

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
LEVITTOWN UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
LEVITTOWN, NY**

DATE: April 10, 2013

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, was duly called and held on Wednesday, April 10, 2013 in the Board Meeting Room of the Levittown Memorial Education Center.

CERTIFICATION:

The District Clerk certified that pursuant to Section 104, Open Meetings Law, notice of meeting was sent to the local newspapers, the Public Library and posted on the district's website. Further, all members of the Board of Education had due notice of said meeting.

PRESENT:

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Peggy Marengi
Mr. James Moran
Mr. Michael Pappas – President
Mr. Peter Porrazzo – Vice President
Mr. Edward Powers
Mr. Kevin Regan – Secretary
Mr. Frank Ward

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. James Grossane – Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Darlene Rhatigan – Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Debbie Rifkin – Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Mark Flower Assistant Superintendent

OTHERS

Mr. Robert H. Cohen– School Attorney
Ms. Elizabeth Appelbaum – District Clerk
Ms. Jennifer Newins – MacArthur High School Liaison
Mr. James Reilly – Division Avenue High School Liaison

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A.** Pledge of Allegiance
- B.** Mr. Pappas, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:15 PM. On a motion by Mr. Porrazzo, seconded by Mr. Regan and approved (7-0) that the Board adjourn to Executive Session to discuss items on the Executive Session Agenda relating to personnel.
- C.** The Board reconvened to Public Session at 7:45 PM at which time Mr. Pappas asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our troops fighting all around the globe.

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II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Pappas thanked Mr. Zampaglione, the principal of Salk Middle School, for the opportunity to attend the National Junior Honor Society Induction Ceremony along with Ms. Rhatigan .

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Mr. Porrazzo moved to “Make the necessary corrections and move the approval of the minutes of March 13, 2013 (Regular Meeting), March 20, 2013 (Special Meeting).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Seconded: Mr. Regan

NOTE: Mr. Pappas requested corrections which were reflected in the approved minutes.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

IV. REPORTS

A. Recognition:

1. Student Academic Presentation – Gardiners Avenue Elementary School
(First Grade Researchers Dive Deep into the Ocean)

Ms. Rifkin reported that the students were bursting with excitement to share their work with the audience. She asked Ms. Hendler, the Principal of Gardiners Avenue, to introduce the program. Ms. Hendler thanked the Board of Education for inviting the children to the meeting and introduced the first grade teachers. The children presented their persuasive writing pieces concerning threats to our ocean environments. They have been learning about the oceans for the past few weeks, as one of the many thematic units covered throughout the year. Using the many lessons taught, the children themselves wrote their persuasive pieces, and were featured in the pictures from the PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Valentino, Principal of MacArthur High School, was called up to present the winners of the L. I. Youth Summit and Williams Institute Ethics Essay Contest. She asked that Mr. McDermott, Dr. Friedman and Mr. Zausin of the Science Department join her in introducing the three outstanding students.

2. L. I. Youth Summit Winners – MacArthur High School
Kristina Alduino and Deanna Gorecki, Grade 10

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IV. REPORTS (continued)

Ms. Alduino and Ms. Gorecki attended a Youth Summit where they presented a paper on bullying and its impact on school communities. The purpose of the Summit was to work with top high school students and make them aware of issues affecting Long Island while working together to provide solutions. Their paper was selected as the top paper in their category and they were awarded a scholarship.

3. Williams Institute Ethics Essay Contest
Mira Sobhy – Finalist, Grade 11 – MacArthur

Ms. Sobhy wrote an essay on the nation's dependence on fossil fuels which provided proposals toward a movement to cleaner renewable energy sources. She also received a monetary award.

3. Art Display: Gardiners Avenue Elementary School

Dr. Grossane asked everyone to enjoy the art on display in the Board Room and hallways from Gardiners Avenue. He noted there is a lot of lovely work and a fun exhibit.

NOTE: Agenda items 1 -4 were discussed under Recognition.

