

MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION VALLEY STREAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 24

BUSINESS MEETING
January 22, 2025

WILLIAM L. BUCK SCHOOL
6:45 PM

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

Others Present: Superintendent Karakas, Dr. Lisa Conte, Dr. Jack Mitchell, and School District Attorney

Absent With Prior Notice: Trustee Maier and Trustee Wheeler

*Late arrival

I. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM & CALL TO ORDER – PRESIDENT HERNANDEZ

Having a quorum, the Business Meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm by President Hernandez at the William L. Buck School. Motion to enter Executive Session at 6:46 pm was made by Trustee Wilson and seconded by Trustee Nunez to discuss Contractual Obligations. Motion carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:35pm by Trustee Nunez and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion carried.

The Business Meeting was reconvened at 7:40 pm, at the William L. Buck School by President Hernandez.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** November 20, 2024, December 11, 2024, and January 8, 2025. Motion to approve the Minutes made by Trustee Nunez and seconded by Trustee Wilson. 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**

Good evening.

I have received two emailed FOIL Requests since our last BOE Business Meeting. The first came on January 7, 2025 from Klaus Beqiri from Rest Easy Pest Control. The next one was received on January 10, 2025 from Abdullah Ar Rafee of Empire Center for Public Policy.

Thank you and that concludes my Correspondence Report.

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

Good evening everyone. It is cold outside, but if you can believe it, we are at the half-way point of the school year.

I always start with our District's motto, Make the Connection – Innovating Our Future, as it continues to inspire and guide the work we do.

As we think about preparing our students for the future, one aspect of that is to ensure a smooth transition for our sixth-grade students entering the Central High School District. We have partnered with the Valley Stream Central High School District to inspire our sixthgrade students as they prepare to transition to the CHD next school year. This month at Brooklyn Avenue School, student-athletes, shared valuable insights with our sixth graders about balancing athletics with academic success, the importance of resilience, and the value of hard work. These visits are part of an ongoing initiative, with student-athletes scheduled to visit all three schools three times this school year.

As part of our district's Vision 2030 initiative, we have redesigned classrooms across all three schools. Additionally, through our participation in the Student Voice and Engagement Learning Collaborative with the League of Innovative Schools, we have incorporated student input into these projects. Last year, students, teachers, and families provided the initial feedback that guided our redesigns.

This year, I've met with students in the redesigned classrooms and conducted interviews with them, as well as with our Student Council members. A follow-up Google Form survey was also sent to Student Council representatives, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. In fact, 100% of surveyed Student Council members agreed that the redesigned classrooms will help students learn more effectively and collaborate better.

Here are two quotes from the survey:

"The redesigned classroom can help students learn better because the room has bright colors and gives off a comfortable, home-like feeling. Also, there are a lot of group areas and solo areas if students need help or quiet time."

"I loved the way you could really be independent and also work with others. I love to have that choice."

These responses highlight the positive impact of our redesigned learning environments! A big thank you to our Board of Education for investing in these redesigned classrooms that our students are benefiting from.

I attended the Nassau Music Educators Association All-County Music Festival this month. The music festival brings chorus, band, and orchestra students from across the county who rehearse and then perform for our regional community. These are some pictures from the event.

From Valley Stream 24, we were thrilled to have two of our talented fifth graders participate in the Division 1 West All-County Music Festival: Aubrey Danquah from William L. Buck on trumpet and Nigel Lian from Robert W. Carbonaro on violin.

In sixth grade, we had three exceptional students represent us in the Division

2 All-County Music Festival: Mia Ramirez from Robert W. Carbonaro on flute, Brandon Gobin from William L. Buck on cello, and Jazmell Sinclair from Brooklyn Avenue on violin.

These students dedicated themselves to an immersive rehearsal schedule leading up to their performance, which culminated in a magnificent showcase at the Tilles Center. We are so incredibly proud of their hard work and the remarkable talent they displayed. The performances were absolutely outstanding!

This year, our district held Scripps school spelling bees for students in grades 4-6. The competitions were truly exciting and showcased the incredible spelling talents of our students.

At William L. Buck, something incredible happened—the Spelling Bee ran through nearly all 450 practice words provided by Scripps, which is a first for our district! After exhausting the practice list, students had to tackle words that were not in the official practice bank, showing their remarkable skills and determination. The bees were very competitive and a nail biting experience for everyone.

We are so proud of all the students who participated in the Spelling Bees, as well as our dedicated teachers, principals, and Dr. Conte, who helped coordinate with Scripps to make this year's grade 4-6 competitions such a success.

