

**Northport-East Northport Union Free School District Board Workshop on Future Study Plan and Business Item as Needed - via Zoom (Thursday, December 3, 2020)**

*Generated by Beth M Nystrom on Friday, December 4, 2020*

**Members present**

David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Larry Licopoli (arrived at 7:00 p.m.), Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

**Members absent**

None

**Also present**

Mr. Robert Banzer, Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Irene McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Dr. Dana Boshnack, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

Mr. Robert Howard, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Mr. Louis Bonadonna, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services

Public Attendance: Approximately 260 virtually

**1. CALL TO ORDER** – President Badanes called the meeting to order at 6:03 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

Not Present at Vote: Larry Licopoli

At 7:02 p.m. the Board reconvened in public session.

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

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

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were no minutes for approval.

**6. STUDENT AND STAFF RECOGNITION/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Presentations: 6.01 Recognition of Staff and Students

6.01.1 Dr. Patricia Schmitt, District Chairperson of English Language Arts, recognized Claire Freas, English Department Student of the Month and presented a video on her accomplishments.

President Badanes and Superintendent Banzer congratulated Claire on her fine accomplishments.

6.01.2 Mr. Banzer recognized students Matthew Mead and Daniel D'Souza who were ranked "Exceptional" at the National Project Citizen Showcase hosted by the Center for Civic Education.

## **7. BOARD WORKSHOP ON FUTURE STUDY PLAN**

Mr. Banzer stated that the priority through the entire Future Study process has been to maintain the diversity and excellence of the education program, keeping class size goals and the educational programs as we know them maintained, with an eye toward other opportunities that might enhance the programs in some way. Through the work of the committee and the consultant, the value we have regarding class size was built into the study as well as a built in acknowledgement of the programs we have. A number of influencing factors were identified including the tax cap, LIPA settlement, building capital work, the likely reduction in state aid, declining enrollment and excess building capacity. The Future Study started over a year ago in October, when the committee was selected. Mr. Banzer stated that he was grateful for the time and commitment of the community advisory committee. Over 300 e-mails were received from parents, guardians and community members regarding the Future Study. Communication to the community regarding the Future Study were sent through newsletters to the entire community, PTA meetings, Board meetings, district e-mails, website resources and FAQ, and through Thought Exchange. The key themes through Thought Exchange were to pause due to the pandemic, keep building transitions to a minimum, social-emotional needs of students, fiscal responsibility of district, and maintain educational program including small class size. Mr. Banzer reviewed the scenario options.

The Board convened into a workshop to discuss the Future Study Report.

President Badanes stated that he understands there will be a social emotional impact on students. Last year the district had to temporarily close Ocean Avenue School and the students were moved to Norwood Avenue School. There was a lot of concern but at the end of the process he heard great things and the students themselves were able to adjust. If you look at declining enrollment and the excess buildings, it would be fiscally irresponsible if we did not close schools. Mr. Badanes stated the he has no issue with closing two schools, and no matter what school is closed, parents and students in that particular school will be upset. We have to make the tough decision as to what two schools will be closed and when looking at the data and the recommendations he believes the two elementary schools that should be closed are Dickinson and Bellerose. Both middle schools should be kept open and 5<sup>th</sup> graders should be put in the middle school in a different wing. Many other school districts have 5<sup>th</sup> graders in the middle school and it works. Mr. Badanes doesn't agree with moving administration out of the William J. Brosnan School unless we have a buyer or renter that would move in immediately. The most difficult decision is when. If we did not have COVID it would be a no-brainer. Based on a lot of what was said he believes it can be done next year. Mr. Badanes recommended adopting revised scenario A.

Trustee Buscareno stated that she has spent a lot of time listening to the community, PTA meetings, friends and her own kids. This is the first opportunity the Board has had to talk about the Future Study and to hear what each trustee is thinking. The important things are transition time, social emotional wellness and the educational impact. Ms. Buscareno stated that she is aware that they need to close a school but she wants to see what the transition would look like. If we are going to move the 5<sup>th</sup> graders to the middle school, get that transition ready and then consider closing one of the schools. Obviously, we have to do something and obviously we are in a pandemic but she wants to make sure all the right things are in place before we start the process.

Trustee Licopoli stated that given that we are in a pandemic all the rules have changed. We have changed the context in how kids are learning, and teachers and adults had to adjust the way they are teaching. We are not sure of what the impact of this time is going to mean. Mr. Licopoli stated that he agrees with what Mr. Badanes had said but also agrees with some of the things Trustee Buscareno said. One thing we have

to be critically conscious of is that the Board has a contract with the entire community, all taxpayers of the Northport-East Northport community. People are going to be deeply affected by the taxes as a result of the changes in state aid and we don't know what the recovery period is going to be. At the end of the day a quality education always wins the day regardless of what the configuration is. Mr. Banzer and the administrative team, along with the principals and faculty provide that type of education for all students. With that framework he agrees with President Badanes. He is also sensitive to the times we are in and sensitive to the fact that we have a contract with the entire community to provide an efficiently run school district.