Valedictorian/ Salutatorian (MacArthur and Division Avenue High Schools)

Dr. Grossane remarked that school is all about achievement and learning and it's always a wonder every year that all our students do such wonderful work. We always recognize the two highest achieving students in both of our high schools. The principals of both high schools were introduced and spoke about all of the achievements and honors their top students had attained. The Board congratulated all the recipients and acknowledged how proud everyone was of them.

B. Superintendent's Reports

1. Student Field Trip Presentation – European Trip

Ms. Rifkin announced that the students who participated in the European Trip would be giving a presentation on their travels. Ms. Faherty, one of the chaperones of the trip, put on view a slide show of the tour. The students spoke about the remarkable experiences they had learning about different cultures, seeing great art and meeting new people. Mr. Pappas remarked that it sounded like an amazing trip. Mr. Porrazzo recognized the chaperones who made the trip possible.

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IV. REPORTS (continued)

2. Follow-up to Public Be Heard Questions
(none)
3. Follow-up to Board Questions
(none)

B. Board of Education:

1. Comments & Reports

Mr. Powers reported that he attended that LEADD Walk and Fair over the weekend and noted many of the Board and Administration were in attendance. It was a good time for all. Mr. Pappas mentioned that he and Mr. Ward did a walk-thru at the Island Trees High School to see the work performed for energy efficiency. They were impressed by the new low energy consumption lighting and automated heating controls. Mr. Pappas remarked that the East Broadway fundraiser at Verdi's was a wonderful, fun event. Additionally, Mr. Pappas visited the Division Avenue Key Club and was amazed at the work they are doing for the community. Mr. Porrazzo and Mr. Pappas were the representatives of the School District for the Eagle Scout Ceremony for a Division Avenue student and also attended a SEPTA Meeting and several PTA Meetings. Mr. Regan, Mr. Powers and Mr. Pappas went to the Wisdom Lane National Junior Honor Society. Mr. Pappas thanked Northside, East Broadway, Salk and Wisdom for their participation in the Levittown Kiwanis Terrific Kids Program.

2. Correspondence
(none)

3. Student Liaisons to the Board of Education

Mr. Reilly described the events taking place at Division Avenue. He shared that Spring Sports are starting up and doing well. He noted that the Boys Lacrosse Team recently had a big win. This week, the play, Peter Pan, was being performed. Mr. Reilly shared that the Prom Dress Drive was very successful.

Ms. Newins reported that at MacArthur the Orchestra recently successfully performed at Busch Gardens. Last week there was a Track Invitational, a fundraiser, which drew many students. She noted the Spring Sports are doing really well and we hope they keep it up. She reported that the Girls Lacrosse Team is wearing handmade Autism Bows for the month of April to show their awareness of Autism. Another fundraiser, the Boys Autism Awareness Tournament is coming up at the end April. Additionally, at the end of the month is the Battle of the Classes which always has a lot of participants.

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V. **PUBLIC BE HEARD**
(Attached)

VI. **ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS**

1. **MOTION:** Mr. Ward moved, "WHEREAS, JAMES REILLY has earned the distinction of being selected Valedictorian for the 2013, graduating class of Division Avenue High School; and

RESOLUTION# 12-13-176
Valedictorian - Division Avenue
High School.

WHEREAS, this achievement is reflective of the high academic standards which the Levittown Board of Education has set for the public schools,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, commend JAMES REILLY for his election as Valedictorian of the 2013 graduating class of Division Avenue High School."

Seconded: Mr. Moran

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

2. **MOTION:** Mr. Ward moved, "WHEREAS, SUKHNEET SAHOTA has earned the distinction of being selected Salutatorian for the 2013, graduating class of Division Avenue High School; and

RESOLUTION# 12-13-177
Salutatorian - Division Avenue
High School.

WHEREAS, this achievement is reflective of the high academic standards which the Levittown Board of Education has set for the public schools,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, commend SUKHNEET SAHOTA for his selection as Salutatorian of the 2012 graduating class of Division Avenue High School."