The winners from each school will soon take an online qualification bee, and those who succeed will move on to the regional Scripps Spelling Bee. We wish all our students the best of luck in the next round!

This month, I had the pleasure of visiting Ms. Calamiong's class at Brooklyn Avenue School, where students were exploring barometric pressure, rain gauges, thermometers, and meteorology through hands-on learning activities aligned with our third-grade science standards.

The students were excited to share their learning and did an excellent job articulating their understanding after engaging in these interactive experiences. It was a wonderful example of the outstanding teaching and learning happening every day here at Valley Stream 24!

I held my Coffee Hour this month at William L. Buck School where I shared some of our accomplishments, data, and innovative work that is happening in our district. We had wonderful conversations with our parents on a cold January evening. This year I have been alternating between morning and evening sessions, so the next Coffee Hour will be at RWC on February 13th at 10:00 am.

We are incredibly proud to share that our very own Trustee Nunez has been appointed to serve on NYSSBA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. Trustee Nunez is also an active member of our district's DEI Committee, and this new role will allow her to represent Valley Stream 24 at the state level.

Having one of our trustees bring back knowledge, resources, and innovative ideas from NYSSBA to our district is an incredible opportunity for us all. Congratulations to Trustee Nunez on this well-deserved appointment to such an important role!

These are upcoming important dates and events.

On January 24th, William L. Buck will be holding a family forum called Cheers to the New Year where families will bring dishes from their cultures to celebrate the new year. It will also be an opportunity to celebrate Lunar New Year as well.

January 29th is Lunar New Year and schools are closed on that day.

February 5th, our board of education will be meeting for its work session at 7:30 pm.

February 13th is my Coffee Hour at RWC at 10:00 am.

February 17 through 21 is our winter recess. There will be no school that week.

Finally, February 26th, our BOE will be meeting for its next business meeting at 7:30 pm.

For building specific events, please visit our main calendar on our district website.

PRESENTATIONS:

RWC Student Presentation

We are now excited about our second grade students at Carbonaro School who will share with us a little bit about our Go Math curriculum and how it helps them solve problems, work together, and become better mathematicians. I welcome Principal Iacono to the podium at this time.

What a wonderful presentation by our Carbonaro second grade students. We thank Ms. Gonzalves for her hard work and Principal Iacono for supporting our teachers. Thank you also to our technology team for putting together the video.

And that concludes my Superintendent's report tonight.

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 Hernandez, Vice President Herrera, 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

VICE PRESIDENT HERRERA:

I have nothing to report at this time. Thank you.

B. LEGISLATION REPORT - TRUSTEE NUÑEZ

Valley Stream 24 will be participating in the NSBA Advocacy Symposium in Washington D.C. from February 2-4. We look forward to working with our State and Federal Legislators in the best interest of our students here at District 24 and our school community as a whole.

Thank you and that concludes my Legislation Report.

VIII. LIST OF ITEMS FOR ACTION:

A. PERSONNEL – VICE PRESIDENT HERRERA

V.P. Herrera 1st, to move A1-A15, as listed Trustee Nunez 2nd. 5-0 motion carried.

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education appoints Kim Conger, to serve as a Per Diem Committee on Special Education (CSE) Chairperson. This appointment is on a per diem basis for the 2024/2025 School Year, in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in the agreement between the Board of Education and Kim Conger and authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the necessary documents to effectuate same, subject to review by counsel.
2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Flor De Lourdes Benites, as a School Monitor Part-Time, effective January 23, 2025, pending civil service clearance, replacing Adriana Pachas. Compensation for this appointment will be Step 1 in accordance with the agreement between the District and the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU).
3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of

Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Ana Salazar, as a School Monitor Part-Time, effective January 23, 2025, pending fingerprint and civil service clearance, replacing Rachael Kolakowski-Aiello. Compensation for this appointment will be Step 1 in accordance with the agreement between the District and the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU).

4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Shaista Mughal, as a School Monitor Part-Time, effective January 23, 2025, pending fingerprint and civil service clearance, replacing Memoona Manzoor. Compensation for this appointment will be Step 1 in accordance with the agreement between the District and the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU).
5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following Salary Changes, effective February 1, 2025:

Nicole Barci	Step 7.5	MA + 15
Lisa Bernstein	Step 4	MA + 60
Leighanne Jaronczyk	Step 3	BA + 15
Ashleigh Jones	Step 3	MA + 45
Vivian Ramirez	Step 5	MA + 15
Naomi Rashad	Step 4	MA + 30
Traci Ritterband	Step 5	MA + 45
Julia Sollin	Step 6	MA + 15
Dr. Carol Wright	Step 21	EDD

6. **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 2024-2025 School Year:

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

Miriam Kizelnik (effective January 23, 2024)

7. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves a leave of absence for medical purposes for Vanessa O'Shea, Elementary Classroom Teacher, on or around January 6, 2025, until on or around February 3, 2025.

