



BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education Meeting Minutes
Board Room
Monday, March 9, 2020

PRESENT R. Atwater, M. Clemens-Harris, C. Gancasz, L. Mead, J. Sweeney, V. Voss

EXCUSED H. Ecker

ALSO

PRESENT J. Reimer, M. Carter, M. Eadie, C. Heiligenthaler, M. Kramer
Public: 8

**CALL TO
ORDER**

President Atwater welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
The Pledge to the Flag was given.

**APPROVE
AGENDA**

The agenda was reviewed and no changes were recommended. Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris to approve the agenda as presented.
Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

**ACCEPT
MINUTES**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting dated February 10, 2020 as presented.
Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

**PUBLIC
FORUM**

None.

PRESENTATIONS

Principal's Update

Mr. Carter provided an updated on the work by Administration with regard to building out the schedule for grades K-12 for next year. He noted that in analyzing the impact of a single school and same start/end times, in addition to the efficiencies, cost savings, and the ability to share faculty and resources, the analysis made Administration aware of another big positive, the ability to move the elementary to the same (6-day) rotation schedule as the high school. This alignment would result in a greater level of the aforementioned benefits to be realized next year. Mr. Carter noted that with this change, times for specials will be more consistent and therefore enhance time spent on literacy and math. It would also



benefit students with related services like Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Speech as those who are scheduled on Mondays tend to fall behind as they miss many of their scheduled times as a result of holidays in the school calendar. Another benefit of the rotation schedule would be it would allow for the reestablishment of a library special for grades K-3 which was eliminated years ago. With the rotation schedule, Mrs. Morrow would have the ability to have literacy instruction time as a result of the alignment of physical education classes. Mr. Carter noted that grades 4-6 would not have this benefit as physical education required time allocations are more dominant in those grades. Mr. Carter stated that teachers will now have consistent planning times together, as well as common planning times within the grades.

Mr. Carter than discussed one of the most unique aspects as a result of the schedule planning which is for next years' grades 3 and 4 population. Given its numbers and a mix of special education and other needs, Administration determined it would be most efficient and effective if there were two sections of grade 3 and two sections of grade 4, along with one mid-grade/blended, multi-age class. He noted there are a lot of needs in the incoming third grade and this will help address it. Third and Fourth are good grade levels to blend because of the standards testing and it aligns with the change to a standards-based report card. Logistically, the blending of the two grades also makes sense with their band lessons and lunch scheduling. Mr. Carter noted he has done a lot of reading on this format of grades, and research indicates the students are happier and more successful as their needs are addressed more to the specific child vs. grade level. He noted that with this structure there would also be support and aides provided. In addition, this change would allow for the special education would move to two classes vs. three, and more equitable sharing of the staff. He noted that Mrs. Goodlander and Mr. LaRock currently work together and have a very robust special education program, and have volunteered to take this new program on. He then commented on planned communications regarding this change.

Mr. Carter also reminded everyone that the musical, The Addams Family, is this weekend and to come out and enjoy the show.

Curriculum Update

Dr. Kramer provided an update on the work the District is doing with regard to Professional Development and looking at the State Ed standards. On Wednesday, March 11th there will be a joint Pre-K - 12 faculty meeting focusing on curriculum units and writing curriculum units. Then on March 20th, the Superintendent's Conference Day, the staff will take the entire day pulling together everything they have been working on year to date with regard to the new standards and creating curriculum units. She noted that curriculum development is an ongoing process. Staff will also be looking at the vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum, where gaps may exist and address to shore it up.

Dr. Kramer discussed that on March 31, 2020 the Board of Regents was planning to hold informational meetings/information gathering around graduation requirement. The Seal of Civic Readiness is a new pathway and/or endorsement that students can earn for graduation.



