

Regular Meeting

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District was held on Monday evening, January 26, 2009, beginning at 6:30 p.m., in the Library at Northport High School, 154 Laurel Hill Road, Northport, New York, with Mrs. Arlene S. Munson, President, opening the meeting and presiding.

Members present: Mr. Warren S. Arthur (arrived at 7:30 pm), Mrs. Liz Dragone, Mr. Joe Gannon, Mr. Rob Ingraham, Mr. Steven A. Meyerowitz, Mrs. Arlene S. Munson, Dr. Kay Hutchins Sato, Mr. Stephen V. Waldenburg, Jr., Mrs. Karen Wills

Members absent: None

Also present: Dr. Marylou McDermott, Superintendent of Schools

1. President Munson called the meeting to order.

Motion was made by Trustee Dragone, seconded by Trustee Ingraham, to convene in Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue.

Unanimously carried by those present.

At 7:40 p.m., motion was made by Trustee Sato, seconded by Trustee Gannon, to reconvene in public session in the library at Northport High School.

Unanimously carried by those present.

Public attendance: There were approximately 120 persons present.

2. Mrs. Munson led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance; and
3. Pointed out the emergency exits.
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, TREASURER'S REPORT AND MONTHLY SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Motion was made by Trustee Sato, seconded by Trustee Dragone, to approve all items under 4.1:

- 4.1 Minutes
 - 4.1.1 Regular Meeting, January 12, 2009

Unanimously carried.

Motion was made by Trustee Ingraham, seconded by Trustee Dragone, to approve all items under 4.2:

- 4.2 Treasurer's Report and Monthly Summary of Receipts and Disbursements:
 - 4.2.1 Treasurer's Report for the periods November 1 - November 30, 2008 and December 1 - December 31, 2008
 - 4.2.2 Monthly Summary of Receipts and Disbursements for November and December, 2008

Unanimously carried.

4.2.3 For Information: Claim's Auditors Report for Warrants and Schedule of Claims for periods ending November 14 and November 26, 2008.

5. SPECIAL REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

5.1 Accomplishments of Staff and Students

Dr. Marylou McDermott, Superintendent, announced the following accomplishments of students and staff: Senior Glen Meyerowitz has been selected as an Intel Science Talent Search Semi-Finalist. Academy of Finance students Louis Gregory and Matthew Watson competed in the Hofstra-CME Commodities Challenge and placed first and second, respectively. Dr. McDermott also congratulated Coach Rich Castellano on winning his 500th girls basketball game.

In response to a question at a prior Board meeting regarding the principal account clerk being bonded, Dr. McDermott stated that the principal account clerk is not required to be bonded and the District has a crime insurance policy that covers public employee dishonesty in the amount of \$5 million with a \$2,500 deductible.

Dr. McDermott stated that the District received an opinion of counsel regarding the release of the draft State Comptroller's Audit Report to the audit committee and it stated that the District acted correctly.

Motion was made by Trustee Meyerowitz, seconded by Trustee Ingraham, to make the letter from the District's law firm public and have it available in the district clerk's office.

Unanimously carried.

Trustee Arthur asked that the motion by Trustee Meyerowitz be amended to include the letter dated October 7, 2008 from the State Comptroller's Office, Jeffrey P. Leonard, Chief Examiner of Local Government and School Accountability.

Unanimously carried.

5.1.1 Mr. Guarav Passi, High School Assistant Principal and Administrator in Charge of Family and Consumer Sciences, introduced the Family and Consumer Sciences Department Student of the Month, Erica Conde. Mr. Passi stated that Erica is a hard working and dedicated Family and Consumer Sciences student. Erica serves as the community outreach chairperson in Northport High School's chapter of the Future Educators Association and plays an instrumental role in planning many activities. Mr. Passi noted that Erica exhibits compassion, empathy and patience while working with young children and has a sincere interest in the area of child development and psychology. Erica plans to pursue a career in pediatric or neonatal nursing.

The President of the Board and the Superintendent congratulated Erica on her accomplishments and presented her with a commendation from the Board.

