

Cheektowaga-Sloan Regular Meeting Transcript of June 17, 2020.

We will begin the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

I call this meeting to order.

Roll Call

Mr. Vohwinkel, here

Mr. Sieczkarek, here

Mrs. Dombrowski, here

Mrs. Ferrucci, here

Mrs. McCowan, here

Mr. Smith, here

Mr. Stewart, here

We have a quorum.

At this time, we need a motion and a second to accept the results of the Proposition and Board of Education election.

Shall the Board of Education of the Cheektowaga-Sloan Union Free School District be authorized to expend the sums set forth in the proposed 2020-2021 Budget in the amount of \$37,136,645.00 and to levy the necessary tax?

Yes: 1065 No: 595

And Board Member – Two five (5) year terms commencing July 1, 2020 and expiring on June 30, 2025.

Stephanie Dombrowski 1A 1153

Wesley Schlossin 2A 894

David J. Vohwinkel 3A 890

We need a motion and a second. Jeff. I'll motion, this is Claire. I heard Jeff and then Claire. On to question.

David, this is Scott. I think Jeffery is muted. He's not coming through. Can you hear me? Now I can. Okay.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

At this time the BOE needs to go into executive session. So the Board will resume immediately after so the public can stay on the call and the audio will return. We need a motion and a second to go into executive session at 6:34 p.m. to discuss the employment history of particular people; and matters leading to the appointments of particular people; and bargaining negotiations.

Gary, Zack. I heard Gary and Zack.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second, to adjourn from Executive Session and resume regular order of business at 8:15p.m. Steph. Denise. Stephanie and Denise.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Motion carried and so ordered.

Thank you for being patient everyone. The board of Education will resume our regular agenda at this time.

We need a motion and a second to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 12, 2020 and the Public Hearing Meeting of June 2, 2020. I heard Claire, do we have a second? I'll second. Denise. Was that Denise. Yes. Alright.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of May, 2020 as submitted.

Steph. Zack. I heard Steph and then Zack.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to approve the Student Reports for May, 2020 as submitted.

Denise. Claire. I heard Denise and then Claire.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to approve the School Lunch Report for May, 2020 as submitted. Steph. Zack. I heard Steph and then Zack.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to approve the Appropriation Status Report for the period ending May 31, 2020 and the Revenue Report for May, 2020 as submitted. Denise. Claire. Denise and Claire.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a Motion and a second to suspend the reading of each Warrant payment and to approve payments for the General Fund, School Lunch Fund, and Special Aid Fund as submitted. Gary. Denise. Steph. I heard Gary and then Denise.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

At this time, Mrs. Finn, Executive Director will address the Board with a School Accountability update.

Good evening everyone. Thank you for this opportunity to update the Board on our School Accountability Status. To begin I would like to give you a little background on accountability. Each year in order to gain access to federal funds, school districts need to comply with requirements under ESSA which is Every Student Succeeds Act. As part of this process school district's get a yearly report card that are connected with the seven indicators. These indicators are student academic achievement, also known as the composite performance. Student Growth, Academic Progress, Graduation Rate, English Language Proficiency, Chronic Absenteeism, and College, and Career and Civic Readiness. Each of these indicator is based on a scale of 1-4. 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. JFK Middle School has been designated a targeted support intervention school which is also known as a TSI school. When we became aware of the status, Mrs. Galenski and I worked collaboratively to develop an implementation plan that would engage teachers, support staff, parents and administrators. Mrs. Galenski has said to me that we needed to view this as an opportunity to reflect and make positive changes to benefit all learners. As a result, she decided to hire a consultant as an outsider looking in to help us navigate these important changes so we can address the areas of need to make help our schools stronger. We already consulted and her name is Dr. Dina Stevenson, and she is a former Buffalo Principal who is well known for her work in turning around schools. The first step in this process is to develop a District Comprehensive Improvement Plan which is also known as DCIP. This plan has to be into the State Education Department by July 30th. We scheduled 6 virtual meetings throughout June. Our last meeting is scheduled for June 22nd with our administrative team. Each of these meetings targeted different stake holders. We held meetings with the K-12 teachers across the district. The student support staff which includes the counselors and the social workers. Then we held a parent meeting. At each of these meetings, Dr. Stevenson shared 3 recommended areas based on our data and these areas are student attendance, social/emotional learning and the implementation of MTSS which is short for Mult Tier System of Support. MTSS is a framework targeted to support struggling Students. It addresses both behavioral and academic needs of students. The ultimate goal of MTSS is to intervene early so that students may catch up with their peers and close the student gap. Dr. Stevenson at these meetings and all stakeholders of these groups can weigh in on 3 areas of focus. She also brought up the conversation where anyone in the group could suggest different ideas or had additional feelings about things that may help our district as well. People openly shared their ideas and overall the teams were in agreement that focusing on these areas benefit our school and district greatly. At each of these meeting we had very productive conversations and meaningful engagements. I can't thank everyone enough. We really appreciate all of the feedback and the input we received. The meetings were just incredible on multiple levels. While reflecting on these meetings, Dr. Stevenson provided me with extremely positive feedback on our commitment, in fact, she was so impressed with our parent meeting. We had parent reps from each building attend each meeting. Dr. Stevenson thanked the parents and said that we had more parents than the other bigger district she worked with, where they usually have one or two. It was obvious to her that we care deeply about our kids.