8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves a leave of absence for maternity/childcare purposes for Ariana Arnone, Elementary Classroom Teacher, on or around March 27, 2025, until on or around June 20, 2025.
9. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves a leave of absence for paternity/childcare purposes for Philip Testa, Physical Education Teacher, on or around April 5, 2025, until on or around May 12, 2025.
10. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves a leave of absence for maternity/childcare purposes for Stephanie Shapiro, Elementary Classroom Teacher, on or around April 20, 2025, until on or around June 27, 2025.
11. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby terminates the employment of the employee identified on confidential Schedule “A”, effective close of business January 22, 2025.
12. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Michelle Evans-Cornish, Temporary Substitute, effective close of business January 3, 2025.
13. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Fatiha Fathy, Full-Time Cafeteria Aide, effective close of business December 20, 2024.
14. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation for the purpose of retirement dated January 2, 2025 of Katherine Giannone, Full-Time Cafeteria Aide, with the resignation effective close of business February 7, 2025.
15. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation for the purpose of retirement dated January 6, 2025 of James Nicholes, Assistant Head Custodian, with the resignation effective close of business March 28, 2025.

B. EDUCATION – TRUSTEE WILSON

Trustee Wilson 1st, to move B1-B2, as listed Trustee Nunez 2nd. 5-0 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 01/07/2025, 01/07/2024, 12/03/2024, 12/19/2024, 11/21/2024, 01/06/2025 and 12/17/2024, 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.
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 12/17/2024, 11/26/2024, 11/25/2024, 12/02/2024, 11/26/2024, 12/05/2024, 12/19/2024, 11/21/2024, 11/26/2024, 12/18/2024, 12/17/2024, 01/03/2025, 12/05/2024, 12/12/2024, 12/02/2024, 12/03/2024, 12/18/2024, 12/12/2024, 01/06/2025, 11/22/2024, 11/21/2024, 12/10/2024, 12/03/2024 and 12/17/2024, 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.

C. FINANCE – TRUSTEE WILSON

Trustee Wilson 1st, to move C1, as listed Trustee Clark 2nd. 5-0 motion carried.

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board hereby accepts the Treasurer's Report, Collateral Report, Appropriation Status Report, Revenue Status Report, Trial Balance for November 2024 and the Claims Auditor's Report for December 2024.

D. POLICY - TRUSTEE WHEELER

Nothing to report at this time.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS, IF ANY: N/A

X. NEW BUSINESS: TRUSTEE NUNEZ

Trustee Nunez 1st, to move X1-X6, as listed Trustee Clark 2nd. 5-0 motion carried.

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education adopts the School Calendar for the 2025-2026 school year.
2. **WHEREAS**, the Commissioner of Education notified school districts on November 26, 2024 of their option to elect not to participate in the regionalization planning process by submitting written notification by January 15, 2025 to the State Education Department,

NOW, THEREFORE, it is resolved that the Board of Education ratifies the action of the Superintendent of Schools in submitting written notification to the State Education Department on January 9, 2025 of the District's election not to participate in the regionalization planning process.

3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education hereby amends the calendar of business meetings to change the March 26, 2025 business meeting to March 19, 2025.
4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education hereby approves the amended Budget Calendar for the 2024-2025 School Year.
5. **WHEREAS**, equipment has been determined to be broken, surplus and/or obsolete, and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the School District to dispose of such broken, surplus and/or obsolete equipment, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that such broken, surplus and/or obsolete equipment will be disposed of in a manner that services the best interest of the Valley Stream Union Free School District Twenty-Four, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools, or his designee is hereby authorized to proceed with the disposal of the following items:

<u>Barcode</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Building</u>
2296	Broken Cart (Lab Cabby)	WLB
2299	Broken Cart (Lab Cabby)	WLB
2466	Broken Cart (Lab Cabby)	BAS

6. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby authorizes the following Budget Transfers for the 2024-2025 School Year.

VALLEY STREAM UFSD #24

TRANSFER BUDGET CODES OVER \$ 10,000

[illegible]

XI. DISCUSSION

XII. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to re-enter Executive Session at 8:05 pm made by Trustee Nunez and seconded by Trustee Wilson to discuss certain Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 9:23 pm made by Trustee Nunez and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn the Business meeting at 9:23 pm by Trustee Nunez and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion carried

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennie L. Padilla

Jennie L. Padilla

District Clerk