CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOICEVILLE, NEW YORK 12412

MINUTES

WORKSHOP MEETING
6:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025
BENNETT SCHOOL

1. Opening Items

1.01 Call to Order 6:00

1.02 Tobacco Policy Statement

1.03 Pledge of Allegiance

1.04 Roll Call: Present: Trustee Knutsen, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Reimondo, Trustee Bishop

Not Present: Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell

Now Present:

Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell arrived at 6:01 pm

2. Welcome

2.01 Bennett School Principal, Gabriel Buono will welcome the Board (duration 10 min)

- Mr. Buono started his welcome by acknowledgement the PTA by mentioning that they provided refreshments and snacks for the board trustees during their executive session this evening
- The PTA has had the following successful events since the last Board meeting at Bennett
    - Fall Festival
    - Holiday Boutique
    - Holiday Craft Fair
    - Collected household items, canned goods and sent them to the people impacted by Hurricane Helene in South Carolina
- Ruth Merenda, Director of Community Events for Ashokan Center donated a performer for the Bennett Fall Concert and will be donating another performer for the Winter Show
- Mr. Buono discussed how the Bennett School is supporting the Culture and Climate Board Goal by creating the Sunshine Committee
    - Fun Fridays
    - Monthly breakfast for staff

- Holiday gatherings
- Birthday celebrations
- Along with many other activities

- Ms. Corsitto, Math Liaison updated the board on the math curriculum and how the 5 practices are being implemented throughout the grade levels
    - Anticipation
    - Monitor
    - Select Task
    - Sequence
    - Connect
- Ms. Kovac, Literacy Liaison asked the question, how do we help student achievement in Literacy?
    - By using data from previous quarters to reflect teaching strategies in the upcoming quarter
    - Using best practice and latest research
    - Continuing education for teachers to apply and use to teach students
- Ms. Kovac ended her update by telling a story on how a third-grade student learned a new skill and taught it to her class and the teacher
- Mr. Buono concluded the welcome by updating the Board on how the Bennett School is addressing the Chronic Absenteeism Board Goal
    - Currently 18% of students in Bennett are chronically absence
        - Mr. Buono has been meeting with Mrs. Mernin, School Social Worker/Community Laison to help decrease the percentage of absent students.
        - Mr. Buono mentioned that the parents seem to be more receptive to Mrs. Mernin and the percentage of absence students has decreased since the beginning of the year

3. Proposed Executive Session

3.01 Enter Executive Session (duration 45 min)

Recommended Action: Motion to enter into executive session to discuss ONTEA negotiations and to meet with their attorney

Motioned: Trustee Reimondo
Seconded: Trustee Hemingway Lynch
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Knutsen, Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Reimondo, Trustee Bishop

3.02 Exit Executive Session

Recommended Action: Motion to exit executive session and return to public session

Motioned: Trustee Knutsen
Seconded: Trustee Goodrich
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Knutsen, Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Reimondo, Trustee Bishop

4. Presentations

4.01 Assistant Superintendent for Business, Monica LaClair will present the Budget Development and Enrollment Projections (duration 20 min)

4.02 MTSS Coordinator, Elizabeth Fallo will present on Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Branching Minds (duration 20 min)

5. Acceptance of Minutes

5.01 Acceptance of Minutes

Recommended Action: The Board of Education hereby accepts the minutes of the December 17, 2024 meeting

Motioned: Trustee Knutsen
Seconded: Trustee Jerome
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Knutsen, Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Reimondo, Trustee Bishop

6. Superintendent District News

6.01 The Superintendent will report District News

- Amendment to School Temperature Bill Introduced
    - As discussed in a previous meeting, Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation that dictated actions schools must take when temperatures reach certain thresholds in educational and support services spaces. But, as a condition of signing the bill into law, the Governor indicated it must be amended and legislation to do so has already been introduced.

      Instead of prohibiting the occupation of educational and support services spaces if the temperature reaches 88 degrees as the bill mandated, districts will be required to develop a policy that includes a plan to remove students and staff from these spaces “where practicable.”

What the phrase “where practicable” means is subject to debate but clearly provides districts with additional flexibility when implementing this law commencing September 1, 2025.

This bill will be passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor in the near term.

- Federal Aid
  - There was a question in the December Board meeting regarding the potential negative impact on our building aid if we lost federal aid. I wanted to revisit this question to ensure that everyone understands that our building aid is not received from the federal government. Building aid is a state aid. Also, for information purposes, we receive $1.1M in federal funding.

    This funding is for special education grants. The majority of our federal funding comes in two grants: Title I and Section 611.

