

**West Valley Central School Board of Education
Official Minutes**

Regular Meeting April 21, 2020 Zoom meeting due to COVID restrictions

Members Present: Niesyty, Ploetz, Kent, Cizdziel, Kowalski, Harmony
Members Absent: Samborski,
Others Present: Lawton, Amodeo, O'Brien, Boberg

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Timothy Ploetz, Board of Education President presiding.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE to the UNITED STATES FLAG

III. Moved by Kowalski, seconded by Niesyty to ADOPT the AGENDA as follows:

Additions: none

Deletions: none

Changes: none

6 ayes, 0 nays, motion accepted

IV. Correspondence/BOE information

none

V. BOARD COMMENTS

Within this section of the agenda, the Board of Education or Administration may take the opportunity to comment on matters of interest or concern.

Darla Kent states that she has been seeing hearts around the community that have put out by the teachers and staff members, and I think it is sweet. And I just wanted them to be recognized.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

none

VII. REPORTS

A. **Superintendent, Eric Lawton** reported that the governor, just put out that schools should continue to operate on the assumption right now that all classes are going to resume on May 18th. I do not know if that will change again but he has been making that decision two weeks out. During my ZOOM meeting with the superintendents there is a lot of belief that we will be done for this school year. However, there has been a big push back right now by the community saying they need to get things out of school. If we do end up being done for this school year,

I am not sure how businesses will open with schools being closed because we are kind of like childcare for working families. I really don't think we are going to open on the 18th, but that is how we are making our plans right now. With that in mind, we have also started to think about – graduation, prom, getting student belongings to their homes. I did talk to Rae Ann Lindberg today and she is willing to come in and bag individual gym lockers to be sent home by bus or it can be picked up with meals. This would be what we did for grades 7-12 lockers. Dan and I discussed that if the governor does have another extension before school opens, we will begin that process. Students are in need of some personal items that they have in their gym lockers or elementary classes. We did switch over to doing our breakfast/lunches on Mondays and Wednesdays. Monday's families receive food for Tuesday also and Wednesday families receive food for Thursday and Friday also. Everyone is getting the same number of meals for the week. What we were noticing is that fewer families were picking up on Fridays. We do not want anyone going without food. We have been working very closely with the food bank and donating food to them and tomorrow they are bringing food to us that may go bad – we can send that out. The fire company reached out and wanted to give us chocolate that they had left over from Easter. But we cannot send those out with school lunches because if the Health Department were to find out they would say that we can not do that. Other than that, really the only thing that we have right now to look at is what is on the agenda. I have talked to Tim about the budget and we will hold off on approving that at this meeting. Need to get a better picture for where we are in the future. The vote will probably not be until the middle or end of June - we have a little time.

B. Principal, Daniel Amodeo reported on grading. We had sent out letter to all of our families, two separate letters, one for students and families in K-4 and one letter for students and families in 5-12. We ended up settling on continuing with the way we gave grades from a zero to 100-point scale. With percentages for the third and moving forward for the fourth quarter what we looked at was trying to maintain consistency, clarity and looking at future needs of our students. Need to be able to distinguish themselves and know what they have done. Not only for college admissions but for potential employers. Potential competition against others for scholarships, grant money, etc. We continue with our traditional zero to 100 numerical grading system in grade 5 to 12. What we did with the third quarter though is we basically decided that any student that had any missing assignments or was in danger of failing the third quarter would be given an incomplete for that quarter and would be given two weeks to make up any of those missing assignments. Basically, from the time we left school which was May 13 until now. They have two weeks to make up any of those work assignments and get that into their teachers, and then we'll go back and adjust their third quarter grade on April 30. Will send out updated report cards home to those students in grades 5 – 12. With K – 4 their schedule and their learning are quite a bit different than grades 5 – 12, it is not really following a traditional schedule. Teachers are meeting with their students as a class in many cases, every day for 30 minutes or what worked for the children's family. We really looked at our schedule and what we wanted for them is to maintain their knowledge, grow their knowledge and learning through our XL platform and some