Dr. Stevenson was extremely impressed with our restorative practice initiative. Hopefully you had an opportunity to hear Mrs. Galenski's budget presentation. As Mrs. Galenski provided a very nice overview of this initiative. For those who were unable to attend it was a brief overview of what restorative practice is. Restorative Practices has been working social services for restoring relationships. Basically there are 4 principals that are the foundation of restorative practice. These are inclusive decision making, accountability, repairing harm and rebuilding trust. Last February, Mrs. Galenski invited Dina Thompson, Executive Director of Erie Co. Restorative Practice Justice Coalition provided an overview of Restorative Practice for administrators and DASA committee which included support staff & social workers. Everyone was in agreement that Restorative practices is just what we needed, in this District. We all felt that in today's world where we are faced with so many challenges. Human connections and relationships are more important than ever. As a result, we formed a district wide committee of 35 people including teachers, administrators and student support staff. We have 13 teachers from each school building to pilot practices into their classroom. We even adjusted the master schedule for MS and HS to include an advisement period so everyone in the whole entire district can begin experimenting with some restorative practice circle which they received training for on opening day last school year. Throughout the 2019-20 school year, the committee met monthly to receive training and support. We have a summer meeting scheduled with this committee to determine the next phase of training and we will also create the district roll out plan where all employees will be trained in restorative practices. We are excited for this opportunity and really believe it will strengthen our relationship with our students and the community as well. This makes me very proud and happy to be a part of this district with all of the wonderful things that we have going on. I know I got a little off track from my initial purpose with my school accountability but restorative practice is an excellent example of collaborating in our District. Dr. Stevenson said to me when she heard of all the things that we are doing, she got excited and she could not wait until fall to be able to see the restorative practice in action. Speaking of fall, Dr. Stevenson will continue to her work related to our TSI status at the middle school. She will continue our work next school year beginning in the fall as well. In fall 2020, more stakeholders input will be needed for an improvement plan for the middle school. Dr. Stevenson will visit the MS for three days in the fall and she will be gathering input, also teaching students, administrators, and parents and looking at a variety of collaborative improvement plans for the middle school. This designation really does provide us an opportunity to reflect on our goals to create a benefit for all of our markers. It really is a collaborative effort to focus on what is best. That is my update for now. So I just want to thank you so much for the opportunity to provide an update on our school accountability status.

Thank you Janelle. Does anyone have any questions?

A yeah, this is Jeff. I have a question. Sorry if you mentioned this, it is hard to hear over the phone. You mentioned before that there were the seven parameters that they graded the buildings on. Which ones exactly was the middle school deficient on?

I don't have the report in front of me with the exact numbers of where it was, particularly we had a sub group of African American students was the group that we got identified for under performance. It had to do with I believe we received one in all seven of those areas for that particular group which is where the designation came from.

Ok and then the District is working closely with Dr. Dina Stevenson and you plan to implement these restorative practices. Do you see any increase in any of these numbers?

Absolutely, that is one of the factors on top of that will help us reach the social/emotional goals that we have related to our district. The MTSS initiative portion of that goal has to do with the academic performance. Many of these indicators are connected to the NYS 3-8 assessments in Math, ELA, and Science and the Regents exams at the HS. So by putting in the MTSS, you focus on instruction to make sure there is differentiation is occurring among all the different classrooms and provide support on how to do that. Then you move into Tier 2 and Tier 3 where you provide research based intervention for students to help fill their gap and hopefully increase their academic success which will not only help our social emotional with restorative practice, but our academic goals as well to improve some of the others related to that.

Last question, is, so with the scoring system, is this like a once a year kind of update thing? Are we doing it quarterly, like semester, or June?

