

Mohonasen Central School District

*Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Education
Monday, March 13, 2023
Farnsworth Technology Center/Mohonasen High School*

Call to Order

The Board meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Abbott, at 6:35 PM. Mr. Abbott requested those present to stand and join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: *Wade Abbott, Stacy MacTurk, Melissa Laudano, Chad McFarland, Ericka Montagino, Lisa Gaglioti (virtual) and Julie Power*

Board Members Absent: *None*

Administrators Present: *Shannon Shine, Laurel Logan-King and Chris Ruberti*

Others in Attendance: *Stephanie D'Annibale, Leisha and Bill Sherman, Tara Wolfanger, Craig Chandler, Matt Hubbell, Jason Thompson, Leslie Smith, Rick Arket, Rochelle Obie, Bill Vacca, Matt Ronca, Alyssa Zito, Sara Lewis, Daniella DeLuca, Rebecca Pollick, Kristin Taylor, Tom O'Connor and twelve members of the community and Student Representatives Kyleigh Millet, Mya Romeo, Ella Obie, and Gino Pelleschi*

Communications - Superintendent

Student representatives Mya Romeo, Ella Obie, Gino Palleschi, and Kyleigh Millett updated the Board on events happening at each of the schools. At Bradt, literacy is being celebrated with literacy trivia questions being asked every morning and students participating in the Read for Ronald McDonald Fundraiser; Pinewood students held their annual science fair and participation was exceptionally high; Ella gave an update on Draper Middle School and reported that the students had a kindness spirit week and held another successful Teen Town; at the High School the National Honor Society held a food drive and welcomed their new members by presenting them with medals.

Mr. Thompson began the Eureka Math and the Reading Series presentation by giving the Board a timeline of the implementation of the programs. Program Coach, Kristen Taylor, explained the use of models and objects used to build conceptual understanding with students in K through 5th grade and shared a video with students practicing the method. Mrs. Smith reviewed the next steps of the program which included continued professional development and small revisions of the system. Mr. Thompson spoke about Star 360 Assessment which is an online computer adaptive test and the progress students have made since it has been implemented. Mrs. Smith reviewed the ELA timeline of the pilot programs Superkids, My View and Into Reading.

Mr. Greg Klokiw, of CS Arch, gave the Board a review in the scope of the proposed Capital Project. He broke down the project into various work classifications, including health and safety, academic improvements and

items that had reached the end of their useful life. He then provided details on the budgeted numbers in each of these areas and gave examples of the work that was being proposed. Mrs. Montagino and Mr. McFarland asked some questions about upgrading the HVAC systems and whether air conditioning would be included in these spaces. Mr. Shine indicated that it would be added when possible but that it would not be feasible in all areas and was cost prohibitive to do so. Mr. Klokiw and Mr. Ruberti gave the Board a cost estimate of \$47,615,000 for all of the capital projects and an explanation of the projected tax impact.

Mr. Ruberti gave an update on various budget components including facilities, transportation, instruction and revenue. He started by giving an update on the final tax levy calculation, which he had finalized at 2.25%. He also updated the Board on the retirements in the district, which included 6 teachers and a teaching assistant. Mr. Ruberti gave an overview of the staffing and budgetary impact of each of the various departments, including facilities and transportation and also discussed the instructional budget for 2023-24. He indicated that there were some staffing changes in the upcoming year in these departments, to both address specific operational needs for the district as well as to meet academic goals and continue to address student needs created by the pandemic. He discussed the impact of the federal grant funds being incorporated back into the general fund budget and the increase that the District expects in Foundation Aid in 2023-24. Mr. Ruberti finished by discussing projected class sizes in grade K-6 and the overall increase of the projected budget. The total increase is expected to be \$4.27 million, an increase of approximately 7.1% over the 2022-23 budget. However, he did remind the Board that the estimated tax impact would be about a \$55 increase for a full value home of \$150,000. Mr. Ruberti answered questions throughout the presentation and discussed the upcoming Board of Education meeting dates and presentation topics.

