

**DATE:** November 9, 2010  
**WHERE HELD:** High School

**KIND OF MEETING:** Regular  
**PRESIDING OFFICER:** John Blowers

**MARGINAL  
NOTATIONS**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

John Blowers  
William Farmer  
Elizabeth Herkenham  
Patre Kuziak  
Lee-Ann Mertzluft  
Joe Pericone

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

James Maughan

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Jim Schultz, Jacqueline St.Onge, Christy Multer, and 29 others.

The Audit Committee met at 7:00 PM with our Internal Auditor Ken Ziobrowski to discuss recent audits.

President John Blowers called the Board meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Kuziak moved and Ms. Herkenham seconded the approval of the consent agenda, which included the minutes of the October 26, 2010 regular meeting of the Board of Education and the authorization of tradebooks & films.

Motion carried 6-0

**Privilege of the Floor**

Sue Bishop, a retired teacher from Cohoes who lives in the district, just came back from China. She asked if we taught Chinese in this school district. She doesn't feel we can prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills without learning Chinese. She would like to see a program similar to the Moers exchange, where we establish an exchange with a sister city in China. She stated we need to be a global prep community.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Mr. Farmer moved and Mr. Pericone seconded the approval of the probationary appointment of Colleen Kane, O'Rourke Middle School Principal, effective 12/13/10; the approval of the extension of a leave of absence for Julie Benson, Elementary teacher at Pashley, effective 11/15/10-1/3/11; the approval of the temporary appointment of Catina Bianchi, Special Education teacher at the High School, effective 11/10/10-6/30/11; the approval of the extension of the temporary appointment of Julie Benson, Elementary teacher at Pashley, effective 11/15/10-1/3/11; the approval of the following substitute teacher/nurse appointments: Allison Ayers, Kelly Baechle, Scott Birge, Keri-Sue Bonnaci, Devin Cassidy, Mary Cinadr, Dean Cirilla, Sara Coffey, Antonia Dauer, Valerie Dechene, Ryan Dwyer, Joseph Eaton, Robert Farrelly, Daniel Ferraro, Elizabeth Foley, Kathleen Forbes, Alicia Gallacher, Laura Graham, Lauro Gregware, Ashley Hermann, Lisa Hlebica, Paul Kisseloff, Julie Kraus, Loida Lewinter, Catherine Logue, Meredith Lounsbury, Marissa Mazzei, Patricia McCarthy, Stacie McGann, Paul Morrison, Caitlin O'Brien, Allison Palmer, Daniel Prockup, Amanda Ralston, Tara Russo, Patricia Scoons, Ryan Sgroi, Paul Tardiff; the approval of the winter coaching assignments:

George Dudas	Varsity Boys Basketball
Jim Jansen	JV Boys Basketball
Matt Shell	Freshman Boys Basketball
Don Juron	Varsity Girls Basketball (20%)
Sue Gestwick	Varsity Girls Basketball (80%)
Sean Merchant	JV Girls Basketball
Peter North	Modified Girls Basketball
Colleen Westphal	Varsity Basketball Cheerleading
Katie Kosalowski	JV Basketball Cheerleading
Paul DeLuca	Bowling
Walt Peretti	Ice Hockey
Chip Button	Boys/Girls Indoor Track
Emily Lewek	Assistant Boys/Girls Indoor Track
Shaun Zepf	Assistant Boys/Girls Indoor Track
Peter Vottis	Alpine Skiing
Matt Turner	Boys Swimming
Steve Jones	Varsity Wrestling
Jeff Blatnick	Assistant Varsity Wrestling
Ron Ashcroft	JV Wrestling
Ryan Fitzgerald	Modified Wrestling

The approval of the following volunteer winter coaching assignments:

Anthony Papa	Wrestling
Joshua Sipe	Wrestling
Ed Koivula	Ice Hockey
Kyle Pearce	Girls Basketball
James Buffoline	Alpine Skiing

The approval of the following Middle School Drama Club appointments:

Ass't Costume Director	Polly Van Nostrand	\$200
Assistant Director	Nicole Boudreau	\$100
	Haley Van Etten	\$100
Choreographer	Dana Wojcik	\$400
Costume Director	Nancy Harrigan	\$400
Graphic Designer	Santina Florio	\$300
Lighting Director	Walter Pfuntner	\$200
Producer	Amy Clark	\$750
Producer Assistant	Lauren Mattison	\$100
Production Assistant	Melissa Armstrong	\$300
Props Assistant	Judy Brinkman	\$200
Props Mistress/ Scenic Design	Marie DiCristofaro	\$400
Set Construction	Dale Clark	\$550
Sound Director	Mark Giaquinto	\$200
Technical Director	John Rayome	\$550

Motion carried 6-0

Mr. Farmer moved and Mr. Pericone seconded the approval of the civil service personnel action as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

Motion carried 6-0

Ms. Kuziak moved and Ms. Herkenham seconded the approval of the Special Athletic Competition Request for the Boys Varsity Wrestling Team.