    Title I funds can be used to improve instructional materials, attendance, school climate, provide counseling, mentoring, and school-based mental health programs, to list some of the allowable uses. As a note, Title I funds cannot be used to support preschool-aged children.

    Section 611 Funds can be used to pay for special education teachers, administrators, related services providers, materials, professional development, and specialized equipment.

- School Calendar for 2025-2026
  - We have begun to look at the school calendar for next year preliminarily. BOCES has not yet provided their draft calendar. Generally speaking, we try to be in sync with the BOCES calendar when possible so that our students who attend BOCES programs have as much opportunity to receive instruction as possible. In our initial review, we note that Labor Day falls on September 1st and the June Regents exams end on June 26th. It appears to be a long school year, but if we follow our traditional pattern, we would recognize both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and the Lunar New Year and Juneteenth are now required to be non-school days. The winter break begins with Christmas Eve on a Wednesday, and ends with New Year’s Day a Thursday. This creates the question of whether to assume that Friday, January 2nd would be included in the winter break because attendance is likely to be very minimal if we designate it as a day in session. With the calendar as it looks today, it appears that we might need to reduce our snow day allocation to six, but that is a very preliminary view that has not been reviewed by the instructional cabinet yet, but is on the agenda for next week.

- Sign at the Middle High School
    - Due to the power surges last week the internal controller on the sign out front has gone bad. Our Technology Director, Mr. Reimer, is working with Stewart signs on a replacement, which is out of warranty. Until the replacement is received and installed, we need to make sure nothing else goes bad so for now the sign will be turned off.

- RFI

    - There was an inquiry as to whether the full district-wide fourth and fifth grade would fit in Bennett along with the existing K-3 structure. Our team did some analysis and believes that this is not a viable option. This model would require approximately 27 classrooms and additional office space for additional mental health and related service providers who would need to move in order to support the additional student population in Bennett. The building currently has 24 classrooms. Creating this model would impact the assignment of mental health and related service providers in a way that would split many individuals between the buildings with a smaller caseload in Woodstock and a larger caseload in Bennett. These individuals would not have sufficient space for serving students in Bennett.

      This structure would also create a higher transportation cost as it will recreate a redundant bus run structure in which we would have vehicles in the Woodstock area picking up students for Woodstock and additional vehicles on the same routes and roads picking up students for Bennett. This would also create a situation in which the Woodstock students would be expected to integrate into a building with an existing culture for just two years. This differs from the previous structure in which students from both primary buildings came together at the same time to create new relationships and to join a new building.

- Summer Skills Academy
    - We are planning to hold our Summer Skills Academy at Bennett this summer. We suspended it last year for multiple reasons, but the planning has begun for the summer 2025 session. This will be a K-5 program held from July 7th through August 1st, 8:30 - 11:30 am. We will share more information as we progress through the planning process.

7. Board District News

7.01 The Board will report District News

- Nothing to report

8. Student Representative Report

8.01 The Student Representative on the Board, Olivia McHugh, will give a report

- This week midterm exams will begin to be distributed to the students for testing, and regents' exams the following week.
- Accomplishments from the students include the completion of the mural, "Welcome to The Nest", which can be found painted above the entrance to the high school gym. Additionally, the Science Olympiad team traveled to Mount Academy for their first competition of the year.
- Upcoming events include Coaches Appreciation Days, which is Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of this week, as well as Onteora's Community Night, which is Friday the 17th.
- As the first half of the school year comes to an end the student governments wanted to inform the board of their completed initiatives so far.
    - The High School has not only completed the mural initiative, but also added clocks to the hallways and outside lunch areas.
    - The Middle School student government completed initiatives including the Halloween Dance with costume parties, as well as, organizing spirit week.

9. Acknowledge Public Be Heard Comments

9.01 The Board will acknowledge the public be heard comments from the last meeting

Megan Brenner

10. Public and Student Comment

10.01 Public and Students may comment on any agenda or non-agenda item

- Mark Wilens

11. Discussion and Possible Action

11.01 Discuss the Creation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy (10 min)

- The policy committee recently reviewed the DEI policy in their committee meeting and wanted to open it up for discussion at the board table
- Trustee Reimondo mentioned that she likes the bullet points and definitions of Highland CSD's policy and would like to blend their policy along with the NYSSBA sample policy to create the DEI policy for Onteora
- Trustee Bishop likes how both Highland CSD and NYSSBA sample policies do not leave any question marks around implementation of this policy
- In conclusion, the policy committee will start working on a draft policy and bring it to the board table as a First Reading

