you know,
9 to your firm, convey our thanks. It's
10 challenging times for all of us, and as we say,
11 you're available all the time, the Board is
12 available. Things are coming up that we've
13 never encountered in many years, and I hope we
14 -- it'll be the last time we encounter this.

15 MR. POWERS: Thank you, Nina.

16 NINA LANCI: But everyone be safe
17 and be healthy, and we will speak again in June
18 at the -- after the budget vote.

19 At this time, I'll entertain the
20 motion to adjourn the meeting.

21 JOHN FERRARA: Motion.

22 MELISSA CMAR-GROTE: Second.

23 NINA LANCI: Thank you, Mr.

24 Ferrara. We have a second.

25 All in favor?

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(WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous,
affirmative vote of the members present.)

NINA LANCI: Thank you, everyone.
Please get home safe and be safe.

(WHEREUPON, the audio for this
proceeding was concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Mary Ellen Beaulieu, certify the foregoing transcript of proceedings held on June 1, 2020, in the matter of North Bellmore School District, Board of Education Meeting commenced via video conference, was prepared using the required electronic equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Signature:
MARY ELLEN BEAULIEU

Date: July 9, 2020
Agency: Accurate Court Reporting Service, Inc.
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631-331-3753 866-388-2277

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