

On April 4, 2023, the Communications Conference Committee met in the District's board room to discuss various topics with district administrators.

Below is a summary of the question and answer session in the following order:

1. Special education communications
 2. Population growth and space concerns
 3. Elementary school report cards
 4. Cafeteria menu suggestions
 5. Selection of Syosset High School Valedictorian and Salutatorian
 6. Crossing guard at South Woods Road and Pell Lane intersection
-

1. Special Education Communications

Syosset Central School District loves to celebrate the successes of our students. We cannot, however, disclose the status of our students. We strive to shine a light on our special education programs without breaking privacy laws. We continue to seek out creative opportunities to highlight special education offerings like the PAES lab, ICT classrooms, and Unified sports, without disclosing student identity.

2. Population growth and space concerns

As a District, we are always trying to predict future enrollment. In the Summer of 2021, 300 kids joined the District in the aftermath of COVID. Typically, we have approximately 100 kids who move away, who are replaced by the 100 new students who move in. The influx of 300 students was a break from the trend. We are now watching that increase like a lump in a snake. We are about six years away from there being overpopulated at the High School. We have time to propose changes that will allow us to be able to handle the large influx of students. We are monitoring what happens in the summer of 2023. If it is a more "normal" year, we will know we are past the pandemic wave.

Separate from population growth, we have other challenges related to space. Intramurals aren't possible without gym space, and the High School has over 2,000 students and only two gyms. This handicaps us as we look to add more clubs or more electives. The Middle School has a similar problem.

We are beginning discussions with the Board about enrollment growth and how to ensure our facilities are adjusted to ensure we are prepared.

3. Elementary Report Cards

Report cards are designed to show what standards are relative to grade levels. We have guidance documents for parents to review that will explain what grades

mean relative to the subject area. We are working to revamp them and distribute these documents in advance of report cards so that it is more clear how parents should view these grades.

4. Cafeteria menu suggestions

If parents and guardians have suggestions about the school menus, they are encouraged to send them to food service director Brian Tierney (foodservices@syossetschools.org). The administration meets with Brian monthly to review food trends in our District and at others. He also reviews with us suggestions made for the menu.

Our Elementary school breakfast and lunch is a satellite lunch menus. This means that the meals are prepared at the High School and Middle School and then safely transported to the Elementary schools. This production method limits some of the menu item choices. We are currently piloting a table-top pizza oven at some elementary schools to see if there are ways to “cook” more items, which would allow us to further expand menu options.

5. Selection of Syosset High School Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The process of choosing the Syosset High School Valedictorian and Salutatorian is based on a series of criteria. A committee is appointed and overseen by the High School principal to review the top 20 students based on their GPA and narrow that number down to five. The committee then reviews the courses taken, the rigor of the transcript, and the grades. An example of a typical candidate is a student who has taken 13 AP courses and received nothing less than an A+.

6. Crossing guard at South Woods Road and Pell Lane intersection

The District works with Nassau County to ensure there are crossing guards at intersections near our schools. However, Nassau is struggling to secure crossing guards. We have requested a guard at the High School intersection but they station guards at their discretion. The county also does not believe that the intersection warrants a traffic control device at that intersection. The county legislature, town council, and police department have observed traffic at the intersection. The town highway department now needs to make the decision on how to move forward.