

In Board Briefs, we summarize key agenda items and discussion topics from previous Board of Education meetings. Full meeting minutes are usually not available until approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting. The community is encouraged to attend each meeting, and the Board welcomes questions and comments. Previous Board Briefs can be found on the District website [here](#).

July 10, 2018 Board of Education Reorganization and Regular Meeting

After an executive session, the annual reorganization meeting was called to order. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tom Rogers and Board trustees Mr. Chris DiFilippo, Mr. Andrew Feldman and Mr. Chris Ulrich were sworn in. Board members Dr. Cohen and Ms. Tracy Frankel were elected to serve as president and vice president, respectively. The Board also re-appointed Francine Benjamin as District Clerk, Brian Cleary as District Treasurer, and made several other annual appointments of staff and designations for services. In addition, the dates for the monthly Board meetings and budget information meetings for 2018-19 were approved, and the Board approved the minutes from the June 11 and June 25 meetings. The Treasurer's Report was also delivered and approved.

Following the reorganization meeting, the regular monthly public meeting was called to order.

Public Hearing – District-Wide School Safety Plan

- Executive Director of Operations, Mr. Greg Hamilton, presented the Draft District-Wide School Safety Plan to the Board. The purpose of the Plan is to prevent or minimize the effects of violent incidents and other emergencies, and to facilitate the coordination of schools with local & county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The Plan will be posted on the District website for 30 days during which the public can provide feedback. Following the public comment period, the Plan will be adopted at the August 13, 2018 Board of Education meeting.
 - A resident asked if the Plan is complete and asked if the public could comment during the meeting. Dr. Rogers explained that the Plan will be posted online for 30 days during which the District will take written feedback from the public, and all the feedback will be presented to the Board at the August meeting. If amendments are needed to the Plan, there may be another meeting with the District-Wide School Safety Team. The resident asked if there were minutes from the meetings of the District-Wide School Safety Team. Dr. Rogers explained that the Plan is the product of the meetings and therefore represents what was discussed. The Plan will be posted prominently on the website, with a link on the homepage, in a PDF format.

The Superintendent's Report and Other Monthly Items

- Dr. Rogers provided a report on the Organizational Meeting of the Security Advisory Committee, established last month by the Board. The first meeting was held July 2 during which the charge of the Committee was reviewed, and members provided feedback on District security initiatives already implemented as well as those they would like to see considered. Dr. Rogers provided a summary of the discussion for the

Board, and commented that the meeting was animated, but respectful where everyone was able to voice their ideas. The notes from the meeting are posted on the District website.

- Dr. Rogers announced that the transportation contract was awarded after the bid process this spring, during which only one bid was received. The District's goal was to add GPS technology and surveillance cameras to the buses. The District and bus company hope to have all technical challenges resolved and both initiatives implemented during the school year.
- A food service bid was also awarded. The vendor is expected to provide higher-quality food and has a more extensive online system listing ingredients of school lunches to better inform parents of any potential food allergens.
- After a discussion last month on the absentee ballot process and the date the absentee ballots were mailed out, the production and distribution of absentee ballots will take place at an earlier date going forward to allow ample time for residents to return the ballots.
- Dr. Rogers updated the Board on the District's request for the Town of Oyster Bay to grant an extension to the comment period for the DEIS for the Syosset Park Development. Although the District received an acknowledgement of this request and an assurance the Town is seriously considering it, no change in the date has been announced.
 - Dr. Rogers provided a recommendation to the Board for a consultant to assist the District in evaluating the environmental portion of the DEIS as a result of a second RFP process conducted by the District.
- Vapor and soil testing has begun at South Grove Elementary School. Once the results are available they will be shared with the Board and public.
- An RFP has been issued to improve the District website in both aesthetics and functionality.

Ms. Frankel asked if we can notify parents of the ability to view food ingredients of school lunch items online. Dr. Rogers replied that the District will be adding a back to school newsletter which will cover the food service vendor change, as well as some other security, procedural and operational changes that will be in effect in the fall.

Mr. DiFilippo asked if there is a timeframe for the next meeting of the Security Advisory Committee. Dr. Rogers replied that the date is not yet set will be provided shortly, based on the availability of the most number of Board members.

Ms. Parker inquired if we have any indication from the Town of Oyster Bay on the timeframe for responding to the District's request for an extension to the comment period for the Syosset Park DEIS and how they determine their response. Dr. Rogers replied that he would consult with the District's lawyer on the process and report back.

