



**NORTH BELLMORE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES – December 9, 2021**

Business Meeting	Martin Avenue School 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, NY 11710	7:30 PM
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The Business meeting of the North Bellmore Union Free School District Board of Education was held on Thursday evening, December 9, 2021, in the All Purpose Room of the Martin Avenue School at 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, New York, and via livestream.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

- Rosemarie Corless, President
- Jo-Ann Erhard, Vice President
- Melissa Cmar-Grote
- Nina Lanci
- Christine Malloy

Also present:

- Marie Testa, Superintendent of Schools
- Janet Pollitt, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
- Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business
- Jason Fischetti, Executive Director of Technology, Data and Information Services
- Leyna Malone, Executive Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education
- Steven A. Goodstadt, District Counsel
- Laurice Gunnels, District Clerk

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 6:43 p.m. Motion was made by Mrs. Erhard at 6:44 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Lanci to move into an executive session. Motion was carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 7:46 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mrs. Corless led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Cmar-Grote read the District’s Mission Statement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Business meeting of November 8, 2021, and Special Meeting of November 23, 2021. Mrs. Erhard seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS None.

CORRESPONDENCE Mrs. Corless advised that the Board received correspondence and it was discussed in Executive Session.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Erhard moved that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer's report for the month ended October 31, 2021. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

BOARD COMMITTEE / HIGH SCHOOL REPORTS

Mrs. Lanci reported the Board met on Wednesday, December 1. She expressed that both she and Mrs. Cmar-Grote were given the distinct pleasure in honoring from Mepham High School, Mrs. Federichi, for receiving the 2021 NYS Art Teacher Association's Educator of the year award, and Sofia LaSpina, the first female football player in Long Island history completing a touchdown pass. There was a presentation on Senior experience and student representative reports from all three high schools. The normal course of business included approval of donations, personnel and CPSE/CSE reports, a first reading on policies, and approval to excise surplus equipment. Mrs. Lanci was excited to report this past weekend the annual Polar Express event was held socially distanced and it was a great success. She offered her gratitude and appreciation to the North Bellmore and Bellmore Merrick Central High School districts for their continued support. She concluded her report with the schedule of upcoming activities and concerts in December. The next meeting will be on January 5, 2022.

Mrs. Corless expressed her gratitude to Mrs. Lanci who coordinates the Polar Express event through the Bellmore Lions Club in support of the families in our community.

FINANCE

The Board of Education acknowledged the review of the warrants that have been approved by the Claims Auditor for the month of November 2021.

Mrs. Erhard moved that the Board of Education approve the Budgetary Transfers dated December 9, 2021. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

The Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of all resolutions included in 11.1 through 15.6.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Testa began her report by reiterating Mrs. Corless' words and expressed her gratitude on behalf of the District to Mrs. Lanci and the Bellmore Lions Club for being a true partnership to our community. Not only do they plan and host the annual Polar Express party each year but continue year round to aid the families in our community.

Mrs. Testa was excited to inform the Board that North Bellmore has begun to implement small group learning in the classrooms. She expressed her gratitude to Administrators and teachers in their assistance in procuring this first phase of returning back to normalcy. Triad and dyad tables were set up in the classrooms for small group instruction. Mrs. Testa spoke of visiting the classrooms herself and shared the overall excitement of the children and teachers with the Board of having this opportunity back.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT
(continued)**

Turning to school safety, Mrs. Testa solemnly asked all to take a moment to reflect in remembrance of those students who passed and were injured in the most recent school tragedy. Once the District became aware of this incident, Mrs. Testa said the Administrators, the School Safety Teams, and the Board came together to review District safety protocols. Mrs. Testa continued by reiterating that she regularly meets as she did just today with the Homeland Security Representative Police Officer, and assured that the District is on top of all the latest safety methodologies to ensure that North Bellmore can continue to enjoy safe and beautiful schools.

