

MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION VALLEY STREAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 24

BUSINESS MEETING
March 19, 2025

WILLIAM L. BUCK SCHOOL
6:45 PM

Members Present: President Hernandez, Vice President Herrera, Trustee Clark, Trustee Maier, Trustee Nunez and Trustee Wheeler

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

Absent With Prior Notice: Trustee Wilson

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

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

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:26 pm by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Nunez. Motion carried.

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

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 26, 2025 and March 12, 2025. Motion to approve the Minutes made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Wheeler. 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

There is nothing to report at this time. Thank you.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – DR. UNAL KARAKAS

Hello Valley Stream 24 families,

March is here! The days are getting warmer, and we're starting to see signs of spring all around us. It's a great time to embrace the fresh energy of the season!

Our district continues to be focused on innovation, and this is in alignment with Vision 2030.

This month, our Vision 2030 Pilot Team met with Ray McNulty to refine their pilot projects and kick off planning for a strategic five-year plan from 2026 to 2030. This plan will be built around the five Vision 2030 cornerstones, with valuable input from our teachers and administrators—ensuring their voices shape the future. I've mentioned before how exciting these pilot projects are, and we look forward to sharing more in the coming weeks!

This month, as part of the League of Innovative Schools, we are actively participating in two learning collaboratives. One focuses on Student Voice and Engagement, where two of our Carbonaro Student Council representatives, Vanessa Harrison and Vice President Ellice John, joined me on Zoom along with Ms. Fowler and Ms. Haufler.

Our students shared how they've played a role in key decisions, including our school lunch program and redesigned classrooms. They presented their insights to superintendents from across the country, and we couldn't be prouder of how they represented VS24!

Students across our district took part in a Masked Reader Assembly as part of Read Across America Week! Here are some moments from the event at Carbonaro School, where teachers read to students while keeping their identities a mystery. The big reveal happened during the assembly, making it a fun and exciting experience for everyone!

A huge thank you to our reading teachers and staff for fostering a love of reading in our students!

"Making the Connection" is a key part of our district motto, and this month, we saw it in action! VSCHD pre-nursing students visited VS24 to teach our kindergarteners about handwashing and healthy habits. The lessons were a hit with students, teachers, and administrators alike! We're so grateful to the high school students for sharing their knowledge and supporting our youngest learners.

We are committed to ensuring a smooth transition for our sixth graders into the Central High School District. This month, VSCHD representatives visited our schools to introduce students to restorative circles, a key practice in the high school district. During these sessions, students engaged in meaningful discussions with their peers, building connections and communication skills.

Later this year, our sixth graders will tour the high school district to help them feel even more prepared. Additionally, a letter was sent home last week to sixth-grade families about an opportunity for students to get acclimated to their new school in July.

This week, we celebrated St. Patrick's Day on March 17th! Here's a great moment from the day—Ms. FitzGerald and her third graders stopped by with potatoes, sharing the history of potatoes' significance in Irish culture.

At VS24, beyond our high-quality curriculum, we take pride in celebrating diverse cultures and learning about the history, traditions, and foods that connect us all.

At the start of this month, we honored the conclusion of Black History Month at William L.

Buck School with a special celebration. Students dressed as notable Black Americans, read

about the figures they studied, and proudly walked through the gym to showcase their learning. This was an extended version of what was shared at our last Board Meeting.

A huge thank you to the staff at WLB and across our district for always making these celebrations meaningful and engaging for our students!

Earlier this month, Valley Stream Council of PTAs held its Legislative Breakfast and this year's legislative members included State Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages, Nassau County Legislator Carrie Solages, and Congresswoman Laura Gillen.

Roxanne Garcia-France, Superintendent of VS District 30, spoke on behalf of our Valley Stream school districts, highlighting key legislative priorities, including but not limited to:

- Securing long-term funding to protect student data with strong cybersecurity measures.
- Ensuring sustainable, inflation-adjusted foundation aid while maintaining the hold harmless provision.
- Addressing funding disparities for English Language Learners, special education, and the financial impact of charter school expansion.
- Increasing the 4% cap on unrestricted reserve funds to provide greater budget flexibility.

As a Board and district, we remain committed to advocating for important legislative priorities to support our students and community. Thank you to our local legislators for listening and to all community members who joined us at the breakfast!