Mr. Shine spoke about recent events in the high school concerning Women's History Month. He discussed the fact that some of the choices of women to honor early in the month were "out of balance". He specifically noted that two transgender women were highlighted in the first week of March and that this represented a larger percentage than transgender women in society as a whole which he indicated was a disproportionate representation.. He indicated that this was not the intent, but he understood the perspective of the people who had reached out with concerns. He indicated that the High School principal would now be approving the women who would be recognized to be sure that it was proportionate, balanced, and non-partisan. Mr. Shine then addressed the fact that he had heard from some community members regarding the GSA club at Draper Middle School. He indicated that the letters GSA had changed over time as to what they were referring to, including Gay Straight Alliance and Gender and Sexuality Alliance, but that "GSA" is the most common name for such clubs. He went on to say that most secondary schools in the state have a GSA or Pride Club and such clubs are voluntary to join and require parent permission. Mr. Shine stated that the

Public Privilege of the Floor

law had been settled many years ago regarding school clubs and that Districts must be “viewpoint neutral” regarding which clubs are allowed.

Patrick Ryan asked a few questions about the budget and the acceptable range of debt service. Mr. Ruberti responded that there is not an exact range of debt service. Mr. Ryan added that he recently attended a state finance hearing that the consensus was that the United State would be heading into a 2-year recession and asked that the Board be conscious of that when hiring new employees. He then asked Mr. Shine about the oversight of school clubs. Mr. Shine responded that the oversight begins at the building level; however, the executive team approves the club every school year where the club must provide information on what the club is meeting about and how many participants attend.

Ruth McFarland voiced her concerns regarding the Draper Middle School GSA club using the word “sexuality” in the title. She asked the District to consider the word “sexuality” in a club name and suggested they use “Pride Club” instead.

Fifth-grade teacher, Rebbecca Pollick-Sawyer, shared that she is a lesbian and very proud of her family and wife. She said that every child’s emotional well-being should be supported, regardless of their background, and should have clubs that support them.

Bill Sherman acknowledged that words are important but argued that identities are as well and they should never be taken away. Mr. Sherman then referenced a recent Center for Disease Control study on mental health found that 67% of adolescents who identify as LGBTQ have persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness. He added that we need an affirming and accepting environment for these students and the Board needs to be the leader in creating that environment. He ended his statement by saying “Love conquers hate”.

Communications - Board of Education

Morgan Beech said she agrees that we should have support for all students but we need to be careful to not infringe on other students’ rights with that support. She also asked a few questions regarding the capital project renovations.

Mr. McFarland reported that some members of the community were taken aback by some of the honorees chosen by high school media arts students and noted that other less controversial women could have been chosen. He said he understands the concerns raised and that Women’s History Month is meant to highlight the successes and achievements of women. He suggested there be more parent and teacher input on controversial issues.

Mrs. Montagino said she was made aware of a poster for the GSA club and requested more information be provided on the club.

Mrs. MacTurk pointed out that the GSA club is not new and has been in existence for some time now.

Mr. Abbott said he understood the frustration when partisan issues get out of balance; however, he found the particular issue of the Women’s History Month honorees to not be as unbalanced as he originally thought. He then read the rest of the list of honorees. He added that while there is always room for improvement he trusts that the faculty and staff will see to it that future honorees will include artists, engineers, and international figures and still allow the students to make their choices. Mr. Abbott continued onto the subject of school clubs and cautioned the Board about how much of a role they should take in these matters.

Mr. Abbott reminded the Board that the next meeting on March 27, 2023 at 6:30 pm will be held at the CAT building in the LGI. He said that Coffee and Conversation dates have all been completed and that the Board received some great feedback. Mr. Abbott reported to the Board that there would be an opioid conference held on March 21st in Saratoga and to contact Mrs. Barry if they would like to attend. Mr. Abbott then shared that Congressman Tonko visited Pinewood and delivered forty-four books from the Library of Congress to the students. The students were then invited to ask the Congressman questions.

