

MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION VALLEY STREAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 24

BUSINESS MEETING
April 16, 2024

WILLIAM L. BUCK SCHOOL
8:00 PM

Members Present: President LaRocco, Vice-President Hernandez, Trustee Herrera, Trustee Maier, Trustee Nunez, Trustee Wheeler, and Trustee Wilson

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

Absent With Prior Notice: N/A

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

Having a quorum, the Business Meeting was called to order at 7:17 pm by President LaRocco at the William L. Buck School. Motion to enter Executive Session at 7:17 pm was made by Trustee Maier and seconded Trustee Wilson for Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:56 pm by Trustee Wheeler and seconded by Trustee Maier. Motion Unanimously carried.

President LaRocco opened the Public Hearing for Policy 5131 – Code of Character, Conduct and Support at 8:00pm and requested any questions or comments. Hearing no questions or comments, President LaRocco closed the Public Hearing at 8:01 pm.

The Business Meeting was reconvened at 8:01 pm, at the William L. Buck School by President LaRocco.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 27, 2024, and April 3, 2024. Motion to approve the minutes made by Vice President Hernandez and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion unanimously 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. On Friday, April 12, 2024, at 4:32 pm I received an email FOIL request from Ms. Samantha Knice an Associate Trainee at Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC.

That concludes my correspondence report. Thank you.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – MR. UNAL KARAKAS

We had another wonderful month of April with incredible initiatives and activities across our district!

I had the incredible honor and privilege of attending Howard University's Recruitment Fair this year. As part of our effort to diversify our recruitment efforts and expand our candidate pool, I reached out to Howard University a few months ago to partner with them. Not only were we able to, but they informed of a Hiring Fair for students studying education. As such, I attended last week on Wednesday in Washington, D.C. and met prospective candidates. Principal Comis joined me as well. We were the only district in the tristate area, which includes NYC, to be present at the Fair. It showcases our commitment to hiring diverse talent.

The picture on the left includes students who not only plan to come back to NY, but also one student who is about to attend Columbia University for their master's.

Here are some additional pictures.

I have to say, the event offered us the opportunity to speak about Valley Stream, the diversity present here, and all the incredible staff and families we have.

Candidates were blown away by what Valley Stream 24 has to offer, and the fact that we were able to spread the word about Valley Stream 24 to such a strong candidate pool speaks volumes.

What an incredible and monumental event for us. I thank the Board of Education for supporting initiatives like this that help us expand our recruitment efforts.

Speaking of recruitment efforts, I am excited that this year, we have expanded our recruitment efforts to include Iona University, and as of this month, also Columbia University and New York University. We now partner with over 30 colleges and universities to expand our recruitment efforts to qualified candidates.

This month we also had the wonderful opportunity to experience the Solar Eclipse. Our district provided glasses to students and staff, and everyone had an incredible time experiencing the eclipse. Our teachers reviewed lessons about the Eclipse, and the weather ended up cooperating for viewing it as well. The next eclipse won't come for another 20 years, and it will be in August of 2044, so this was a once in a school lifetime event for the students at Valley Stream 24. I have heard very positive feedback from teachers, administrators, and parents about the glasses that were handed out to experience this wonderful and historic event.

We are so proud of the success of our students and stand by all of them. I am proud to announce that Rachel Alcantara, a sixth-grade student from Brooklyn Avenue School, became the New York State Champion of the 2024 Elk's Drug Awareness Essay Contest! Rachel's essay has now advanced to the national level of the competition. Congratulations to Rachel and her family, and to all of VS24 (as well as BAS). We thank her teacher, Ms. Anderson, and of course the building principal, Dr. Comis, for all their support for initiatives like this as well. Furthermore, we extend our appreciation to Brian Steckler and the entire Elk's Lodge Team for their support and commitment to this significant endeavor. We will be honoring Rachel at our May Board meeting.

As you can see, our students are getting a well-rounded and stellar education here at VS24. We are always looking at where we are and continuously growing and developing. Vision 2030, as I have shared, is future-focused and allows even further growth so that students are prepared for the 21st Century.

With Vision 2030 and the future of our district in mind, we have very exciting initiatives to further enhance our offerings in the 2024-25 school year proposed

budget that Dr. Mitchell will expand on during the budget presentations coming up to our community. I will let you know of those dates shortly.

To briefly share some of the exciting initiatives our proposed budget includes, which the board adopted last month, we have incorporated feedback from our staff, families, and community members to create this budget. Next school year's budget not only maintains existing programs but enhances and adds on to them while remaining financially responsible.

The first initiative that I am confident our community will be very excited about is that we plan to expand our Spanish program to grades 3 and 4. We currently offer it to grades 5 and 6. Research shows that students learn a language best if they start learning it before the age of 10, and this will allow our students to do just that. We can start general language introduction in grade 3, so that by grade 6, we have even better and more extensive Spanish language acquisition.