Seconded: Mr. Moran

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

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VI. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS

- 3. MOTION:** Mr. Ward moved, "WHEREAS, LIAM LANG has earned the distinction of being selected Valedictorian for the 2013, graduating class of MacArthur High School; and
- RESOLUTION# 12-13-178
Valedictorian -MacArthur High School

WHEREAS, this achievement is reflective of the high academic standards which the Levittown Board of Education has set for the public schools,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, commend LIAM LANG for her selection as Valedictorian of the 2013 graduating class of MacArthur High School."

Seconded: Mr. Moran

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

- 4. MOTION:** Mr. Ward moved, "WHEREAS, HARLEY DIETZ has earned the distinction of being selected Salutatorian for the 2013, graduating class of MacArthur High School; and
- RESOLUTION# 12-13-179
Salutatorian – MacArthur High School

WHEREAS, this achievement is reflective of the high academic standards which the Levittown Board of Education has set for the public schools,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, commend HARLEY DIETZ for her selection as Salutatorian of the 2013 graduating class of Division Avenue High School."

Seconded: Mr. Moran

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

- 5. MOTION:** Mr. Porrazzo moved, "WHEREAS, all claims, warrants and charges against the School District have been reviewed by the Claims Auditor and have been certified by the Claims Auditor for payment,
- RESOLUTION # 12-13-180
Warrants

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the March 2013 report of the Claims Auditor be accepted."

Seconded: Mr. Regan

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

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VI. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS

6. **MOTION:** Mr. Porrazzo moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, accept the attached Claims Auditor Report prepared by Albrecht, Viggiano, Zureck & Company, P.C., for the month ending March 31, 2013." RESOLUTION # 12-13-181
Claims Audit Report

Seconded: Mr. Regan

NOTE: Mr. Pappas wanted to discuss the memo from AVZ, the Claims Auditor. He remarked that he had a problem with the wording of this memo and read some parts of it. He acknowledged that AVZ is going to make another category for an explanation as to why it is a confirming purchase order. Mr. Pappas stressed that purchase orders over 90 days, regardless of the reason, are still late. He noted it is the responsibility of the Business Office to address those purchase orders that are in question. He commented that the number of confirming purchase orders have come down but he feels that is because the Board has stayed on top of this issue. Mr. Flower showed some examples of why he disagreed with AVZ's findings. He challenged the criteria that the Claims Auditor uses. There was discussion on this issue. Mr. Porrazzo felt it was not necessary to get hung up on the number of exceptions as long as there is a valid business reason attached. He agreed that another category that states 90 days with an explanation, is necessary. Mr. Flower advised the Board that his office was working diligently to determine those explanations.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

7. **MOTION:** Mr. Porrazzo moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, accept the attached Treasurer's Report for the month ending February 28, 2013 and place same on file." RESOLUTION # 12-13-182
Treasurer's Report

Seconded: Mr. Regan

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

8. **MOTION:** Mr. Porrazzo moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, accept the attached Appropriation and Revenue Status reports for the period ending February 28, 2013 and March 31, 2013." RESOLUTION # 12-13-183
Appropriation and Revenue
Status Reports.

Seconded: Mr. Regan

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

NOTE: Mr. Powers left the room.

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VI. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS

9. **MOTION:** Mr. Moran moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve no increase to the the Driver Education tuition of \$470 for the 2013-2014 school year, commencing July 1, 2013 and ending June 30, 2014." RESOLUTION # 12-13-184
Driver Education Tuition
2013-2014

Seconded: Mr. Porrazzo

MOTION CARRIED. Six members present voting yes.

APPROVED 6-0.

10. **MOTION:** Mr. Moran moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve an increase in the GC Tech student tuition rate from \$13,303 to \$13,694 for the 2013-2014 school year." RESOLUTION # 12-13-185
GC Tech Tuition Rate
2013-2014

Seconded: Mr. Porrazzo

MOTION CARRIED. Six members present voting yes.

APPROVED 6-0.