Next week, Principal DeBlasio, Principal Comis, and I will be attending the League of Innovative Schools Spring Convening in Pittsburgh. We'll visit several districts leading innovative initiatives and explore ways to bring fresh ideas back to VS24, aligning with Vision 2030.

We're excited to be part of this work, and I look forward to sharing more when we return!

As you know, we are very proud to have received a \$500,000 grant by Assemblywoman Solages this year. I just want to provide a quick update on the projects. In exciting news, all 6 out of the 6 water bottle filtration systems are now installed and are operational.

Robert Carbonaro School is also receiving a brand-new sensory playground to support all students, and we are still on track for installation to potentially take place at the end of April or early May depending on the weather.

On behalf of our Board of Education and the entire District, we once again thank Assemblywoman Solages for the grant as it truly helps support our students and district community in a profound way.

Great news—our NYSED Report Card levels are now online, and we received all Level 3s and 4s for chronic absenteeism subgroups! We are one of the only districts in our area to achieve this for all subgroups, thanks to the intentional efforts of our administrators and staff.

We continue to partner with our parents to emphasize the importance of attendance, as being in school supports both students' academic growth and social-emotional development.

The chronic absenteeism metric plays a role in school district designations, and while this is the final year the state will use chronic absenteeism as a measure, next year, they will transition to full student attendance percentages. Our administrative team is already preparing for this shift in data collection.

I wanted to take a moment to celebrate this achievement—so well done, VS24!

These are upcoming important dates and events.

March 20- WLB is hosting a PTA Book Fair, and I will be a mystery reader at 6:30 pm. I have my book ready and I am looking forward to reading to students.

March 21- RWC will be having a multicultural event at 6:30 pm.

March 31- Schools will be closed for Eid al-Fitr, which is the holiday to celebrate the end of Ramadan and fasting. We wish our families, students, and staff who celebrate a happy Eidin advance.

April 4- PTA Pizza Lunch.

April 7- Athletes Helping Athletes at RWC.

April 14-18- Spring recess and there will be no school.

April 23- BOE BOCES Budget Vote and Business Meeting, starting at 8:00 pm.

April 24- Our Sixth Grade Hockey Tournament will take place at South High School at 4:00 pm. We look forward to this!

April 24+25- Grades 4-6 will take their Computer Based ELA State Assessment.

April 29+30- Grade 3 will be taking their NY State ELA Exam and that will be paper-based.

A parent letter regarding state assessments is going out this month to all of our families, reminding our parents of the key assessment dates at the end of April and in May.

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

What an amazing job that our students did. We thank them for all of their musical talents and their dedication. We also thank all of our music teachers for inspiring our students. That concludes my Superintendent's report tonight.

PRESENTATIONS:

All-County Music Awards

We have a special music award presentation this evening, led by Mr. Garzetta and Mr. Iacono. Mr. Shmorhun couldn't be here tonight, but he has played an important role in supporting our students. I welcome Mr. Garzetta and Mr. Iacono to the podium to introduce the award to our community and to honor our students.

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

TRUSTEE MAIER

There is nothing to report at this time. Thank you.

B. LEGISLATION REPORT - TRUSTEE NUÑEZ

There is nothing to report at this time. Thank you.

VIII. LIST OF ITEMS FOR ACTION:

A. PERSONNEL – TRUSTEE CLARK

Trustee Clark 1st, to move item A1-A17, Trustee Maier 2nd 6-0 motion carried.

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the permanent appointment of Megan Breen, as an Occupational Therapist, effective April 11, 2025 in accordance with Nassau County Civil Service Exam 7288R, established December 21, 1988.
2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the appointment of Kenneth Martinez, as Assistant Head Custodian, effective March 31, 2025, in accordance with Nassau County Civil Service Promotional Exam 76-038 (S263), established October 2, 2024. The appointment is for a 60-day probationary period, said probation set to expire on May 30, 2025. Compensation is in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreement with Local 74, United Service Workers Union.
3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the appointment of David Nolan, as a probationary Cleaner, effective on or around April 3, 2025, pending successful completion of the onboarding process. This appointment is for a 26-week probationary period. Compensation for this appointment will be at Schedule B, in accordance with the agreement between the Board of Education and Local 74 United Service Workers Union (USWU).
4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Leonardo Cautin, as a Full-Time School Monitor (Cafeteria), effective March 20, 2025, pending civil service clearance, replacing Katherine Giannone. 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 hereby appoints Kathleen Neske, as a Full-Time School Monitor (Cafeteria), effective March 20, 2025, pending civil service clearance, replacing Fatiha Fathy. Compensation for this appointment will be Step 6 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 Vanna Wong, as a School Monitor Part-Time, effective March 20, 2025, pending civil service clearance, replacing Raymond Gillespie. 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 approves the following additions to the per diem substitute list for the 2024-2025 School Year:

