

**Northport-East Northport Union Free School District Board of Education Workshop on Future Study Report - via Zoom Webinar - 7:00 p.m. (Wednesday, September 23, 2020)**

*Generated by Beth M Nystrom on Thursday, September 24, 2020*

**Members present**

David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

**Members absent**

Larry Licopoli

**Also present**

Mr. Robert Banzer, Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Irene McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Mr. Robert Howard, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Future Study Committee Members: Armand D'Accordo, Brian Dolan, Carol Taylor, Chase Cetta, Denise Zagari, Doug Hedger, Frances Roberts, Gabrielle DeYoung, J Ronald Gaudreault, Jim Ruck, Joseph Centamore, Kristen Ng, Lisa DeNisco, Lori Beekman, Lynn Cromeyn, Mercy Smith, Moriah Heuer, Phyllis Clements, Robert Holden, Rosanne Fischer, Sara Abbass, Paul Darrigo, Andrew Rapiejko, Jim Maloney

Public Attendance: 0

**1. CALL TO ORDER** – President Badanes called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

**2. IF NECESSARY, THE CHAIR MAY ENTERTAIN A MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION** - Note: It is anticipated that the Board will meet at 6:00 p.m. to act upon a resolution, upon majority vote, to immediately convene into Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to the employment history of particular persons, and matters pertaining to current litigation.

Action: 2.01 Motion to convene into Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to the employment history of particular persons, and matters pertaining to current litigation.

Motion by David Badanes, second by David Stein.

Final Resolution: Motion passes

Yes: David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

At 7:05 p.m. the Board reconvened in public session in the Cafeteria at the William J. Brosnan School.

**3.** Mr. Badanes led those present in the **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**; and

**4.** Pointed out the **EMERGENCY EXITS**

Superintendent Banzer stated that a letter went out prior to tonight's meeting stating that Northport High School will go virtual tomorrow due to a student testing positive for COVID-19. That person was in close contact with a number of other people who attend the high school over the weekend. Mr. Banzer stated that they are working with the Suffolk County Department of Health regarding contact tracing and will continue to work with them tomorrow.

**5. BOARD WORKSHOP ON FUTURE STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Discussion, Report: 5.01 Future Study Committee Report

Superintendent Banzer stated that the charge of the Future Study Committee was to answer the following question: *Pre-Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve Program Delivery Options Study: Are there options that might provide effective and cost-effective ways or patterns to organize how the PreK-12 program is implemented/delivered over the next three years?*

Mr. Banzer thanked the following committee members and reviewed the committee's methodologies: Amanda Beisler, Brian Dolan, Deborah Larsen, Dominic Varrialle, Gina Hagedorn, James Connor, John Pizzarelli, Kristen Ng, Lynn Cromeyn, Phyllis Clements, Rosanne Fischer, Andrew Rapiejko, Carol Taylor, Dana Boshnack, Eugenia Villa Cuesta, Irene McLaughlin, Jim Maloney, Joseph Centamore, Lauren Hale, Mercy Smith, Robert Ansell, Sara Abbass, Allison Beyersdorf, Chase Cetta, Denise Zagari, Frances Roberts, J Ronald Gaudreault, Jim Ruck, Joe Schramm, Lisa DeNisco, Moriah Heuer, Robert Dennis, Stephanie Cusack, Armand D'Accordo, Dan Drance, Doug Hedger, Gabrielle DeYoung, Jacqueline Kleinman, Jody Schlanger, Kathryn Sheridan, Lori Beekman, Paul Darrigo, Robert Holden, Nora Nolan

#### Advisory Committee Timeline

The Advisory Committee collaborated as steering committee for the study as follows: Met on-site on November 4<sup>th</sup>, December 9<sup>th</sup>, January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 26<sup>th</sup>. Met digitally on-line on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Starting on March 18<sup>th</sup> used a google doc 'blog' for the sharing of Advisory Committee analysis and suggestions with the consultant. Small group on-line discussion groups on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup>. Reviewed three drafts of the study and two print drafts through July 9<sup>th</sup>. On July 15<sup>th</sup>, the Advisory Committee as a 'focus group' rank-ordered the scenario options of the study as to which might be best, as is or adapted, to serve the pupils of the school district. On July 28<sup>th</sup> scanned the Program Implementation Study a final time before submittal to the Board of Education and Superintendent.