Mrs. Testa explained the focus and concentration of the Administrators this evening will be to share and detail for the Board the grants that are written in support of the District, and continued by addressing the following updates:

- Professional Development - Mrs. Testa expressed her gratitude to both Ms. McNamara and Mrs. Pollitt for the continued broad and deep instruction for the North Bellmore teachers, most recently with the Writing PD.
- School Safety - The Principals are continuing to hold required safety drills within the buildings (fire, lockout, and lockdown).
- Sixth Grade Graduation – Graduation is now in the planning stages. The District is currently looking ahead at possible celebratory festivities.
- Recruitment to fill grant-funded positions is ongoing. The RTI Coordinator is on this month's report for review and approval, and interviews with counselors, social workers, and teachers are currently underway. The sub teacher shortage is a continuing issue, but the District is working diligently on this.
- Mask Mandate – This month Governor Hochul signed another executive order extending the mask mandate another 90 days.
- Digital Access Survey is a mandated New York State survey that all Districts were given for the parents to complete based on the usage of funds under The Smart Bond Act. Mrs. Testa requested that the parents complete and submit the survey.

Moving on, Mrs. Testa proudly informed the Board and the community that the North Bellmore Technology Department, i.e. Mr. Bevilacqua, Mr. Fischetti, were featured in the Bellmore Herald - *North Bellmore Revamps Stem Science Program*. She shared some of the students from Martin Avenue are shown in photographs on the page and the article highlights the District's new coding and technology program.

In closing, Mrs. Testa joyfully announced that the music winter concerts will begin again for the first time next week and expressed how happy the District is to have the return of the festival shows.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci to approve the Personnel Report dated December 9, 2021. Mrs. Cmar-Grote seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

- A. Appointments
- B. Leave Requests
- C. Resignation
- D. Termination

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Motion was made by Mrs. Cmar-Grote to approve the Staff Development Report dated December 9, 2021. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

BUSINESS REPORT

Mrs. Rehak addressed the local and federal grants that support the District:

Local Grants:

- \$100K Grant from Senator Brooks (Safety & Security Upgrades) - The original application was submitted in 2018-2019 and is currently in the final review process. Funds will be used towards additional fencing on district grounds, the purchase of walkie-talkies, and installation of outdoor speakers all to enhance District safety and security.
- Additional \$100K Grant from Senator Brooks (Capital Projects) – These funds will be utilized to renovate adult bathrooms in Martin Avenue to single use, ADA accessible, all gender bathrooms. This process is in the early stages and may take over a year based on the status of the previous grant.
- \$250K Grant from Legislator McKeivitt (Security Vestibules) – These funds are for the installation of security vestibules at all the District buildings. The project was approved by NYSED. Additional funding was required and approved through voter approval. The project went to bid and the contractors were approved at the November Board meeting. Start date is pending.

Federal Funding:

- CRRSA (Coronavirus Respondent and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act) - \$1,972,901. This grant is broken down into two subsidiary grants, CRRSA ESSER and CRRSA GEER and was approved in August of 2021. The District as previously reported received the initial 20 percent payment.
- ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) – \$1,166,864. The plan is located on the District website. This grant consists of two separate applications. The State upon review asked for additional information regarding addressing learning loss. The District has responded and it is pending second review.

With regard to Federal Funding, Mrs. Rehak went into further elaboration. She explained that while budgeted expenditures are included in both grants they do work in conjunction and overlap each other during a three year period. Some funds have already been expensed and some will continue to be encumbered and expensed over the next few years. Mrs. Rehak informed the Board that Districts were required to detail and prioritize both non-recurring expenditures and specific areas relating to in-person instruction and learning loss. In furtherance of this, she went on to illustrate some expenditures budgeted under these grants:

**BUSINESS REPORT
(continued)**

- Cabling required in the classrooms to accommodate the need for potential livestreaming.
- Additional personnel including three full time reading teachers, two full time social workers, one school counselor, the RTI Coordinator, part-time Math AIS teachers, and part-time cleaners.
- Funds allocated toward purchasing instructional materials such as decodable texts for reading instruction, and training in the Orton Gillingham Approach, a highly structured means to teach reading, spelling, and writing to all students including those with dyslexia.
- Summer Learning including the weekly book clubs, the Summer Scholar Program, and Word Warriors Program. These programs were utilized last summer and will continue in the summer of 2022.
- Afterschool Academy Program – The District is working on creating an afterschool program to address learning loss. This is in the planning stages with more to follow in the future.

**CURRICULUM &
INSTRUCTION REPORT**

Mrs. Pollitt began her report in furtherance on what Mrs. Rehak reported regarding the new positions under the CRRSA/AARP grants:

- The District hired three full time reading teachers.
- The District will be hiring one School Counselor and two School Social Workers. This interview process is underway for both.
- RTI Coordinator - Mrs. Pollitt thanked the Board for their approval of the Personnel Report and was excited to welcome the new RTI Coordinator, Dr. Lydia Williams, who will start on Monday, December 13th.