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

Ana Salazar (effective March 20, 2025)
Daniel Yellinek (effective March 20, 2025)

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER AIDE

J’Niya Smith (pending civil service clearance)
Ana Salazar (pending civil service clearance)

8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves the following persons to serve as assistant election inspectors for the Annual Budget Vote Meeting on May 20, 2025, compensation at the rate of \$235 for the day:

Brooklyn Avenue School

Benny Bejarano
Johana Murphy

William L. Buck School

Barbara Carroll
Sandra A. Lattimore
Candida Y. Molina

S. Corona Avenue Firehouse

Jeanne Ost

Robert W. Carbonaro School

Lisa G. Allen
Nicole Bailey
Danielle Camastro

9. **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 20, 2025, compensation at the rate of \$250 for the day:

Ronald J. Garofalo
Stephen Haner
Mary E. Hansen Sterger
Ramsey Jenkins III

10. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves a leave of absence for medical purposes (pending documentation and review) for James Fischman, Elementary Classroom Teacher, on or around March 10, 2025, until on or around April 21, 2025.

11. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves an intermittent leave of absence for family medical reasons (pending documentation and review) for Nicole Shevak, Full-Time Aide, on or around March 14, 2025, until on or around June 27, 2025.

12. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Kathleen Calabrese, School Monitor Part-Time, effective close of business February 28, 2025.

13. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Kathleen Neske, School Monitor Part-Time (Cafeteria), effective close of business March 19, 2025.

14. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Kristen Nugent, School Monitor Part-Time, effective close of business March 28, 2025.
15. **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 Risa Miller, Challenge Teacher, dated February 24, 2025, with the resignation effective close of business June 30, 2025.
16. **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 Kelly Carr, AIS Math Support Teacher, dated March 14, 2025, with the resignation effective close of business June 30, 2025.
17. **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 Dr. Lisa Conte, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, dated March 12, 2025, with the resignation effective close of business June 30, 2025.

B. EDUCATION – TRUSTEE MAIER

Trustee Maier 1st , to move item B1-B2, Trustee Wheeler 2nd 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 02/13/2025, 02/24/2025, 02/24/2025, 02/13/2025 and 02/26/2025 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 01/22/2025, 02/24/2025, 02/05/2025, 02/14/2025, 02/12/2025, 01/28/2025, 02/06/2025, 02/12/2025, 02/13/2025, 02/27/2025, 02/15/2025, 01/27/2025, 02/04/2025 and 02/07/2025 for the 2024/2025 School Year and 02/10/2025, 02/24/2025, 01/24/2025, 02/14/2025, 01/27/2025 and 02/13/2025 for the 2025/2026 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 WILSON

Trustee Maier 1st, to move item C1, Trustee Nunez 2nd 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, Appropriation Status Report, Revenue Status Report, Trial Balance for January 2025 and the Claims Auditor's Report for February 2025.

D. POLICY - TRUSTEE WHEELER

Trustee Wheeler 1st, to move item D1, Trustee Nunez 2nd 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 0115 – Dignity For All Students Act

Policy 3700 – Expense Reimbursement

Policy 6165 – Computer Resources and Data Management

Policy 6166 – Computer, Network, and Internet Acceptable Use

Policy 6167 – Internet Safety

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS, IF ANY: N/A

X. NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Maier 1st, to move item X1-X7, as listed Trustee Wheeler 2nd 6-0 motion carried.