#### Study Methodology & Overview

First, the study analyzes the use of space by the current program offerings in the six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school of the District. The principals provided detailed information about how the assets of each building are used in the 2019-20 school year to implement the grades K-12 program. The detailed space allocation data are benchmarked to the NY State Education Department's school building capacity guidelines as well as to the class size guidelines endorsed by the school district to deliver the program. The school buildings pupil capacity study data and findings are in the K-12 School Building Capacity Study published in January 2020. The pupil capacity study is posted on the School District website.

Second, the study estimates future enrollment trends of the District based on historical enrollment data, historical live data, and patterns of enrollment at each of the grade levels K-12. The enrollment projection calculations study data and findings are in the Enrollment Projection/Demographic Study published in January 2020 and is posted on the School District website.

Third, the senior administration and the building principals of the District were interviewed to learn as comprehensively as possible the short-range and long-range objectives of delivery of the program in the existing facilities. The meeting also provided insights to understand local conditions and points of view that could affect the viability of various suggestions and options to use the current facilities to the very maximum and meet program expectations for pupils. The interview meeting helped to further the understanding about the values and policies that guide the vision of the District and the long-range planning efforts of the District.

Fourth, a visit was made to each building hosted by each respective principal. The principals provided data about the scheduling patterns and use of instruction and instructional support staff resources that now exist in the schools to implement the program.

Throughout the study development process, a Community Advisory Committee – “local people, local knowledge” – met with the consultant as a steering committee from November 2019 through May 2020 to review/discuss data, offer perspectives and insights, and ask clarifying questions.

Priority: Maintain the diversity and excellence of education programs delivered with the class size goals of the district and guided by the program vision. Options should address the role of neighborhood schools as practicable given the enrollment projections and the school district building resources available.

Influencing Factors: Tax levy affordability by local property taxpayers.

- Resolution of the outstanding LIPA tax certiorari case
- ‘Bones of the Buildings’ capital items to be addressed over the next five years.
- Likely 20% reduction in State Aid.
- Projected enrollment decline.
- Excess school building pupil capacity.
- Likely continued above inflation rate cost for retirement, health insurance, and utility costs.

Scenario Options Format

- Program Delivery (pages 70-90) – Rationale – Estimated Pupil Capacity Results of Implementing Scenario – Scenario Opportunities & Challenges
- Financial (Pages 97-101) – Estimated Annual Savings to the Expenditures of the School District Budget

Scenario Options

- Scenario Rationale Considerations
- Pupil Capacity
- Enrollment Projections
- Reduction in Expenditures due to staff or possible redeployment
- Reduce fixed expenditures
- Class size Equity (balance)
- Long-term capital expenditures – “Cost Avoidance”
- No new construction needed to meet new capacity
- Eliminate Portable classrooms
- Teacher certifications
- Grade Level Configurations/Partner Schools/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy
- Socio-Economic Diversity

Estimated Influence of Each Program Implementation Scenario Option Reflecting Enrollment Estimates for 2021-2022										
SCENARIO OPTION	Dickinson Elementary	Fifth Avenue Elementary	Pulaski Road Elementary	Norwood Avenue Elementary	Ocean Avenue Elementary	Bellerose Avenue Elementary	Northport Building	East Northport Building	High School	Estimated Annual <i>Minimum</i> Reduced General Fund Expenses for Possible Program Redeployment and/or Tax Levy Reduction
A	‘Mothball’ until rented/sold/razed.	K-4	K-4	K-4	K-4	‘Mothball’ or *	7-8	5-6	9-12	-\$5,766,871 to -\$7,375,239
B	‘Mothball’ until rented/sold/razed.	K-3	K-3	K-3	K-3	‘Mothball’ or *	6-7	4-5	8-12	-\$5,936,053 to -\$7,616,927
C	‘Mothball’ until rented/sold/razed.	K-3	K-3	K-3	K-3	6	7-8	4-5	9-12	-\$4,696,076 to -\$6,160,459
D	‘Mothball’ until rented/sold/razed.	K-2	3-4	K-2	3-4	‘Mothball’ or *	7-8	5-6	9-12	-\$5,936,053 to -\$7,606,927
E	‘Mothball’ until rented/sold/razed.	K-1	2-3	K-1	2-3	6	7-8	4-5	9-12	-\$4,780,666 to -\$6,281,303

\*Separate decision to ‘mothball’ Bellerose; or house the district offices and the Alternate Education Program now at Brosnan to enable the renting or sale of Brosnan.