NOTE: Mr. Porrazzo stated that, next year, he would not approve any increases for tuition unless they are given to the district while the departments are compiling their budgets. He felt it was not fair to give last minute increases. Dr. Grossane remarked he will have the information available in January/February of next year.

11. **MOTION:** Mr. Moran moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve Tender Garden located at 3100 Hempstead Turnpike, Levittown, NY 11756 and Kiddie Junction located at 3 North Village Green, Levittown, NY 11756, as the two sites for the Universal Pre-K Program for the 2013-2014 school year." RESOLUTION # 12-13-186
Universal Pre-K Sites

Seconded: Mr. Porrazzo

MOTION CARRIED. Six members present voting yes.

APPROVED 6-0.

NOTE: Mr. Powers returned to the meeting.

12. **MOTION:** Ms. Marengi moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does hereby, authorize students at Division Avenue and MacArthur high schools to participate in a foreign field trip to London, England from April 10, 2014 to April 18, 2014." RESOLUTION # 12-13-187
Authorization of Foreign
Field Trip – London, England

Seconded: Mr. Regan

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VI. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS

NOTE: Ms. Rhatigan announced that this is an additional trip that is revolving around the theater curriculum. She noted that many students seem interested.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

- 13. MOTION:** Mr. Regan moved, RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the individuals on the attached list as the Election Registrars for 2013.”

RESOLUTION #12-13-188
Election Workers

Seconded: Mr. Powers

NOTE: Mr. Porrazzo asked the District Clerk, Elizabeth Appelbaum, if the district was still using the old voting machines. She responded yes.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

- 14. MOTION:** Mr. Porrazzo moved, “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does hereby, accept with thanks, the following gifts:

RESOLUTION # 12-13-189
Gifts to Schools

- a. music reference books with accompanying audio CD set, NYSSMA approved sheet music, refurbishing of several instruments in need of repair, band uniform skirts/props and various pins, certificates, bookmarks and other like rewards for Northside music students, given by Northside Music Club, c/o Susan Massoni and Marie Reid, co-presidents, 32 Glazer Lane, Levittown, NY 11756,
- b. a check in the amount of \$1,000 for a scholarship in the name of Patrick Rosenberger, at Division Avenue High School, given by the D’Orazio Family and Friends of Patrick Rosenberger, 35 Lynwood Avenue, Farmingville, NY 11738,
- c. \$300 for a Michael Palermo Memorial (athletic) Scholarship to be presented at the MacArthur Athletic Awards Dinner, c/o Janet Sliasky, 4013 Eve Drive, Seaford, NY 11783.

Seconded: Mr. Moran

NOTE: The Board discussed adding another gift to the district.

MOTION: Mr. Powers moved, “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does hereby, waive the twenty-four hour policy rule and add a gift (d) to Agenda item #14.

RESOLUTION #12-12-190
Waiver of Twenty-four
Hour Notice

Seconded: Mr. Regan

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

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VI. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (Continued.)

- d. 20 yard clay mix for Gardiner Ave
Levittown Baseball

NOTE: Mr. Pappas thanked all the generous donors.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED AS AMENDED 7-0.

- 15. MOTION:** Mr. Ward moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, declare the items on the following lists obsolete and that they may be discarded, donated, or sold at the highest possible salvage value:

RESOLUTION # 12-13-191
Obsolete Equipment

<u>School/Building</u>	<u>Number of Item</u>	<u>Date</u>
MacArthur (printer)	1	3/6/13
Gardiners (computer)	1	3/5/13
LMEC (printers)	4	3/18/13
LMEC (micros)	1	3/18/13."

Seconded: Mr. Porrazzo

- 16. MOTION:** Mr. Ward moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, declare the books on the attached lists obsolete and that they may be discarded, donated, or sold at the highest possible salvage value."

RESOLUTION # 12-13-192
Obsolete Books

<u>School</u>	<u># of Books</u>	<u>Date of List</u>
Division	166 library books	3/7/13
East Broadway	209 math texts	3/22/13."