Mr. Abbott reported that NYSSBA had sent out a survey on upcoming resolutions that they will present. He urged his fellow Board members to fill out the survey and return it to him.

**New Business -
Instructional**

*Approval of
Recommendations of the
Committees on Special
Education and
Committee on Preschool
Special Education*

**Request for Approval of Recommendations of the Committees on
Special Education and Committee on Preschool Special Education**

MOTION made by Mrs. Montagino, seconded by Mrs. Power that the Board of Education approve and arrange for the recommendations of the Committee on Special Education and the Preschool Special Education for meetings held on 01/11/2023, 01/25/2023, 02/08/2023, 02/15/2023, 02/22/2023, 02/27/2023, 03/01/2023, 03/02/2023, 03/06/2023, 03/08/2023. The motion was passed unanimously, seven members present and voting.

**New Business -
Business/Personnel**

*Request for Approval of
Health and Welfare
Contract with
Scotia-Glenville Central
School*

**Request for Approval of Health and Welfare Contract with
Scotia-Glenville Central School**

MOTION made by Mr. McFarland, seconded by Ms. Laudano, that the Board of Education approve a health and welfare contract with Scotia-Glenville Central School. The motion was passed unanimously, seven members present and voting.

Approved Minutes

MOTION made by Mrs. Power, seconded by Mrs. Montagino, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of February 27, 2023. The motion was passed unanimously, seven members present and voting.

Personnel

MOTION was made by Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mrs. Montagino that the Board of Education approve the following personnel recommendations. The motion was passed unanimously with seven members present and voting.

Appointments

Maureen Armstrong
Appointment: Long Term Substitute
Assignment: 1st Grade Teacher (Bradt)
Date of Commencement: March 13, 2023
Expiration Date: June 22, 2023
Salary: Step 5 plus Graduate Credits

Sarah Kinne
Assignment: School Nurse (10 month)
Location: Draper Middle School
Effective Date: February 27, 2023
Step: 7
Salary: \$43,643.00

Mona Selim
Appointment: Substitute Cafeteria Monitor
Location: Bradt Elementary School
Date of Commencement: March 6, 2023
Salary: \$14.20 per hour

Linda King
Appointment: Cafeteria Monitor
Location: Pinewood Intermediate School
Date of Commencement: March 20, 2023
Salary: \$14.20 per hour

Tammy Miller
Appointment: Substitute Food Service Helper
Location: Varies
Date of Commencement: March 15, 2023
Salary: \$14.20 per hour

Kaitlyn Shelton
Appointment: Substitute Bus Driver
Location: Transportation
Date of Commencement: March 9, 2023
Salary: \$19.00 per hour

Alex Wiltsie
Appointment: Part-time Cleaners
Location: Bradt Elementary School
Date of Commencement: February 6, 2023
Salary: \$14.20 per hour

John Galluzzo

Appointment: Part-time Cleaners
 Location: Bradt Elementary School
 Date of Commencement: February 6, 2023
 Salary: \$17.00 per hour

Spring Coaches 2023 *(amended from the February 27, 2023 meeting)*

Sport/Level	Name	Coaching Step
Girls Track Assistant	Emily Burns	7

Rachel Schlude
 Appointment: 1st Grade Teacher
 Effective Date: Close of Business March 29, 2023

Noah Kurtz
 Appointment: Teacher Assistant
 Effective Date: Close of business March 15, 2023

Danielle Bartik
 Appointment: Substitute Food Service Helper
 Effective Date: Close of business February 28, 2023

Christopher Stiffen
 Appointment: Cafeteria Aide
 Effective Date: February 7, 2023

Adjournment

MOTION made by Ms. Laudano, seconded by Mrs. Montagino, that the Board of Education meeting be adjourned at 9:48 PM.
 The motion passed unanimously, seven members present and voting.

Christopher Ruberti

Clerk - Board of Education

Assistant Superintendent for Business