other things that we are using. We decided to assign all our elementary students a letter grade of an S for satisfactory completing their basic distance learning assignments and their distance learning time. We did not send out their report cards for third quarter because if we end up coming back, we can update those report cards and then they'll see them on their fourth quarter report cards, or we can mail them – all depending on what is going to happen. We still need to figure out how we're going to end up calculating final averages at the end of the school year. There are a lot of different schools of thought out there, some districts are weighting first and second quarter grades more than they are weighting third and fourth quarter grades, but we will talk about that as we get further down the road into May. I just wanted to address is the technology, again for the most part, our families and students have access in some way, shape, or form to the internet. Obviously in our community it can be spotty at times. It is not the best depending on where you are located or what type of service you have, but the students and their families are doing a great job of troubleshooting and problem solving, to be able to utilize that technology and game learning opportunities. So, we did just put out some information for families on how to have best practices for managing some technology at home. First thing we wanted to emphasize was that the student devices that are coming from the school are only for instructional purposes. This would be the same if we were at school. Our suggestion is when they need it for class or for an assignment have them use the device, when they don't need it have the device shut off, use the device in a common area not in an isolated area. We informed parents to be able to see what their students are communicating and with whom. The school district can look at that and then address those issues – the filter is very sensitive. This helps us be in a good spot with technology and we would not be where we are without Bryan Hansen. I know he is very humble and will kind of deflect the accolades and the recognition, but there is no way we can be doing what we're doing without him and his knowledge his expertise. And there are many, many school districts throughout the region and throughout the state that are nowhere near where we are with being able to provide some instruction and learning opportunities for kids. Granted it is not the best or ideal. We want to be in the classroom, school building but you know we are in a better spot than we would be with him. He is also troubleshooting tech issues remotely in school and if he needs to fix devices, he can do that with students and get some different technology out to students if they need that as well. A lot of this success is really his doing so I cannot thank him enough and on that note to the teachers. With not just focusing on instruction or teaching or contacting and talking with families on a regular basis to see what their needs are just to do some of quote unquote well checks. I couldn't imagine a school of 500, 600 or even 1200 kids and trying to manage this. It says a lot for our school, community, staff and their ability to be able to do what we are doing. This community and our school rally around the students and provide the best opportunities possible and I just don't see how that could happen in a larger district as efficiently. Thank you to all staff and teachers. That is all I have this evening and I would be glad to answer any questions. Darla Kent asked if we have good participation; are most of the kids logging in and when the teacher is meeting with them are they participating? Dan Amodeo states that we have good participation. He met with faculty

today in K through 4th grade and there has been a dip in participation over the last week. I am sure it is becoming taxing on some of our students and families especially at the younger ages. We are going to continue to reach out to our families and students. We will be creating a list by the Friday and do a parent conference with any students that we are concerned about that have not been accessing as much as they should be. I also understand that there are a few students that do have some legitimate access to the internet issues, the timing of the day when there is someone home. The other thing that Bryan Hansen did is set up a WI Fi area outside of the school and we posted that on our Facebook page. I do not expect students to come in and sit in the parking lot to be with their classes, but they would be at least able to come to the area to access the internet to get their assignments, access learning and to start asking teachers questions and get some feedback and the help they need. Any questions for Dan?

C. **Business Official, Ann O'Brien** reported that going back to what Eric state earlier that we would put off adopting the budget until the state budget passes. There was a provision in the state budget to potentially make state aid cuts every quarter depending on revenue projections. Well the first quarter will be ending, and they are going to be looking at it at the end of this month. I think we just kind of want to wait and see what is exactly going to happen. The other piece of this is that they can only cut so much because the feds gave us some money. If they cut too much, they could lose the money from the feds. I have been talking to different business officials and one of the ideas is kind of what I would suggest. They cut are aid by \$91,792 and then they put in federal cares restoration to put that aid back in. So if push comes to shove it might be the conservative way to handle this because we just don't know what is going to happen. That is the problem. We could basically take the amount of money that they did cut from us and appropriate that much fund balance to cover anything that might come up and it will just take care of us. We may need it or we may not. At least if they do cut state aid we are in good shape for his school year coming up. Now going into the next year this would get us through this year and enable us to plan for the future. Darla Kent states that it makes sense with a plan. Ann O'Brien says they could come out, let's say, on May 4th they're going to come out with a number, but we do not know, that is what is so difficult. We don't even know if they are going to have a budget vote for crying out loud. That would be what I would purpose on May 11, plan as we learn more information. Darla Kent asks if there will be any retirement incentives offered or anything from the state level. Ann O'Brien states that she hasn't heard anything. Eric Lawton states that he heard of a potential 55 25 the state might offer where you could retire without the penalty of not having the 30 years in, they haven't voted on it yet.

VIII. **CONSENT AGENDA**

none

IX. **PERSONNEL**

none

X. **OLD BUSINESS:**

none

XI: **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Moved by Niesyty, seconded by Harmony to adopt the 2020-2021 Cattaraugus-Allegany-Erie-Wyoming BOCES Administrative Budget. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion accepted

B. Cast **one** vote for a BOCES Board candidate in the following designated areas: **Area 1, Area 4 and Area 9**

1. Moved by Kent, seconded by Harmony to vote for ***Jeri Reichman P.O. Box 246 Whitesville, NY 14897 Area 1*** (Andover, Wellsville & Whitesville) 3-year term. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion accepted

Candidate running unopposed

2. Moved by Cizdziel, seconded by Niesyty to vote for ***Candace Clemens 3423 Fortune Drive Allegany, NY 14706 Area 4*** (Allegany-Limestone, & Portville) 3-year term. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion accepted

Candidate running unopposed

3. Moved by Kowalski, seconded by Kent to vote for ***Mr. Brad Sande 115 Fairmont Avenue Salamanca, NY 14779 Area 9*** (Randolph, Randolph Academy & Cattaraugus-Little Valley) 3-year term. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion accepted.

Candidate running unopposed

XII: Moved by Kowalski, seconded by Harmony to **ADJOURN** at 7:30 pm. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion accepted

District Clerk

Meeting minutes from transcribed dictation and audio