

DATE: March 24, 2009
WHERE HELD: Middle School

KIND OF MEETING: Regular
PRESIDING OFFICER: Bob Speck

**MARGINAL
NOTATIONS**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Blowers
Elizabeth Herkenham
Tim Kelliher
Patre Kuziak
Robert Speck
Michael Wolf

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Joe Pericone

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jim Schultz, Jacqueline St.Onge, Rick Evans, Christy Multer, and 15 others.

President Robert Speck called the Board meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Wolf moved and Ms. Herkenham seconded the approval of the consent agenda which included minutes of the March 10, 2009 regular meeting of the Board of Education.

Motion carried 5-0

See attachments

John Blowers arrived.

Ms. Herkenham moved and Mr. Wolf seconded the acceptance of the leave of absence of Susan Brennan, Kindergarten teacher at Charlton Heights, effective 4/1/09-4/29/09; the approval of the temporary appointment of Janice Germain, Kindergarten teacher at Charlton Heights, effective 4/1/09-4/29/09; the acceptance of the resignation of Johnny Martinez, Director – High School Drama Production, effective 3/10/09; the approval of the substitute teacher appointment, so noted on the attached list.

Motion carried 5-0

See attachment 1

Ms. Herkenham moved and Mr. Wolf seconded the approval of the civil service personnel action as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

Motion carried 5-0

See attachment 2

Mr. Wolf moved and Ms. Herkenham seconded the approval of Policy 9380 (Annual District Meeting).

Motion carried 5-0

See attachment 3

John Blowers returned after Program Review break.

Mr. Kelliher moved and Ms. Herkenham seconded the approval of the Contract for Health & Welfare Services with South Colonie School District.

Motion carried 6-0

See attachment 4

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

Motion carried 6-0

See attachment 5

Privilege of the Floor

Rick Reynolds addressed the board in his capacity as the historian of the Town of Ballston. This year the State of New York is celebrating the Quadricentennial European Entry into New York with commemorative flags. Rick presented four commemorative flags to Board President Bob Speck to be displayed at the schools.

Program Review – Student Health & Wellness

Rick Evans introduced the program review on Student Health & Wellness and presenter Juliann Della Rocco. Also participating in the presentation were Barb Oberdieck, Rie Posillico, and Bob McGuire. Juliann presented first on trends in Health & Wellness in the schools stating how difficult it is to gauge the effectiveness of prevention measures (how many suicides were prevented, violent acts, etc). Statistics related to six risky behaviors identified in adolescence as contributing to death, or disability in adulthood, were provided. They included tobacco use, alcohol & other drug use, behaviors contributing to unintentional & intentional injuries, sexual behaviors, physical activity and obesity & dietary behavior. Bob McGuire talked about the physical activity levels in the community & school, the school health index survey, as well as the effectiveness and utilization of the fitness center. He described how funds received from Carol White PEP grant were used. Bob described measures to decrease obesity and reported that our

district is far below the national average. Social worker Barb Oberdieck has been with the district for thirty years and she described trends that she has seen in suicides and depression among our students. She described the district's three prong approach to prevention activities. Barb sees about 300 kids per year, including high achieving, highly motivated students. Issues include anxiety and high stress, single parent families, difficulty in finding role models to learn how to deal with stress & other feelings of disappointment, loss, etc. Her role is to teach these students how to deal with these feelings. A question was asked about whether the immediacy of technology has an impact on students. In her opinion, the need for constant communication leads to more anxiety, and may pose internet risks for students. SRO Trooper Healy talks to students about internet safety in class. A survey about the DARE program was also included in the board packet. The program is successful because when student needs are identified, our staff does a great job of responding with a comprehensive health education curriculum and creative solutions. The success of the DARE program is also attributable to the people, such as Officer Dunbar from the Glenville Police. The parent comments were extremely supportive and positive, citing a positive connection with the police force. Are there common trends at the macro level that influence student behavior & how does Barb's interactions with students trickle down to staff? The process is very confidential unless threatened behavior puts students at risk. Maryellen explained how the PAT team (Pupil Assistance Team) functions. Team includes the social worker, High School administration, the Special Services Director, the nurse, Trooper Healy, guidance personnel, and others who meet to discuss medical, physical, social, emotional, and other student needs. They triage to develop a solution or a plan to address these needs and a list of students is given to teachers. They may contact an administrator to discuss further. Approximately 20-30 students are discussed each week and many are weekly follow-ups.