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby authorizes the District to enter into an agreement with US Medical Staffing LLC for healthcare services for the 2025-2026 school year and further authorizes the President of the Board of Education 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 Rockville Centre UFSD for student health and welfare services for the 2024-2025 school year and further authorizes the Board President. the Superintendent of Schools and the District Clerk 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 Garden City UFSD for student health and welfare services for the 2024-2025 school year and further authorizes the Board President. the Superintendent of Schools and the District Clerk 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 2024-2025 school year and further authorizes the Board President. the Superintendent of Schools and the District Clerk 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 Hewlett-Woodmere UFSD for student health and welfare services commencing March 20, 2025 for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year and further authorizes the Board President and the Superintendent of Schools 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 hereby approves the License and Operating Agreement between the District and SCOPE Education Services for the 2025-2026 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.
7. **WHEREAS**, the Valley Stream Union Free School District Twenty-Four received bids in response to bid specifications for Contract G1 - EPDM roofing replacement at William L. Buck Elementary School (SED No. 28-02-24-02-0-001-027) and for Contract G2 - EPDM roofing replacement at Robert W. Carbonaro Elementary School (SED No. 28-02-24-02-0-004-029); and

WHEREAS, the School District's Administration and H2M Architects reviewed the bids submitted in response to the Invitation to Bid; and

WHEREAS, based upon such review, the Superintendent recommends that, the Board of Education reject all bids and re-advertise for new bids; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has the discretion to reject all of the aforementioned bids received; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education rejects all bids submitted and received for the EPDM roofing replacement project and that the Board of Education directs District Administration to revise the bid specifications as is deemed necessary and to rebid and readvertise the EPDM roofing replacement project.

Trustee Clark 1st , to move item X8, Trustee Maier 2nd 6-0 motion carried.

8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Valley Stream UFSD No. 24 hereby nominates Michael Jamie, Fran Langsner, and Robert "B.A." Schoen for Trustees of the Nassau BOCES Board.

Trustee Maier 1st , to move item X9-X11, Trustee Wheeler 2nd 6-0 motion carried.

9. **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education hereby ratifies the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the United Public Service Employees Union, Aides and Monitors' Unit, and hereby authorizes the Board President and the Superintendent of Schools to execute same.
 10. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board hereby adopts the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for the 2025- 2026 school year in the amount of \$41,242,480 to be presented to the qualified voters of the District at the Annual Meeting.
 11. **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 2025-2026 school year and authorizes submission to the State Education Department and publication of the 2025-2026 Property Tax Report Card.
- Trustee Maier 1st , to move and amend Proposition 4 of X12, Trustee Wheeler 2nd 6-0 motion carried.*
12. **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 20, 2025 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 2025-2026 in the amount of \$41,242,480 and for the purposes shown in the statement thereof presented to 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 Board of Education be authorized to appropriate and expend the maximum amount of \$850,000 from the 2018

and 2024 Capital Reserve Funds established for the purpose of completing capital improvements as follows: District wide door control access and alarms, District wide roofing replacement and repairs, and Three (3) classroom renovations District wide. All of the above to include labor, materials, equipment and incidental costs.

Proposition No. 3

SHALL the proposed budget of expenditures of Valley Stream Central High School District, Nassau County, New York for the year 2025-2026 be approved in the amount of \$166,848,681 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. 4

SHALL the Board of Education of the Valley Stream Central High School District be authorized to appropriate and expend the maximum amount of \$4,500,000 as follows from fund balance for the purpose of completing capital improvements as follows: Restoration of Valley Stream South Streambank, Renovation of District Offices and Renovation of Classrooms. All of the above to include labor, materials, equipment, apparatus and incidental costs.

Proposition No. 5

SHALL the Board of Education of the Valley Stream Central High School District be authorized to acquire by purchase that certain real property and improvements known as 10 Fifth Street, Valley Stream, New York, located in the Town of Hempstead, New York, Section 39 Block 27 Lot 4-7 & 418, at a cost not to exceed \$6,400,000, and said sum is hereby appropriated for out of the District's Capital Reserve Fund established on May 15, 2018 and unappropriated fund balance.

Trustee Maier 1st, to move item X13, Trustee Wheeler 2nd 6-0 motion carried.

13.**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.

[illegible]

XI. DISCUSSION

XII. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to re-enter Executive Session at 7:59 pm was made by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Clark to discuss Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 10:48 pm by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Nunez. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn the Work Session by Trustee Maier at 10:48 pm and seconded by Trustee Nunez. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennie L. Padilla

Jennie L. Padilla
District Clerk