Mr. Banzer noted that the Future Study Resources can be found on the District's website under "Future Study Updates"

Several committee members commented on the final report.

Mr. J. Ronald Gaudreault stated that it was an interesting and engaging process. The committee in various ways from the outset established the fact that they wanted a high quality education program in the district, wanted to attract highly competent teachers and retain them, with state of the art buildings and equipment. The committee worked hard at trying to establish the scenarios. The report contains other suggestions and opportunities for savings and efficiencies and areas of improvement.

Ms. Moriah Heuer stated that she appreciated that the committee was able to put forth the ideals of the community. Everyone had slightly different things that were important to them. She was personally surprised at the scenarios presented and stated that some of them are workable but she does think there are issues with each of them. A large amount of work was done by the committee before COVID hit and they did not have an opportunity to address how that might impact the future of education and the impact on virtual learning.

Mr. Armand D'Accordo stated that his understanding is that the five options were presented to the Board but the Board does not have to choose any of them and the Board could take other things into consideration. Mr. Seversky did a great job leading the committee and providing the level of detail in the report. Mr. D'Accordo requested that the Board keep the big picture in mind and there is an expectation that there will be savings, a cut in budget and not just a reduction in the tax levy.

Mr. Chase Cetta stated that the five scenarios are not concrete scenarios. On page 148 of the report the committee gave their own insight on each scenario. Even though one scenario might save the most money, it might not be best for the community. Mr. Cetta stated that his thinking was about his future, what he had in school and what it is going to be like in ten years.

Ms. Carol Taylor stated that it was a very meaningful experience being on the committee. One data point to look at is the report card showing that students graduate and that is a perfect indication of product satisfaction. Real estate has boomed because of COVID and it is possible that enrollment projections could be different.

Ms. Frances Roberts stated that there are a lot of numbers and figures, information and data and suggested that we shouldn't forget that we are talking about children. Those scenarios are jumping off points and doesn't think that any will say that they embrace them 100%. She would like to see kids identify with a building and take into consideration the transportation issues and ages of children that would be moving around.

Ms. Phyllis Clements stated that this is a tremendous transitional time in terms of LIPA and COVID. Some of the scenarios aren't taking into account that children need stability. In all the scenarios children are realigned. She would like all of this to be considered very carefully and what is in the best interest of the children.

Ms. Mercy Smith stated that the committee went into this with LIPA and COVID aside and looked at this as a challenge but as well as an opportunity. There were pages of information that needed to be digested in order to come up with possible solutions. The committee really put the students at the center. There is probably additional work to be done in refining and retuning in terms of COVID and the LIPA settlement. There is an opportunity to utilize technology and partnerships to deliver creative and innovative programming.

Mr. D'Accordo stated that the projections for enrollment that Mr. Seversky built into the analysis were all at the highest end of the range, and he felt that any potential uptick in enrollment was adequately addressed. There was no concerns about cuts to programs.

Ms. Lisa DeNisco stated that she appreciated the fact that the way these plans were being rolled out that it was not going to effect just one building or group, it is across the entire district. It is looking at the community as a whole versus just targeting one section of the community and will bring children together at an earlier age. It takes away the stigma of what side of the tracks you live on.

Ms. Rosanne Fischer stated that the future study is very timely with the LIPA settlement and the decrease in enrollment. The approach to the process was to include the voice of the customer and community stakeholders. This was a formula for success and she appreciated them valuing her opinion.

Trustee Buscareno asked if the committee members were gravitating towards one scenario. She stated that having grades 8-12 in one building is a red flag to her.

Ms. Frances Robert stated that she agreed that 8<sup>th</sup> graders should not be at the high school and her impression was that scenario A was the least upsetting.

Ms. Mercy Smith stated that an hour and a half bus ride is not a viable option and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are in a developmentally different place and should not be in the high school. The five scenarios are a starting point.

Mr. Paul Darrigo stated that this was an exercise in necessity and it was being done because the district is faced with some decision to make. It may mean some disruptions but a right balance will be struck. He preferred scenario A, did not like 8<sup>th</sup> graders in high school and would like to keep the community feel for the elementary schools.

Mr. Banzer stated that on page 148 of the report there are notes regarding the scenarios.

Mr. Jim Ruck stated that he has been in the community since the 1<sup>st</sup> grade and that the world and community is changing. Getting people together, getting facts and details about the community and getting input is important to coming up with a positive solution. Something does have to happen and there is no perfect solution. Whatever outcome is decided it will based on the best interests of the students.