Budget Update – Jim Schultz provided an updated version of his budget recommendations that maintained the half time elementary computer assistants per the board request. We are currently looking at a plan to achieve cost savings using BOCES shared service to provide for substitute calling services, as well as decreasing the budgeted amount available for substitutes by reconfiguring meetings, job embedded staff development activities, etc. Application of an additional \$100,000 to fund balance at the Tier 2 level and other staffing reductions would result in a tax levy increase of 2.95%. Superintendent Schultz further split his Tier 3 recommendations into two priorities, the first tier would further reduce the budget by \$55,000 through additional staffing cuts and the second would result in an additional \$160,000 decrease. There were additional questions about the use of TIMS and sharing of effective models between elementary buildings to address the reduction in computer assistant time in labs. Jim clarified questions about special education reductions and the impact of scaling back the level of speech services offered. Students identified as needing speech services will continue to receive service. The Superintendent also addressed the implications of personnel reductions as set forth in law and determined by seniority. Questions have been raised about personnel changes to the Spectrum Program. There will be a list of tenure areas put in a future board packet. The Superintendent talked about the insurance committee that is currently looking for savings. They are hoping to have some ideas prior to April break as well as looking for a multi-year solution to attain savings over several years. Jim has asked Board members to consider the level of fund balance to be applied to next year's budget, as well as looking at his Tier 2 and Tier 3a recommendations for the next Finance meeting.

Budget Forum – Superintendent Schultz ran through the potential agenda for the Budget Forum on March 31st including what we know about state aid and the federal stimulus, contingency budget, explanation of trickle down effect of staff reductions, and fund balance. The plan is to divide the audience into six focus groups headed by a Board member to seek reactions from the community & give them an opportunity to ask questions about the budget. There was also a discussion about reaching out to many more groups this year after the last forum and ways to reach out informally. Ideas for the budget brochure were considered including impact of contingency budget this year, our ability to react to Governor's actions, proactive cost savings & CASHIC participation, and possibly address salary issues in the budget brochure via an overview about contract process.

Reports & Communications

- John Blowers attended the legislative breakfast. He was also at the SGO meeting where Food Service Director Nicky Boehm worked on a menu planning activity with students that incorporated the required nutritional components into the High School lunch offerings. Thursday he will be attending career day to talk about High Tech company opportunities.
- Rick Evans reminded Board members of the upcoming program review on student achievements and accomplishment in April. The Board is looking for an extended amount of time to hear about student achievement and it was suggested to allocate two hours (8-10pm) for the presentation. If data is provided in the board packet prior to the review, then it doesn't need to be addressed again unless there are specific questions. Board members would like to hear about any creative approaches or initiatives used to increase student learning, with the exception of technology which is already covered in its own review. Sharon McTygue is requesting a .1 increase in special education time at Pashley for the balance of the year. This request changes a .5 teaching position to a .6 position. More information will be provided in the next board packet to better understand the budgetary impact.

- Superintendent Jim Schultz included a draft referendum letter to the next committee to review potential bond projects and asked board members to comment. Also included in the packet is the Capital District Region BOCES budget and their cost cutting measures. Board members are invited to their site to attend an open house.
- Bob Speck talked about board activities and asked Board members to suggest topics for a retreat at the end of the year. It came to his attention that the community may not realize that the retreat is held at our schools during off hours and there are no venue costs. There was a suggestion to have board committee reports at the retreat.
- Patre Kuziak attended the District Health and Wellness Committee meeting where they discussed their task to look at potential improvements.
- Tim Kelliher reported that the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee continues to meet and they are moving towards developing an outline.
- Jackie St. Onge discussed the insurance information on the Hostetter building that was provided in the packet. She attended a meeting between the two insurance adjusters at which they discussed the status of the determination of scope of damages and necessary repairs. Also discussed were what happens next and timeline.

Mr. Kelliher moved and Mr. Wolf seconded a motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline St. Onge
Clerk of the Board