Under the “4+1” pathway assessment option, students must take and pass four required Regents Exams or Department-Approved Alternative assessments and complete a comparably rigorous pathway to meet the fifth assessment requirement for graduation. This would be similar to the Biliteracy endorsement the school currently has in place. Dr. Kramer noted that the State is looking for volunteers to be a Pilot school for the Seal of Civic Readiness. She is meeting with Jessica Karches this Friday in order to have Barker considered as a Pilot school for the program. Dr. Kramer noted that the Civic Readiness Initiative would help to boost the District’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan score two points, as it is a tool to measure school's success. She noted that many of the Civic Readiness requirements are already in place at the District. The program encourages students to believe in the power of their own voices and develop ways to take action through gathering, interpreting and using evidence in order to make educated and informed decisions on a civic level. Mr. Sweeney asked about how many would benefit from this endorsement/pathway. Dr. Kramer stated that this year, at this point in time, only one would benefit from the pathway option but about half the graduates could earn the endorsement. She noted that the current Sophomore class would benefit more from the pathway option, and provided an example of a civic project that would be applicable.

Financial Update and Budget Update

Ms. Heiligenthaler noted she would combine the financial update with the budget update this month. She noted that the updated 2019-2020 year-end projection has not changed much since last month, and is now projected to end the year underspent by \$581,000. She noted that more incentives will be put through the budget today and barring any unforeseen expenses, she is comfortable with the year-end projection.

Ms. Heiligenthaler reviewed the Instruction portion of the budget, noting it is the largest subsection totaling \$9,611,338, approximately 56% of the budget and represents a decrease of 0.8% from last year. There were no changes to FTEs for 2020-2021 and replacements for retirees were budgeted at entry-level salaries. The salary increases in the budget are based on contractual obligations. Budget Code 2280/Occupational Education increased 10.28% from last year as it is budgeted for on a rolling average. During 2019-2020 the school was billed for 55 students and for 2020-2021 there are 59 students enrolled. She projected this would level off at approximately 60. Computers Curriculum is up \$10,000 to update and add devices that are outdated/obsolete.

Operation of Plant was reviewed next. Ms. Heiligenthaler commented that as a result of the request from the Board last month, the Director of Facilities salary expense was moved and spread into two lines: (1.) Contractual Repairs, and (2.) Materials & Supplies. Ms. Heiligenthaler noted that it did not change the overall expense but just transferred it to lines and would be used to assist the District with simpler repairs such as replacing ceiling tiles and would also cover related expenses if the District should need to hire temporary help for special projects.

Mr. Reimer noted that the overall budget for 2020-2021 is currently projected to be \$17,254,712, a decrease of 0.1% from 2019-2020. Ms. Heiligenthaler stated that



the figures represented only a few hundred dollars more than the prior month. Mr. Reimer noted that this will likely be the figure being brought forward to the April Board meeting. This budget has a reasonable contingency amount within it, and represents the best utilization of all resources as much as the District can and in the most efficient way. Mr. Atwater commented that the budget looks pretty solid and good work by Administration.

SUPERINTENDENT'S

REPORT

Mr. Reimer commented that he would discuss and update the Board on advocacy, the Corona virus and capital improvement.

Last week Mr. Reimer was at the NYSSOCC/Leaf 2020 Winter Institute and Lobby Day Conference and reported he was very pleased with the number of members of the Senate and Assembly Education Committees that reached out to him as a result of the Board's resolution which was mailed to the legislative representatives. The resolution was sent to the Senate's Education and Budget Committees, Assembly's Education Committee, Rural, and Budget Committees, as well as the Governor Cuomo and local officials. He did have time reserved with Mr. Cuomo but the Governors' schedule changed. He said the conversations he did have were really good. He noted that the overall foundation aid issue is not unique to the Barker school, but the impact of the power plant is. During his conversation he provided a view of 2010 to now with regard to levels of funding of foundation aid, and walked them through the difference of valuation from then to now, as well as the AGI of the town from then to now, which equates to an approximate 4% change compared to the changes experienced within the districts they represent. Assemblyman Michael Benedetto and Senator Shelley Mayer understood what it meant to go to fully funding the foundation aid, but just what it would like is to be determined. They both stated they are pushing for full funding in approximately 3 years. Mr. Reimer noted that if this were to come to fruition, it would take care of the District's issues. He noted that Senator Mayer was adamant funding change is coming but again, not sure how it will look. He noted that she is familiar with this area and has ties to it. The groups/individuals he met with were from across the State and some had similar economic factors, others more affluent, but Barker was heard. The Board's resolution is why the representatives reached out to us which was very good.

