

MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION VALLEY STREAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 24

BUSINESS MEETING
March 27, 2024

WILLIAM L. BUCK SCHOOL
6:45 PM

Members Present: President LaRocco, Vice-President Hernandez, 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: Trustee Herrera

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

Having a quorum, the Business Meeting was called to order at 6:55 pm by President LaRocco at the William L. Buck School. Motion to enter Executive Session at 6:55 pm was made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wilson to discuss Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:29 pm by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion Unanimously carried.

The Business Meeting was reconvened at 7:33 pm, at the William L. Buck School by President LaRocco.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 28, 2024, and March 13, 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:

I received a FOIL request from Mr. Dandan Zou a reporter for Newsday via email on March 6, 2024.

On March 8, 2024 I received a letter in the mail from Ms. Andrea K. Carra. The letter was to inform the Board of her retirement which will be effective June 30, 2024 at the close of the business day.

That concludes my correspondence report. Thank you.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – MR. UNAL KARAKAS

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

Tonight, I am proud to begin my report by highlighting the remarkable efforts of our very own Assistant Superintendent for Business, Dr. Mitchell. In January, Dr. Mitchell embarked on a journey to Guatemala alongside approximately 40 other educators as part of the LifeTouch Memory Mission. Their mission? To contribute to the construction of a sustainable school using recycled plastic bottles.

Dr. Mitchell shared with me the profound impact this experience had on him, underscoring the value of extending support to those in need and fostering opportunities for others.

Recently, the LI Herald featured an insightful interview with Dr. Mitchell, shedding light on the significance of this mission and its far-reaching effects.

Since its inception in 2000, the LifeTouch Memory Mission has been dedicated to serving children, families, and communities across the globe.

On behalf of the Board of Education, myself, and our entire district, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Mitchell for his involvement in this meaningful humanitarian endeavor!

Here is another image showcasing the incredible work that was done. A picture like this truly exemplifies the significance of efforts like these.

I want to share a 4-minute video that Lifetouch created to further showcase this important mission.

(Video shown)

Wow! What an inspiring display of support and dedication to humanity. Once again, we extend our heartfelt thanks and congratulations to our very own Dr. Mitchell for representing Valley Stream 24 in such a significant and impactful manner.

Earlier this month, we had our annual Valley Stream Council of PTAs Legislative Breakfast. Three legislators joined us, including Assemblywoman Solages, Assemblyman Curran, and Senator Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick. I had the privilege of speaking on behalf of our Valley Stream Superintendents and Board of Education, and outlined key legislative items that will help support our school districts. I am proud to say that there are productive discussions underway in Albany right now on key issues that I brought up such as Foundation Aid funding, revamping the Tier 6 retirement system, APPR, and more.

The highlight of the event was having two outstanding Student Council members, Vanessa Harrison and Malcolm Mathis from RWC and BAS respectively, join me in addressing the audience, both receiving standing ovations. Their courage and eloquence exemplify the promising leadership within our student body.

I also want to thank our PTAs, families, and staff for supporting this event. I think we had the most representation at the breakfast. Overall, it was a truly wonderful morning of advocacy and community engagement.

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On the same day as the legislative breakfast, Assemblywoman Solages hosted the 11th annual Women of Distinction ceremony, a profoundly meaningful event for all the honorees and their families. Witnessing the tremendous support from constituents of the 22nd Assembly District was truly inspiring. We are exceptionally proud and honored that our very own Trustee Nunez was recently recognized as a Woman of Distinction by Assemblywoman Solages. Congratulations to her!

As you know, fostering diversity and bringing our families together are core values in our district. Family Forums are an important part of this. This year, we were thrilled to see both WLB and BAS successfully host their forums, and this month, RWC followed suit.

The theme for RWC's forum centered around Game Night, an evening enriched with cultural desserts brought in by families, showcasing their diverse backgrounds and traditions. Families and students were treated to a slide deck exploring the historical origins of featured games and the diverse cultures they represent.

Parents, students, and staff alike embraced the opportunity to play games and connect in a joyous atmosphere. Thank you to the RWC staff for making this Family Forum a success.

This year marked the introduction of mid-year Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTCs) for the first time in our district. Following the conferences, I distributed a survey to our families to gather feedback, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Remarkably, 100% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that mid-year conferences were beneficial to them. Additionally, our teachers expressed strong support for PTCs.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue this practice next year. We extend our gratitude to our dedicated teachers for their hard work in supporting our families as we strive for continued student progress in the final three months of the school year.

