# ONTEORA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOICEVILLE, NEW YORK 12412

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING
6:00 p.m.
**TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024**
BENNETT SCHOOL

**1. Opening Items**

1.01 Call to Order 6:00 pm
1.02 Tobacco Policy Statement
1.03 Pledge of Allegiance
1.04 Roll Call: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo

**2. Welcome**

2.01 Bennett Elementary School Principal, Gabriel Buono will welcome the Board (duration 15 min)

- Mr. Buono started his update with a joke by asking Trustee Bishop "What did the moon bring to the beach yesterday for the solar eclipse?" Sun Block!
- Mr. Buono reported ELA exams start tomorrow
- He has been busy with the preparation for the upcoming year transition and is trying to meet all the teacher needs
    - Mr. Buono mentioned that he plans to meet with each Phoenicia Teacher
    - He met with the Phoenicia PTA last night to answer questions and report accurate information surrounding the transition
    - Mr. Buono reported that he also had a meeting with the Bennett and Phoenicia PTA's to discuss the Bennett garden build on April 20th and April 21st
- There will be a Special Chorus concert on Thursday April 25th

**3. Presentations**

3.01 Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Stephanie Laffin will present the Sixth - Grade Social Studies Textbook Adoption

3.02 Assistant Superintendent for Business, Monica LaClair will present the 2024-2025 Superintendent's Recommended Budget (duration 20 min)

**4. Superintendent News**

4.01 The Superintendent will report on District News

Superintendent McLaren reported that we have experienced an earthquake, a snow day, and a solar eclipse in the past week and today it was 76 degrees and sunny. Thank you to everyone for your support and understanding as we navigate these situations. Barring any additional weather surprises, we will extend the Memorial Day holiday weekend by one day and school will not be in session on May 24th.

Important Dates and Events
The date for homecoming 2024 has been set as September 28th. Mark your calendars! We have the musical happening this weekend - you can attend on Friday or Saturday at 7 pm or on Sunday at 1 pm. They will be performing the School of Rock. I'm sure it will be a wonderful production. Please attend and support our students.
Many of our student artists are featured in an art exhibition titled Future Voices at SUNY Ulster Muroff Kotler Gallery. The gallery showcases the work of Ulster County high schools, including Onteora. Onteora High School students have over 35 artworks in the show. SUNY Ulster alumni, artist, and gallery owner Allison Constant of the Art Bar in Kingston is the juror and Guest Curator for this exhibition. The show runs from April 5th through the 19th. Assistant Superintendent Laffin and I were able to attend the opening and see the art and we can attest that it is amazing how talented these young artists are.
Meet, Greet and Eat will be on Monday, May 6th from 5:30 to 7:30. Many of our local restaurants are participating and there will be a silent auction to benefit the Phoenicia
Farewell Fare. Admission is free and each hors d'oeuvres will be $3. The proceeds from the hors d'oeuvres will benefit the Bellaeyre Bash.

Transition Activity
The MS will be holding an activity for the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade students - a combined kickball game in the middle school. This will take place during the day and will be a fun activity and a way to bring the students who will be in the Middle School in September together.

Clarification:
In last Friday's Hudson Valley One article, there was a misunderstanding by the journalist regarding one of Ms. LaClair's comments. In the paper it says, "Because of the high equalization rate in Woodstock … we're seeing a lot of them [non-payment] from Woodstock"
The "them" that she was referring to were taxpayers who paid taxes, not taxpayers who did not pay. After paying taxes these taxpayers then challenged their assessments, and, due to the equalization rate and when the home was purchased, many won, and were owed a refund on taxes paid. That refund comes out of the District's general fund budget.
One example that we saw, someone purchased a home in 2023 for $1.5million dollars, because of the 46.5% equalization rate, the taxes for 23-24 were assessed at $3,225,806 and they paid $25,029.50 ($1,500,000/$1000 * $16.686) in property taxes. This property owner than challenged their assessment and won. The tax bill was reduced to $11,638.71 ((1,500,000*.465)/$1000*$16.686) and the taxpayer was eligible for a refund by the district of $13,390.79. ($25,029.50-$11,638.71).
Although this is one of the larger refunds, the District has processed almost $40,000 of refunds since December 2023

4.02 Superintendent, Victoria McLaren, will present the information on the Onteora CSD website Soaring to New Heights: Optimizing Onteora

## 5. Student Representative Report

5.01 The Student Representative on the Board, Sophia Odato, will give a report

Ms. Odato reported that recently in Student Government we discussed our next steps in both our mural contest and our outdoor classroom.

