

# MINUTES

## BOARD OF EDUCATION VALLEY STREAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 24

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BUSINESS MEETING  
December 11, 2024

WILLIAM L. BUCK SCHOOL  
6:45 PM

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**Members Present:** Trustee Clark, Trustee Maier, Trustee Nunez, and Trustee Wilson

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

**Absent With Prior Notice:** President Hernandez, Vice-President Herrera, and Trustee Wheeler

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### I. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM & CALL TO ORDER – SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:33 pm by Trustee Wilson and seconded by Trustee Nunez. Motion carried.

The Business Meeting was reconvened at 7:34 pm, at the William L. Buck School by Trustee Maier.

**Motion to appoint Trustee Maier as temporary chairperson to preside over the December 11, 2024 meeting of the Board of Education.**

**First: Trustee Wilson**  
**Second: Trustee Nunez**

**Motion carried.**

**II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: N/A**

**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 nothing to report at this time. Thank you.

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

Good evening everyone. It is a windy night as the seasons are changing, and I cannot believe we are in the final month of the calendar year already. We have two exciting presentations tonight and some updates to share with our community. Let's get started!

I start by just reminding our community of our Motto that drives the work we do, and this year, we are making the connection with the future!

As we have shared, our Challenge Program has now expanded to grades 4-6, while we maintain Enrichment for All for every student in grades K-6. When we think of innovation and creative thinking, this is exactly the type of work we also think about. Here are some pictures of the hard work Mrs. Risa Miller is doing with our Challenge students. Students are using blueprints to build and design as well as code and engage in robotics. We are incredibly excited about having our Challenge program in the upper grades and look forward to the continued success of our students.

This year, our goal is also to increase the number of trips our students are taking to supplement and enhance our curriculum.

One recent impactful trip was our sixth grade Challenge students going to the Nassau County Museum of Art in Roslyn Harbor. This trip was focused on helping our sixth-grade students with their research design as they prepare for their projects when they enter the Olympics of Visual Arts competition later in the school year. Students also had the opportunity to learn about diverse artists, styles, time periods, and geography as inspiration. They also worked on strengthening observation skills that develop visual literacy, communication, critical thinking, and self-expression.

We thank Dr. Conte for her work in supporting and guiding instruction in our district, as well as Risa Miller and our art teachers for going on this important trip with our students.

Our holiday concerts are in full swing, as the season started with William L. Buck holding its concert earlier this month. Mrs. Milanese and Mr. Shmorhun put on an exciting performance for our families and district community. We thank them as well as Mr. Garzetta for all their hard work with our music program. We also thank our students in chorus and band for a job well done.

These are pictures of the holiday concert at Carbonaro School which took place last week, where Mrs. Wilkey and Mr. Shmorhun did an incredible job working with our band and chorus to present to our families. We thank them for their hard work and dedication, and of course our students at Carbonaro School for their incredible performance. I am very excited to attend Brooklyn Avenue's concert on Monday.

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A big thank you goes to Mr. Iacono, who is our music chair, who works with all our music teachers to coordinate events at all three schools. Thank you

also to our building principals for supporting our music programs and teachers.

At William L. Buck School, there was a cultural arts assembly held this month thanks to the Cultural Arts program at the Central High School District run by Mr. Jeff Hsi. The students showcased dances from various cultures and then answered questions from students at Buck. We look forward to bringing the cultural arts assemblies to Brooklyn Avenue and Robert Carbonaro Schools in the coming months.

We also believe in celebrating student success. This picture shows a recent recognition of academic excellence and achievement for our students at Brooklyn Avenue School. Dr. Comis recognized two students from every class where teachers helped select students, and I had the absolute honor to be there and cheer our students on as well.

Our teachers are doing a wonderful job differentiating instruction for all students across the district. Here are pictures of students in Mrs. Oestreich's class who are enjoying working in math centers where they solve problems in small groups and individually to continuously excel in their math content.

Our Scripps classroom spelling bees for grades 4-6 took place recently, and I had the honor of visiting classes and seeing our students compete. I have to say, the winners of the classes did an incredible job spelling hard words, and I think it is going to be an incredibly competitive school bee that will take place in January. The winner of the school bees will move on to the regional spelling bees.

Here are some upcoming important district dates and events in the coming weeks. For building-specific events, please visit our website and view our district calendar which has all events listed for our families.

December 16- BAS will hold its holiday concert.

December 23-January 1- is our holiday recess. There is no school for students.

January 8th, our BOE will be meeting for its work session at 7:30 pm.

January 16th, I will hold my Coffee Hour at William L. Buck School at 6:30 pm.

January 20th is Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and there is no school on that day.

And finally, January 22nd is the next BOE Business Meeting at 7:30 pm.

I wish our families a wonderful holiday recess. To those who celebrate Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Hannukah, Happy Holidays to you. We also wish everyone a Happy New Year in advance.

I once again wish all of our families and community Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year in advance.

That concludes my Superintendent's report tonight

### **PRESENTATIONS:**

Holidays Around the World Feature by Brooklyn Avenue

Our final presentation tonight will be led by Dr. Comis and the Brooklyn Avenue School showcasing holidays around the world.

We welcome Dr. Comis up to the podium to introduce the holidays around the world feature.

Holiday Music Ensemble

We have two presentations tonight. One will start off my Superintendent's Report, and then the second will be at the end of the report. The first presentation is a holiday performance from our very own district orchestra, led by Mr. Garzetta. Let's give Mr. Garzetta and our orchestra a huge round of applause as they come on up.