5.1.2 Ms. Jo Imwalle, Director of Community Services, introduced Mr. Edward Richards from the Northport VA Medical Center and the following students who developed a relationship with the veterans through Project Tolerance: Dylan Kern, Samuel Costa, James Nikunen, James Amato, Jacqueline Judson, Lindsay Silvestri, Shannon Bartels, Amanda Guniewicz, Danielle Mayhew, Johanna Waldron, Nicole Miller, Dillon Burns, Patrick Carroll, Katarina Grbic, Justin Masters, Kathleen Friedrich, Sarah Donelan, Paul Scancarelli, Jennifer Radwan, Dominic Esposito, Nicole Mauriello, Zach Cassidy, Danielle Pietsch, Melissa Kleynowski, Alexa Magrane, John Garelle, Connor Cheely, Tom Tromblee, Kim Amato, and new members Tim Hamill, John Schneider, Alex Bennett, Patrice Ryan.

At 8:00 p.m. the President of the Board announced a short recess.

At 8:05 p.m. the meeting resumed.

5.2 Review of Instructional Initiatives

5.2.1 Business

Mr. Christopher Donarummo, High School Assistant Principal and Administrator in Charge of the Business Department, stated that the 2008-2009 business department initiatives include professional development opportunities, authentic learning experiences, internship opportunities, expansion of community service projects, and incorporation of financial literacy instruction across the curriculum. Mr. Donarummo highlighted some of the authentic learning experiences such as lecture series offered in financial planning and sports marketing, job shadow day and DECA competitions. Mr. Donarummo noted the expansion of community service projects at Northport High School. Mr. Donarummo stated that one of the 2009-10 initiatives is to incorporate financial literacy instruction into the business education curriculum. Mr. Donarummo thanked the Board for the opportunity to present the initiatives.

After a brief discussion, the President of the Board thanked Mr. Donarummo for his informative report.

5.2.2 Family and Consumer Sciences

Mr. Gaurav Passi, High School Assistant Principal and Administrator in Charge of the Family and Consumer Sciences Department, presented his report stating Family and Consumer Sciences education prepares students to face the economic, sociopolitical and technological challenges transforming the world. Mr. Passi reviewed the middle school program which includes real world activities that teach entrepreneurship and marketing skills. At the high school level, the program includes food and nutrition courses and human development and management. Mr. Passi noted that a new course offered at the high school is the Early Childhood Literacy Lab where students gain an understanding of emergent literacy and how picture books, music and computer literacy can increase literacy skills. Mr. Passi stated that the Family and Consumer Sciences Department prepares students for future careers in culinary arts, early childhood and elementary education. Mr. Passi thanked the Board for its continued support.

Mrs. Munson thanked Mr. Passi for his fine presentation.

5.2.3 Community Services (Academic Summer School, Continuing Education, Driver Education, Recreational Summer Camp)

Ms. Jo Imwalle, Director of Community Services and Academic Summer School, presented her report to the Board. Ms. Imwalle stated that the BOCES Regional Summer School will be offered at Northport High School for the summer of 2009. Ms. Imwalle noted that the Bridge Program enabled sixth and seventh graders to accelerate into Regents Integrated Algebra. Ms. Imwalle spoke about the Continuing Education Department's goal to provide a variety of lifelong learning activities and to continue to develop new classes which will enhance the interests of the entire community. Ms. Imwalle stated that the Driver Education Program now offers classes on Saturdays to meet the needs of the District's student population. Ms. Imwalle noted that the Recreational Summer Camp offers a safe, flexible and affordable program for children during the summer. Ms. Imwalle thanked the Board for its continued support.

After a brief discussion there was a consensus that the Board would strive to make driver's education available to all students and look into finding ways to expand the roster of certified driver education teachers. The President of the Board thanked Ms. Imwalle for her thorough report.

5.3 Board discussion and action to provide the Superintendent with direction for the development of the proposed budget for 2009-2010.