Audience to the Public

A resident asked if there is ample time for the environmental consultant to review the Syosset Park DEIS and provide guidance to the District prior to the July 31st comment period deadline. Dr. Rogers explained that meeting the deadline of July 31st was included in the RFP and was used as a criterion in scoring the proposals. The District has already reported to the Board on the areas of the DEIS which are within its scope of expertise. The consultant will be focusing on the construction and environmental impacts of the project, not the DEIS in its entirety. The resident asked if the District should wait for the independent environmental test results being conducted at the site before providing comments on the DEIS. Dr. Rogers replied that there are two processes taking place that are on parallel tracks. One is the SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review) process that requires several steps including the DEIS stage, in which the District is currently involved. At this point in the SEQR process, the District is being asked to react to the DEIS statement prepared in March and the District has an obligation to make the current deadline of July 31st. The independent testing is not a requirement of the DEIS process, but is being undertaken by the Town on its own initiative.

A resident inquired about the possibility of utilizing aides on buses. Dr. Rogers explained that the District is planning to replicate a system currently being implemented in the Half Hollow Hills District with success where a group of aides are provided with additional training. These aides will be deployed if any bus experiences an issue until the issue is resolved. The district is currently working on a training protocol and the goal is to implement this new process during the school year. The surveillance cameras will provide another measure of control.

A student entering the high school in the fall asked what diversity initiatives the District has in place. Dr. Rogers explained that two years ago, the Board made the decision to observe holidays from other faith traditions, including Diwali, Eid al-Adha, Eid al-Fitr and Lunar New Year, making Syosset the first District on Long Island to accommodate all of these holidays in the school calendar. Every building has a form of an international celebration where students experience cultural arts, dress in traditional clothing and partake in cultural food celebrations, among other activities. At the High School there are over 60 clubs, many focused on populations of students who identify with a certain culture. The high school is working on creating an umbrella group of the affinity clubs to be sure they are working together as opposed to operating in silos. In addition, the high school works hard at building a school culture where freshmen are welcomed into the building and feel comfortable. Dr. Rogers encouraged her to speak to the building principal, Dr. Durante, who could welcome her to the High School and answer her questions more fully.

A resident asked about the structure of the Board of Education meetings and advocated for a structure to allow for back and forth discussion of agenda items between the Board and audience; for example, by entertaining public comment after each agenda item, or deferring votes on controversial agenda items.

Discussion Items

- The Board discussed cyber security and the measures the District is taking to ensure its data and communications are secure. Ms. Parker asked how data and communications are being protected, what encryption is being used, how often software is updated and firewall logs are monitored. Ms. Frankel brought up the issue of lost cell phones and how to safeguard access to any information that can be accessed via cell phones. Mr. DiFilippo asked about the frequency of backing up the District's servers. Dr. Rogers gave an overview of the District's security safeguards, network segregation structures, network security, data backup protocols, Board communications and procedures and said that he would also have the BOCES IT staff to present a detailed review of the District's cyber security plan at a future Board meeting.
- The Board discussed the structure of Board of Education Meetings and how to best allow for public comment while ensuring the essential business of the District is addressed and a formal, organized process is maintained for the meetings. The length of the meetings and frequency was also discussed. Dr. Cohen asked Dr. Rogers to provide recommendations to the Board for alternatives to consider.
- The Board discussed the practical implications of utilizing metal detectors at school buildings. Mr. Ulrich reported on a study published on the Department of Justice website reviewing the implementation of metal detectors at a school with approximately 2,000 students. The study concluded that it could be a 90-minute process for all students to enter the building and pass through the metal detectors, even with a staggered arrival time. A staggered arrival time might in turn require adding 2 periods to the start of the school day and/or additional bus routes. The metal detectors could also result in lines outside the building, exposing students to risk and weather. Dr. Cohen said this information would be shared with the Security Advisory Committee to be taken into consideration, and Dr. Rogers said he would contact superintendents of Districts that are currently using metal detectors for their feedback.
- Mr. DiFilippo proposed researching the feasibility and cost of installing an electronic sign in front of Syosset High School to display important announcements and events.

New Business

- Various resolutions were approved relating to: appointments and abolition of positions; revisions to agreements pertaining to the certain administrative positions; fall coaching appointments and pay; committee and sub-committee members, committee minutes and recommendations; draft policies; acceptance of service contracts; eliminating the requirement for apprenticeship agreements for capital projects, participation in a school facilities purchasing consortium and awarding of bids under the consortium; attendance at conferences; award of a bus transportation bid; acceptance of a donation; authorization of a partial settlement of a claim; and award of an environmental services bid to review parts of the Syosset Park DEIS.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Monday, August 13, 2018 at South Woods Middle School, beginning at 8 p.m.