Throughout the High School, students are excited for spring.
Spring sports are preparing for their first competitions. Track had a home meet today against Ellenville. HS Yearbook club is set to submit to publishers at the end of April, and yearbooks will be delivered to students at the end of the year.

This week, presenters from the Ulster County Crime Victims Assistance Program will be coming into PE classes to teach and talk about Healthy Relationships and Teen dating Violence. Their presentation will focus on red flags in relationships, signs of abuse, and the prevalence of violence in relationships. On a different note, the senior class had a successful Pancake Breakfast fundraiser this past Saturday at the Dietz Stadium diner. Thank you to all that supported! The Krispy Kreme Fundraiser put on by the Junior class just came to an end and they sold close to 400 boxes. Prom is fast approaching! And it will be May 31st.

## 6. Board District News

6.01 The Board will report District News

- Trustee Goodrich reported that he recently attending the Town if Olive Comprehensive Housing Workshop
    - Introductions from LaBella Associates Staff and a Subconsultant for Environment Planning. LaBella Associates have been hired to work with the Town of Olive under the Ulster County Smart Communities Initiative to develop a Comprehensive Housing Plan. The first phase is to engage residents by scheduling workshops in four different town of Olive Hamlets. The next phase after completing Comprehensive Plans is to look at the current zoning laws, housing codes and short-term rental laws. One of the main objectives is to improve affordable housing in the Town if Olive

    - Socio-Demographics 2020 highlights:

        - 19% Renter Occupied
        - 81% Owner Occupied (some may be seldom used for owner vacations)
        - 70% of renters are housing burdened
        - 20% of owners with a mortgage are housing burdened

## 7. Acceptance of Minutes

7.01 Acceptance of Minutes

*Recommended Action:* The Board of Education hereby approves the minutes of March 19, 2024
Motioned: Trustee Jerome
Seconded: Trustee Storey
Result: Unanimous

Yea: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo

## 8. Discussion & Possible Action

8.01 Approve 2024-2025 School Calendar

*Recommended Action:* The Board of Education hereby approves the School Calendar for the 2024-2025 School Year, as attached
Motioned: Trustee Goodrich
Seconded: Trustee Storey
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo

8.02 Motion to add agenda item to consider ways to centralize the two elementary schools as we work toward a true centralization for discussion

Motion to add agenda item 8.02
First: Trustee Mitchell-Marell
Seconded: Trustee Jerome
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo

- Trustee Hemingway Lynch started the discussion by giving ideas on how she thinks the two elementary school can come together socially
- Trustee Bishop thinks it is important to mention that the Board will support these ideas as we move forward
- Superintendent McLaren spoke that a District Goal for 2024-25 could be to combine culture and climate
- Trustee Mitchell-Marell agreed with Trustee Bishop and agrees that the Board will not implement the ideas, but could discuss and support them at the table

## 9. Acknowledge Public Be Heard Comments

9.01 The Board will acknowledge the public be heard comments from the last meeting

- Kara Colevas
- Esther Downtown
- Megan Brenner

## 10. Public and Student Comments

10.01 Public and Students may comment on any agenda or non-agenda item

- Faedra Dagirmanjian

## 11. **Break**

11.01 The Board will take a 5-minute break

## 12. Consent Agenda

12.01 Approve Consent Agenda

*Recommended Action:* The Board of Education hereby approves Consent Agenda item numbers 12.02-12.10
Motioned: Trustee Storey
Seconded: Trustee Jerome
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo

12.02 Approve Volunteers

*Recommended Action*: The Board of Education hereby approves the following volunteer listed below:
Braunstein, Riki- Bennett Elementary School
Delgado, Melanie- Woodstock Elementary School

12.03 Donation from Patrick Burkhardt

*Recommended Action:* The Board hereby accepts the donation of hemlock wood from Patrick Burkhardt for the Bennett Garden Project

12.04 Donations

*Recommended Action:* The Superintendent recommends approval for the attached donations, each contributing to various initiatives within our district, and increasing their respective budgetary appropriations. The total amount for approval is $9,425.00.