Yes, the yearly school report card comes out typically around the end of February, So, that's when we received our notification this year was about mid-February. Then at the end of February I was invited to a conference in Albany to learn more about this designation and what we needed to do. So every year, it's a once a year thing that comes out. Typically, it is February or the end of February when it does come out. So what we have to do as part of our improvement plan is all of the stakeholders input, we will come up with a benchmark where we have to set smart goals and we have to be able to measure the progress we are having. So we have to do an initial data guide to kind of see where we are at the beginning of fall and then we have to set benchmarks to reflect on where we are in January and February and then if we don't see that we are on track for our targets and are not making the progress we want, we will need to make some adjustments in the plan for the second half of the year. The final assessment will come in June with all local data related to see how we assess our goals and see how we are making progress and unfortunately the measures that are used by NYS on the school report card, they are not exactly linked up to the local measures that we use. They use a variety of different formulas to come up with the overall accountability status that we have. We are hoping that all of these things that we do will impact our NYS results and our Regents results, and our overall academic progress which will in turn help with the NYS measurements.

Hi this is Claire. I just have one question for Janelle.

So if I could just clarify one thing. So it was just our Middle School who has this distinction put on them. None of our other buildings, correct?

That is correct. We are in good standing. We are in good standing which means we are at good standing at TR, WW and JFK HS. It was only at the MS where we received a designation of TSI. The TSI is the first level of designation that has to do with the variety of subgroups that has to deal with the seven different subgroups that we are evaluated on which are African American, Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, Asian, are just a few examples of the groups that we are individually evaluated on. TSI is a designation in regards to a particular subgroup. A second kind of designation is called a CSI school. A Comprehensive Support Intervention School. If a school or district is designated as a CSI school or district, that is where NYS Education Dept. comes in and implements an improvement plan. That has to do with an all students category. So on our NYS school report card, all students receive a one in all seven areas we would have been considered a CSI school but right now we have been identified for one subgroup on the report card.

Thank you Janelle.

You're welcome.

Hi Janelle, it's Denise. I just have a question also.

So, what we are going to be working on can be on an individual level with the students, or is it more of a specific grade, or is it the whole school in general that we'll be helping.

Well actually, we are going to take a local look, as far as the school level, but we are also taking this opportunity to impact the entire district. Many of these initiatives like the MTSS & Restorative Practices that will benefit the MS will also benefit the rest of the district as well. So it's a bit two-fold. We are going to be focusing on these initiatives on the entire population of the MS but we will also be trying to incorporate in our overall district goals, because we all of these schools feed into one another and these are areas we all need to help each other on. We are hoping to do, I have to say that Restorative Practices and the thing that Dr. Stevenson was so impressed with is we were able to take these initiatives and gear them consistently from PreK-12. In a lot of bigger districts that is very challenging but we have a very nice thing with our size that we are able to take these initiatives and really engage every stakeholder from PreK-12 and have consistency. So we are hoping that the work we do at the middle school and again at that parallel level at the district as well will improve the overall academic performance. Being that it was a particular subgroup as well, the improvement plan does need to target those particular group of students as well. There will be individual work for that category of students that needs to be done. In addition to everybody else at the school. Does that answer the question?

Yes, thank you very much.

You're welcome.

Thank you again, Janelle.

You're so welcome. Thank you for having me. I appreciate the time and the opportunity to talk about this. So, thank you again.

At this time the Board will resume our regular agenda.

We need a motion and a second, to accept the following resignations:

- A.C. LaFlore, Student Support Specialist for the Cheektowaga-Sloan UFSD, effective June 30, 2020.
- Sharon Backert, Library Aide at Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School effective June 12, 2020.

Denise. Claire. I heard Denise and Claire.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to accept the resignation due to retirement from Karen Gasiorek, Senior Clerk Typist at John F. Kennedy Middle School, effective December 26, 2020.

Retirement benefits as per the Clerical contract. Denise. Claire. I heard Denise and Claire again.

Onto question?

I would just like to say one thing. I would like to thank Karen for all of the years that she has been a secretary in our schools. She is a wonderful lady. Thank you.

