



BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 17, 2023 - Board Room

Present R. Atwater, D. Carnes, C. Gancasz, J. Harris, E. Gow, J. Sweeney, V. Voss

Excused None

Also Present J. Reimer, M. Carter, C. Cornwell, M. Eadie, C. Heiligenthaler, S. Kordish
Public: 8

Call to Order President Atwater welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approve

Agenda The agenda was reviewed. Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Gow, to approve the agenda as presented.
Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion carried.

**Accept
Minutes**

The Board reviewed the minutes. Motion by Mrs. Gancasz, seconded by Mrs. Harris, to accept the minutes as presented from the Regular Board Meeting dated of March 13, 2023.
Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion carried.

Public Forum A parent brought forward a concern regarding cyber bullying that is happening by someone to which TikTok videos are being taken and modified to bully individual students. She inquired as to what the school's policies and procedures were relative to these incidents once known and with regard to informing parents of students that are targeted. She discussed what she knew and had heard about the students impacted and possible person(s) doing the bullying, and concerns about student's safety and wellbeing. She noted that TikTok has pulled one video down upon her request but wanted the school to also know that the school crest and name are also being used in case the District would want to reach relative to the unauthorized usage. Mr. Reimer commented that the District became aware of this over the weekend and is investigating, and notification to parents and guardians of students that are in videos identified through this process would be contacted.



Presentations Reading Presentation

Mrs. DeMarco and Mrs. Cottle presented the science of reading and the Orton Gillingham approach to reading. They discussed statistics relative to the science of reading vs. traditional guided reading, and the differences between the two ways to learn reading. Mrs. DeMarco noted that 95% of students can learn to read when using instructional programs based on the science of reading. They reviewed the six Orton Gillingham principals of instruction, lesson components, as well as FastBridge reports for Grades 1 and 3 to show the progress made by students at risk using this approach. They also reviewed the top ten takeaways from the WNY Science of Reading conference which a number of Barker teachers attended, the benefits of the programs, and applied usage at Barker. They discussed how it is applied to various areas of learning not just with students at risk. They then demonstrated how the program works and discussed the confidence the students have gained through it. Mr. Reimer noted that there is not one program that will fit every student and there are many training programs to help the students, but this builds on the overall set of skills or provides tools for the needs of students for a robust educational program. Mrs. DeMarco and Mrs. Cottle responded to questions.

Principal's Update - M. Carter

Mr. Carter commented that the District has been very busy with hirings which include English Teacher interviews the past Thursday, with a demo lesson scheduled for Friday; Library/Media which took place today with the demo scheduled for next week; the Principal interview will be Tuesday; and Guidance interviews will be Wednesday. It is anticipated that finalist will be brought forward at the May board meeting. He noted that Dave Carson is being recommended for the Director of Summer School for the 2023-2024 school year, replacing Mrs. Goodlander. The summer school positions for teachers and assistants/aides will be brought forward for consideration in May. Grade 3 & 8 state assessments begin April 25th. The ELA will be computer-based. Mr. Carter discussed ongoing work for the start of the school year. Given the positive feedback received last year, Tuesday, September 5th has been scheduled as the Welcome Back Night for parents and students. Adjustments from last year's initial welcome back were also made based upon feedback received. It is also the first day back for staff.

Director of Instructional Services' Update - S. Kordish

Ms. Kordish discussed approval of the submission of the SPP13. She noted that she will be working on the Data Warehouse protection survey. The IEP Direct import has been completed. She discussed that a few new students have moved into the community and a few are seeking out-of-district placements which continues to be difficult as the wait list for some schools is one year. She then discussed homeschooling and the updated package to provide to parents/guardians that are interested in homeschooling which is anticipated to be finalized by June 1st. She reviewed the number of students who are being home schooled vs. prior years as follows:



School Year	# of Students	# of Families
2017-2018	35	20
2018-2019	31	18
2019-2020	30	16
2020-2021	38	18
2021-2022	58	29
2022-2023	42	22

She discussed confirming and arranging testing for out-of-district students and noted a Harris Beach seminar regarding NYSED test accommodations scheduled for May 1st and May 8th which she and some teachers will be participating in webinars hosted Harris Beach for Special Education test accommodations. She, along with Mr. Cornwell, are looking at therapeutic crisis intervention, and exploring options and proactive behavior management strategies training for staff in preparation for the new 12:1;1 classroom planned for 2023-2024.

Mr. Reimer noted that with regard to testing, the last day for Grades 7-12 will be June 13th with regents commencing the next day. He noted that the end of school year is being reviewed by the BTU after discussions and any calendar changes will be brought forward at the May meeting.

Coor. of Curriculum & Prof. Learning/AP's Update - C. Cornwell

Mr. Cornwell commented on the science of reading noting it is trying to target younger students to ensure they have a solid foundation in reading which is critical down the road. He discussed mentor training which has been completed. Four teachers/staff members have been formally trained to be mentors. Another round of training will occur some time this summer.