Ms. Sara Abbass stated she felt that scenario A was the best option but thinks that it is a starting place, not by any means the final decision. They do need to take into consideration the amount of people coming into the district and may need to revisit that and speak to realtors. There will be an opportunity to bring so much more to the students when there is equity. Having 8<sup>th</sup> graders at the high school is not necessarily appropriate.

Ms. Lynn Cromeyn stated that out of all the option she did like scenario A. The guiding principal was to keep the programs that we have and she does think there is opportunities for change and those changes going forward may impact us positively.

Ms. Moriah Heuer stated she doesn't agree with the 8<sup>th</sup> graders at the high school but does feel that option A is closest to what we are used to. It might be worthwhile to contact other districts who have that model to find out what the pros and cons are. A 6<sup>th</sup> grade academy might be good but there is nothing to draw from. One big negative was that work would have to be done to Bellerose to allow for specials and parents would lose the option to go to one or the other middle school.

There was a discussion regarding moving administration and Port Academy to the high school, if the elementary schools could remain K-5 after closing two schools, the timing and how the options would roll

out, State Aid implications of closing schools, bond work at schools and impact of building aide, benefit of grouping grade levels together, geographical boundaries of new zoning, estimated reductions to general fund, why Dickinson and Bellerose were chosen to close, and what the numbers would look like if only one elementary school was closed.

President Badanes stated that the Board thanks the committee for their time spent on this committee and for giving back to the community. Mr. Badanes stated that there will be future public meetings to obtain additional input from the community.

## **6. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, GENERAL - FOR BOARD ACTION**

Action: 6.01 Personal Actions Report

Recommendation to approve the attached Personnel Actions Report

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by Victoria Buscareno.

Yes: David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

President Badanes announced the retirements of Hope Haber, Teacher Aide, and Joanne Leschen, Teacher Aide.

## **7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, FINANCIAL - FOR BOARD ACTION**

Action: 7.01 Appropriate Reserves, Confirm Budget and Set Tax Levy for 2020-2021

Recommendation to approve the following resolution to Appropriate Reserves, Confirm Budget and Set Tax Levy for 2020-2021:

"RESOLVED that, pursuant to voter approval on June 9, 2020 of Proposition No. 1, the 2020-2021 Budget Appropriations shall be,

Proposition 1 Annual School District Budget	\$172,752,759
Total Budget Appropriation	\$172,752,759

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 1318, Subdivision 1, of the Real Property Tax Law, the District shall retain \$6,910,110 of its 2020-2021 total unassigned fund balance, said amount being 4.00% of the voter approved budget and shall apply to the 2020-2021 tax levy the sum of \$4,391,473, the remainder of the 2020-2021 total unassigned fund balance.

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Subdivision 12 of Section 1604 of the Education Law, the estimated receipts, including the application of the remaining unassigned fund balance as determined above and the required levy of taxes for school district purposes, be established as follows:

Non Tax Revenue	\$ 23,035,117
Tax Levy (includes estimated STAR reimbursement of \$7,500,000)	\$149,717,642

RESOLVED that, pursuant to 259 and Subdivision 5(a), Section 1804 of the Education Law, the following additional tax levy also be established:

For the School District Library as requested by the Library Trustees \$ 10,151,300

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 8 of the Suffolk County Tax Act and based upon the assessed valuation which has been certified to the District by the Town Assessor, the following computed tax rate

per \$100 of assessed valuations be adopted and order certified to the Supervisor of the Town, together with the dollar amounts to be raised by the President of the Board:

	Amount to be Levied	Estimated Tax Rate/\$100 AV
For Regular School Purposes	\$149,717,642	\$187.542
For School District Public Library	\$10,151,300	\$12.716"

There was a brief discussion regarding the LIPA settlement and how it will effect assessment. Mr. Howard stated that the formal tax rolls are issued in December.

Motion by David Stein, second by Allison C Noonan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

**8. ADJOURNMENT** - Board policy requires adjournment by 10:30 pm, unless meeting is extended by vote.

Information: 8.01 Upcoming Meetings

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, October 1, 2020

7:00 p.m.

William J. Brosnan School

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, October 15, 2020

7:00 p.m.

William J. Brosnan School

Action: 8.02 Adjournment

Recommendation to adjourn the meeting

Motion by David Badanes, second by Allison C Noonan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

At 9:50 p.m., the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth M. Nystrom  
District Clerk