Mr. Reimer next discussed how the District is addressing the Coronavirus given there is a lot of discussion in the public. He noted that at the conference, the Tuesday morning session was with the NYS Department of Health who put out guidance for schools and other areas. He noted that the virus is going to come and will impact the area. The main thing is how it is going to look like. The Department of Health is trying to prevent a steep curve increase in the number of people infected with the virus and trying to mitigate it to avoid issues related to such a rise vs. a more level increase to the number infected. He commented that he received today at 5:45 p.m. guidance from the SEC and in conjunction with the Department of Health which mirrors the information/precautions sent home. He noted that this information is being shared with Administration, the school nurse and others to ensure everyone is kept up to date on information as it is known. He said that the District has policies and protocols in place to address this virus as it normally does



during the virus/cold and flu season. He then reviewed the differences in protocols for the flue vs. the Coronavirus. Mr. Reimer noted that the District is prepared based on current policies and protocols. As the Governor declared as State of Emergency with regard to the virus, the District will continue to monitor closely and follow guidance. With regard to travel internally and/or internationally, the guidance right now is saying to not cancel trips but the District will evaluate and follow the CDC's guidance. At this point in time, the Washington DC trip is still on and the District will monitor and see if adjustments need to be made. The International Clubs trip will be discussed at a meeting on Thursday. Mrs. Clemens-Harris inquired as to what the financial impact would be if cancelled. Mr. Reimer noted that it depends on how the cancellation happens, whether through a government ban or District decision. If the District cancels it will equate to a significant loss. It is being investigated what it will mean if the government bans travel. This also will be discussed at Thursday's meeting.

Mr. Reimer noted that the building needs which the District must address as a result of the capital forums, walk thrus and retreat, need to be discussed again since last month's meeting and the Board must to determine how it would like to move forward in order to not miss the 45-day rule to put a referendum forward at the May 19, 2020 vote. He commented that given the number of questions raised at the February meeting regarding the need for more input and information, he thought it might be wise to hold off on a decision regarding a potential capital expenditure this evening as planned last month, and rather, schedule a special meeting to finalize a decision. He discussed what the Board needs to determine: (1.) if a project would be put to the public as one or two referendums, and (2.) dollar amount. He noted that the language in the referendum(s) would be very general to allow for flexibility to address items as the work progresses and would describe the work being proposed in a general scope. With regard to a library/media center project, he provided Mrs. Morrow's letter to the Board on Friday regarding the transitions she has seen in libraries, and the changes have led them to become innovative places where students can exchange ideas and have collaborate spaces with multi-media opportunities to learn. She also felt the move to a single library would enable the school to have a space for the students which is accessible all day, and make it a focus of learning and literacy for the Barker students that they would want to come to in order to prepare them for the future. Mrs. Goodlander spoke about the students being more driven this year by projects and the need for them and the teachers to have a makers space to go and create and problem solve. She gave examples of the projects the students have done, how they resolved a problem and the resultant outcomes. She noted that there is insufficient space in her room to really allow the students to explore and create. She noted her visit over winter break to look at Iroquois school's maker space, and also discussed presentations at NYSSCATE she saw which she thought were originally by college students presenting (media and STEM projects) which turned out to be eleventh graders and how professional they were. Having a makers space for the students starting at an early age, would result, as she could see, her fourth graders to become those eleventh graders she saw in the future. The makers space is needed for the children to be successful and envision opportunities. Mr. Reimer spoke about how others have combined libraries from two separate areas (elementary and high school) to one successfully and were able to design it as such that the grades levels did not interact. He noted



