



Erie County Association of School Boards

355 Harlem Road, West Seneca, NY 14244
Phone: (716) 821-7297 | Fax: (716) 821-7296

SWEET HOME CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Attention: Marianne Jasen, President
91 Ava Lane
Williamsville, New York 14221

Dear Ms. Jasen,

When I was appointed as the Executive Director for ECASB, I had as one of my goals to reach out and visit each & every member district Board of Education meeting. I am now moving into my 4th year of visiting school boards during their meetings. It is one of the best parts of my job – traveling to districts and watching dedicated volunteers making a difference in their communities for children and families.

If I expect Board of Education members to attend events at ECASB, I should be invested enough to attend their meetings. Through the visitations, I have been able to observe best practices and observe unique ways in which the boards conduct their business and interact with the community.

By attending the member district meetings, I hope to be a resource to the Board of Education trustees within the ECASB membership. I hope to better understand how ECASB can serve our members and advocate for them on their behalf with our legislators both in Albany and Washington.

When I decided early in the day on March 21st that I would be attending the Sweet Home Central School District Board Meeting, I immediately went to the district website and found the information for the board meeting easily accessible, and was able to print the agenda.

I arrived early to Heritage Heights Elementary and was able reconnect with Principal Antonio Perry who I had the pleasure of working under at Lockport High School, and working with as a Board Member when he was in administration at Iroquois High School. I had the opportunity to speak with Board Member Scott Johnson who provided me with a great deal of information about Heritage Heights Elementary.

The room for the meeting is a unique space that is not often found in elementary buildings. I was greeted by two Pre-K students who shook my hand and welcomed me to school.

I was glad that I was able to attend this particular BOE meeting and be a part of the student demonstrations. I was amazed at how comfortable students were working on computers and i-pads. I was impressed with the school's and the districts initiatives with having STEM at this grade level. As I watched the students level of engagement and knowledge, it occurred to me that these students will be leaders of tomorrow in their respective fields. I was most impressed with the student who was trouble shooting his robot and making adjustments in the

shocks on the robotic device. In the library were future engineers, graphic artists, architects, designers, and manufacturers. Not only was I impressed with the students, but looking around the room, you could see the pride on the faces of the parents as their students demonstrated and explained to others the skills they have gained through the STEM initiative.

Upon return to the Board Room, I was in for an equally impressive presentation by the staff who provided the back story to the STEM initiative and keys to the success of the family culture that has been developed at Heritage Heights elementary. I believe that the community needs to see what is happening at Heritage Heights elementary and perhaps that could be shared through a form of social media.

The Superintendent report was concise and focused on the day to day business of the district keeping the Board members informed. The report on the DEI initiative provided necessary updates to the Board and the community on where the district is headed with DEI.

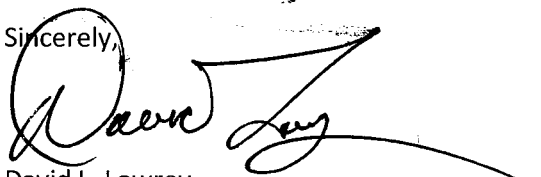
Within your agenda, I like the fact that you have a chart of upcoming events. As a Board Member, it is always nice to have all upcoming events all listed in one place. Kudos to your District Clerk for insuring the chart is up to date.

The information items in the middle of the agenda allows Board of Education members to share what activities they have attended. I was impressed that almost every Board Member attended the musical. By sharing the information about what activities the Board Members have attended, it lets the audience and the community know that serving on a School Board is more than just a monthly meeting. I enjoyed listening to all the different events that are held at various buildings.

As I reflected on the meeting, I realized there was a great deal of information and business that was conducted within a short period of time. I believe part of the reason is that the Board of Education stays focused on their role as a Board and allows the Superintendent to handle the day-to-day running of the district. This is not always the case when I attend School Board meetings throughout the area.

I thank you for acknowledging that I was in the audience and all the work that ECASB does to support School Boards throughout Erie County. If ECASB can provide any support to you in the future, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Again, your meeting was one of the most enjoyable meetings I have attended this year. I enjoyed having all the students present and listening to the videos of students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Lowrey", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David L. Lowrey
ECASB Executive Director