We are also excited to announce that our proposed budget has our Challenge Program next year extended to grades 4 and 5, as we currently only have it in grade 6. This will provide added enrichment to all of our students. We will still provide Enrichment for All for all students K-6.

With our parents and staff's input, after a survey that I sent out earlier this school year, we are also extending our summer program hours this summer to 5 hours instead of 3! This will provide added intervention and enrichment for our students in the month of July as our students prepare for their new grade. More information on the Summer program will be forthcoming in the coming weeks.

Our teachers piloted a new science curriculum, and as such, we will be utilizing a brand new curriculum for grades K-6 through which is called Into Science. Into Science is through HMH, which is the same company that provides our math curriculum, Go Math, as well as our Into Reading curriculum for grades 3-6. Utilizing Into Science will give teachers the same online platform they are used to utilizing, and teachers will be provided with training on the new program.

We also have two propositions that are noteworthy that are included in the budget. The first is something I think our entire community will be happy to see. I have heard this feedback from the first day I began as Superintendent 10 months ago, and that was about air conditioning. We are adding a proposition to utilize funds from our Capital Reserve for window-unit air conditioning for BAS and RWC. For

rooms that have windows, aside from our gym and cafeteria, we would place air conditioning to ensure that our students and staff stay cool in our warmer months. This has been a huge ask by our entire community and will truly make an impact on student learning and staff teaching and supporting all of our students.

We are also adding a proposition to utilize our Capital Reserve for magnetic door hold open devices to enhance the safety of our classrooms. In the event of an emergency, it is critical that our doors lock. As such, the magnetic door hold-open devices automatically close and lock all doors should a building ever need to be in lockdown. This means teachers would not need to worry about finding a key, and we would not need to worry if a substitute teacher for the day didn't have access to a key. It is an incredibly important device that will only enhance safety across our district. With this upgrade also comes a fire alarm upgrade as well.

We also plan to enhance our classrooms and redesign them soon too, in alignment with Vision 2030. Classroom redesigns would allow classroom furniture to be upgraded to be collaborative and innovative, similar to how students would learn to collaborate in the job market out there today .

We also have a proposed new 8:1:3 special education class in our budget, for a Kindergarten class. This will allow, at the very least for this upcoming year, to allow more of our students with disabilities to be in district which is a very important initiative.

The entire budget, including with all the new initiatives, will allow us to remain under our tax level limit. This is huge as it means we are being fiscally responsible. As you know, grant funding from Covid also are ending. With BAS also becoming in good standing, we also have to absorb the TSI grant funding. Despite all of this, and with the tax levy limit at 2.16%, our proposed tax levy remains under that at 1.7%! A lot of districts across Long Island are proposing tax levy's at their cap, but we are happy to report that ours will be under that percentage. This involved careful short-term and long-term planning.

We will be sharing more about the budget and its specifics at upcoming meetings. The budget presentations are listed on the slide here.

I also wanted to share some important dates and events coming up with our spring recess and then in the month of May.

Our spring recess is coming up, with this Friday being the last day before we end. Schools will reopen on May 1st. When we return in May, May 2nd is our grade 5 NY State Science Exam. May 7+8 are our NY State Math Exams for grades 3, 4, and 6. May 9+10 is our computer-based Math Exam for Grade 5.

We have our exciting 6th grade trip this year to Ashokan. That is taking place May 13th through the 15th. We also have an exciting band and orchestra concert for our entire district to be held at William L. Buck School on May 16th. May 21st is our Exhibit Night and the very important Budget Vote. We encourage all of our families to vote as I shared about all that the budget will offer our students both short and long-term.

My Coffee Hour in the month of May will be at WLB on May 23rd. May 24th will feature WLB's spring chorus, as BAS and RWC had theirs earlier in the school year. Finally, May 27th is Memorial Day, which means we will have no school.

I cannot believe I just shared about the month of May, as the school year is getting closer to an end. But we still have more learning and exciting events in the final two months of school. I want to thank our staff and families for their ongoing support, as always.

And that concludes the Superintendent's report.

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: Vice President Hernandez, Trustee Maier and Trustee Herrera.