Mrs. Pollitt then continued her report on yearly grants written in support of the District:

- Consolidated Grant Application – This grant is four grants in one. It is non-competitive, allocation based, and there are particular parameters surrounding the allowable usage of money.
 - *Title I* is based on the number of low-income families in the District and provides funds for extra educational services for children struggling academically.
 - *Title II* is for supporting effective instruction by improving the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders through professional development.
 - *Title III* is for language instruction for the English Language Learners and Immigrant students. The funds are pooled together with other Long Island Districts in a Consortium and the Consortium creates the opportunities. Pooled funds are utilized for PD and technological equipment all geared toward the instruction of ELL's.
 - *Title IV* provides supplemental funding to provide students with a well-rounded education, student support, and academic enrichment. This year these funds will be used towards the professional salaries of teachers in the language enrichment program and push-in services contracted through the Safe Center of Long Island for Health and Wellness.

**CURRICULUM &
INSTRUCTION REPORT**
(continued)

- UPK State and Federal Expansion – UPK State is also an allocation based grant. Mrs. Pollitt reported that the District is grandfathered into this and expressed her gratitude to the District and Dr. Marilyn Johnson who initially applied for the original grant to the State many years ago. The State portion of the grant totaling \$178,200 funds 66 half-day placements, and this year the District was given leeway to convert some to full day. With that allocation the District funded 42 half days and 12 full days maintaining the half days for those parents who preferred half day placements. As to the Federal Expansion funds, new for this year, Mrs. Pollitt was happy to inform the Board that monies received totaling \$464,400 funded 86 full day placements.

In closing, for those interested in the Universal Pre-K Program, Mrs. Pollitt informed the Board that the UPK application will post to the website right after the new year, informational postcards will be mailed to the North Bellmore residents, and a press release will be placed in the local papers.

TECHNOLOGY REPORT

Mr. Fischetti continued with his report on the grants that support the District in the area of technology:

- Smart Schools Bond Act – This grant process began years ago and the funds received totaled approximately \$1.289 million. These funds were utilized to upgrade the network, switches, servers, replacement of computers for the teachers, back-up systems to support current and future 1:1 initiatives, and I-Pads and case carts for Grades 4-6 were purchased.
- E-Rate Grant – This is a three-year grant totaling approximately \$135,000 to be utilized for network upgrades and equipment. This year begins a new three-year cycle. The previous E-Rate grant was utilized for the WIFI project allowing wireless access to every classroom (again in preparation for the 1:1 initiative).
- Schedule N – This is a yearly grant totaling approximately \$30,000 per year for replacement and upgrades of video surveillance equipment, i.e. additional cameras, servers, new software, etc.
- CRRSA/ARPA Grants – As part of these grants, funds were utilized for the cabling project, adding network drops to every classroom so the smartboard computers no longer require WIFI. This will benefit the District if long-term remote learning becomes a necessity.

Mr. Fischetti lastly reported that PD for Microsoft Teams and Microsoft 365 was completed. He was excited to share that students in Grades 5 and 6 will be shifting from Seesaw and joining this online community which is very similar to Google Classroom. Students he explained will have the ability to interact with the whole class or one-on-one, submit assignments, share work with each other, teachers can post important reminders, and specifically noted the chat feature between the students themselves has been disabled. Moving forward, Mr. Fischetti did say in furtherance that a PD will be offered in the spring to review and build on the program.

**TECHNOLOGY REPORT
(continued)**

Mrs. Corless inquired of Mr. Fischetti about a grant reported in the paper for those schools who were directly impacted by cyber-attacks as well as possibly other schools not directly hit who may apply as well. Mr. Fischetti in response indicated his awareness of this and he explained that the Nassau County Schools are currently awaiting guidance from Nassau BOCES in reference to it, i.e. who can apply, what can be applied for, etc.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION
REPORT**

Mrs. Malone reported on the IDEA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B, Section 611 and 619 funds, grants that support the Special Education Department:

- Section 611 – Ages 3 to 21 (Pre-School and School Age)
- Section 619 – Ages 3 to 5 (Pre-School ONLY)

The IDEA grant are longstanding grants utilized for very specific allowable functions such as:

- Salary for professional and support staff.
- The purchase of services including payment of tuition, consultations and evaluations, and contractual agencies.
- Employee benefits.
- Supplies and materials.