Motion was made by Trustee Waldenburg, seconded by Trustee Ingraham, to suspend the order of the agenda and move item 5.3 after 7. - Public Participation.

Unanimously carried.

5.4 The President of the Board announced the upcoming Board of Education meetings to be held on February 9th and February 23rd. On March 9th the Superintendent will present the proposed budget and the in depth budget talks will be held on March 16th and March 30th.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

6.1.1 Letter from Mr. Peter White, to members of the Board, received December 17, 2008, re: continuation of the district programs on promoting tolerance

Mr. White addressed the Board and stated that the programs and opportunities offered by the Northport-East Northport School District have provided our students to be better citizens. Mr. White spoke about the students' efforts to teach English in Farmingdale. Mr. White stated that the District has cultivated something in the last four or five decades that is very special and urged the Board to maintain it. Mr. White also invited the Board to see how the students teach English on Monday nights in Farmingdale.

6.1.2 Letter from Ms. Jean Baron, to members of the Board, received January 6, 2009, re: district management.

Ms. Baron read her letter to the Board regarding the recent NYS Comptroller's Audit Report findings and the recent report published in *US News and World Report* citing top high schools in the United States and asked the Board for comments.

Trustee Arthur questioned the validity of some of the statements in Ms. Baron's letter, in particular the per pupil spending and her statement that the Comptroller's findings stated that there is a complete lack of fiscal controls. Mr. Arthur stated that the Comptroller's Office did not audit all fiscal controls and that there is no language in the Audit Report stating that there was a complete lack of fiscal controls. Mr. Arthur also stated that an article in the New York Times from October 27, 2008 stated that schools across the country are adding electives into their high school course offerings as a way to round out transcripts to elite colleges.

In response to a question regarding co-seating of five courses, Ms. Irene McLaughlin, High School Principal, stated that they afford the flexibility of offering different levels of courses for students to get them in a nine period day. The teachers are teaching two course levels in one period.

6.1.3 Letter from Mr. Armand D'Accordo, to members of the Board, received January 6, 2009, re: district financial controls.

Mr. D'Accordo read his letter to the Board regarding the District's financial controls, the Audit Committee, and the permanent replacement for the Assistant Superintendent of Business.

There was a brief discussion regarding the mandate of the audit committee and Mr. D'Accordo stated that he would like to offer his services and apply for a position on the Audit Committee.

In response to an inquiry regarding the Assistant Superintendent for Business, Dr. McDermott stated that she felt the candidates were not correct for the position, and due to Mr. Blake's experience in other districts and

his expertise, she asked Mr. Blake to remain to help guide the District through this transitional period. Dr. McDermott also stated that an advertisement did go in the NY Times for a permanent Assistant Superintendent for Business.

6.1.4 Letter from Ms. Denise Summers Mumm, to members of the Board, received January 16, 2009, re: SCWA, digitally recording meetings, current primary class size.

Ms. Mumm read her letter to the Board.

Mr. Larry Blake, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Business, stated that he and Mr. Resca met with representatives from SCWA in early November and shared the information they requested. Mr. Blake stated that he is waiting to hear from SCWA and any update will be shared with the community.

Vice President Waldenburg stated that the Board needed to get more information regarding digital audio recording meetings and asked Mr. Peter Falotico to look into it.

Dr. Terry Bouton, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, stated that the average class size ranges from 18 to 23.

In response to Ms. Mumm's question regarding the Princeton Plan, Dr. McDermott stated that it would require redistricting and there is concern that community members prefer neighborhood schools and then it also becomes a transportation issue.

