

WATERTOWN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 19, 2021

The regular meeting of the Watertown City School District's Board of Education was held on May 19, 2021, in the District Office Conference Room at HT Wiley School for the board members and was streamed live for the public to view virtually via a link on the district website. The meeting, conducted by the Board President, Maria Mesires, opened at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Maria T Mesires
Michael R. Struchen
Culley T. Gosier
Jason B. Harrington
Nancy C. Henry
Beth A. Linderman
Suzanne C. Renzi-Falge

Officers Present: Patricia B. LaBarr, Superintendent of Schools
Michelle R. Gravelle, District Clerk

Administrators: Stacey J. Eger-Converse, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
Tina M. Lane, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services
Joshua W. Hartshorne, School Business Administrator

Agenda Changes: None.

Public Comments: None

Communications: The Superintendent shared two communications with the Board members.

- Jeff-Lewis School Board Association is preparing the National Honor Society Virtual Program. The date is to be determined. When the program details have been finalized; more information will be forwarded to the National Honor Society Advisors.
- The Superintendent's office has received correspondence from the Office of the State Comptroller. The comptroller office has selected the District for an audit. More information to follow in the future.

Board and Staff Reports:

Mr. George Emrich, Athletic Director, and Mr. Jon Bliss (Wrestling Coach) – Wrestling Merger with Immaculate Heart Central

Mr. Emrich was approached by the administration at Immaculate Heart Central about merging their wrestlers with the Watertown team for the 2021-22 season. Their players would play under Watertown colors. Mr. Bliss went on to outline for the board members how that process would look. One of the main concerns of the board members was that by adding the students from IHC the possibility of minimizing the playing time for the WCSD players on the team. Mr. Bliss explained that in the sport of wrestling two players with the same weight would compete in a wrestle off to determine which will earn the spot to attend the meet. With the fact that the team lacks the participation at this point, bringing in the IHC participants would bolster the program, give it more success, and draw younger players into the program.

The Superintendent reminded the members that with this being an annual request it's something that they can revisit to discuss yearly.

Policy Committee Report, March 14, Nancy Henry—Ms. Henry reported that there were very few changes made to the list of policies, only a few grammatical changes were noted.

Items for Consent Agenda:

Resolution Offered by Michael Struchen.

RESOLVED, that Consent Agenda Items A and B are hereby approved.

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Committee on Pre-School Education.
- B. Approval of the Minutes of the Committee on Special Education.

Seconded by Beth Linderman and carried; all voting aye.

Items for Board Action:

Resolution Offered by Suzanne Renzi-Falge.

WHEREAS, the Inspectors of Election for the Annual School District Election and Budget Vote held on May 18, 2021, have delivered to the Clerk of the Board of Education their signed statements and reports of votes cast at said Election/Budget Vote, and such statements and reports have now been examined and canvassed as follows:

Approval of the 2021-2022 School Budget, Proposition #1: Total Number of Votes:

Yes votes: 477
No votes: 91

Approval of the Capital Project Request, Proposition #2: Total Number of Votes:

Yes votes: 486
No votes: 82

For Members of the Board of Education:

Rande S. Richardson: 519 votes
Lorie L. Converse: 433 votes
Ammbrose Souza: 415 votes

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2021-2022 proposed budget, Capital Project proposition, and elected Board of Education members have been approved by the qualified voters of the school district, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Ammbrose Souza, Lorie L. Converse and Rande S. Richardson are declared the elected members of the Board of Education. They will each serve a three-year term commencing July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2024. The District Clerk has notified the successful candidates, and will send written confirmation.

Seconded by Jason Harrington and carried; all voting aye.

Resolution Offered by Jason Harrington.

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Patricia B. LaBarr, the Board of Education hereby approves the following:

RETIREMENTS

A	Name	Title	Effective Date	Years
1	Brumfield, Donald	Special Ed Teacher	6/30/2021	18
2	Pringle, Reneé	Cook	6/24/2021	25

RESIGNATIONS

B	Name	Title	Effective Date	Years
1	Brooke Welch	Art Teacher	6/30/2021	6 months
2	Randy Clark	Building Maintenance Worker	5/13/2021	3

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

C	Name	Title	Effective Date	Ending Date	Reason
1	Elmer, Tara	Elementary Teacher	9/1/2021	6/30/2022	Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)
2	Lamica, Nicole	Elementary Teacher	9/1/2021	6/30/2022	Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)
3	Phelps, Jennifer	Elementary Teacher	9/1/2021	6/30/2022	Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)
4	St.Croix, Jayson	Math Teacher	9/1/2021	6/30/2022	Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)
5	Swenson, Julie	Elementary Teacher	9/1/2021	6/30/2022	Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)