A special thank you goes to our principals for their assistance in coordinating schedules, and to our families for their ongoing support.

We also had our sixth-grade hockey tournament at South High School's gym last week. The students showed great sportsmanship, and it was a lot of fun to watch. In the end, Robert Carbonaro School came out victorious this year, so congratulations to RWC!

Here are a few more pictures. Thank you to Dr. Comis for helping to organize this game.

As you know, we value our music and art programs here at Valley Stream 24. Our spring chorus concerts have begun, with BAS and RWC hosting theirs this month. The students did a wonderful job thanks to Ms. Wilkey's hard work with both choruses. Our families also had a wonderful time at each event. William L. Buck School will be holding its chorus performance in May.

We also look forward to our band and orchestra performance in May as well.

In exciting news, I recently joined the National School Superintendent's AASA Artificial Intelligence Steering Committee in which about 25 Superintendents from the country review AI and advocate for state level and federal policies that ensure that AI, when utilized, is used in an ethical and meaningful way. The first meeting was held virtually this month, and we started the conversation around this important review of potential policy proposals. I look forward to continuing this conversation as we always plan for the future of learning with the technology that is available to us and use it a meaningful and appropriate way.

This year, the focus of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is really on allowing for authentic cultural experiences to take place within our curriculum and also within our community. One particular population that can be underrepresented at times are our families who have children with disabilities.

I wanted to let our community know that for all of our families who want to support language development as well as communication, including but not limited to families with children who might have a disability or speech needs, Hendrickson Park recently placed a communication board in 2023 as a supportive resource.

Families and caretakers of children with or without speech needs can use the board

to turn their kid's playtime into a teachable moment to practice speech, work on their empathy and self-control, or maybe jumpstart learning sign language with a friend.

Sensory friendly hours are being added to all village events and this summer for the first time it will be included in the village pool activities!!! This is wonderful for our families and community members.

We thank our Village for thinking of all children and all of our families in Valley Stream.

These are some important dates and events coming up. Easter Recess is this Friday and Monday upcoming. We wish everyone celebrating a Happy Easter.

Eid is on April 10th. We wish all our Muslim families a Happy Eid in advance.

Our State Assessments are in the middle of April, and it will be computer-based for grade 5 on April 15 and 16.

Finally, we have our spring break April 22nd through April 30th.

Now I am excited to introduce Principal Comis who represents Brooklyn Avenue School and their Women's History Month presentation.

Dr. Comis will then introduce our music teachers Mr. Shmorhun and Mr. Garzetta who will introduce the students receiving music awards.

PRESENTATIONS:

Brooklyn Avenue School Student Presentation

Instrumental Music Awards

What incredible presentations and awards tonight. We are so proud of all of our students. 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

Vice President Hernandez:

Members of the Valley Stream Central High School District girls and boys swim teams recently concluded their inaugural seasons. These student athletes made Valley Stream Central High School District history by taking part in the district's first ever swim program. Both teams also saw a great deal of success making All Conference and onto the county's roster.

Serving as a reminder to all our District 24 students who are active participants in their school's government to continue to pursue their passions because opportunities await you at our high schools. Recently, three new student liaisons were selected by their senior high school building principals. The student representative from each senior high school will sit on the Board together, and relay concerns and requests from their respective student bodies as the Board works to develop District policy. This is an amazing opportunity for our students to continue to foster their interest in civic engagement.

Two valley Stream South High School student-artists and two art teachers had their works exhibited at the Firefly Gallery in Northport in February. The exhibition, titled Kindred Spirits, highlighted the bond that art can forge between educators and students. The exhibit was organized through the New York State Art Teachers Association and seeks to emphasize the strong impact that art has on the lives of teachers and students when they share their love of art together. The artworks focused on how different perspectives and media influence how we view others, as well as wrought landscapes, which used the emotional qualities of color to influence a viewer's perception of a place.

Female athletes in the Valley Stream Central High School District were recently treated to a special visit by Olympic gold medalist swimmer Samantha Arsenault Livingstone. The visit highlighted the importance of mental health and taking care

of oneself despite busy schedules. The event was organized in partnership with the student mental health nonprofit #SameHereSchools and involved a number of mindfulness and group exercises to get the student athletes thinking and talking about things in their daily lives that might be adversely affecting their mental health. The visit was one of the many ways the Valley Stream Central High School District is working to ensure its students have the resources and support to maintain their mental health amid their busy schedules.

A reminder that the recreation program at each of our high schools is currently under way with dates going into May for students to engage in sporting activities, participate in fitness curriculum and remain active in their free moments.