Motion carried 6-0

Ms. Mertzlufft moved and Mr. Pericone seconded the acceptance of a gift of \$1,032 from the Pashley PTA to the Music Department to help with the replacement costs of the main stage curtain at the High School.

Motion carried 6-0

Mr. Farmer moved and Mr. Pericone seconded the acceptance of the Internal Audit Report of 2009-10.

Motion carried 6-0

Ms. Herkenham moved and Mr. Pericone seconded the approval to participate in a Co-operative Fuel Bid.

Motion carried 6-0

Ms. Herkenham moved and Mr. Pericone seconded the approval of the recommendations from the Committee on Special Education.

Motion carried 6-0

### **November 16<sup>th</sup> Forum**

Elizabeth Herkenham talked about the format for the November 16<sup>th</sup> forum. John Blowers will moderate the discussion and the evening will begin with an introduction to our school district by Rick Evans. Next Mike Russo, Director of Government Relations for Global Foundries will provide an overview of construction progress, job opportunities and other activities associated with the chip fab plant. Mike Russo along with other panelists including James Maughan -GE Wind Energy, George Seymour – HVCC Biotechnology Program, and two other potential panelists will speak on their backgrounds and job skills required for 21<sup>st</sup> century careers. The forum is expected to raise awareness on business and educational partnerships. There will be a Q&A session from the audience. Christy Multer has put the information on the website and she has also contacted our new Gazette reporter for coverage at the November 16<sup>th</sup> forum. She will also do an outreach to her group of BOCES peers. The presentation will be held in the O'Rourke Middle School cafeteria.

## **SGO Reporting**

Several Board members met with SGO representatives last week. Patre Kuziak, Board of Education student liaison, thanked Board members Joe Pericone, Lee-Ann Mertzluft and Will Farmer for attending the meeting. The Board of Education members did a presentation for the SGO students and stressed the importance of communication. Next they broke into small groups to give students an opportunity to express their thoughts with individual Board members. In Lee-Ann's group, the SGO students talked about cuts to arts classes and were concerned about electives being cut. They felt study halls are overcrowded and there are limited spaces such as the library where students can go to do their work. They are concerned about more cuts. They felt it was a good idea to replace exterior doors and we should look into other energy savings. Students like to use laptops in their classrooms, but need faster internet connectivity. They are all into etext and ebooks and would prefer not to be carrying textbooks around. They think facebook, twitter and blogs are good ideas, especially for teacher/student interactions and would all like to have their own email at school. Students feel that we need to upgrade our software. Students liked the building and thought it was in good shape however the intercom system is antiquated.

Will Farmer reported out on his group. Students agreed that the bottle recycling was a good project for them. They felt that the High School parking lot is in bad shape and are concerned with limited access in and out of the parking lot. They reported that none of them bought lunch. Some of their reasons included everything has cheese, the lines are too long, prices too high and there are not enough healthy choices. When asked about the upcoming budget, they asked why is the budget being cut and yet we are getting new doors and windows. They commented that some seniors have two study halls because classes were cut. There was a concern that the journalism class was cut. Dan Le Claire was present and he answered that the journalism class was cut because there was not enough student interest. They also felt that their teachers are more stressed this year.

Joe Pericone reported that his group of students was very concerned about the budget. Their classes filled up quickly and they wondered if seniors have priority? The answer is yes they do and again they mentioned the number of study halls. They also thought that Physics classes were too crowded. Overall they would like to have more information on the budget development process.

Patre Kuziak's group expressed some of the same themes including: complaints about study halls and larger class sizes. When asked if it made a difference in their learning, they said no, it did not. They didn't like losing some of their options and were concerned with having different levels of students in AP courses. Per Dan LeClaire that's not a change from the past. Students would be willing to help if they can save money. Patre issued an invitation for them to attend finance meetings to learn about the budget process. Overall she felt it was a very positive discussion.