APPOINTMENTS – SUBSTITUTES – INSTRUCTIONAL

D	Name	Effective Date	Ending Date
1	Abel, Nathan	5/20/2021	6/30/2021
2	Booth, Kristin	5/20/2021	6/30/2021
3	McClusky, James	5/20/2021	6/30/2021
4	Riordan, Caleb	5/20/2021	6/30/2021
5	Riordan, Mackenzie	5/20/2021	6/30/2021
6	Wilson, Jenna	5/20/2021	6/30/2021

APPOINTMENT – SUBSTITUTE – NON-INSTRUCTIONAL

E	Name	Effective Date	Ending Date
1	Sawyer, Yvonne	5/13/2021	6/30/2021

APPOINTMENTS - LEAD TEACHERS

F	Name	Job Title	Effective Date	Ending Date
1	Britton, Nadine	Science 7-8	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
2	Brown, Jessica	English 7-8	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
3	Castilleja, Timothy	Science 9-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
4	Elmer, Tara	Technology Integration Specialist	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
5	Freeman, Terry	Guidance 7-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
6	Hayden, Jessica	Art K-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
7	Hazard, Anthony	Social Studies 7-8	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
8	LaFex, Holly	Special Education 9-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
9	Lake, Kristen	World Language 7-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
10	Lamica, Nicole	Instructional Coach	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
11	Peters, Lori	PE/Health K-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
12	Phelps, Jennifer	Instructional Coach	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
13	Reynolds, Jason	Math 7-8	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
14	Shepard, Brian	Mathematics 9-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
15	St. Croix, Jayson	Technology Integration Specialist	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
16	Swenson, Julie	Instructional Coach	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
17	Thurheimer, Keira	Special Education 7-8	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
18	Webb-Bennett, Jo-Ann	Social Studies 9-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
19	Wilcox, Abigail	English 9-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022
20	Wischerath, Andrea	Music K-12	9/1/2021	6/30/2022

Seconded by Michael Struchen and carried; all voting aye.

Resolution Offered by Suzanne Renzi-Falge.

RESOLVED, that a donation from Long Falls Dentistry for \$250.00 will be made to the H.T. Wiley Student Council. This donation is gratefully accepted and approved and will be acknowledged in writing.

Seconded by Beth Linderman and carried; all voting aye.

Resolution Offered by Culley Gosier.

RESOLVED, that the formation of an extracurricular club – Case Musical at Case Middle School with Sara Gleason as the advisor (as per the attached) is hereby approved.

Seconded by Nancy Henry and carried; all voting aye.

RESOLVED, that the following revised Board of Education policies are hereby approved and adopted:

4001, Fiscal Responsibilities

4002, Reports of Possible Violations of Policy or Law

4003, System of Accounts

4004, Bonding of District Personnel

- 4101,** Budget Planning
- 4102,** Budget Publication and Hearing
- 4103,** Budget Adoption and Implementation
- 4104,** Contingency Budget
- 4105,** Budget Transfers
- 4106,** Revenue
- 4107,** School Tax
- 4108,** Authorized Signatures
- 4109,** Tax Exempt Bonds—Post Issuance Compliance
- 4201,** Borrowing Funds
- 4202,** Deposits
- 4203,** Investments
- 4204,** Insurance
- 4205,** Financial Facilities Development
- 4301,** Audit Committee
- 4302,** Annual Audit
- 4303,** Internal Audit Function
- 4304,** Auditing Claims for Payment

Seconded by Culley Gosier and carried; all voting aye.

The District Clerk then realized that she misspoke on the Policy number for Audit Committee during the reading of the Resolution.

A motion to Amend the number to correct it was made by Beth Linderman; seconded by Jason Harrington and carried; all voting aye.