11.02 Senior Exemption Update

- Resolution to be voted on for approval at the February 4, 2025 BOE meeting

12. **Break**

12.01 The Board will take a 5-minute break if needed

13. Consent Agenda

13.01 Approve Consent Agenda

Recommended Action: The Board hereby approves item numbers 13:02 -13.07

Motioned: Trustee Goodrich
Seconded: Trustee Jerome
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Knutsen, Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Reimondo, Trustee Bishop

13.02 Personnel Agenda

EXTRA DUTY STIPENDS

NAME	POSITION	AMOUNT
Duffy, John	Track-Spring-Assistant Coach	$4,000.00
Wall, William	Track-Spring-Assistant Coach	$4,000.00
Matteson, Eric	Volunteer-Wrestling- Assistant Coach	-$0-

RESIGNATIONS: INSTRUCTIONAL

NAME	POSITION/SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE	REMARKS
DeRuvo, Richard	Teacher-Science/High School	06/30/25	Retirement
Kuhne, LeeAnn	Teacher- Special Education/Middle School	06/30/25	Retirement
Shultis, Sandra	Teaching Assistant/High School	06/30/25	Retirement
Funk, Brianna	Track-Spring- Assistant Coach	12/18/24	Personal

RESIGNATIONS: NON - INSTRUCTIONAL

NAME	POSITION/SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE	REMARKS
Cservak, Joel	Building Maintenance Mechanic	01/14/25	To accept Bldg. Maint. Leader position
VanLeuvan, Dillon	Custodian	01/14/25	To accept Head Custodian position

APPOINTMENT: NON-INSTRUCTIONAL
PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENT

NAME	POSTION/SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE FROM -TO	REMARKS

Cservak, Joel	Building Maintenance Leader	01/15/25 – 07/14/25	Salary $62,500, new position
Tieri, Janice*	School Nurse/Bennett	03/03/25- 11/02/25	Step 2, replace resignation
VanLeuvan, Dillon	Head Custodian	01/15/25 – 07/14/25	Step 16, replace resignation

pending pre- employment paperwork

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: ADMINISTRATIVE

EMPLOYEE NUMBER	EFFECTIVE DATE FROM -TO	REASON
092324	01/15/25 – 02/04/25	Paid Administrative Leave

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: NON-INSTRUCTIONAL

EMPLOYEE NUMBER	EFFECTIVE DATE FROM -TO	REASON
4203	02/10/25 – 04/07/25*	Paid FMLA
4261	01/16/25 – 02/05/25*	Paid FMLA
4261	02/06/25 – 03/06/25*	Unpaid FMLA
4322	04/18/25 – 04/25/25*	Paid FMLA

pending dates, pending medical documentation

13.03 Budget Transfer

Recommended Action: The Superintendent recommends the transfer of $611,541.00 for the BOCES Capital Project Payment. Amount $ 611,541.00 from Budget Code A9060.800-10 to Budget Code A1983.490-10

13.04 Financial Report

Recommended Action: The Board has reviewed and hereby accepts the Financial reports from November 2024

13.05 Surplus Items

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District declare the attached list of miscellaneous items as surplus and authorizes the sale and/or disposal of these items.

13.06 Warrants

Recommended Action: The Board of Education has reviewed and hereby accepts Warrant Schedule 4

13.07 Schedule U-The Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Pre-School Special Education (CPSE) Recommendations

Recommended Action: The Board hereby approves the Instruction - Schedule U-The Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Pre-School Special Education (CPSE) Recommendations, Schedule U, #01/25, Confidential, as reviewed by Trustee Hemingway Lynch

14. Contracts and Independent Contractor Retainers

14.01 Approve all Contracts and Independent Contractor Retainers

Recommended Action: The Board of Education hereby approves item numbers 14.02 - 14.14

Motioned: Trustee Jerome
Seconded: Trustee Reimondo
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Knutsen, Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Reimondo, Trustee Bishop

14.02 Approve Clark Patterson Lee Proposal

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the proposal between the Onteora Central School District and Clark Patterson Lee for Architectural & Engineering Services for the MSHS Elevator Upgrade and Plaster Ceiling Repairs for a fee not to exceed $56,000.00 and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.03 Approve Additional School Resource Officer

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve an additional School Resource Officer (SRO) for the Onteora Central School District effective no sooner than January 15, 2025 through June 30, 2025 in the annual amount of $117,600.79 (prorated) and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.04 ICR-Mentor- Automotive

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Sloan Hoffstatter retained as a Community Mentor in Automotive effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.05 ICR-Mentor-Chinese

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Dylan Nelsen-Epstein retained as a Community Mentor in Chinese effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.06 ICR- Mentor- Comics