Rick Evans talked about a student survey that was done last year by teacher Mike Mosall. It will be done again and Board members requested that they include a question about the use of etext versus hardcopy textbooks. Jackie St.Onge reminded them that we need to keep in mind the state aid that we receive for qualified textbook purchases.

Jim Schultz mentioned that he will be meeting with a couple of student representatives as part of a Superintendent Advisory committee. They will act as the voice back to the student population.

## **Policy Review**

Will Farmer discussed his plan for policy review this year as the Board representative. He and Jim Schultz met to discuss the policy review process. All areas have been reviewed, with the oldest having been reviewed in 2006. The policy sections for Students and Instruction will be the two series that will be reviewed this year. He asked if we want to consider using a practice of reviewing at least two series each year? All agreed it was a good idea.

At the NYSSBA conference, a new anti-bullying law called the Dignity for All Students Act was discussed. Schools will need to develop policies and revise their codes of conduct to address this legislation. The act has many requirements and we will be seeking to get involvement from students and input from our public. The question was asked if we have a policy on social networking or social media. No, but other schools are currently having this same discussion.

## **Finance Meeting (November 30<sup>th</sup> or December 8<sup>th</sup>)**

There was some discussion on a date for the Administrator's meeting with the Board. It was suggested to have it prior to the Finance Committee meeting on Nov 30<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 PM. The Finance Committee meeting will be from 7:00-9:00 PM.

## **Privilege of the Floor**

John Blowers asked Board members how they would like to respond to the privilege of the floor question raised at the beginning of the meeting. They would like Administration to explore the topic prior to responding. Jim Schultz suggested that this fits under the charge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century framework committee. It might also be opened up to a

Shared Decision Making committee to explore multi cultural experiences and global awareness.

### **Reports & Communications**

- Elizabeth Herkenham attended the Charlton Heights PTA meeting. She noticed less participation and a smaller budget. She is working on an overview of the meeting with Dennis Brobston and will share it when complete.
- Rick Evans and John Capano attended a session at which Alan November was the keynote speaker. He will send the link to the information. Business leaders highlighted the needed skills for students, including soft skills. Empathy was mentioned as very important.
- Jackie St.Onge updated the board on the construction work done over the past summer as part of Phase I of the December 2009 energy bond proposition. Phase II projects are scheduled for the summer of 2011 and have been submitted to the State Education Department for approval. She reported that she met with building principals and budget managers to begin the budget process. They were given an overview of education funding at the federal and state levels and how it will impact BH-BL's budget.
- Lee-Ann Mertzluft attended the Pashley PTA meeting and highlighted two items of discussion. They talked about having their first audit in six years and also about parent conduct at school functions.
- Jim Schultz talked about the meeting with the Teachers' Association and the history of Shared Decision Making (SDM) in BH-BL. He passed around an example of a check list used by committees for SDM guidelines. Paul Heiser at NYSSBA is working on a legislative position paper on a tax cap proposal. Jim also reported that BOCES is working on developing next year's school calendar which he will share as soon as it is available. He will looking for some Board input regarding the change this year for the opening day of school conflicting with a Jewish holiday. He mentioned that the front loading of staff development was very effective this year. He shared another unfunded mandate for administration of Regents exams. It is estimated to cost BH-BL \$18,000 for substitutes due to a new one day English exam mandated for January 11<sup>th</sup> which is outside of the current Regents exam schedule. Jim had a meeting at Tech Smart at which NYSERDA and HVCC presented. The most important thing that schools can do is integrate more math into programs and use project based applications.
- John Blowers attended the Charlton Heights Monster Mash. He reported that FACS Director Rie Posillico shared BH-BL partnerships at a meeting with CG Power Solutions leadership. John mentioned an upcoming CAPSBA meeting at which there will be six topics presented in a format that will allow attendees to rotate amongst topics. He asked Board members if there is interest in touring Niskayuna's facilities following their \$91 million construction bond. He will follow up on a potential December 7<sup>th</sup> date for the tour.
- Christy Multer mentioned an initiative that she is working on with Mike Russo of SEDC to create an alignment of schools, colleges, and businesses in an eleven county area. It will be a major event and the tentative title is "Tech Valley Alliance for Education and Jobs."

Ms. Kuziak moved and Mr. Farmer seconded a motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline St. Onge  
Clerk of the Board