All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to approve the recommendation from the Superintendent of Schools to appoint Robert Julian, Jr., certified as School Building Leader, as the Principal of John F. Kennedy Middle School effective July 1, 2020. This appointment is in addition to Mr. Julian's position as Principal of John F. Kennedy High School and does not change Mr. Julian's probationary period beginning July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2023. Compensation and benefits as per the Administrative Contract. Steph. Jeff. I heard Steph and Jeff.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Lindsay Ragusa, certified in English to Speakers of Other Languages, and Early Childhood Education Birth-2 & 1-6, be appointed to the Grade 3 Elementary Education Teaching position at Woodrow Wilson effective September 1, 2020. This position holds a probationary period beginning September 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024. Compensation and benefits as per the TAC contract. Claire. Zack. Claire and Zack.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to approve the Terms of Employment for Elaine Cole, Teacher Assistant at John F. Kennedy High School; Linda Hybicki, District Treasurer; Mary Brucz, Cafeteria Manager; Joseph Goodrow, Maintenance Mechanic Crew Chief; Jessica Emmerling, Director of Special Education & Student Services; and Janelle Finn, Executive Director of Curriculum, Accountability & Professional Development for the 2020-21 school year as submitted. Gary. Zack. I heard Gary and Zack.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second that Dawn Kross shall be granted a leave of absence from her Senior Clerk Typist title for the ensuing year ending June 30, 2021. This same leave of absence will be appointed yearly to coincide with the appointment of Secretary to the Superintendent of Schools. Gary. Claire. Gary and Claire.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following be appointed for the 2020-21, and 2021-22 school years:

Grade Level Leader, Grade 5 – Amy Wilcox
Math Department Chairperson – Kathleen Dougherty
Science Department Chairperson – Amy Kochan
Social Studies Department Chairperson – Colin Brinson
Student Support Services Chairperson – Jessica Stiglmeier
6th Grade Team Leader – Kristine Brown
8th Grade Team Leader – Sarah Bandemer
Special Teams Leader – Carleen Dixon
Jeff. Zack. Jeff and Zack

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to approve the 2nd reading of Policy # 5676 Privacy and Security for Student Data and Teacher and Principal Data and adopt the same. Denise. Steph. Was that Stephanie after Denise? Yes. Denise and Stephanie.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to accept the request from Cynthia Tymorek, Senior Clerk Typist at John F. Kennedy High School to change the date of her retirement from September 1, 2020 to August 29, 2020. Gary. Denise. Steph. I heard Gary and Denise.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

We need a motion and a second to schedule the July 2020 Reorganizational Meeting for July 7, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Gary. Denise. I heard Gary and Denise.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

Before we adjourn this meeting I just wanted to say the Board of Education would like to thank the teachers of Cheektowaga Sloan school building. On behalf of myself and the entire board of education to express our deepest gratitude to the individuals who worked so hard for our students to continue to receive the quality education and distance learning model These are challenging times and the administrators, students and staff have proven how special the Cheektowaga Sloan District is. Lastly, the Board of Education would like to thank the voters of the District for their involvement and support of the District and its' budget. At this time, if there are any other Board members who may have comments to add, please feel free.

This is Claire. I would like to give my sincere gratitude to Mrs. Galenski for her undying devotion to our children and our District. She is an amazing Superintendent and we are so grateful we have her. Thank you, Andrea.

This is Zack. I would like to say to me it is clear from the outstanding support of the voters of this District in approving the budget by such a large margin. To me, the satisfaction the parents and residents have in the positive leadership of the Superintendent, administration and the Board of Education.

I agree. (Claire)

This is Denise. I would like to thank everyone for their vote and for passing the budget. It is very important for us to have a healthy year next year. So I also want to say that Andrea and the staff of this District has done great job in getting us through this crazy period of time for a period of time that we were thrown into, not knowing what to do and not knowing guidance from our Governor. Thank you very much for getting us through this crazy time and I look forward to September.

Mr. Vohwinkel, may I share a statement with our community? (Mrs. Galenski)

Yes.

As a result of the most recent Executive Order from our Governor, which allows for in person graduations of 150 individuals beginning on June 26th, we have spent significant time listening to our Senior's voices, our parents and our class advisors. We are very excited to inform our community that we have taken all of that input and have revised our graduation plan. We have all wanted nothing more than to give our Seniors the most special and meaningful graduation possible. Since Mr. Julian has been instrumental in this entire process, we want him to share this exciting news with our Seniors first as they rightfully deserve to hear this news from him as their Principal, and our parents' tomorrow. We are all looking forward to this upcoming graduation for our Seniors. I leave by saying, stay tuned. Tomorrow, Mr. Julian will be sharing this very exciting news!"

Thank you, Andrea.

Thank you, Mrs. Galenski.

Lastly, I would just want to say congratulations to Board members elect. I hope that you have a worthwhile experience as a member of the Board. I am sure that you will do great things in moving this District forward and make it as best as it can be. Thank you again to the public for supporting the district and our budget which is crucial for us to provide such a quality education for our students.

At this time, we need a motion and a second to adjourn this meeting at 8:48 p.m. Denise. Steph. Was that Denise and then Stephanie. Yes. Alright.

Onto question? All in Favor? Aye. Opposed? Carried and so ordered.

Thank you for everyone that attended the meeting today.