That concludes my report.

B. LEGISLATION REPORT - TRUSTEE NUÑEZ

Thank you to students from RWC and WLB for their articulate and wonderful presentations. On April 5-8 the National School Board Association will be holding its annual National School Board Convention. Valley Stream 24 will be present.

VIII. LIST OF ITEMS FOR ACTION:

A. PERSONNEL – VICE PRESIDENT HERNANDEZ

V.P. Hernandez 1st, to move A1-A5, Trustee Maier 2nd 6,0,0

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the irrevocable letter of resignation of Rosa Morales, School Monitor Part-Time, dated March 26, 2024, with the resignation effective February 28, 2024.

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Dorann Mannion as a School Monitor Part-Time, effective March 28, 2024 (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).

3. **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

Sandra Tangney (effective March 28, 2024)

SUBSTITUTE PART TIME MONITOR

Tina Marino (effective March 28, 2024)

4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the following persons to serve as election inspectors for the Annual Budget Vote Meeting on May 21, 2024, compensation at the rate of \$225 for the day:

Brooklyn Avenue School

Benny Bejarano
Victor Cook

William L. Buck School

Barbara Carroll
Sandra A. Lattimore
Candida Y. Molina

S. Corona Avenue Firehouse

J. McFarlane

Robert W. Carbonaro School

Lisa G. Allen
Danielle Camastro
Maria F. Gemma Sy

5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of

Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the following persons to serve as chief election inspectors for the Annual Budget Vote Meeting on May 21, 2024, compensation at the rate of \$250 for the day:

Harry Anesta
Ronald J. Garofalo
Mary E. Hansen Sterger
Ramsey Jenkins III

V.P. Hernandez 1st, to move A6, Trustee Wheeler 2nd 6,0,0

6. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby accepts the irrevocable letter of resignation of Johanne Gaddy, Building Principal, dated March 12, 2024, with the resignation effective close of business June 30, 2024.

V.P. Hernandez 1st, to move A7-A8, Trustee Wilson 2nd 6,0,0

7. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby accepts the irrevocable letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement of Andrea K. Carra, Classroom Teacher, dated March 7, 2024, with the resignation effective close of business June 30, 2024.

8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby accepts the irrevocable letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement of Nancy Jakobsen, Senior Account Clerk, dated March 14, 2024, with the resignation effective close of business June 30, 2024.

B. EDUCATION – TRUSTEE WILSON

Trustee Wilson 1st, to move B1-B2, V.P. Hernandez 2nd 6,0,0

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 02/26/2024, 03/06/2024,

02/05/2024, 3/01/2024, 02/05/2024, 02/07/2024, 02/07/2024 and 02/13/2024, 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 01/31/2024, 01/31/2024, 02/14/2024, 02/06/2024, 02/13/2024, 01/31/2024 for the 2023/2024 School Year and 02/06/2024 for the 2024/2025 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 Wheeler 2nd 6,0,0

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 January 2024.

D. POLICY - TRUSTEE WHEELER

Trustee Wheeler 1st , to move D1-D2, Trustee Wilson 2nd 6,0,0

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accepts the following policy for first reading:

- Policy 5131 – Code of Character, Conduct and Support

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

- Policy 9400 – Board of Education Meetings – Types, Agendas, Procedures and Minutes

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS, IF ANY:

X. NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Maier 1st, to move X1-X11, Trustee Wheeler 2nd 6,0,0

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the Agreement between the District and Jericho 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.

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the Agreement between the District and Garden City 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.

3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the Agreement between the District and Freeport UFSD for student health and welfare services for the 2023-2024 school year, and further authorizes 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 North Merrick 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.

5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of

Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the Agreement between the District and White Glove Community Care for student health and welfare services for the 2023-2024 school year, and further authorizes the Board President to execute the necessary documents to effectuate said Agreement.

6. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education (Audit Committee) accepts the Single Audit report by R.S. Abrams and the Corrective Action plan for the 2022-2023 school year.

7. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby ratifies the Resolution dated February 26, 2024, appointing Rodney Austin to serve as an Impartial Hearing Officer as authorized by District Policy No. 5425.

8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board hereby adopts the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for the 2024- 2025 school year in the amount of \$39,282,476 to be presented to the qualified voters of the District at the Annual Meeting.

9. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education of the Valley Stream UFSD 24 hereby approves the Property Tax Report Card for the 2024-2025 school year and authorizes submission to the State Education Department and publication of the 2024-2025 Property Tax Report Card.