Mr. Cornwell discussed the Professional Development Day held on March 17th which was a success. The feedback from the teachers and staff who participated is very favorable with 95% of those responding enjoyed the day and the ability to choose which morning session they attended. The most well attended morning sessions included those on instructional strategies to help students who have suffered from trauma, multi-media resources for instruction, and an introduction to common vocabulary and more inclusive strategies to help our LGBTQ+ students. Barker was also able to certify over two dozen teachers and staff in CPR/AED/First Aid training as a result of this professional development day. The afternoon of this day was set aside for grade level and content area curriculum work. He noted ideas for future topics for professional development included incorporating more technology in education, district-wide behavioral management strategies, reading and writing in the content areas, and additional time for curriculum work and integration. He stated he felt that overall, the day was well received.



Mr. Cornwell surveyed the staff regarding software usage, and most of the educational software programs that the District uses on a regular basis have been renewed through BOCES for the upcoming school year. Preparation work is nearly finalized to have our students in grades 3-8 prepared for the NYS Assessments in the areas of ELA and Math which will take place over the next few weeks.

Financial Update - C. Heiligenthaler

Ms. Heiligenthaler noted that the State Comptroller's Office has reached out to the District and scheduled the exit interview for April 26th with Mr. Reimer and herself to provide a summary of their findings. She noted that the audit began last May, concluded in November with some subsequent follow-up, and now should be closed out potentially at the end of April.

Ms. Heiligenthaler then reviewed various budget documents and the timelines associated with them. The draft Budget Statement has been provided to the Board tonight and will be finalized once revenues can be completed which is pending the State budget being released. The District is also waiting on the tax-exempt summary for Niagara County. The Budget Statement must be made available and on the website for the public 7-14 days prior to the Budget Hearing. The District's public hearing is scheduled for May 8th at 6:30 p.m. Additional information provided to the Board includes budget to budget comparisons. The budget is projected to be \$18,195,652 which is a 2.12% increase. The Property Tax Report Card has been provided and the top section represents elements of the tax cap. The next section looks at fund balance and the last looks at how the District intends to spend any reserve money. The Administrators salary disclosure form pertains to the salary threshold of \$162,000 or anyone that has superintendent in their title. The NYS Report Card, as well as exemption impact report for each county, is contained in this document. The School District Budget Notice will be mailed after the budget hearing but no later than six days prior to the budget vote day. It will be in the Banner which goes to all households in the District the day after the Budget Hearing. It contains much of the same information, except it also a contingent budget in the event that the proposed budget does not pass.

Superintendent's

Report

Mr. Reimer discussed the state budget which was pushed back. He commented that he is hoping more would be known at the end of the week as it creates a restriction for the District as well as other school trying to approve budgets without having a definite aid number to finalize the revenue side of the budget. The initial estimate in January and February for foundation aid may still be really close he noted. Once the revenue side is known the final pieces will be put into place. He noted that the budget newsletter being mailed Wednesday does not include the revenue piece for this reason.

With regard to the strategic plan, Mr. Reimer noted the survey for staff was left open until after break to provide time for additional feedback. The data will be



reviewed and staff will be updated on the results of the information. He anticipates being able to provide these results to the Board next month.

Mr. Reimer discussed staffing, commenting it is the earliest ever he has posted for positions for an upcoming year. As there continues to be a substantially depressed pool for a number of areas, he is hopeful to get ahead of other districts and hire the best candidate. He noted the difficult issue now, which is becoming more the norm, is historically people accepted a job and quit looking, now people accept and keep looking. As the District has experienced, some candidates accept and are approved to work here and will accept another position after their appointment and leave.

He reviewed progress of the capital work. National Grid informed the school that the solar array would be hooked up by the end of April. He discussed the Capital Improvement Project and walked through pictures of renderings to date. He commented that these are probably the 5-6 version of the ideas to date. He noted input from various people, especially for which areas would directly impact their work. He also discussed how the architects, SEI Design, design the project but LaChase, the Project Manager, estimates out the actual costs. He then asked the group to estimate costs for a light and a window so that people understand the higher than expected costs of a project and the impact of prevailing wage. He discussed the various areas including the field, tennis courts and lighting for the exterior to make this not only a place for students and staff to utilize but also the community. Mrs. Gancasz inquired about restrooms and the concession area. Mr. Reimer noted that some of the work she inquired about will not be aidable but he felt it could be addressed in-house. He then discussed interior work including the update of the shop area to bring it up to current learning standards. As more plans evolve, he will continue to share with the staff, Facilities Committee, and the Board.

Policies/Plans The second reading of the policies listed below was performed:

6510	Health Insurance
6520	Workers' Compensation
6540	Defense and Indemnification of Board Members and Employees
6550	Leaves of Absence
6551	Family and Medical Leave Act Policy
6552	Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)/Military Leaves of Absence
6560	Determination of Employment Status: Employee or Independent Contractor

There were no changes to the policies as presented. Motion by Mrs. Gancasz, seconded by Mrs. Gow, to approve the policies noted above as presented.

Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion Carried.



There were no additional changes or suggestions made to the policies being presented for first review which were:

7110	Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy
7111	Release of Students to Custodial/Noncustodial Parents
7120	Age of Entrance
7121	Diagnostic Screening of Students
7122	Transfer Students/Credit
7130	Entitlement to Attend -- Age and Residency
7131	Education of Homeless Children and Youth
7132	Non-Resident Students
7133	Education of Students in Foster Care
7140	School Census

Education

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Newfane Central School District and Barker Central School District for the education of student(s) in Grades K-12 for the 2022-2023 school year.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the disposal of the wrestling mat and that said item be declared excess property and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to dispose of item.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

**Personnel
Items**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the resolution conferring tenure of Christopher Post in the area of Technology Teacher effective August 31, 2023, subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby confers tenure upon Christopher Post in the area of Technology Education effective August 31, 2023, subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Mr. Reimer talked about Mr. Post and the Board and those in attendance congratulated Mr. Post.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the resolution conferring tenure of Joel Strong in the area of Science Teacher effective



September 2, 2023 subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby confers tenure upon Joel Strong, in the subject area of Science Education effective September 2, 2023, subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion Carried.

Mr. Reimer talked about Mr. Strong and the Board and those in attendance congratulated Mr. Strong.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the resolution for the creation of a full-time non-instruction position of Central Office Clerical.

Whereas, the Barker Central School District has determined that it is necessary to establish the following position in accordance with the Niagara County Civil Service Rules, and therefore;

Be it resolved, that the Board of Education hereby establishes the following classified civil service position, effective July 1, 2023:

Position	Classification
1 – 1.0 Central Office Clerical	Competitive (Taylor Law non-unit exempt/confidential)

Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of David Carson as Summer School Coordinator for the 2023-2024 school year effective, April 18, 2023, salary based upon his 2023-2024 hourly rate.

Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the probationary appointment of Timothy Leising as a full-time Groundskeeper/Repairperson at a rate of \$22.50 per hour effective immediately upon clearance of fingerprinting and background checks

Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of Kristina Shaft as a Substitute Nurse at the per diem rate of \$140.00 effective March 28, 2023 subject to fingerprint and background check.

Yes: 7, No: 0



Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of Madison Gancasz as a Substitute Teacher at a per diem rate, and as a Substitute Teaching Assistant and Substitute Teacher Aide at a rate of \$14.20 per hour for Grades Pre-K-12 effective the date of receipt of fingerprint and background check clearances.

Yes: 6, No: 0, Mrs. Cancasz abstained from voting due to her relationship with Ms. Gancasz

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of Tamara Pessah as a Substitute Teacher at a per diem rate for Grades 7-12 effective April 18, 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of Laura Geraci-Speis as a Substitute Teacher at a per diem rate for Grades 7-12 effective April 18, 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of Kayley Wakefield as a Substitute Clerical/Typist at a rate of \$14.20/hour effective April 18, 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the following Community/Parent Volunteers: Amanda Corraine, Michael Corraine, Debra Hames.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Business & Financial

Items

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to accept the Warrant Report for April 17, 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to accept the Extraclassroom Report dated March 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.



Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to accept the Treasurer's Report dated March 31, 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the proposed budget of expenditures of the Barker Central School District for the 2023-2024 school year in the amount of \$18,195,652 and direct that such proposed budget of expenditures be submitted at the annual meeting of the qualified voters of the Barker Central School District, Niagara and Orleans Counties, State of New York, as Proposition #1 scheduled on May 16, 2023 subject to further federal or state directives.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the 2023-2024 Tri-Component Budget Statement and Budget Notice.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the Property Tax Report Card upon approval of the 2023-2024 Barker Central School Budget.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the Health Consortium Municipal Cooperation Agreement for July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2028.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion Carried.

Upon conclusion of the Business & Financial Items, Mr. Carter commented that he just received word that the District's students and musical show, Cinderella, just received six nominations at the Kenny Awards at Shea's this evening for: outstanding musical production; outstanding dramatic performance; outstanding supporting actress, Julia Kalynycz; outstanding technical design; outstanding scenic design; and outstanding costumes.

**End of Public
Session**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to adjourn public session at 8:39 p.m., and move into Executive Session for the purpose of collective negotiations pursuant to Article fourteen of the Civil Service Law with the Barker Teachers' Union.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Executive



Session Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the adjournment of the Executive Session at 9:23 p.m., and return to Public Session.
Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion carried.

Public Session/

Adjournment Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the end of the Public Session and adjournment of the meeting at 9:23 p.m.
Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion carried.

Prepared by,

Mary H. Eadie
District Clerk