Trustee Meyerowitz stated that community members should not be concerned about the possibility of redistricting at this time.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

<u>Name</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Dr. Beth Gonzalez-Dolginko SEPTA Representative	Dr. Gonzales-Dolginko read a letter to the Board regarding the expansion of the inclusion program for students with special needs to include 11 th and 12 th grades and asked that this be placed on the agenda and discussed at the February 23, 2009 meeting.
Trustee Meyerowitz requested that this be added to the Board agenda of February 23, 2009.	
Charlie Slevin Resident	Stated he has concerns that taxes are going to drive residents out of their houses and the District has to find a way to control spending and make cuts for residents to be able to afford to live here.
Robert Slingo Resident	Mr. Slingo stated that he would like the Board to postpone submitting its direction to the Superintendent to prepare the 2009-2010 School Budget and form a Budget Committee consisting of community members and professionals to provide recommendations pursuant to the Suffolk County Grand Jury Report of September 26, 2006. Mr. Slingo also urged the Board that, before a dollar amount is given to the Superintendent, it should release to the taxpayers full and complete information for the community to provide oversight.

There was a brief discussion by the Board and the Superintendent stated that soft data was given because the District does not know what State Aid and other revenues will be. Dr. McDermott also stated that the figures

represented what it would cost the District to roll over the current programs now in place. Vice President Waldenburg stated that the Board has to give the Superintendent a guideline for her to be able to present a budget in March.

Dr. Nina Dorata
Audit Committee Member

Stated she read through the high school course catalog and suggested the District look into rotating electives each semester which could drive enrollment up. Dr. Dorata stated she does not promote eliminating electives but there has to be a compromise.

There was a brief discussion by the Board regarding electives.

Mike Kucza
Resident

Asked that the superintendent work on a budget and come up with the ideal, offering every opportunity for students, but with strategic reductions in none core areas while still providing the core foundation that kids need to succeed.

5.3 Direction for the development of the proposed budget for 2009-2010.

The President of the Board opened discussion up to Board members regarding the direction for the Superintendent to develop the proposed budget for 2009-2010 stating that there are still many unknown factors that will affect the budget such as State Aid, the BOCES budget, and the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. The administration has been working diligently in this environment with the financial variables being extreme this year.

Trustee Arthur stated the budget process started quite a while ago when the Board instructed the Superintendent to find economies back in October and this is a continuation of that.

Trustee Wills stated that it is a pretty grim forecast and the District has to re-evaluate and reassess to look for savings and make sacrifices in all departments but not at the expense of our children. Trustee Wills urged her fellow trustees to come in as low as possible.

Trustee Meyerowitz stated that after listening to the community members tonight he is troubled with the taxes and economy and agrees that the Board has to be very cautious but also need to find a way to make sure the educational programs continue. Trustee Meyerowitz suggested that the Superintendent prepare a budget with a 3.75% spending increase and include in that number something to address the problems the District hoped to deal with in the bond referendum that failed, with the exception of an artificial turf field. Trustee Meyerowitz stated he would like the Board and the community to discuss any additional cuts or eliminations during the in-depth budget talks.

Trustee Ingraham stated that he would like to see a target of 3% as a place to start which will require resourcefulness by the Superintendent and the staff to identify savings. Trustee Ingraham stated that the administration needs to look in all areas for cost savings, however, he will not compromise his principles in terms of short changing students.

The President of the Board stated that she would personally charge the Superintendent to come in with a mid 3% or lower spending increase with concrete things to deliberate on.

Dr. McDermott stated she accepts the challenge of the Board and is aware of the difficult fiscal times and the community needs. Dr. McDermott pledged to do her very best, along with the administrative team, to come in as low as possible with the commitment to preserve programs and staff.

Trustee Arthur stated that the sense of the Board is to economize as much as possible and his feeling is to come in with a budget no more than 3% and to look for economies to reduce that.

Motion was made by Trustee Meyerowitz, seconded by Trustee Dragone, to direct the Superintendent to come back with a budget not to exceed 3.75% spending increase. That budget should maintain programs and include proposed expenditures to begin repairing the fields other than an artificial turf field.

Vote on the motion:

YES: Mrs. Dragone, Mr. Meyerowitz

NO: Mr. Arthur, Mr. Gannon, Mr. Ingraham, Mrs. Munson, Dr. Sato, Mr. Waldenburg, Mrs. Wills

Motion failed.

Motion was made by Trustee Arthur, seconded by Trustee Wills, to direct the Superintendent to prepare a proposed budget of no more than 3%, looking for as many economies to reduce that number and still preserve programs, and including possible modest improvements to the fields.