NOTE: Mr. Ward wanted to know if we recovered the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged books by fining the last person to take out the book. Mr. Ward was informed that if we are aware of the person responsible, we do ask for reimbursement. Mr. Ward noted there should be better record keeping. Ms. Marengi remarked that these textbooks are old and have been used by many students.

Several meetings ago, Mr. Porrazzo requested Administration look into using e-books. He asked if any information had been obtained. Ms. Rhatigan responded that she will put together a report on eBooks and iPads. Mr. Powers remarked that he had asked Administration to research using the public library licenses. Ms. Rhatigan responded that she would reach out to them. Additionally, Mr. Powers inquired what had become of the recycling program for discarded books. Dr. Grossane reported that last year one of the student liaisons, had set up the program and this year no one has taken her place as of yet. He noted that volunteers were needed.

Seconded: Mr. Porrazzo

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

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VI. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (Continued.)

17. MOTION: Ms. Marengi moved, "To approve the following Schedules: RESOLUTION# 12-13-193
Schedules

Schedule 12-G-11 1001
(Resignation/Termination – Certified Personnel)."

Schedule 12-H-13 1002
(Appointments – Certified Personnel)."

Schedule 12-H-13c 1003
(Designation – Consultants)."

Schedule 12-H-13g 1004
(Designation - Coaches)."

Schedule 12-HH-13 1005
(Appointments – Non-Instructional Personnel)."

Schedule 12-I-3 1006
(Use of School Buildings)."

Schedule 12-J-4 1007 **PULLED**
(Tenure–Certified Personnel)."

Schedule 12-JJ-4 1008
(Permanent Status –Non-Instructional Personnel)."

Schedule 12-K-10 1009
(Leave of Absence –Certified Personnel)."

Schedule 12-KK-10 1010
(Leave of Absence –Non-Instructional Personnel)."

Schedule 12-N-2 1011
(Health Services)."

Schedule 12-O-9 1012
(Students with Disabilities)."

Seconded: Mr. Powers

NOTE: Mr. Pappas noted to the audience that schedules are thoroughly discussed in Executive Session.

AMEND AS FOLLOWS: Schedule 12-JJ-4 **PULLED.**

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members present voting yes.

APPROVED AS AMENDED 7-0.

18. Ad Hoc –

Dr. Grossane reported that the Board has been asking if we can predict how well the students will do on the new assessment tests. He stated that the students are given intermediate assessments to determine how well they know the lessons taught. He remarked that a program called North West Evaluation Assessments (NWEA) is used in grades 4, 5, and 6. We are finding a sharp dip in the results for 6th grade. Dr. Grossane shared that part of the reason for this is that the older students know how the system works. They realize that as long as they get the answers correct, the test continues and the questions get harder. The teachers were reporting that the higher functioning students were purposely getting questions wrong so the test would stop. Mr. Powers reported

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VI. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (Continued.)

that his son had figured out how to scale the NWEA test back. He wanted to know what NWEA was doing about this. Dr. Grossane shared that originally he was under the impression that these tests were going to be an approved method of helping the students become accustomed to automated testing and use as a measure for APPR. He now feels this may not be the way to go. Therefore, he will be looking at other methods, like STARS and the Envision Program. Dr. Grossane mentioned that every middle school in the state shows a dip for 7th and 8th grades. He reported that he was working with the Principals and Curriculum Associates to develop more of an interim assessment system that would give us a better guide to how students are doing.

Mr. Pappas asked if the NWEA is the interim Common Core Assessment. Dr. Grossane responded yes, but that there are other assessment tests given. Ms. Rifkin commented that we are challenged this year because we don't know what the test is going to look like. We have given the students the sample questions provided by New York State and NWEA. She feels that even though NWEA says it is Common Core aligned, it does not align to what New York State posted on their website, ENGAGE New York. Mr. Porrazzo stated the purpose of NWEA is to progressively have the student challenged, therefore, the initial questions may not be as difficult. Ms. Rifkin reported that the questions do not progress to the equivalent of the grade level.