All expenditures must be for the benefit of those students receiving Special Education services. For this school year, Mrs. Malone reported that the District received \$52,823 for Section 619 and \$568,077 for Section 611. These numbers she indicated do not represent the total budget for Special Education in North Bellmore but assist in the cost of the fiscal responsibilities associated with the provision of Special Education services. Mrs. Malone detailed these grant funds in North Bellmore are utilized to offset costs related to Special Education as follows:

- Salaries for direct and indirect professional and support staff including but not limited to instructional staff, behavioral support, clerical and paraprofessional support.
- Staff and professional development specific to special education only.
- Special Education services through contractual means including direct services and evaluations.
- CPSE and CSE school age level students for in-district and out-of-district placements.

CPSE/CSE REPORTS

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the CPSE and CSE reports dated December 2, 2021. Mrs. Cmar-Grote seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 5-0 for the following consent agenda items: 15.1-15.6.

NEW BUSINESS CONTRACTS

15.1 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the following contracts for the 2021-22 school year:

- Behavioral & Neuropsychological Consultants, LLP
- The Center for Developmental Disabilities, Inc. (SEDCAR)
- The Center for Developmental Disabilities, Inc. (Tuition)
- Herricks UFSD
- KIDZ Therapy Services, PLLC
- Mind Prep Tutoring, LLC (Academic Tutoring)
- Mind Prep Tutoring, LLC (Skilled Nursing)
- Mind Prep Tutoring, LLC (Related Services)
- Questar III (Internal Audit Services)
- Seaford UFSD

DONATION

15.2 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept a donation from Project A-Game, 7-Eleven, Inc. of a check in the amount of \$711.00 to be used to support Principal's Book of the Month purchases for the students of Saw Mill Road School.

**OMNIA PARTNERS
CONTRACT:
Online Marketplace
(Amazon)**

15.3 WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District has Board Policy 6700 and its accompanying resolution, which permits the Board of Education to enter into contracts through cooperative purchasing; and

WHEREAS, the North Bellmore Union Free School District wishes to utilize a contract through OMNIA Partners for the purchase of products through an Online Marketplace; and

WHEREAS, OMNIA Partners let Contract #MA3457 between Amazon and State of Utah for the purchase of products through an Online Marketplace; and

WHEREAS, Contract # MA3457 authorizes municipalities, like North Bellmore Union Free School District, to purchase of products through an Online Marketplace pursuant to the contract.

WHEREAS, said contract is in compliance with Board of Education Policy 6700 and its accompanying resolution, and New York State General Municipal Law §103(16).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the North Bellmore Union Free School District's participation in the OMNIA Partners Purchasing Program for the 2021-2022 school year; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District authorizes the North Bellmore Union Free School District's use of OMNIA Partners Contract #MA3457 between Amazon and the State of Utah to purchase of products through an Online Marketplace; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business or the Purchasing Agent to issue a purchase order through OMNIA Partners in accordance with Contract #MA3457 between Amazon and the State of Utah.

**OMNIA PARTNERS
CONTRACT:
Online Marketplace
(Amazon)
(continued)**

15.4 WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District has Board Policy 6700 and its accompanying resolution, which permits the Board of Education to enter into contracts through cooperative purchasing; and

WHEREAS, the North Bellmore Union Free School District wishes to utilize a contract through OMNIA Partners for the purchase of products through an Online Marketplace; and

WHEREAS, OMNIA Partners let Contract #R-TC-17006 between Amazon and Prince William County Schools for the purchase of products through an Online Marketplace; and

WHEREAS, Contract # R-TC-17006 authorizes municipalities, like North Bellmore Union Free School District, to purchase of products through an Online Marketplace pursuant to the contract.

WHEREAS, said contract is in compliance with Board of Education Policy 6700 and its accompanying resolution, and New York State General Municipal Law §103(16).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the North Bellmore Union Free School District's participation in the OMNIA Partners Purchasing Program for the 2021-2022 school year; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District authorizes the North Bellmore Union Free School District's use of OMNIA Partners Contract #R-TC-17006 between Amazon and the Prince William County Schools to purchase of products through an Online Marketplace; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business or the Purchasing Agent to issue a purchase order through OMNIA Partners in accordance with Contract #R-TC-17006 between Amazon and the Prince William County Schools.

