

# MINUTES

## BOARD OF EDUCATION VALLEY STREAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 24

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BUSINESS MEETING  
December 17, 2025

WILLIAM L. BUCK SCHOOL  
6:45 PM

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**Members Present:** President Herrera, Vice President Wilson, Trustee Hernandez, Trustee Maier, Trustee Matthew, and Trustee Nunez

**Others Present:** Superintendent Karakas, Dr. Christopher Keogh, Dr. Jack Mitchell, and School District Attorney

**Absent With Prior Notice:** Trustee Clark

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### I. Call to Order

Having a quorum, the Business Meeting was called to order at 6:47 pm by President Herrera at the William L. Buck School. Motion to enter Executive Session at 6:47 pm was made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Hernandez to discuss Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:30 pm by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Matthew. Motion carried.

The Business Meeting was reconvened at 7:37 pm, at the William L. Buck School by President Herrera. Motion carried.

### II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** November 19, 2025 and December 3, 2025. Motion to approve the Minutes was made by Vice President Wilson and seconded by Trustee Hernandez. Motion carried.

IV. **WELCOME TO VISITORS:** At this time, the Board of Education welcomes questions or comments relative to the items on tonight's agenda.

**V. CORRESPONDENCE REPORT– MS. JENNIE PADILLA, DISTRICT CLERK**

I have nothing to report at this time.

**VI. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – DR. UNAL KARAKAS**

Good evening everyone.

We are in the final days of 2025 if you can believe it.

This year, our district is focused on innovation, inspiration, and academic achievement, guided by our motto, Make the Connection, Innovating Our Future.

Our district's latest mission and vision focuses on academic excellence, critical thinking, innovation, and drawing on the strength of the diverse cultures in our community.

December is concert season as we approach the holiday break. Tonight, we will enjoy a special performance from our orchestra and band students in just a few moments.

Concerts at Brooklyn Avenue School and Robert W. Carbonaro School took place last week and were truly wonderful, featuring thoughtful song selections, student soloists, and speakers.

Thank you to Ms. Wilkey, Ms. Milanese, Mr. Garzetta, and Mr. Shmorhun for their outstanding work.

William L. Buck School will host its concert tomorrow evening at 7:00 pm.

I continue to be impressed by the learning taking place across our schools. During a recent visit to a newly redesigned Kindergarten classroom at Brooklyn Avenue School, students were fully engaged in their literacy lesson, using flexible seating options to stand, write, or sit as Ms. Martins and Ms. Gillespie taught.

It is wonderful to see our redesigned classrooms supporting flexible learning environments for students as early as Kindergarten.

During the holiday season, our Student Councils are leading meaningful efforts to support those in need. This photo highlights the William L. Buck Student Council's collection of canned goods and essential items for members of our community.

Thank you to Ms. Iadeivio and Ms. Campo for their leadership at Buck School, and to all of our Student Council advisors for their outstanding work.

As a former sixth-grade teacher, I especially enjoyed teaching ancient civilizations, so it was a pleasure to see this learning come to life in Naomi Rashad's departmentalized sixthgrade social studies class. In collaboration with Art Teacher Leighanne Jaronczyk and ENL Teacher Vivian Ramirez, students participated in an engaging interdisciplinary STEAM lesson that challenged them to design and build functional marble runs inspired by ancient Mesopotamian ziggurats using everyday materials.

Through their social studies curriculum, students explored early Mesopotamian civilizations and the historical significance of ziggurats. They then applied this knowledge in a hands-on, real-world context that required planning, engineering, creativity, and problem solving—beautifully exemplifying innovative, inclusive teaching and learning in Valley Stream 24.

I would like to share a brief update on two important facilities projects and commend our outstanding facilities team, led by Mr. Brocher. Their dedication is evident every day, and it was especially clear this week as our schools were fully prepared for instruction on Monday following several inches of snow on Sunday. Thanks to their proactive efforts clearing snow in advance, our buildings opened safely and on time.

Two major projects are moving forward very well. The installation of Magnetic Door HoldOpen Devices, which enhance school safety and allow doors to automatically secure during a lockdown, is currently underway. We anticipate these systems will be certified and fully operational in all three schools in January.

Additionally, our air conditioning project continues to progress smoothly. We are recommending bids and RFPs for approval this evening and expect work to begin promptly. We remain optimistic that the project will be completed this school year. We will continue to keep our community informed as this important work moves forward.

I am excited to remind our community that our Board of Education Building Walkthrough will take place on January 10th. This information is available on our website, and we warmly welcome community members to join us. If you are a parent and would like to attend, please let your PTA President know as having a head count is helpful for us.

