



**Minutes of the Barker Central School District
Board of Education Special Board Meeting
Tuesday, July 22, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Library Media Center**

Present	R. B. Atwater, R. Atwater, D. Carnes, C. Gancasz, J. Sweeney, Jr., V. Voss
Excused	S. Mason
Also Present	M. Eadie Public – 6
Call to Order	Mr. Atwater called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The pledge to the flag was done.
Agenda	Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to approve the July 22, 2026 special meeting agenda as presented. Yes: 6, No: 0 Motion carried.
Personnel Matters	Mr. Atwater noted he would recommend the motion for Dr. Reimer include “commendation and regret” within it given the work he has done through the years for the District and community. Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approved the acceptance of the resignation of Dr. Jacob L. Reimer, Superintendent of Schools, with commendation and regret, effective September 20, 2026. Yes: 6, No: 0 Motion carried.
Public Session	Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to end the Public Session and enter into Executive Session to discuss matters relating to the employment history and appointment of particular person(s) at 7:04 p.m. Yes: 6, No: 0 Motion carried.
Executive Session	Motion by Mrs. Gancasz, seconded by Mrs. Carnes to return to Public Session at 8:10 p.m. Yes: 6, No: 0 Motion carried.



Presentations

Mr. Atwater welcomed Dr. Taweepon Farrar, District Superintendent & CEO of Orleans Niagara BOCES. Dr. Farrar presented and discussed the Superintendent Search Process with the Board. She stated that the Board's job of selecting the next superintendent is one of the most significant responsibilities it has. It is a critical choice which will shape the District trajectory for the years to come. The decision should exemplify the values, expertise, and community vision for the District. She noted three critical components of the decision: (1) leadership ability, the incoming superintendent sets the tone for all the organizational outcomes; (2) the strategic focus, as every decision in a search process must support finding the absolute best leader; and (3) process integrity, as the recruitment must be exceptionally thoughtful, inclusive, and strictly confidential. The core mission is to design a rigorous search process that identifies an exemplary leader who is uniquely aligned with Barker's values and community expectations. She noted that the survey the Board of Education completed will help guide the decision process.

Dr. Farrar stated the search consultant should direct, manage, and facilitate every detail of the process to ensure the Board is supported and insulated from administrative burdens. The consultant should directly oversee and direct every phase of the recruitment. The consultant should also identify and recruit candidates; coordinate structured community and staff stakeholder meetings for feedback; vet applicants, conduct comprehensive reference checks, provide interview logistics, including protocols; provide strategic advising through object guidance and final deliberations; and maintain strict confidentiality at all times, and use of non-disclosure agreements. Confidentiality impacts the applicants and the District. She discussed the benefit of receiving feedback through stakeholder groups, ideally from staff, community, and students. She suggested that these be done without the Board Members there, as their presence could influence people's willingness to speak freely and why that can be beneficial. She explained the importance of the role of the Board relative to the impact of confidentiality with regard to applicants. She next reviewed guiding principles of a search process. Dr. Farrar discussed the importance of understanding Barker's DNA and the development of the leadership profile. By basing recruitment upon customized Barker criteria, it helps to ensure the candidate pool is pre-qualified to the District's exact contextual needs. She then discussed active recruitment strategies and the process of finding the most capable leaders.

Dr. Farrar talked about the differences between a closed search, hybrid search, and open search. After sharing the differences of the three, the Board concurred that they felt a hybrid search would be the best option for the District.

Dr. Farrar then discussed what a structured stakeholder engagement could look like. She noted that the stakeholder input informs the process, but the Board will make the final decision. She noted that the consultant's process could start with the community with a survey to gather foundational



priorities and expectations, then move to a staff survey which would help identify operational and academic priorities. Next, focus groups would be coordinated for in-depth insights from targeted civic and school groups, ending in the finalist screening. She noted it is very important to try receive the most internal input as possible to help guide the decision.

The proposed search timeline was reviewed and discussed based on what was presented. Dr. Farrar noted that the process will require much more of the Board's time than their current time commitment given it is an arduous process. She recommended the Board should plan to have a meeting after the recruitment phase, currently scheduled through the end of August, and she suggested early September. The Board discussed availability and agreed to plan for a special meeting on September 10th at 6:30 p.m. in the Library Media Center. The Board also reviewed the other components within the timeline. When asked about contract negotiations, it was noted that this would be worked through during the process and should involve NYSCOSS and the school's attorney. Board appointment and transition timing was also discussed and Dr. Farrar noted that the notice provided by the candidate to the current employer could be 30-120 days which would have an impact the anticipated start date currently estimated to be January 1, 2027.

She noted there are about 8 phases to the search process, and the Board is currently at Phase I which is the planning phase - to develop protocols and a candidate profile. She then reviewed the other phases, which next would be recruitment, on through to appointment. She discussed candidate evaluation framework which should include strategic core characteristics, operational competencies, and cultural fit.

She emphasized the importance of Board input throughout the process, and how imperative confidentiality is. She felt, confidentiality not only protects the candidates' identity, it is the single most critical factor in securing a premium applicant pool. It ensures top-tier talent is comfortable entering the search pool, enables authentic, open communications during interviews, and ensures a professional process is completely free of external lobbying. She noted that high-performing leaders are at risk within current home districts should their interest in a district be disclosed, and would hinder professionals from applying if not comfortable with the confidentiality of the process.

Dr. Farrar discussed the vetting and due diligence process and the importance of a multi-layered verification protocol to completely protect a district's reputation and ensure structural candidate alignment. She also reviewed why and how the process she outlines succeeds, as well as the options of using Orleans Niagara BOCES vs. an outside recruitment firm for the Board to consider.

She responded to the Board questions regarding the various topics within the presentation.



Mr. Atwater inquired if the Board had any additional questions. There were none brought forward. He asked if the Board would be prepared this evening to make a determination as to whether to utilize Orleans Niagara BOCES for a search consultant or a third party. The Board concurred to move forward with Dr. Farrar and Orleans Niagara BOCES.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mrs. Voss, that the Board approve the resolution to appoint Dr. Farrar, Orleans Niagara BOCES, as the District's superintendent search consultant.

RESOLVED, that the Barker Central School District Board of Education appoint Dr. Taweepon Farrar, District Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer of Orleans Niagara BOCES, to serve as the Board's consultant for the search and selection of the next Superintendent of Schools, under the terms and conditions presented to the Board.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Atwater noted dates received for a potential Board Retreat were July 29, August 5, 6, or 10th. Various members noted conflicts. Mr. Atwater noted that he will reach out to Dr. Reimer for additional dates.

He then noted the NOSBA Mixer, in Wilson, NY at the Wilson House, on August 26, 2026, to see if other Board Members would like to attend with him. He said if they were to let him or Mrs. Eadie know.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Sweeny, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to conclude the Public Session and adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Prepared by,

Mary H. Eadie
District Clerk