

MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION VALLEY STREAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 24

BUSINESS MEETING
February 25, 2026

WILLIAM L. BUCK SCHOOL
6:45 PM

Members Present: Vice President Wilson, Trustee Clark, Trustee Hernandez, Trustee Maier, and Trustee Matthew

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

Absent With Prior Notice: President Herrera

I. Call to Order

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

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:39 pm by Trustee Maier and seconded by Trustee Clark. Motion carried.

The Business Meeting was reconvened at 7:41 pm, at the William L. Buck School by Vice President Wilson. Motion carried.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** January 28, 2026 and February 11, 2026. Motion to approve the Minutes was made by Trustee Maier and second by Trustee Hernandez. Motion carried.

IV. **WELCOME TO VISITORS:** At this time, the Board of Education

welcomes questions or comments relative to the items on tonight's agenda.

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

Nothing to report at this time.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – DR. UNAL KARAKAS

VII. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – DR. UNAL KARAKAS

Hello Valley Stream 24 community! It has been a cold and snowy winter, and I want to start by thanking Charlie and our entire facilities team for a job well done in preparing our schools for a regular opening today. Let's hope spring is right around the corner.

I always start with our district motto, which is make the connection-innovating our future.

This month, Dr. Keogh, Mr. Onorato, Mr. Neri, Ms. Ponzio-Byrams and Ms. Plutner led a technology parent academy in-person in which students and families learned about responsible technology use and a lot of the programs and software we offer. It was very informative and our parents had positive feedback. We look forward to continuing parent academies as a way to bridge the home-school connection.

These are some more pictures from the event.

Earlier this month, I was able to attend the NSBA Advocacy Institute, joined by President Herrera, Dr. Keogh and Mr. Boniello. We attended sessions that spoke about advocacy at the federal level, including on Title Grants and AI. There were a lot of great topics on federal advocacy priorities that directly impact school districts, including IDEA funding, Title grants, AI infrastructure, CTE and workforce pathways, and expanding opportunities for neurotypical and neurodivergent learners. The sessions strongly affirmed that the advocacy work already underway in Valley Stream 24 is aligned with national priorities, while also helping us refine how we continue to elevate our district's specific needs with local, state, and federal leaders.

I had the opportunity to meet with our Student Council members at Robert Carbonaro School about AI. Similar to my meeting at WLB, students shared how much they know about AI, the benefits of it in the upper elementary grades, and even some of the hesitation they have about using it. It was a great conversation showing how our students both know the advantages and limitations of AI.

I also had the opportunity to visit Ms. Milanese teaching fourth grade students how to use Soundtrap to make their own music. It was quite amazing to see students working together on this and learning to agree on which soundtracks they wanted to incorporate. Soon, students are actually going to build on this by including their own personal narratives through the use of Soundtrap. All three of our music teachers use the software and collaborate on their planning, so I just want to say thank you to them for making music instruction innovative, creative, and fun!

Today marked the 100th Day of School, since we had Snow Days on Monday and Tuesday. Our Kindergarten students dressed up as 100 year olds, and other classes engaged in lessons around the number 100. These pictures put a smile on all of our faces and showcase how we can make learning fun for our students.

William L. Buck had its Black History Month Wax Museum earlier this month. Students dressed up as historical figures while their partners read important research facts about the person they studied. Kudos to our sixth grade students for their hard work. Ms. Jaronecyzk, the art teacher, also had students create art work for Black History Month which was just amazing to see. Thank you to all our staff for honoring this important month. Tonight, we actually have William L. Buck presenting its Black History Month presentation for our Board.

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

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

March- Women's History Month

March 11- BOE Work Session (6:45 pm)

March 11+ March 18- Half-Days for Parent-Teacher Conferences (Dismissal at 11:30 am)

March 20- Eid al-Fitr (No School)
March 25- BOE Business Meeting (7:30 pm)
March 26- Coffee Hour at BAS (10:00 am)
April 2-8- Spring Recess (No School)

Tonight we welcome William L. Buck School for a Black History Month presentation!

Tomorrow, Brooklyn Avenue is holding their Wax Museum starting at 9:30 am. We are very excited about that.

Next month will be Women's History Month.

That concludes my Superintendent's Report tonight.

- WLB Black History Month Student Presentation

What a great presentation on Black History Month. Thank you to the WLB Staff for this and our students for a job well done!

VIII. **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 Wilson, Trustee Hernandez, 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

B. **LEGISLATION REPORT - PRESIDENT HERRERA**

The legislative breakfast is Saturday, February 28, 2026, at 9 am at

Memorial. Every please come the food is delicious. The kids that cook the food are really wonderful and are from our culinary arts program. If you have the chance stop by. Free breakfast, coffee, tea, and juice. These kids can cook!

IX. LIST OF ITEMS FOR ACTION:

A. PERSONNEL – VICE PRESIDENT WILSON

Trustee Hernandez 1st, to move items A1-A7, as listed Trustee Maier 2nd 5-0 motion carried.

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Theresa Raimondo, School Monitor Part-Time, effective December 3, 2025.

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Deborah Zagorski, School Monitor Part-Time, effective February 25, 2026.

3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves a leave of absence for medical purposes for Jo-Anne Casucci, School Social Worker, effective on or around March 6, 2026, until on or around May 11, 2026.

