

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 they are approved by the board members 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](#).

November 16, 2015 Board of Education Meeting

After an executive session, the meeting was called to order and the minutes from the Oct. 26 Board Meeting were approved. The Treasurer's Report was delivered and also approved.

The Superintendent's Report and Other Monthly Items

- Superintendent of Schools Dr. Thomas Rogers acknowledged Dolly Kranz, coordinator of testing, planning and administration, for her hard work in coordinating Superintendent's Conference Day held in early November. Dr. Rogers also thanked those staff members who conducted workshops throughout the day.
- Student Council representatives from H.B. Thompson Middle School provided an overview of activities happening within the building, including the sixth-grade social, Red Ribbon Week, Drama Club productions and the class trip to Washington, D.C. The representatives also highlighted the school's participation in several charitable initiatives, including an upcoming "Souper Bowl."
- Dr. Rogers introduced Michael Salzman, coordinator of fine and performing arts, and noted that Mr. Salzman was selected by New York State to serve on a blue-ribbon task force on a new arts pathway for earning a high school diploma. Mr. Salzman then presented certificates to district musicians who were chosen to participate in All-National and All-State ensembles. Mr. Salzman proudly announced that once again, Syosset has more All-State musicians than any other school in New York State.
- Research Facilitator Veronica Ade recognized the high school students who were named semifinalists and regional finalists in the Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology. She noted that out of 1,800 projects, 466 students were recognized as semifinalists and only 60 were named regional finalists. Regional finalists Sarah Lee and Kunal Shah provided a brief summary of their research projects to the Board.

Audience to the Public

- A parent spoke about the district's Visitation Day and noted she wants to see this day eliminated due to safety concerns on a number of levels. Dr. Rogers responded that he would be rotating between three buildings on Visitation

- Day this year to observe how the day is conducted firsthand. Dr. Rogers noted that the security guard presence will be doubled for Visitation Day this year and that parents are required to obtain tickets for the event from the school in order to attend. Following his observation of Visitation Day, Dr. Rogers will report to the Board and make any necessary recommendations.
- A community resident asked about the district's procedures to verify student residency in the district. Dr. Rogers reported that a student's residency is verified when he/she is registered with the district. If there is a reason to believe a student is no longer a resident, the district conducts an investigation. Should the investigation show that a student does not reside in the district, the district is required to conduct a Residency Hearing.

New Business

- Various resolutions were approved relating to appointments, transfers, reassignments, resignations and retirements.
- A number of district policies were approved for a first reading (the second reading of the policies will be conducted at the Dec. 14 meeting). Dr. Rogers highlighted a change to the Student Health Services policy (specifically relating to the food allergy portion of this policy) that was suggested by the Food Allergy Committee. The change in language affords parents who have children with life threatening food allergies with more flexibility in knowing what foods will be available in class during celebrations and more notice to bring in appropriate snacks for their own children.
- A Board member questioned where policies can be found on the district's website. Peggy Grosso, coordinator of educational services, noted that district policies and new policies that are under Board review can be found on the Board of Education page of the district's website (click on the "Policies" tab on the left-hand menu of that page).

Discussion Items

- A Board member recommended that assigned voting sites for the annual school budget and trustee election should be made clearer on the district's website so that community members can better understand where they are supposed to vote. The Board member also suggested that the district better communicate with residents that they do not need to register with the school district to vote if they are already registered with the County or through the DMV.
- Dr. Rogers noted that the district would explore making the voter registration web page easier to understand. Dr. Rogers also noted that those residents who register to vote through the school district are registered for only the school budget vote and trustee election; the voting lists are not furnished to the county for jury duty purposes or for voting in general elections.
- A Board member asked about the new scanner voting machines versus the lever-style machines that have been used in the past. Dr. Rogers noted that

for the past several years, the state has passed one-year exemptions so that districts could continue to use the lever-style machines (as the scanners are more expensive to rent). Dr. Rogers said that he does not foresee this exemption again for the coming year, however, the district is making plans to conduct a more expensive election for 2016 using the new scanners.

- A Board member questioned the gap between the regular grade 11 English course and the AP English course and wondered if there were any students getting “lost” in the gap between the two. She questioned the need for a grade 11 English Honors course. High School Principal Dr. Giovanni Durante outlined the honors path and noted that he does not believe an honors course for grade 11 is needed. Dr. Catherine Longmore, English coordinator, reported that with the adoption of the Common Core Learning Standards, the regular grade 11 English course is quite similar to the AP English course offered at that level.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting of the Board of Education is Monday, Dec. 14, 2015 at 8 p.m. at South Woods Middle School.