| ***Donations Received for Board of Education Approval, April 9th, 2024*** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Donor:*** | ***Amount:*** | ***Purpose:*** | ***Appropriation:*** |
| Stewart's Foundation | $750.00 | Woodstock Supplemental | A2110.431-07 |
| Anonymous | $3,500.00 | Bernado Lapo Mem. Award $1,500.00, Stephen G. Bayer Mem. Award $1,000.00, Wellington Hunter Mem. Award $1,000.00 | CM2989.400-15 |
| Judith & Scott Buehler | $300.00 | Paul Wereszynski Scholarship Fund | CM2989.400-05 |
| Karen A. Wereszynski | $500.00 | Paul Wereszynski Scholarship Fund | CM2989.400-05 |
| David Boucher | $1,000.00 | Henry Boucher Mem. Award | CM2989.400-15 |
| David Boucher | $500.00 | Paul Wereszynski Scholarship Fund | CM2989.400-05 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Patricia A. Tosi | $300.00 | Peter Tosi Memorial Award | CM2989.400-15 |
| Margaret Petrella | $150.00 | Joe Petrella Memorial Award | CM2989.400-15 |
| Margaret Haug | $175.00 | George Haug Mem. Award | CM2989.400-15 |
| Margaret Haug | $125.00 | George Haug Science Award | CM2989.400-15 |
| Margaret Haug | $125.00 | Nancy Fitzsimmons Mem. Award | CM2989.400-15 |
| Anonymous | $2,000.00 | Bennett Supplemental | A2110.431-03 |
| **Total** | **$9,425.00** | | |

12.05 Textbook Adoption: Sixth - Grade Social Studies

*Recommended Action:* The Board of Education hereby adopts the Sixth - Grade Social Studies Textbook Series: Discovering Our Past; The Eastern Hemisphere, by McGraw Hill.

12.06 Memorandum of Agreement between OCSD and ONTSA

*Recommended Action:* The Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools hereby approves Memorandum of Agreement between the Onteora Central School District and the Onteora Non-Teaching Supervisors Association

12.07 Memorandum of Agreement between OCSD and ONTEA

*Recommended Action:* The Board of Education, with the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools hereby approves Memorandum of Agreement between the Onteora Central School District and the Onteora Non-Teaching Employees Association.

12.08 Personnel Agenda

**EXTRA DUTY STIPENDS**

| NAME | POSITION | AMOUNT |
|---|---|---|
| Matteson, Lori | Volunteer JV and Modified Assistant Softball Coach | -$0- |
| Via, M. Scott | AIS/Regents Prep- Earth Science Regents Review | $2,108.00 |

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE: INSTRUCTIONAL**

| EMPLOYEE NUMBER | EFFECTIVE DATE | REASON |
|---|---|---|
| 3463 | 09/01/24 – 06/30/25 | Parental Leave of Absence |

**TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT: NON - INSTRUCTIONAL**

| NAME | POSITION | EFFECTIVE DATE | RATE |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Zygmunt, Andrew | Summer Custodial | 06/27/24 – 09/01/24 | $20.00/hour |

**RESIGNATIONS: NON - INSTRUCTIONAL**

| NAME | POSITION/SCHOOL | EFFECTIVE DATE | REMARKS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jones, Tammy | Bus Attendant/Transportation | 04/05/24 | Personal |
| Kaiser, Laura | Bus Driver/Transportation | 04/05/24 | Retirement |

**SUBSTITUTE**

| NAME | POSITION | RATE |
|---|---|---|
| Bell, Carolyn | Teacher (certified) | $150.00/day |
| Villanueva, Ana* | Food Service | $15.00/hour |

*pending pre-employment processing*

12.09 Schedule U- The Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Pre-School Special Education (CPSE) Recommendations

*Recommended Action:* The Board hereby approves the Instruction - Schedule U- The Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Pre-School Special Education (CPSE) Recommendations, Schedule U, #4/24 Confidential, as reviewed by Trustee Storey

12.10 Budget Transfers

*Recommended Action*: The Superintendent recommends the transfer of $592,820.00 from various codes for the BOCES Capital Project Payment.
Amount from Budget Code to Budget Code
$294,005.45 A9060.800-10 A1983.490-10
$75,250.55 A9060.875-10 A1983.490-10
$223,564.00 A9020.800-10 A1983.490-10

## 13. Contracts and Independent Contractor Retainers

13.01 Approve all Contracts and Independent Contractor Retainers

*Recommended Action:* The Board hereby approves item numbers 13.02 - 13.10
Motioned: Trustee Goodrich
Seconded: Trustee Storey
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo

13.02 Inter-Municipal Agreement with the Town of Olive

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Inter-Municipal Agreement between Onteora Central School District and the Town of Olive for the use of the softball field at Grant Avery Park and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.03 Center for Creative Education

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Center for Creative Education retained as Dance Residency Artist effective April 29, 2024 to May 3, 2024 at a rate of $800 per session + admin fee to a maximum rate of $5,280.00 and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.04 Children's Neuropsychological Services, PLLC

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Children's Neuropsychological Services, PLLC retained as Neuropsychologist Independent Educational Evaluation effective April 10, 2024 to June 30, 2024 at a rate of $260.00 per hour to a maximum rate of $7,280.00 with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.05 Empire Neuropsychological Services, PLLC-Jodie Cohen, PhD