Trustee Loughran thanked everyone for their comments and stated that he echoes what the majority of the Board has said already. He was a student in a building that was closed down and lived through that transition. Mr. Loughran stated that undeniably closing a building has been a long time coming. The district has had declining enrollment for quite some time. We are making a significant decision based on the fact that we had the Future Study in the works. We responded to COVID with a 0% tax levy this year. With the LIPA settlement we knew we had this to help soften that blow and the contract with the entire community would be served. After speaking with a number of community members, in a perfect world he would support Scenario A in its entirety, however, with the geographic split he would have a hard time shuffling kids that long. Mr. Loughran stated he is happy with adapted scenario A, and that is the direction the school and Board should go in. He wrestles with the times we are in but to completely postpone this decision would do a big disservice to the community. He is in favor of at least putting in place a phased in approach if not going full in for September.

Trustee McNaughton stated that she spent the last couple of months attending PTA meetings, talking to people on the phone, and talking to PTA members trying to grapple with this. It would be much better if we were not in the situation we are in with COVID. It is difficult to close a school but this is something the district is capable of doing. Coming up with a decision that works and then vetting that decision so parents are comfortable with it. We only have a certain amount of resources, do we want to invest them in buildings or opportunities for students. This would be an opportunity to enhance programs for students that we have wanted to do for a long time. An opportunity to expand programs at the high school and bring down programs to the middle school. Ms. McNaughton stated that she is not in favor of closing just one school and would not want to redistrict and then have to redistrict again. The Board would not be doing its job if we were to maintain buildings that we do not need because space and enrollment doesn't require them. The job of the school board members is to define what education looks like in our community. She supports adapted scenario A, keeping 5<sup>th</sup> grade model where they are separate from the rest of the middle school. Conversations and communications will be very important. It would be very wrong not to go forward with this given how enrollment has declined. We would be giving students less because we wouldn't be able to support programs with the reduction in state aid and the LIPA settlement.

Vice President Noonan stated that these are certainly difficult times but she concurs with everything that the other Board Trustees have said. There are still a few unanswered questions and she would feel better if we could flush them out. She would like to see what the social emotional support would look like for the students, especially the 5<sup>th</sup> graders. The fact that only 28 of the 46 committee members ranked the scenarios doesn't sit well with her. She would also like to see more of the data that was generated from Thought Exchange. She doesn't feel comfortable with the fact that Bellerose and Dickinson, outside of Pulaski, have the highest percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch prices. Ms. Noonan agrees with adapted scenario A, but would like those types of questions to be asked and answered.

Trustee Stein stated that he agrees with both the content and the way Mr. Badanes framed his opening. He has kids in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades at Dickinson and he would be directly affected by this. The lens through which he is viewing this through is what is in the best interest of the entire community. The Board having a contract with the entire community is very important. Thought Exchange was an interesting tool. The dilemma is it is a finite data set. It really draws in only people who are already involved. The number of respondents to it in terms of the entire community represents 3 to 4% of the entire community. There are

approximately 15,000 taxpayer properties with approximately 10,000 over the age of 60. In the current environment, there are many people who are struggling and the savings we are talking about are extremely important. We promised in the context of LIPA that we were going to make significant strategic moves in the district. Mr. Stein stated that he recognizes that COVID is here but we are seeing positive news about vaccines coming from multiple suppliers. He hopes that we will be in a different place comes September. He knows that it is the right decision for the district and the community and the kids will be okay if it is framed in a positive outlook. Mr. Stein stated he is in favor of adapted scenario A.

Trustee Licopoli stated that it is important to remember that when schools experience this you see a reduction in programs, class sizes increase and there is a reduction in opportunities, but we are not going to experience that. Class sizes will still be the best in Suffolk County. The quality of education we are accustomed to is still preserved in this plan. This is quite a gift to be able to do, to reduce expenses and preserve programs.

There was a discussion regarding use of portables, free lunch program, the educational impact statement, administrative guidelines in regards to class size, programmatic opportunities, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade program at the middle schools, playground equipment, the timeline for closing the schools, cost cutting measures for next year's budget regardless of school closings, rezoning transitions, and variances.

There was a discussion of the possibility of moving the administration out of the Brosnan building. There is a tremendous amount of technology infrastructure and it there would be a significant expense to move the administration at this time. What to do with the buildings is a separate discussion.

At 8:50 p.m. the Board reconvened into public session.

Action: 7.01 Resolution to approve Adapted Scenario A of the Future Study Report

Motion to approve adapted scenario A and to direct the administration to take all necessary actions to proceed including, but not limited to, the educational impact study, for the 2021-2022 school year and to complete all task without unnecessary delay

Motion by David Stein, second by Thomas Loughran.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

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

Action: 8.01 Personnel Actions Report

Recommendation to approve the attached Personnel Actions Report.