The walkthrough provides a unique opportunity to see our buildings and classrooms in action, highlight ongoing projects, and share areas where we are continuing to invest to support innovative teaching and learning across the district.

In very exciting news, our Drama Club is off to a fantastic start. Auditions took place this month, with approximately 60 students participating so far. The enthusiasm from both students and families has been wonderful to see.

Thank you to Ms. Walbrecht and Ms. Martinez for launching and leading this brand new club in our district. We are already looking ahead—please mark your calendars for the Drama Club's performance of The Little Mermaid on June 11, 2026.

Thank you to the Board for investing in this new club.

Here are upcoming important dates and events to take note of.

December 18- WLB Winter Concert (7:00 pm)

December 24-January 2 (Holiday Recess, No School)

January 5- Return to School

January 10- BOE Building Walkthrough (9:00 am)

January 14- BOE Work Session (6:45 pm)

January 19- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No School)

January 28- BOE Business Meeting (7:30 pm)

February 28- Legislative Breakfast at Memorial (9:00 am)

We are pleased to share a special holiday performance this evening. As I

have mentioned, our music department does an outstanding job nurturing our students' musical talents. Tonight, Mr. Shmorhun and Mr. Garzetta will lead our chorus and band students through a selection of pieces to bring joy to our winter season.

At this time, I am happy to turn it over to Mr. Shmorhun.

What an outstanding job by our students and our music department. Let's give them one more round of applause. There are refreshments in the back so please stick around and enjoy it at the end of this meeting. On that upbeat note, that concludes my Superintendent's report tonight.

- **Holiday Music Presentation**

## **VII. OTHER REPORTS:**

### **A. VALLEY STREAM CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

There are three delegates from Valley Stream UFSD Twenty-Four on the Central High School Board of Education: President Herrera, Vice President Wilson, and Trustee Maier.

#### **Residency Hotlines:**

Valley Stream School District	516-872-5677
Village of Valley Stream	516-592-5140
Town of Hempstead	516-584-5000

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Vice President Wilson:

The high school board had their last meeting of the year on December 9, 2025, last Tuesday. The Board was joined by members and students of My Brothers Keepers and Girls Inc. Two wonderful programs that provide mentoring, leadership, and opportunities to students in our district. The next meeting is on January 13, 2026. I also want to note the high school will also be doing building tours of all 4 buildings starting at North at 8:30 on January 10, 2026. Unfortunately, it is the same day as the elementary district's tours. It is a good opportunity for those who have students that will be matriculating to the high school district. It will give them an opportunity to walk around and tour the buildings. I hope everyone will join us. That concludes my message at this time. Thank you.

## **B. LEGISLATION REPORT - TRUSTEE NUÑEZ**

Thank you, Madam President. Just a reminder again the Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for February 28, 2026, at 9 am at Memorial. Again, this is a great opportunity to meet your local, state, and federally elected officials. I encourage everyone to attend and bring questions. Thank you. That concludes my report.

## **VIII. LIST OF ITEMS FOR ACTION:**

### **A. PERSONNEL – VICE PRESIDENT WILSON**

*V.P. Wilson 1<sup>s</sup>, to move items A1-A9, as listed Trustee Hernandez 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-0 motion carried.*

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following Teacher Aides to provide supervision after school with the Music Program effective January 27, 2026, through May 31, 2026. Compensation will be in accordance with the agreement between the Board and the agreement with the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) at an hourly rate of pay:

1. Rachel Kolakowski-Aiello
2. Gina Tomaszewski

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following Substitute Teacher Aides to provide supervision after school with the Music Program, as needed, effective January 27, 2026, through May 31, 2026. Compensation will be in accordance with the agreement between the Board and the agreement with the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) at an hourly rate of pay:

1. Amy Corke

3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following Teacher Aides to

provide supervision after school with the Drama Club, as needed, effective December 18, 2025, through June 11, 2026. Compensation will be in accordance with the agreement between the Board and the agreement with the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) at an hourly rate of pay:

1. Nicole Shevak

4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Megan McBrien, as a Permanent Substitute Teacher, effective December 22, 2025, pending successful completion of the onboarding process for the 2025-2026 school year.

5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Joshua Khan, as a Full Time Teacher Aide effective December 18, 2025, pending civil service clearance. Compensation for this appointment will be Step 1 in accordance with the agreement between the District and the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU).

6. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Marie McGee, as a School Monitor Part- Time, effective December 18, 2025, pending civil service clearance. Compensation for this appointment will be Step 1 in accordance with the agreement between the District and the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU).

7. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby revises its appointment for the District Records Management Officer for the 2025-26 School Year to be Mary Cubas, to serve without compensation.