Ms. Rifkin mentioned everyone was anxious to see what the tests look like and discussions have already started to develop interim assessments for next year. She was hoping to move forward with an ELA and Envision Program for next year so assessments can be built in. Dr. Grossane noted that he was looking to create more benchmarks. This year has been a transition year for everyone with the move to Common Core. He remarked that he was anticipating guidance from the state which they received with the modules in the upper grades but was waiting for advice for the primary grades. He shared that the test is very difficult to predict. Dr. Grossane was concerned with the Commissioner's comments that when other states implemented the Common Core, they saw a 20% - 30% dip in students' scores.

Mr. Pappas asked if we had any data that would support a conclusion stating that the students will do better and show growth. Ms. Rifkin reported that we can see if our students are growing, however, we do not know what is happening in the other districts. She commented that we are hoping to close the gap. Dr. Grossane stated we are looking for a 3% growth. Mr. Pappas remarked the surrounding districts are also trying to improve.

Mr. Porrazzo wanted to know if instead of benchmarking with a test that we don't know, is there any other way to see if a student is growing. What do we have that measures that? He is not concerned regarding a dip in scores, as long as all districts scores went down. Mr. Porrazzo expressed his feeling that it is our responsibility to motivate our students to want to take these tests and do well on them. Dr. Grossane agreed and remarked that we need to review the right data in order to move forward. Additionally, Mr. Porrazzo wanted to know if our teachers were collaborating more on tests and if our newly created Curriculum Associates were moving in the right direction. Dr. Grossane responded that they were definitely moving forward especially, with the Chemistry program. He noted he had several meetings with the Chemistry Department and Curriculum Associates to analyze data and discuss what needs to be done to help the students and teachers. The Curriculum Associates in turn have met with the teachers and Principals to realign the instruction accordingly. Coincidentally, Mr. Pappas asked

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how the Chemistry classes were doing. He was told that the midterms had been eliminated but the students were given a regular test. Ms. Rifkin stated that the third quarter test will be a common assessment. Dr. Grossane mentioned each teacher is able to see a student's progress through grades and tests.

Ms. Rifkin reported that she could provide good data from the READ 180 Program which charts student's growth. Additionally, teachers are administering classroom assessments and the report cards for grades two through five are based on Common Core. She noted that from the progression of the report cards, you can see whether students are meeting the standards that they did not meet before. Ms. Rifkin commented that benchmark assessments will be helpful for next year because you can compare across teachers and schools and conduct data meetings across the district on the same assessments. Ms. Marengi disagreed in that she felt the READ 180 data is not what we are looking for. She stated that data looks at a very small limited population. She would rather use the STARS Program. Ms. Marengi went on to discuss how to use this program to show student growth. She feels that the teacher is the motivating factor in a student's progress. It is in the presentation of the testing, to try to motivate the students to show growth. Mr. Powers wanted to know who does the statistical data analysis. Ms. Rifkin responded that she oversees the Principals who in turn work with the teachers. The Board went on to discuss the reporting of this data.

MOTION: Mr. Ward moved, "That the Board go into Executive Session at 10:05PM to discuss personnel issues.

Executive Session

Seconded: Ms. Marengi

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

The Board reconvened in public at 11:30 PM.

VII. ADJOURN

MOTION: Mr. Porrazzo moved, seconded by Mr. Regan to adjourn the public meeting 11:35 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted

Elizabeth Appelbaum
District Clerk

NOTE: TAPES OF THE MEETING ARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT THE LEVITTOWN LIBRARY.

ATTACHMENTS TO BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

OF MEETING OF April 10, 2013

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V. PUBLIC BE HEARD

PLEASE NOTE: COPIES OF ATTACHMENTS SUBMITTED ARE GIVEN TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THEN KEPT WITH THE OFFICIAL MINUTES IN THE DISTRICT CLERK OFFICE.

The guidelines pertaining to Public Be Heard were read. Dr. Grossane and/or Board members will respond to questions, after the last speaker is heard.