President Badanes announced the retirement of Eva Mihalik, Science Teacher.

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Stein.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 8.02 Schedule J - Committee on Special Education

Recommendation to approve Schedule J - Committee on Special Education

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Stein.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 8.03 Northport Association of School Administrators Memorandum of Agreement  
Recommendation to approve a Memorandum of Agreement between the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District and the Northport Association of School Administrators dated December 3, 2020

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Stein.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

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

Action: 9.01 BIDS

Recommendation to take specified action on the following BIDS:

FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS:

9.01.1 AWARD: Bid #21-102 - Broadcast Desk/Backdrop Walls & Associated AV Equipment

EDUCATIONAL:

9.01.2 AWARD: Bid #21-103 - Hardcover and Paperback Books

9.01.3 AWARD: Bid #21-104 - Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade Supplies

BUILDINGS & GROUNDINGS:

9.01.4 AWARD: Bid #21-105 - Hardware, Plumbing & Automotive Parts & Service

9.01.5 AWARD: Bid #21-300C - Bond Issue Related Capital Improvement Program

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 9.02 COVID-19 Related Purchased Resolution

Recommendation to approve the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared Coronavirus Disease 2019 ("COVID-19") a pandemic;

WHEREAS, by Executive Order, the Governor of the State of New York, Andrew M. Cuomo, has directed that every school in the State of New York close through June 30, 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic (the "School Closure");

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of New York has directed the School District to submit a reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year which will require the School District to purchase equipment, supplies and other operating costs attributable to the state disaster emergency declared pursuant to Executive Order 202 of 2020;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board declares the purchase of equipment, supplies and other operating costs attributable to the state disaster emergency declared pursuant to Executive Order 202 of 2020 to be an emergency as a result of the threat to the health, safety and welfare of the students and staff at the BOCES; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes the purchase of equipment, supplies and other operating costs attributable to the state disaster emergency declared pursuant to Executive Order 202 of 2020 as an ordinary contingent expense of the Board and authorizes the District Superintendent, or his designee, to take the necessary legal steps to purchase equipment, supplies and other operating costs attributable to the state disaster emergency declared pursuant to Executive Order 2020 of 2020."

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 9.03 Oyster Bay-East Norwich CSD

Recommendation to approve a 2020-2021 Special Education Services Agreement between the Board of Education of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District and Oyster Bay-East Norwich Central School District (Spec. Ed.)

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 9.04 NCS Pearson, Inc.

Recommendation to approve a Confidentiality and Data Security and Privacy Standards Addendum between NCS Pearson, Inc. and the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 9.05 Establishment of Irene Taylor Memorial Scholarship

Recommendation to approve the following resolution:

"RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the establishment of the Irene Taylor Memorial Scholarship in honor of former Northport-East Northport Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Irene Taylor, in the amount of \$500 to be awarded to a graduating student pursuing a career in education. The criteria is based upon financial need and completion of an essay.

ALSO RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept the following donations toward the Irene Taylor Memorial Scholarship Fund: Patricia and Katlyn Conway \$50.00, Stephany and Lawrence D'Aquisto \$100.00, Stelios and Frangitsa Bertos \$25.00, Ira Goodman \$50.00, Martin and Irene Nadler \$100.00, Mimi Dickson \$25.00, Joanne and Dennis Kroon \$100.00, William and Julie Brosnan \$200.00"

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 9.06 Claims Auditor's Report

Recommendation to approve the Claims Auditor's Report for Warrants and Schedule of Claims for payments dated:

October 9, 2020 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), October 15, 2020 (Accounts Payable Warrant), October 23, 2020 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), October 30, 2020 (Accounts Payable Warrant), October 2020 (Claims Audit Report)

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 9.07 Transfer of General Fund Appropriations

Recommendation to approve Transfer of General Fund Appropriations in the 2020-2021 fiscal year (\$276,156.00)

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

Action: 9.08 Transfer of Capital Fund Appropriations

Recommendation to approve Transfer of Capital Funds in the fiscal year 2020-2021 (\$11,298.00)

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

## **10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT - FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Information: 10.01 Budget Transfers for the period October 30, 2020 through November 19, 2020 - As per Board Policy #6150 all transfers between salary codes up to \$25,000 and transfers between all other codes up to \$10,000 are to be reported to the Board of Education as an information item

## **11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## **12. NEW BUSINESS**

Vice President Noonan stated that she attended a virtual NYSSBA workshop on structural racism and would like to report on it at the next meeting.

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

Information: 13.01 Upcoming Meetings

### REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, January 7, 2021

7:00 p.m.

William J. Brosnan School

### REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, January 21, 2021

7:00 p.m.

William J. Brosnan School

Action: 13.02 Adjournment  
Recommendation to adjourn the meeting

Motion by David Badanes, second by David Stein.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

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

At 9:05 p.m., the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth M. Nystrom  
District Clerk