**RECORD RETENTION AND
DISPOSITION**

15.5 WHEREAS, in or about May each year, the North Bellmore Union Free School District conducts its annual budget vote and election; and

WHEREAS, the District Clerk is currently in possession of all unused ballots resulting from annual budget vote and election from the 2021 election; and

WHEREAS, the Record Retention and Disposition Schedule LGS-1 provides for the destruction of such ballots after six (6) months from the date of the election; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District orders the destruction of all unused ballots resulting from election of 2021.

**DISPOSAL OF DISTRICT
PROPERTY**

15.6 WHEREAS, the North Bellmore Union Free School District has identified a trailer as obsolete and no longer needed to fulfill the District's aims and goals; and

**DISPOSAL OF DISTRICT
PROPERTY
(continued)**

WHEREAS, Policy 6900, Disposal of District Property, authorizes and directs the Superintendent of Schools or their designee to dispose of the District's property by offering it for sale to local municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District has conveyed an interest to the administration of the North Bellmore Union Free School District to purchase the above-referenced trailer in exchange for their tractor; and

WHEREAS, the North Bellmore Union Free School District has conveyed an interest to the administration of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District to purchase their tractor in exchange for the above-referenced trailer;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District hereby finds that the above-reference trailer is obsolete upon the determination by the Board of Education of the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District that their tractor is obsolete; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District hereby directs the disposal and sale of the above-referenced obsolete trailer to the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District in exchange for the specified tractor contingent upon Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District approving a resolution regarding the tractor referenced above.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Tice (Washington Blvd.) – There has been so much talk regarding addressing learning loss. Math AIS is currently not being provided in the District (or at least at Newbridge Road School). Can you please advise why Math AIS is not being provided and when will this service return? Mrs. Pollitt responded by reiterating the hiring of new personnel challenges that the District is currently experiencing including the recent resignation of the AIS teacher at Newbridge and the shortage of substitute teachers working per diem. In the interim, Mrs. Pollitt explained that AIS is currently being delivered by the classroom teachers and reiterated the return of small group instruction. The classroom teachers are meeting in small groups and providing additional support in the classrooms. Mrs. Pollitt reassured that while recruitment has been challenging, it is ongoing, and will continue into the new year until the District meets all staffing requirements.

Mr. Guarneiri (Powell Avenue) – At the meeting last month it seemed like the Board was referencing the survey sent out last summer to understand how North Bellmore as a community felt towards COVID protocols in our schools. The State Health Department obviously makes all the guiding rules, but that survey provided justification for this Board to attempt to make everyone happy. As the situation is constantly changing with the City issuing vaccine mandates for children, with how we view COVID, can North Bellmore please send out a new survey in reference to COVID protocols and intentions on vaccinating our children? This would give the Board and the community a more updated and relevant stance on the communities' feelings. Mrs. Corless responded that the Board would definitely consider it and thanked him for the suggestion.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS
(continued)**

Ms. Holmes (Logue Street) – The news has reported that school districts in the middle of the country have switched to canceling school or switching to remote only days on Fridays to give teachers a break and keep them from quitting. Has the District discussed this as a possibility for our District and has the Board heard anything from the teachers' unions about this? Mrs. Corless responded that the Board has not heard anything regarding this and are not considering it.

Ms. Pascalli (Briggs Street) – Re. mandates – Have you received any information at all from Governor Hochul about possible vaccine mandates for students who attend schools? Mrs. Corless responded that the Board has not.

Ms. Pascalli (Briggs Street) - The parents against mandates have started a movement across the state and country. You will notice flags placed outside this school tonight. Each flag represents a child who will not be in school if the vaccine mandate gets put into place. Will you be proactive and help us and our children by writing to the Governor and express concerns that students should not be mandated to receive the shot? Ask for local control? Mrs. Corless responded that this is under consideration by the Board and we are reviewing letters to the Governor. The Board will provide an update once we have more information to share.

**POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE
SESSION**

Motion was made to return into Executive Session by Mrs. Lanci at 8:43 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Erhard. Motion was carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 10:30 p.m.

Mrs. Corless wished everybody on behalf of the Board happy holidays.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 10:32 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 13, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurice Gunnels
District Clerk