END OF RESOLUTIONS

Superintendent of Schools Report—Patricia B. LaBarr

- ❖ Superintendent LaBarr thanked the board members for allowing Mr. Emrich and Mr. Bliss to come to the meeting to discuss the wrestling merger with IHC.
- ❖ She thanked the voters for coming out to cast their votes the evening prior. There were a few minor glitches which will be worked out in preparation for next year's Election Day.
- ❖ She and Josh Hartshorne recently participated in a virtual presentation for the Rotary in which they talked about the Capital Project and the district's budget.
- ❖ The Superintendent has finished the tenure observations for the teachers that are receiving tenure next month. She reflected on how interesting it has been to see the in-person and virtual teaching styles and how these teachers are making it all work for students.
- ❖ She recently had the opportunity to sit through a simulated board meeting facilitated by SUNY Oswego students that are currently in the leadership program.
- ❖ She mentioned that there will be some additional 2020-21 school calendar changes on June 1.
- ❖ The Blindspot book study with 11 district employees is winding down.
- ❖ The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee is continuing to work in small breakout rooms, virtually, and they may be sharing at the next board meeting some of their findings and thoughts in how the district can enhance the strategic plan goals
- ❖ This Friday will be an afternoon of professional development for staff. George Theoharis will

be a guest speaker. George is with Syracuse University; author of *Leadership for Increasingly Diverse Schools*. She invited the board members to participate as well, via the webex link she has provided.

- ❖ She reports that James Huber has finished his final report of the special education audit and will be attending the June 1 board meeting to share his thoughts and findings with the Board.
- ❖ The work continues on the district website in order to transition over to the new system, Finalsite, on July 1. In addition to this, after July 1, the district will implement BoardDocs, a platform for reviewing Board of Education materials.
- ❖ The Policy committee has finished its meetings for this school year. Superintendent LaBarr is pleased with the revisions the committee worked on this year. The committee will pick up where they left off in September.
- ❖ The Wellness committee currently has a Walk, Run, Stroll or Roll event. The information is posted on the district website and ParentSquare for any families interested in participating.
- ❖ The emergency project for the hot water heater at Case has been completed.

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Report—Stacey Eger-Converse:

- ❖ Ms. Eger-Converse reports that today was the deadline for Universal Pre-K applications for any families that had a desired location for their student. There are just under 200 applications thus far, which is a favorable number of students. Additionally, Kindergarten registration was recently held at the elementary buildings. The enrollment numbers of Kindergarten students per building is very good as well.
- ❖ There are five students at the high school level that are working on their Seal of Bi-literacy presentation next week. This is the highest number of students achieving that credential in a given year thus far.
- ❖ The enrollment number of students for K-6 summer school is being finalized. Student enrollment for the summer program looks very good and with that more finalized, summer school teachers will be appointed at the June 1 meeting. The STEM program application is now available for grades 4 –6 as well.
- ❖ Mrs. Eger-Converse spoke about an opportunity called Brilliant Pathways, which is a career in college readiness program. If awarded the opportunity, this would offer three years of mentorship and support for up to 50 students in a given building. An application for HT Wiley and Case Middle School was submitted and she awaits notification.
- ❖ She received notification this week that the district will be awarded the My Brother's Keeper Family and Community Engagement Grant. This grant consists of four years of \$125,000 each year. This would allow a family and community liaison position between the district and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services Report—Tina Lane:

- ❖ Ms. Lane has been conducting substitute interviews along with several interviews coming up for anticipated vacant positions in the fall.
- ❖ She recently gathered the district's counselors to discuss the challenges that have been faced throughout the pandemic. They had some small group discussions about solutions to the challenges and moving forward plans. In addition to that she and Mrs. Eger-Converse recently met with Panorama, the repository used at the building level to encapsulate notes from teachers, counselors, and nurses as they pertain to students' social-emotional learning.

School Business Managers Report—Joshua Hartshorne:

- ❖ Mr. Hartshorne thanked the voters that came out yesterday to vote for the school budget and Capital Project. He also thanked the nurses that helped with taking temperatures at the door, building and grounds workers for their help with signage, and election inspectors for their hard work as well.
- ❖ The District Treasurer is preparing for the upcoming State Comptroller audit the Superintendent mentioned during communications earlier in the meeting.
- ❖ He reports that he's working on applications for both the (ARPA) American Rescue Plan Act and for federal funding along with the (CRRSA) Federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021.
- ❖ The internal audit starts June 1; the audit will be focusing on Title IX. Questar will be conducting the audit for approximately two weeks.

Upcoming Dates

President Mesires reviewed a few upcoming dates; noting the Memorial Day break in which there will be no school for students May 28 through June 1.

Executive Session

At 6:30 p.m. a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent evaluation by Jason Harrington and a second by Michael Struchen and carried; all voting aye.

Open Session

At 7:13 p.m. Beth Linderman made a motion to move back into Open Session and a second from Jason Harrington and carried; all voting aye.

Adjournment

With no further business, at 7:14 p.m., President Mesires asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Culley Gosier, seconded by Michael Struchen and carried; all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michelle R. Gravelle
District Clerk