8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Alisha Beera, P/T School Monitor Aide, effective December 23, 2025.

9. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following additions to the per

diem substitute list for the 2025-2026 School Year:

SUBSTITUTE PT MONITORS:  
Alisha Beera

**B. EDUCATION – TRUSTEE NUÑEZ**

*Trustee Nunez 1<sup>st</sup> , to move items B1 & B2, as listed V.P. Wilson 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-0 motion carried.*

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accepts the confidential recommendations of the Committee on Pre-School Special Education previously approved by the Committee on Pre-School Special Education on the dates listed below, pertaining to students being considered for pre-school special education services as set forth in a schedule provided to the Board of Education and the Board of Education hereby approves and ratifies said recommendations of the Committee on Pre-School Special Education.

Dates: 11/12/2025, 11/17/2025, 11/05/2025, 12/01/2025, 11/20/2025

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accepts the confidential recommendations of the Committee on Special Education previously approved by the Committee on Special Education on the dates listed below, pertaining to students being considered for special education services as set forth in a schedule provided to the Board of Education and the Board of Education hereby approves and ratifies said recommendations of the Committee on Special Education.

Dates: 11/21/2025, 12/03/2025, 04/24/2025, 11/12/2025, 11/21/2025, 11/19/2025, 11/20/2025, 10/28/2025, 12/03/2025, 11/21/2025, 11/21/2025, 11/19/2025, 12/01/2025, 11/20/2025, 11/14/2025, 11/10/2025, 12/02/2025, 11/20/2025, 11/24/2025, 11/19/2025, 11/19/2025, 11/14/2025

**C. FINANCE – TRUSTEE MATTHEW**

***Trustee Matthew 1<sup>st</sup>, to move item C1, as listed Trustee Hernandez 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-0 motion carried.***

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board hereby accepts the Treasurer's Report, Collateral Report, Claims Auditor's Report, Appropriation Status Report, Revenue Status Report, Trial Balance for October 2025 and the Claims Auditor's Report for November 2025.

#### **D. POLICY - TRUSTEE CLARK**

***Trustee Maier 1<sup>st</sup>, to move item D1, as listed Trustee Nunez 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-0 motion carried.***

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education reviews and adopts the following revised policies:

- Policy 0110- PROHIBITION AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT
- Policy 4500- ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING OF BUS DRIVERS AND OTHER SAFETY-SENSITIVE EMPLOYEE
- Policy 4300- WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION
- Policy 6163- ACCEPTABLE USE – REMOTE LEARNING
- Policy 6180- PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS, IF ANY: N/A**

**X. NEW BUSINESS:**

***Trustee Hernandez 1<sup>st</sup>, to move items X1-X9, as listed V.P. Wilson 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-0 motion carried.***

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby approves membership for the District-Twenty Four Board of Education in the New York State Caucus of Black School Board Members for the 2025–2026 school year.

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby approves the attendance of the Superintendent of Schools at the ASU + GSV Summit in San Diego, CA, for which the Superintendent has been nominated by Digital Promise and awarded a scholarship by the GSV Scholarship Team, held from April 12, 2026 through April 15, 2026, and hereby authorizes reimbursement for travel and meals as authorized by District Policy 3700.

3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby approves an additional Work Session to be held on January 10, 2026, which shall serve as the Board of Education Walkthrough, in addition to the dates previously adopted on the Board's official meeting calendar.

4. **BE IT RESOLVED**: That the Board of Education hereby determines that the equipment listed below is no longer needed for District purposes and authorizes the Valley Stream UFSD 24 to auction the equipment listed below with Auctions International. Any funds received from the equipment sale will be recorded in A2670.00, "Sale of Property".

Asset Tag # 139501001  
Asset Description - 2006 Van  
Manufacturer - Ford  
VIN # 1FTNE24W86HA61642

5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the recommendation from H2M Architects for the award of bid SED No. 28-02-24-02-0-002-030 & No. 28-02-24-02-0-004-031, for Contract E2 for Electrical Upgrades at the Brooklyn Ave. School & Robert W. Carbonaro School, respectively, to Cooper Power & Lighting, Corp. of Farmingdale, New York for the total amount of \$199,000.

6. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the recommendation from H2M Architects for the award of bid SED No. 28-02-24-02-0-002-030 & No. 28-02-24-02-0-004-031, for Contract G1 for Air Conditioning Install at the Brooklyn Ave. School & Robert W. Carbonaro School, respectively, to JMF Contracting, Inc. of Ronkonkoma, New York for the total amount of \$386,000.