Jane Finkelstein 848 Mayer Drive, Wantagh, NY

Ms. Finkelstein came to discuss the unprecedented situation going on in the country regarding the movement to opt out of state tests. She wanted to know how the district is going to handle the refusals. She understood about all the state mandates. She wanted the community to know the correct facts of the situation in order to move forward. Ms. Finkelstein feels that these are changing times but the picture is much bigger than just the tests. She wanted the community to know what is going on about the information given from the tests. Additionally, she asked, if it is a fact that the district will lose funding if you do not have the 95% participation rate or is there a waiver.

Tara Moore 4053 Briarwood Ave, Seaford, NY

Ms. Moore, an educator and a parent of two children in the district, thanked the Board for allowing her to speak. She commented that she is aligned with a growing number of parents in the district who are refusing to allow their children to participate in the state assessment exams. In researching this decision, she found that many teachers, parents, educational advocates and administrators feel these tests are flawed and do not have any meaningful purpose. Ms. Moore spoke about how she feels the school district does more to provide for students, especially those with special needs, than most other districts on Long Island. She is very disappointed that, upon presenting the information to the district that she is refusing to allow her daughter to take the exam, she was met with very little sympathy and understanding. Ms. Moore stated that even though she is acting on behalf of her child, she was told her child must verbally refuse to take the exam. Every day of testing, her daughter must look at her teacher, defy her authority and say no. In addition, she was told that no alternative activity will be provided for the children whose parents are refusing to allow them to take the exam. She does not see the educationally sound benefits to this course of action but feels it is cruel and developmentally inappropriate for the children. Ms. Moore feels the district is intent on punishing the children for the decision made by their parents. She would like the district to reconsider its position.

Tom Kohlman 806 Brent Drive, Wantagh, NY

Mr. Kohlman spoke about the Elementary Education position which he thought was filled in the fall of last year. He now sees a new post for the position under Director of Elementary Education with less requirements for the job, especially in the area of Common Core and APPR. He would like to see someone in the position with the best qualifications in these two areas. Mr. Kohlman remarked that he wants someone in place who can answer any and all questions that could arise so that they can bring Elementary Education to the next level.

ATTACHMENTS TO BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

OF MEETING OF April 10, 2013

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RESPONSES:

In response to the concerns regarding the Assessment Tests:

Dr. Grossane reported that as the Superintendent of Schools, one of his priorities is to enact Commissioners Regulations. Therefore the tests must be given. He commented that it is a parents prerogative to do what they can, but he is not complacent in their choice. He understood that it is difficult for a child to defy a teacher, especially when it is the parent's decision. In relation to this, the district is reviewing its position and reexamining its decisions. Dr. Grossane noted that he has been conferring with other Superintendents to see their position. On the question on participation rate, although there is various information going around, he is under the assumption that if we do not meet our 95% participation rate, our Title I funding for remedial services could be affected. He noted that we hope to come to some kind of resolution before the test is given.

Ms. Marengi attended a workshop where it was reported that if schools do not meet their participation rate, then their Title I funding could be in jeopardy. Additionally, Ms. Marengi feels that you should use motivational theory when giving these tests. She remarked that the schools should celebrate that the students are well prepared and will do their best. Ms. Marengi stated these tactics could lower the child's anxiety and help them relax. She commented that there are ways to work within the system because we don't know what the penalties are going to be.

Mr. Cohen noted that the New York State School Boards sent out a guidance memo stating that both the United States Education Department and the State Education Department are informing districts that there is a potential to lose Title I funding if you do not have the 95% participation rate. He remarked that districts are in a difficult situation in that the federal and state government is telling them that they must administer these tests and there is no right to opt out. Their view is that these tests are part of the curriculum which are created by the state and not individuals. Mr. Cohen reported that the state is checking to make sure that schools are not complacent in this situation.

In response to the Mr. Kohlman's comments:

Dr. Grossane noted that he would get back to Mr. Kohlman on this matter. He explained that he will answer the question in public at the next meeting but would give Mr. Kohlman the answer before that.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Appelbaum,
District Clerk