Vote on the motion:

YES: Mr. Arthur, Mrs. Dragone, Mr. Gannon, Mr. Ingraham, Mrs. Munson, Dr. Sato, Mr. Waldenburg, Mrs. Wills

NO: Mr. Meyerowitz

Motion passed.

Trustee Meyerowitz asked Dr. McDermott to continue using the same budget book format this year and to include the proposed new format at the March 9th meeting.

8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, GENERAL - FOR BOARD ACTION

Motion was made by Trustee Meyerowitz, seconded by Trustee Sato, to approve all items under 8., including Supplemental 8.1.1 (Schedule A #149-151), and new 8.1.7 (Schedule L):

8.1 Personnel Schedules, each dated January 26, 2009, and each attached and made part of the official minutes:

- 8.1.1 Schedule A - Certified Staff (including supplemental A #149-151)
- 8.1.2 Schedule B - Non-Instructional Staff
- 8.1.3 Schedule C - Salary Transfers
- 8.1.4 Schedule D - Extra Pay
- 8.1.5 Schedule J - Committee on Special Education
- 8.1.6 Schedule K - PDC NASA
- 8.1.7 Schedule L - PDC UTN

8.2 Receiving for a second reading and adopting the following textbook:

- 8.2.1 Pre-Algebra Pre-Algebra 7
Ron Larson, etal. Grade 7
McDougal-Littell, 2008

8.3 Receiving for a first reading the following policies:

- 8.3.1 Policy #2220, "Board Officers" - (new numbering system - old numbers 9210 and 9220)

8.3.2 Policy #6410 "*Authorization to Sign Checks*" - (new numbering system - old number 3360)

8.4 Approving the following resolution:

"BE IT RESOLVED that Article 32A.4.b., Early Retirement Incentive Plan, of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District and the United Teachers of Northport, which expires on June 30, 2010, is amended as follows:

"Become age eligible for the first time for regular service retirement between the dates July 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009 *and/or September 1, 2009* or September 1, 2009 to August 31, 2010; or eligible for regular service retirement between the dates July 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009 or September 1, 2009 to August 31, 2010."

Vote on Trustee Meyerowitz's motion to approve all items under 8. including Supplemental 8.1.1 (Schedule A #149-151) and new 8.1.7 (Schedule L) was unanimously carried.

Vice President Waldenburg acknowledged the thirteen employees retiring effective June 30, 2009 and thanked them for their service to the District.

At 11:00 p.m., motion was made by Trustee Sato, seconded by Trustee Waldenburg to extend the meeting.

Unanimously carried.

9. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, FINANCIAL - FOR BOARD ACTION

Motion was made by Trustee Meyerowitz, seconded by Trustee Sato, to approve all items under 9.:

9.1 Taking specified action on the following BIDS:

EDUCATIONAL

9.1.1 Award - Kindergarten Through Fifth Grade Supplies

9.2 Approving a three year extension for the District's Major-In-District contract with Baumann & Sons, Inc., with a CPI increase for each year.

9.3 Authorizing the Board President to sign a contract with the following school district to provide Health Services for Northport-East Northport students attending school in that district during the 2008-2009 school year:

9.3.1 Syosset Central School District, twenty students attending Our Lady of Mercy Academy at \$741.27, totaling \$14,825.40.

9.4 Approving the attached 2008-2009 Special Education Services Contract between Northport-East Northport Union Free School District and Smithtown Central School District.

Vote on Trustee Meyerowitz's motion to approve all items under 9. was unanimously carried.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT - FOR INFORMATION ONLY

10.1 Schedule I - Home Instruction

10.2 Investment Report for November, 2008

10.3 Monthly Revenue & Budget Status Report as of November and December, 2008

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

There being no further business to discuss at this time, motion was made by Trustee Meyerowitz, seconded by Trustee Sato, to adjourn the meeting.

Unanimously carried.

At 11:02 p.m., the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Beth M. Nystrom
District Clerk

bmn