What an amazing job by our VS24 orchestra. Thank you once again to Mr. Garzetta for a job well done, and to our students for all their hard work. It definitely put us in the holiday spirit 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

**TRUSTEE MAIER:**

January 11, 2025 at 8:30 pm they will start their Building Tours at the North High School if anyone wants to come see the buildings. Probably 9-9:15 pm at South and so forth.

**B. LEGISLATION REPORT - TRUSTEE NUÑEZ**

There is no report at this time.

**VIII. LIST OF ITEMS FOR ACTION:**

**A. PERSONNEL – TRUSTEE NUNEZ**

*Trustee Nunez 1<sup>st</sup> by consent, to move A1-A8, Trustee Wilson 2<sup>nd</sup> 4-0 motion carried.*

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following Teacher Aides to provide supervision after school with the Music Program effective January 28, 2025 through May 31, 2025. Compensation will be in accordance with

the agreement between the Board and the agreement with the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) at an hourly rate of pay:

Amy Corke  
Rachael Kolakowski-Aiello

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following Substitute School Monitors to provide supervision after school with the Music Program, as needed, effective January 28, 2025 through May 31, 2025. Compensation will be in accordance with the agreement between the Board and the agreement with the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) at an hourly rate of pay:

Corliss Danas  
Elizabeth Smyth

3. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints the following additional teachers to teach the Learning Lab Program for ELA and/or MATH for the 2024-2025 school year. Compensation is in accordance with the appropriate hourly rate of pay as per the current Valley Stream Teachers' Association contract:

**Robert W. Carbonaro School**  
Susan Cleven-Blaesi

4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approves to appoint Michelle Evans-Cornish, holding Certificates in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Grades 1-6 and Students with Disabilities (Grades 1-6), as a Temporary Substitute which may turn into a Leave Replacement for Patricia Werner, to be effective on or around December 12, 2024. The duration of this appointment will extend until the return of Patricia Werner, but no later than June 27, 2025, or earlier at the discretion of the Board of Education. Compensation will be at the daily substitute rate of pay until Ms. Werner has exhausted all of her allowable time and then will be at Step 1 MA, consistent with the provisions outlined in the Valley Stream Teachers Association (VSTA) Contract.

5. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approves to appoint Marleen Cazales St. Jean, holding a Certificate in Childhood Education (Grades 1-6), as a Temporary Substitute which may turn into a Leave Replacement for Joanna Gallo, to be effective on or around January 6, 2025. The duration of this appointment will extend until the return of Joanna Gallo, but no later than June 27, 2025, or earlier at the discretion of the Board of Education. Compensation will be at the daily substitute rate of pay until Ms. Gallo has exhausted all of her allowable time and then will be at Step 1 MA, consistent with the provisions outlined in the Valley Stream Teachers Association (VSTA) Contract.
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**

Rebecca Albahae (effective December 12, 2024)

Michelle Evans-Cornish (effective December 12, 2024)

7. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Raymond Gillespie, School Monitor Part-Time, effective December 5, 2024.
8. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Justin Williams, Full-Time Aide, effective December 20, 2024.

**B. EDUCATION – TRUSTEE CLARK**

*Trustee Clark 1<sup>st</sup> , to move B1-B2, as listed Trustee Wilson 2<sup>nd</sup> 4-0 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



11/13/2024, 11/15/2024 and 11/19/2024, 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 11/04/2024, 11/21/2024, 11/21/2024, 11/07/2024, 11/07/2024, 11/07/2024, 11/04/2024, 10/28/2024, 11/19/2024, 11/04/2024, 11/14/2024, 11/07/2024, 10/23/2024, 11/14/2024 and 11/18/2024, 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 1<sup>st</sup> , to move C1, as listed Trustee Nunez 2<sup>nd</sup> 4-0 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 October 2024 and the Claims Auditor's Report for November 2024.

#### **D. POLICY - TRUSTEE WILSON**

No report at this time.

#### **IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS, IF ANY: N/A**

#### **X. NEW BUSINESS – TRUSTEE WILSON**

*Trustee Wilson 1<sup>st</sup> , to move X1-X5, as listed Trustee Nunez 2<sup>nd</sup> 4-0 motion carried.*

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education hereby amends the calendar of business meetings to change the April 22, 2025 business meeting to April 23, 2025.
2. **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 Alphabet City Tutors LLC for professional development for the 2024- 2025 school year, 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, that the Board of Education hereby approves the Agreement between the District and Manhattan Psychology Group, PC for consultant services for the 2024-2025 school year, and further authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the necessary documents to effectuate said Agreement on behalf of the Board of Education.
4. **BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education hereby awards a new Transportation Contract to WE Transport, Inc., for the school year 2024-2025, commencing on December 12, 2024, and ending on June 30, 2025, and further authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the necessary documents to effectuate the said agreement.
5. **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 8:06 pm was made by Trustee Nunez and seconded by Trustee Wilson to discuss certain Personnel and Contractual Obligations. Motion carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 8:47 pm was made by Trustee Wilson and seconded by Trustee Nunez. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn the Business meeting at 8:48 pm by Trustee Nunez and seconded by Trustee Clark. Motion carried

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jennie L. Padilla*

Jennie L. Padilla

District Clerk