that it was suggested at a forum to add another librarian given the constraints of covering two areas by one person. However, the cost analysis of the suggestion to hire staff vs. a single library was higher and cost the community more due to its ongoing and long-term legacy costs. Mr. Atwater asked what would a media center/library/makers space look like. Mr. Reimer noted it would depend. If it is something the community agrees is needed, once it is approved, the design would be worked out. That is part of the collaborative design phase which would bring people in for input on different concepts to determine what is needed and wanted within the amount approved. He noted that about \$1.2 million would be enough to build the envelope, structure and bones of such a space. The technology would be addressed differently. Mrs. Clemens-Harris noted that it was interesting to see the media center combined with a tech space for use of a makers space like at Geneseo. Dr. Kramer noted that at Alleghany, one of the poorest areas south of Barker, has one of the best STEM programs in the State but the district realized that this was necessary to give their students the best opportunity to be prepared to succeed after high school. The Board continued its discussion about the need and benefits of a media center/library/makers space for the students but agreed it was needed to prepare and give the students the best opportunities after high school.

The Board then discussed the other areas that would be addressed from a capital project including HVAC, electrical and energy upgrades, parking lots, playground, classrooms, and fields. With regard to the playground, Mr. Reimer reviewed the independent audit performed on the playground which estimated the cost to bring the playground up to code would be approximately \$175,000 which did not include ongoing annual maintenance costs. He noted that new playground components would be approximately \$500,000 which would be aidable and therefore cost the community approximately \$75,000 vs. \$175,000 to repair plus the ongoing annual maintenance. Mr. Reimer asked the Board what they would like to do. Mr. Atwater noted that he is sentimental about the playground and helped work on it with members of the community but acknowledged the economics. Mr. Atwater asked the Board for their view. Mrs. Clemens-Harris did not believe it made sense to spend the \$175,000 on the current structure. She noted that the community needs to have information available to understand why the Board is making decisions and being fiscally savvy with the community's money. She commented that, do we keep it because of emotional outcome and thus a higher cost to the community vs. replace, cost less and less upkeep. Mrs. Gancasz commented that it makes sense to replace. Messrs. Mead and Sweeney concurred that it made sense to replace. Mrs. Voss inquired if the size of a new playground would be the same. Mr. Reimer noted that it could be relatively the same for the cost with the number of apparatuses. Whether different components of the current playground could be kept would need to be determined. Salvage value would also be looked at. The Board agreed the existing playground is unique and there is emotional attachment, but with projected current and future costs, as well as safety concerns to keep the existing structure, it is in the best interest of the students and community to replace.

With regard to having one referendum or two, based on subsequent information provided to the Board, Mr. Atwater asked for the members' views. Mr. Sweeney stated that after seeing the videos and comments regarding the opportunities available through a project, and the additional information on library media center



and makers spaces, that the Board is here about the children and the children will be in a better place by doing all the projects noted. As all the components are important, he said he would now opt to combine the projects into one referendum. Mrs. Clemens-Harris concurred with combining. She said that the videos should be on the website. She asked teachers in support to get information to the community. The community needs to see we are preparing their kids for a different future than they know. The Board discussed if it would make sense to do a public event to inform the community as there is misinformation out there, and give them an idea of what we are proposing vs. the concepts originally shown for consideration. Mr. Reimer noted that this could be done. Information could be sent to the community prior to the vote, in addition to information being in the next Banner distribution. Mrs. Voss agreed to combine the projects into one referendum. Mr. Mead noted that he was of the mindset to split the project into two referendums last month, but after listening to everything, changed his view to combining into one, as they are all important to do. Mrs. Clemens-Harris noted that after watching Geneseo video, she felt so backwards and that we were doing a disservice to the students presently, and commented that it was not like the District does not have the space to do this. Mrs. Gancasz agreed to combine but hoped that it would go through. She felt very strongly that it all needed to be done.

After a lengthy discussion, the Board recapped that it would present a \$5.9 million capital project which included soft costs, construction and incidentals. The final totality of the project would be done in the design phase with input from multiple groups. The resolution and SEQR would need to be approved prior to April 3 to meet the requirements of a May 19, 2020 vote, and the follow-up meeting to do this would be scheduled for March 30, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Weller spoke about providing input and lack of knowledge of what is going on in the community, if she did not work here she would not be informed.