Residency Hotlines:

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

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

B. LEGISLATION REPORT - TRUSTEE NUÑEZ

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

VIII. LIST OF ITEMS FOR ACTION:

A. PERSONNEL – VICE PRESIDENT HERNANDEZ

V.P. Hernandez 1st, to move A1, Trustee Maier 2nd 7,0,0

1. 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 2023-2024 School Year:

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Nakiyah Drones (effective April 17, 2024 pending fingerprint clearance)

SUBSTITUTE PART TIME MONITOR

Olivia Rojas (effective April 17, 2024 pending civil service clearance)

B. EDUCATION – TRUSTEE WILSON

Trustee Wilson 1st, to move B1-B2, Vice President Hernandez 2nd 7,0,0

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 03/01/2024, 03/15/2024, 03/25/2024, 03/25/2024, 03/12/2024, 03/15/2024 and 03/19/2024 for the 2023/2024 School Year and 03/08/2024, 03/11/2024, 03/15/2024, 03/15/2024, 03/13/2024, 03/13/2024, 03/15/2024, 03/25/2024, 03/11/2024 and 03/11/2024 for the 2024/2025 School Year, 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 03/06/2024, 03/01/2024, 02/05/2024, 03/21/2024 and 03/22/2024 for the 2023/2024 School Year, 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 MAIER

Trustee Maier 1st, to move C1, Trustee Nunez 2nd 7,0,0

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 February 2024.

D. POLICY - TRUSTEE WHEELER

Trustee Wheeler 1st, to move D1, Trustee Maier 2nd 7,0,0

1. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education has a second read and adopts the following revised policy:

- Policy 5131 – Code of Character, Conduct and Support

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS, IF ANY:

X. NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Maier 1st, to move X1-X7, Trustee Nunez 2nd 7,0,0

1. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the recommendation from the Nassau County Cooperative of Superintendents for Buildings & Grounds, for the Blinds,

Shades, Motorized Drapes Restoration of Stage Curtains Bid 2024-25, awarding said bid to Master Carrier Window/Acme Window Treatments.

2. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the License Agreement and Rider between the District and SCOPE Education Services for the 2024-2025 Before and After School Child Care Program and further authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the necessary documents to effectuate said Agreement.

3. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the Agreement between the District and Uniondale UFSD for student health and welfare services for the 2023-2024 school year, and further authorizes the Board President and the Superintendent of Schools to execute the necessary documents to effectuate said Agreement.

4. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the Agreement between the District and Da Vinci Education & Research for Special Education Services, Consulting and Professional Development for the 2023-2024 school year, and further authorizes the Board President and the Superintendent of Schools to execute the necessary documents to effectuate said Agreement.

5. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the purchase of the Into Science Program from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt at a cost of \$286,138.70, to be paid through the 2025-2026 school year, and further authorizes the Board President to execute the necessary documents to effectuate same.

6. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby authorizes the placement of the following additional voter proposition at the annual budget vote & election on May 21, 2024 and directs the District Clerk to place said additional proposition in the annual notice of said vote & election.

Proposition No. 7

SHALL the Board of Education of the Valley Stream Union Free School District No. Twenty-Four be authorized to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund, in accordance with the provisions of Section 3651 of the NYS Education Law, to pay costs of the construction, reconstruction, repair and

rehabilitation of existing School District facilities, and the acquisition of original furnishings, equipment, machinery and apparatus required for the purpose of capital improvements including but not limited to, additions and reconstruction, roofing, asbestos abatement, heating / ventilation, masonry work, windows, and similar projects, in a maximum amount of \$5,000,000, having a probable term of ten (10) years, and be authorized to raise \$5,000,000 to fund the reserve in the current or future years with an annual contribution of any available funds, through various sources including, but not limited to, state aid reimbursement and cost saving measures resulting in unexpended funds or by the transfer of unappropriated fund balances from the general fund and the interest accrued on such funds over the term of the capital reserve fund, in amounts as determined annually by the Board of Education.

7. BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education hereby authorizes the following Budget Transfers for the 2023-2024 School Year:

VALLEY STREAM UFSD #24

TRANSFER BUDGET CODES
OVER \$ 5,000

	BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BOARD APPROVAL		
	DATE: April 16, 2024		
CODE	DESCRIPTION	FROM	TO
A9060.8 A1060.4	Hosp & Med Insur Contractual Expenses Budget Legal Ads	\$27,000.00	\$27,000.00
A9060.8 A1420.4	Hosp & Med Insur Attorney Fees Impartial Hearing Officer	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
A9060.8 A1480.49	Hosp & Med Insur Public Info BOCES Zimmerman & Edelson	\$16,845.00	\$16,845.00
A9060.8 A2250.400-3	Hosp & Med Insur Special Ed Related Services OT, Behavioral Services, Evals & P/T Speech Teacher	\$130,000.00	\$130,000.00
A1240.15 A1240.4	Central Admin Salary Supt Office Expense Superintendent Conferences	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00
	TOTALS	\$ 180,945.00	\$ 180,945.00

XI. DISCUSSION

XII. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to re-enter Executive Session at 8:18 pm made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wilson to discuss certain Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion to exit the Executive Session at 9:55 pm made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion to adjourn the Business meeting at 9:56 pm by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Nunez. Motion unanimously carried

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennie L. Padilla
Jennie L. Padilla
District Clerk