7. **WHEREAS**, four (4) requests for proposals (RFP) for Through-Wall Air Conditioning Units and Support Brackets for the 2025- 2026 school year were sent to separate vendors and one was received in return, now therefore it is hereby

**RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education awards the following vendor: PC Richard & Son Builders Division, 105 Price Parkway, Farmingdale, NY 11735.

8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education hereby ratifies the memorandum of agreement between the District and Local 74, United Service Workers' Union, IUJAT for a collective bargaining agreement for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028.

9. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby authorizes the following Budget Transfers for the 2025–2026 School Year.

<b>BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BOARD APPROVAL DATE: December 17, 2025</b>			
<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>FROM</b>	<b>TO</b>
A9060.8 A2250.400- 3	Hosp & Med Insur Special Ed Related Services <b>Registered Behavior Technicians &amp; Related Services</b>	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
A2110.160- 2	LCH/CRM/CPY Aides-RWC BOCES Summer	\$15,936.94	
A2330.49	School		\$15,936.94

**Summer School  
2024**

Motion made to amend the agenda and add an additional resolutions under New Business was made by Trustee Hernandez and seconded by Trustee Maier. Motion carried.

*Trustee Hernandez 1<sup>st</sup> , to move item X10, as listed Trustee Maier 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-0 motion carried.*

10. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the provisional appointment of Catherine Cancro, as principal account clerk, effective December 18, 2025. Compensation for this appointment will be in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement

**XI. DISCUSSION**

Trustee Nunez:

To my fellow trustees, Superintendent Dr. Unal Karakas, administrators, teachers, staff, families, and the Valley Stream District 24 Community it has been a profound honor to serve as a trustee for Valley Stream District 24. After much reflection I am announcing my resignation from the board of education effective December 31, 2025. While it is difficult to step away from this seat I do so with immense pride in what we have accomplished together. First and foremost, I want to thank our Superintendent, Dr. Unal Karakas. Under your steadfast guidance this administration has reached new heights of effectiveness. Your vision has provided the stability and direction our district needed. It has been a privilege to witness the progress made under your leadership. To our administrators, teachers, and staff you are the heartbeat of our schools. Your dedication ensures that our students, the very reason we serve, have the tools to succeed. It has been a privilege to work alongside such dedicated individuals who prioritize our children's success above all else. To the parents, thank you. Thank you for partnership. Thank you for trusting us with your children's future. To my colleagues on the board of education thank you for the shared hours of debate, collaborations, and service. Local governance is the foundation of our democracy and as I depart, I leave my fellow trustees with this charge. Be

good stewards, follow logic and fact over rhetoric. Be fiscally responsible and continue to support the Superintendent and the administration in their mission. We must be vigilant to avoid the pitfalls of past practices that once hindered our progress. To our newly elected trustees, I encourage you please to respect the traditions that built this district. I beseech you to please have the courage to firmly reject ineffective past practices and complacency. Approach your role with the understanding that you cannot expect what you do not inspect. Trust but verify. Ask questions. Demand results. Govern with a clear sense of purpose and compassion. Keeping the children of District 24 at the forefront of every single decision. Our district must continue to be innovative and forward thinking. We must abandon antiquated ideology of yesteryear and embrace change and transformation. Evolution is not a threat it is a necessity for the growth of our students. So, this is not a farewell but a transition. This resignation allows me to continue the good work we have started over the past several years on a larger platform. I am excited to share that I will be cheering you on from the Nassau County Legislature. In my new role I look forward to partnering with Valley Stream District 24 and continuing to support your growth and prosperity for years to come. Thank you to my colleagues. Thank you, Valley Stream District 24, for the opportunity to serve.

Dr. Unal Karakas:

On behalf of the Board of Education, Trustee Nunez I know that at the last Business Meeting I did express how bittersweet this is for Valley Stream 24. You have been a fierce advocate for our children, for our district, and for our staff. You have made a tremendous impact on this community. Serving on the board of education is an incredibly difficult yet rewarding thing to do and you have done it with pride and have always been centered around intentionality and thinking about what's best for the children of this district. We are so grateful. It's bittersweet and I say bittersweet because we have a new partnership now moving forward. We look forward to that partnership. We are excited about that and we are very very happy for you. Sad for us but happy for you and your personal growth and development in your new role. We are looking forward to partnering with you for years to come.

President Herrera:

Echoing what Dr. Karakas said and trying not to cry. Your footprint, you

know how big it is. We are going to miss you sincerely. I want to wish everyone a very restful and happy holiday season.

**XII. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the Business Meeting by Trustee Maier at 7:58 pm and seconded by Vice President Wilson. Motion unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jennie L. Padilla*

Jennie L. Padilla  
District Clerk