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Kevin Rowe retained as a Community Mentor in Comics effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.07 ICR- Mentor- Film

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Larry Fessenden retained as a Community Mentor in Film effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.08 ICR- Mentor - Law

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Sajaa Ahmed, Administrative ADA retained as a Community Mentor in Law effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.09 ICR- Mentor-Medicine

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Melissa Hazlitt retained as a Community

Mentor in Medicine effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.10 ICR- Mentor-Painting

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Angela Gaffney-Smith retained as a Community Mentor in Painting effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.11 ICR- Mentor- Philosophy

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Dan Werner retained as a Community Mentor in Philosophy effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.12 ICR- Mentor- Photography

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Franco Vogt retained as a Community Mentor in Photography effective January 20, 2025 to June 28, 2025 at a rate of a $ 250.00 total stipend with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.13 ICR- Schubert- BN

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Paul Schubert retained as Piano Accompanist at the Bennett School effective January 15, 2025 through June 30, 2025 at a rate of a $75.00 per service to a maximum of $375.00 with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

14.14 ICR- Schubert- WD

Recommended Action: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED on recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education of the Onteora Central School District approve the Independent Contractor Retainer between the Onteora Central School District and Paul Schubert retained as Piano Accompanist at the Woodstock School effective January 15, 2025 through June 30, 2025 at a rate of a $75.00 per service to a maximum of $300.00 with no fringe benefits or deductions and authorizes the Superintendent to sign such an agreement.

15. Policies

15.01 First Reading of Policy 5678 Artificial Intelligence

15.02 First Ready of Policy 1322 Ex Officio Student Member of the Board of Education

16. Committee Reports

16.01 Audit Committee

- Nothing to report

16.02 Communications Committee

- Trustee Hemingway Lynch reported that the committee met this month and talked about the finalized written report of the long-term plan
- The committee also discussed the content for board corner in the newsletter and the content for the emailed board briefs
- The committee asked BOCES for a presentation of a new communication tool that may be valuable to the community called Parent Square. Which is an online tool that parents, teacher and administrators can communicate through

16.03 Facilities Committee

- Nothing to report

16.04 16.04 Legislative Action Committee

- Trustee Bishop indicated that the committee has not met but wanted to provide and advocacy update.
    - Virtual Capital Conference day will be February 7, 2025 and in person Lobby Day in Albany will be February 12, 2025.
        - BOCES will arrange meetings for trustees to meet with assembly persons during Lobby Day

16.05 Policy Committee

- Nothing to report

17. Old Business

17.01 The Board will discuss Old Business

- Trustee Reimondo asked when the board should start reading the Governance Core 2.0 that was discussed during the Board Retreat
    - The board agreed to read chapter 1 between each meeting and discuss it at the following meeting
- Trustee Knutsen mentioned that tomorrow night is the presentation on the development of the capital project and urged the community to attend
- Trustee Lynch thanked Superintendent McLaren for the information on the Board Dashboard and asked if having it in the Superintendent weekly update is a good place for it.
    - Conclusion- District Clerk will include it with the attendance report at the first meeting of each month
- Trustee Jerome happily discussed that this year's Meet, Greet, and Eat will take place on April 7, 2025
- Trustee Lynch discussed the use of the building facilities and open gym space She requested that administration should put a plan together and asked if coaches could have 24/7 access
    - Superintendent McLaren responded that if the use of the gym is requested, people must go through the proper process and start at the building level

18. New Business

18.01 The Board will discuss New Business

- Trustee Goodrich asked when the board will be discussing the capital improvement propositions and asked the timeframe
    - Assistant Superintendent for Business, Monica LaClair mentioned that the timeline was discussed during her presentation at the last meeting.
        - The board will need to approve the propositions that will be on the ballot at the March 18, 2025 board meeting

19. Request for Information

19.01 Board Members will Request Information of the Superintendent

- Nothing requested

20. Adjournment

20.01 Adjourn the Meeting. Next meeting is February 4, 2025, at the MS/HS.

Recommended Action: Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:05 pm.

Motioned: Trustee Reimondo
Seconded: Trustee Knusten
Result: Unanimous
Yea: Trustee Knutsen, Trustee Jerome, Trustee Mitchell-Marell, Trustee Goodrich, Trustee Hemingway Lynch, Trustee Reimondo, Trustee Bishop

Board of Education: Cindy Bishop, Meghann Reimondo, Sarah Hemingway Lynch, Clark Goodrich, Emily Mitchell-Marell, Caroline Jerome, Rick Knutsen