The Board discussed the importance of informing and educating the community about the proposed capital project, especially given the amount of emotions, misunderstanding at the forums, and incorrect information in the community. Given the aforementioned, doing the projects separately raised the concern that due to the importance and need of the library/media center and makers space, that would get in the way of it passing. The Board discussed the outcome if the referendum was voted down and the resultant distress given the need to address the building condition and the preparedness of the students. The Board was reminded that there are no funding cut off dates, and the aid comes in when the project is complete. Mr. Sweeney noted his desire is to get as much information to the voters before the vote so they can make an educated decision, commenting that it is on the Board to educate the person and not to pick and choose. He also suggested that the teachers need to answer questions in the community and talk about the things they see and benefits of the referendum. Mrs. Clemens-Harris commented that if everyone feels that strongly about the need of the project, and it is her impression they do, then if you are on board with it, she thinks more will come around.



POLICIES Upon motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the following policies:

Policy #/Name

- 7520 Accidents and Medical Emergencies;
- 7521 Students with Life-Threatening Health Conditions;
- 7522 Concussion Management;
- 7530 Child Abuse and Neglect/Maltreatment;
- 7550 Dignity for All Students Act;
- 7551 Sexual Harassment of Students;
- 7552 Bullying in the Schools;
- 7553 Hazing of Students; and
- 7560 Notification of Sex Offenders.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Atwater presented the first reading of the following policies for review and comment:

Policy #/Name

- 7570 Supervision of Students;
- 7610 Special Education: District Plan;
- 7611 Children with Disabilities;
- 7612 Grouping by Similarity of Needs;
- 7613 The Role of the Board in Implementing a Student's Individualized Education Program;
- 7614 Preschool Special Education Program;
- 7615 Least Restrictive Environment;
- 7616 Preferral Intervention Strategies in General Education (Prior to a Referral for Special Education); and
- 7617 Declassification of Students with Disabilities.

There were no questions and/or recommended changes brought forward.

EDUCATION Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the 2020 - 2021 District and Board of Education calendars as presented.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the following books be declared excess property and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to dispose of library books from Pratt Elementary Library:

- 1.) 11 Yellow Webster's Elementary Dictionary: ISBN: 0-87779-475-8; and
- 2.) 4 White Doubleday Children's Thesaurus: ISBN: 0-385-23833-9.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.



PERSONNEL

ITEMS

Motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the appointment of Kimberly Beaton as a Substitute Teacher at a per diem rate for Grades Pre-K - 6 effective March 10, 2020.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the appointment of Marcus Debellaistre as a Substitute Teacher at a per diem rate, as well as a Substitute Teaching Assistant at a rate of \$11.80/hour for Grades Pre-K - 6 effective March 10, 2020.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve Katie Bouchard to present to or shadow in the Elementary School, primarily with E. Goodlander, as part of the post-secondary education requirements at Niagara University for the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Program.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the acceptance of the resignation of Fred C. Nash, Technology Teacher, with commendation and regret for the purpose of retirement effective June 30, 2020. Mr. Atwater noted the District's appreciation for his many years of service.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the acceptance of the appointment of Election Inspectors for the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2020:

Inspectors: \$80.00 for the day

- 1.) Janet Kerth
- 2.) Marcia Frost
- 3.) Fran Costello
- 4.) Karen Demorest - Alternate - Paid only if called
- 5.) Grace Bodine- Alternate - Paid only if called

Voting Machine Custodian: \$90.00 for the day

- 1.) Matthew Costello

Election Chairman

- 1.) Sue Benoit

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.



**BUSINESS AND
FINANCIAL ITEMS**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Treasurer's Report dated February 2020.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Extraclassroom Report dated February 29, 2020.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Board Warrant Report dated March 9, 2020.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the budget transfers for the 2019 - 2020 school year totaling \$84,000 from the Public Special Education Contractual lines to cover tuition costs at Special Education Non-public Schools.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Motion carried

END OF PUBLIC

SESSION Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to end the Public Session and enter into Executive Session at 8:12 p.m. for the purpose of discussing to discuss matters of particular personnel.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE

SESSION Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the adjournment of the Executive Session at 8:55 p.m., and return to Public Session.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC SESSION/
ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, that the Board approve the end of the Public Session and adjournment of the meeting at 8:56 p.m.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary H. Eadie, District Clerk