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Empire Neuropsychological Services, PLLC-Jodie Cohen, PhD retained to provide an Neuropsychologist Independent Educational Evaluation effective April 10, 2024 to July 30, 2024 at a maximum rate of $3,250.00 with no fringe benefits or deductions. This rate does not include attendance at CSE meetings, hearings, or court appearances which are billed at $275.00 per hour and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.06 M. Erideson

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and MaryAnne Erideson retained as Mentor in Culinary Art effective April 10, 2024 to June 6, 2024 at a maximum rate of $200 for 20 hours with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.07 L. Piccoli

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Liz Piccoli retained as Teaching Artist effective April 30, 2024 to June, 1, 2024 at a maximum rate of $2,000.00 per 12 sessions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.08 M. Savatgy- PH

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Matthew Savatgy retained as Phoenicia Earth Day Coordinator effective April 12, 2024 to April 26, 2024 at a maximum rate of $1,000.00 and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.09 M. Savatgy- WD

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Matthew Savatgy retained as Woodstock Go Green Day Coordinator effective May 1, 2024 to May 15, 2024 at a maximum rate of $1,000.00 and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

13.10 P. Mansfield

*Recommended Action:* BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Philip Mansfield retained as Mentor in Photography effective April 10, 2024 to June 6, 2024 at a maximum rate of $250 for 25 hours with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

## 14. Policies

14.01 First Reading of Policy 5330 Budget Transfers

14.02 First Reading of Policy 5322 District-Owned Cellular Telephones

14.03 First Reading of Policy 5510 Fiscal Accounting and Reporting

14.04 First Reading of Policy 5321 Use of Credit Cards

14.05 Rescind Policies 5340, Borrowing Funds and 5511, Collection of Non-Sufficient Funds Check

*Recommended Action:* The Board of Education hereby rescinds Policies 5340 and 5511
Motioned: Trustee Hemingway Lynch
Seconded: Trustee Storey
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo

5340, Borrowing Funds - Non-Essential per NYSSBA

5511, Collection of Non-Sufficient Funds Check - This policy is an administrative matter and not a matter of Board policy, so it should be removed per NYSSBA

## 15. Committee Reports

15.01 Audit Committee

- Nothing to report

15.02 Communications Committee

- Trustee Hemingway Lynch reported on the update. The committee met the first Wednesday of the month. The committee brought the ideas forward from the rest of the board so everyone has visibility on the role of the committee.
    - Trustee Hemingway Lynch indicated that the Board Briefs seem to be well received and Trustee Hemingway Lynch asked for input for ideas for the update before the first Wednesday of the month
- Trustee Bishop mentioned that Holly Brooker, consultant from BOCES- Public Relations that Board Trustees try to attend community events/school district events as a visible board member
    - District Clerk to share Google Doc with the Board of Education with events/dates along with other event ideas

15.03 Facilities Committee

- Nothing to report

15.04 Legislative Action Committee

- Nothing to report

15.05 Policy Committee

- The committee met and reviewed multiple polices and will continue to do that to update the policy manual

## 16. Old Business

16.01 The Board will discuss Old Business

- Nothing to report

## 17. New Business

17.01 The Board will discuss New Business

- Trustee Goodrich encourages the community to visit the FAQ's on the Optimizing Onteora webpage and asked if Superintendent McLaren can present the FAQ's and open them up for discussion at a future BOE meeting
- Trustee Bishop asked if the Board could consider creating a resolution related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
    - Trustee Bishop printed out materials for the Trustees to read and review
    - Trustee Hemingway Lynch mentioned that a previous board member, Trustee DeJesus may have started research on this topic approximately 3 to 4 years ago

## 18. Request for Information

18.01 Board Members will Request Information of the Superintendent

- Trustee Storey asked Superintendent McLaren if she could reach out to the Superintendent of Kingston City School to see if Kingston City School District would be willing to change lot lines for residents to become residents of Onteora CSD
- Trustee Jerome asked for an overview surrounding homework
    - Standards, requirements, is the amount of homework decided by teacher, school, or by grade level
    - Trustee Jerome indicated that she has been asked questions regarding this topic and mentioned that parents are asking for more homework
    - Superintendent McLaren indicated that Onteora has a homework policy and that homework is also addressed in the student handbooks, but will gather the information to shar with the board
    - Trustee Storey mentioned that information surrounding this topic is also in Board Docs

## 19. Adjournment

19.01 Adjourn the Meeting. Next meeting is April 16, 2024 at Phoenicia School

*Recommended Action*: The meeting is adjourned at 7:52 pm.
Motioned: Trustee Storey
Seconded: Trustee Mitchell-Marell
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Storey, Trustee Bishop
Not Present: Trustee Reimondo