4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education hereby amends the probationary period of Amanda Plutner, to end on August 28, 2028 based upon the teacher's demonstration that they received tenure in another school district within the state and received an annual professional performance review rating in their final year of service in such other district as required under Education Law 3012(1)(a).

5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following Salary Changes, effective February 1, 2026:

Breana Martinez Step 1 MA+15

6. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Joanne Leibling, as a School Monitor Part-Time, effective March 16, 2026, pending civil service clearance. Compensation for this appointment will be Step 1 in accordance with the agreement between the District and the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU).

7. BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Maiya Grappie, as a School Monitor Part-Time, effective March 9, 2026, 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).

B. EDUCATION – TRUSTEE MAIER

Trustee Maier 1st, to move items B1-B2, as listed Trustee Hernandez 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 the dates listed below, pertaining to students being considered for pre-school special education services as set forth in a schedule provided to the Board of Education and the Board of Education hereby approves and ratifies said recommendations of the Committee on Pre-School Special Education.

Dates: 1/28/2026, 2/02/2026, 1/28/2026, 1/28/2026

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

Committee on Special Education.

Dates: 12/12/2025, 1/12/2026, 1/14/2026, 1/15/2026,
1/16/2026, 1/20/2026, 1/23/2026, 1/27/2026, 2/03/2026

C. FINANCE – TRUSTEE MATTHEW

Trustee Matthew 1st, to move item C1, as listed Trustee Hernandez 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, Claims Auditor’s Report, Appropriation Status Report, Revenue Status Report, Trial Balance for December 2025 and the Claims Auditor’s Report for January 2026.

D. POLICY - TRUSTEE CLARK

No report at this time.

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

XI. **NEW BUSINESS:**

Trustee Maier 1st, to move items XII-XI6, as listed Trustee Hernandez 2nd 5-0 motion carried.

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the proposal and grants the contract from ZE Creative Communications to provide translation services to the District for newsletters and other publications in the 2025-2026 school year, and further authorizes the Superintendent to execute the necessary documents to effectuate same.

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education hereby amends the calendar of business meetings to change the April 21, 2026 business meeting to April 28, 2026.

3. **WHEREAS**, the Valley Stream Union Free School District Twenty-Four ("District") has engaged More Roofing for general construction work on EPDM Roofing Replacements at William L. Buck & Robert W. Carbonaro elementary schools (Projects # 280-224 -020-001-027 & 280-224 -020-004-029); and

WHEREAS, the District's Engineer, H2M, recommends modification to the existing contracts for a change order in the amount of a \$253,000 increase for the addition of a second alternate contract (G2) for an expansion of the scope of work to include an additional roof with the materials and labor required to be performed to the work set forth in the More Roofing agreement with the District.

WHEREAS, the District's Engineer, H2M, recommends modification to the existing contracts for a change order in the amount of a credit of \$20,000 for unused allowances less the amount to be paid for with allowances included in the More Roofing agreement for materials and labor required to be performed in addition to the work set forth in the More Roofing agreement with the District.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby accepts Change Orders # G1 - 1 & G1 - 2, to the contract with More Roofing for work on EPDM Roofing Replacements at William L. Buck & Robert W. Carbonaro elementary schools (Projects # 280-224 -020-001-027 & 280-224 -020-004-029), and to increase the overall agreement in the amount of \$233,000.

4. **WHEREAS**, New York Elks Lodge #1 has offered to donate 142 dictionaries for distribution to third grade students, now therefore it is hereby

RESOLVED, pursuant to District Policy 1313, and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the District hereby accepts, with gratitude, the donation by New York Elks Lodge #1, and authorizes the dictionaries to be distributed to third grade students as determined by the Superintendent or his designee.

5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby awards the Emergency Transportation Contract beginning on February 2, 2026, through March 4, 2026 and authorizes the Board of Education President and Superintendent of Schools to execute the contracts, as set forth in the February 25, 2026, BOE Business Meeting Schedule below:

Schedule for 31 Day Emergency Bid to Lexington School for the Deaf Anticipated Cost

Bus Company	School	# of Students	Month Per Pupil	Month per Matron	Month Total Cost
Sunbright LLC	Lexington School for the Deaf	1	\$11,070	\$3,600.00	\$14,670.00

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 2025-2026 School Year.

BUDGET TRANSFER FOR BOARD APPROVAL DATE: February 25, 2026			
CODE	DESCRIPTION	FROM	TO
A2250.140	CSE Chairperson Per Diem	\$30,000.00	
A2250.150-1	RR/SPEECH/CID Salaries-BAS	\$15,000.00	
A2815.49	BOCES-Health Services		\$45,000.00
	BOCES Health Services		

A1621.45	Materials & Supplies	\$2,112.00	
A1910.4	Unallocated Ins Wright National Flood Insurance		\$2,112.00
		\$22,000.00	
A9060.8	Hosp & Med Insur Health Services		\$22,000.00
A2815.4	Expenses Substitute Nurses		
		\$69,112.00	\$69,112.00
	TOTALS		

X. **DISCUSSION**

XI. **AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**

XII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the Business Meeting by Trustee Maier at 8:05 pm and seconded by Trustee Clark. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennie L. Padilla
 Jennie L. Padilla
 District Clerk