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

Proposition No. 1

SHALL the proposed budget of expenditures of Valley Stream Union Free School District Twenty-Four, Town of Hempstead, Nassau County New York for the year 2024-2025 be approved in the amount of \$39,282,476 and for the purposes shown in the statement thereof presented at the annual meeting, and that the sum be raised through a levy upon the taxable property in the Valley Stream Union Free School District Twenty-Four, after first deducting the monies from state aid and other sources as

provided by law.

Proposition No. 2

SHALL the proposed budget of expenditures of Valley Stream Central High School District, Nassau County, New York for the year 2024-2025 be approved in the amount of \$161,364,443 and that the sum be raised through a levy upon the taxable property in the Valley Stream Central High School District, after first deducting the monies from state aid and other sources as provided by law.

Proposition No. 3

SHALL the Board of Education be authorized to appropriate and expend the maximum amount of four hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$425,000) from the capital reserve fund for the purpose of completing capital improvements as follows: A/C window unit installations and electrical costs for rooms in the Brooklyn Avenue Elementary School and Robert W. Carbonaro Elementary School.

Proposition No. 4

SHALL the Board of Education be authorized to appropriate and expend the maximum amount of Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$800,000) from the capital reserve fund for the purpose of completing capital improvements as follows: District-wide door hold-open installations & fire alarm upgrades.

Proposition No. 5

SHALL the Valley Stream Central High School District be authorized to appropriate and expend the maximum amount of \$2,550,000 as follows from fund balance for the purpose of completing capital improvements as follows: Renovate current District Maintenance Garage creating a Construction Trades Facility. All of the above to include labor, materials, equipment, apparatus and incidental costs.

Proposition No. 6

SHALL the Board of Education be authorized to appropriate and expend the maximum amount of \$1,156,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of completing capital improvements as follows: Gymnasium window and operating system replacements at Memorial Junior High School, North Junior Senior High School and South Junior Senior High School.

11. **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: March 27, 2024			
CODE	DESCRIPTION	FROM	TO
A1310.16	BUSINESS OFFICE SALARIES	\$16,375.00	
A1621.406-81	HEATING/COOLING EXPENSE-BAS		\$4,975.00
A1621.406-82	HEATING/COOLING EXPENSE-RWC		\$5,875.00
A1621.406-83	HEATING/COOLING EXPENSE-WLB		\$5,525.00
ULTIMATE POWER, A&I MECHANICAL AND HONEYWELL-ENERGY PERFORMANCE INVOICES			
A9010.8	EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT	\$33,000.00	
A1620.406-11	GAS/ELECTRIC-BAS		\$21,000.00
A1620.406-12	GAS/ELECTRIC-RWC		\$2,000.00
A1620.406-13	GAS/ELECTRIC-WLB		\$10,000.00
PSEGLI AND NATIONAL GRID ESTIMATE FOR REMAINDER OF 2023-2024			
A9060.85	DENTAL INSURANCE	\$32,000.00	
A9060.8	HOSP & MED INSURANCE	\$40,000.00	
A1620.407-51	SECURITY-BAS		\$29,300.00
A1620.407-52	SECURITY-RWC		\$27,800.00
A1620.407-53	SECURITY-WLB		\$14,900.00
ARROW SECURITY ESTIMATE FOR REMAINDER OF 2023-2024			
A5581.491	SUMMER SPECIAL ED. TRANSPORTATION	\$12,000.00	
A2330.49	BOCES SUMMER SCHOOL		\$12,000.00
SUMMER SCHOOL 2023			
A2020.15	BUILDING PRINCIPAL SALARIES	\$1,551.00	
A2110.400-73	COPIER LEASES-RWC		\$1,551.00
EXTRA COPIES (B/W AND COLOR)			
A9060.8	HOSP & MED INSURANCE	\$215,621.45	
A5540.4	TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES		\$215,621.45
HIGHER TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND INCREASED RIDERSHIP			
A9060.8	HOSP & MED INSURANCE	\$ 21,373.00	
A5581.49	BOCES/TRANSP. EXPENSE		\$ 21,373.00
HIGHER TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND INCREASED RIDERSHIP			
TOTALS		\$ 371,920.45	\$ 371,920.45

XI. DISCUSSION

XII. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to re-enter Executive Session at 8:20 pm made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wilson to discuss certain discuss certain Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion to exit the Executive Session at 9:47 pm made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion to adjourn the Business meeting at 9:47 pm by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wilson. Motion unanimously carried

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennie L. Padilla
Jennie L. Padilla
District Clerk