

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

MINUTES

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION was duly called and held on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 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 Public Library and posted on the district's website. Further, all members of the Board of Education had due notice of said meeting.

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Peggy Marengi, President
Ms. Christina Lang, Vice President
Ms. Jennifer Messina, Secretary
Ms. Marianne Adrian
Mr. Dillon Cain
Mr. James Moran
Mr. Michael Pappas

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Tonie McDonald – Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Chris Dillon – Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Debbie Rifkin – Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Todd Winch – Assistant Superintendent

OTHERS

Mr. Bob Cohen – Legal Counsel
Ms. Elizabeth Appelbaum – District Clerk
– Student Liaison MacArthur High School
– Student Liaison Division Avenue High School

- A. Ms. Marengi, President, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:30 PM. She asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and requested a moment of silence for all those serving our country at home and abroad. On a motion by Mr. Moran seconded by Ms. Adrian and approved (7-0) that the Board adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of seeking legal advice from the Board's Attorney.

- B. The Board reconvened to Public Session at 7:30 on a motion by Ms. Adrian seconded by Mr. Cain and approved (7-0). Ms. Marengi read a statement from the Board of Education regarding an employee's posting on his personal social media account. Additionally, Ms. Marengi read a letter of apology from this employee.

Note: The order of the agenda was changed to allow for Public Be Heard to start at the beginning of the meeting. (Comments appear at the end of the minutes).

II. REPORTS

A. Recognition

i. Art Display

Ms. Marengi asked everyone to look around the room to see all the beautiful art work from the East Broadway School.

B. Student Presentations

i. Chromebooks Advance Student Learning

Dr. McDonald announced that the building Administrators, students and staff from Salk and Wisdom Middle Schools have prepared a virtual presentation on how Chromebooks have advanced student learning at the Middle School level. Mr. Avena, Principal of Wisdom Avenue School, explained that the presentation would be on the Google classroom and Google breakout rooms which are as important to the process of education as they simulate small group instruction of past years. The breakout room allows teachers to have remote and hybrid students participate in the same activity in a small group. The students and teachers shared their experiences and expressed how much they enjoyed working with this program. Mr. Winch commented that these presentations give us a little bit of a glimpse into our classrooms and some of the wonderful things that are going on with the various tools that the Board has approved for use in the classroom. Dr. McDonald stated that children enjoy this program and it's very engaging for them.

C. Superintendent

1. Comments and Reports

A. Districtwide Safety Plan Update

Mr. Milano gave an update on the Safety Plan. He reported that early in December the State Education issued a new Regulations regarding the information that needed to be included in the District-wide Plan. He shared that the information is directly related to COVID-19. Mr. Milano stated that the plan was revised and will be made public for a 30 day public comment period. He was asking the Board to officially approve this. Mr. Pappas complimented Mr. Milano and his staff for the wonderful job they are doing keeping the buildings clean and disinfected.

B. Budget 2021/2022 School Year

i. First Draft

Dr. Dillon handed out the binders which included a calendar of budget presentations and budget topics by month, the first draft of 2021-2022 Rollover Budget, and a Transportation Presentation. He noted that these binders will be updated as each meeting progresses. He stated that the District's goal remains the same which is to create a budget that maintains and supports our current programs while incorporating the Board of Education Goal. As financial and fiscal security is essential to the future well-being of the District and the community, the Board makes as its goal to develop, in conjunction with the District Administration, a sound budget that is within the tax levy limit. Dr. Dillon emphasized that it is very early in the budget process and that there are a lot of unknowns some of which are: COVID related expenses and operation for the 2021-2022 school year; tax levy information; State Aid Projections, BOCES program costs; estimated enrollment and staffing.

He went over the Budget Planning Calendar and what is included in building the Budget. He reported that as of now the rollover budget is 3.25 %. He stated that our primary goal is always to be financially responsible. The budget reflects and supports the Board of Education Goals and looks for ways to reduce expenses without impacting programs. Dr. Dillon discussed the preliminary Revenue Budget where estimates concerning the Property Tax Levy limit indicates there will likely be less than 2.00% increase based on CPI and early indications are likely that State Aid could be continued to be cut for the remaining school year and decreased for the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Pappas commented that the estimated State Aid reductions are terrifying and there is no way a District can function with these cuts at the level that we are functioning now. Dr. Dillion said that the talk right now is of cutting all aid which includes expense driven aid and foundation aid.

ii. Transportation

Dr. Dillon introduced Ms. Dajuana Reeves, Supervisor of Transportation and Mr. Jesse Tomeo, the Mechanics Supervisor. Dr. Dillon advised that they are doing an incredible job in terms of operations, repairing our buses, and running the department in the middle of a crisis. He thanked them both. Ms. Reeves presented the Transportation Budget. She reported on the Goals of the Transportation Department, number of staff, current District routes, students transported daily, equipment, summary of purchase history, and proposed bus purchase breakdown for 2021-2022. Mr. Pappas had a question on the percentage of change for the students transported daily from last year to this year. Ms. Reeves responded that since some students are now on hybrid, remote learning or the parents have the option of driving them to school, our numbers have decreased with an approximate percentage of not more than 20%. She reported on our purchase history for buses from 1999 to present. She remarked that over the past three years, the District's replenishment plan has helped us have more usage out of the buses. She reported that a lot of work is needed to maintain buses that are older due to corrosion and lack of parts. She remarked that we now have less than 10 buses that are over 20 years old. Mr. Pappas stated that it is better to buy buses on a continual bases and keep a flat level as much as possible otherwise it could cost the District millions if you have to buy buses all at once. Ms. Reeves spoke about the Department's points of pride such as the largest in-house Transportation Department in Nassau County; annual DOT Inspection rate over 90%; continued training for staff and students in safety regulations and requirements, especially for stop the Bleed; on-line applications for Private/Parochial schools and medical transportation requests; replenishment of repair tools including diagnostic equipment that will improve efficiency and decrease out of service time; and implementation of the Servicfinder Software to digitize repair records and inventory parts that are ordered. Mr. Pappas asked if all of our drivers are trained on "Stop the Bleed." Additionally, he asked if this equipment is on every single bus right now and where are they kept on the bus. Ms. Reeves responded that all drivers are trained on this procedure but the kits are not on the buses this year because of COVID. She stated that the kits will be kept in the driver compartment of the bus where the first aid is usually kept. Mr. Pappas recommended that the kits be put on the bus now in case they are needed. Dr. Dillon wanted to thank Mr. Milano, Mr. Tomeo and Mr. Gunn for their collaborative effort working with the garage. He stated that having them as been an additional asset. Ms. Reeves reviewed the planned initiative for 2021-2022, for example recruiting drivers and attendants for the District; maximizing route efficiency with software utilization and updates; continuing to decrease daily out of service vehicles; and additional safety initiative in reporting Drug & Alcohol Testing for current and incoming employees with the NYSDOT system. Mr. Pappas asked if we still train our own drivers and do they need a license. Ms. Reeves responded affirmatively. Mr. Pappas questioned whether we have reached out to the PTA or sent out ConnectEd messages regarding our need for drivers. He noted that it if we don't have enough drivers it will cost us more money to contract out for bus runs. We can do it here more efficiently and cheaper than private companies. Ms. Rifkin advised that she did reach out to the community through a ConnectEd e-mail for a variety of positions and got a good response. She pointed out that a lot of

people have retired or left because of COVID. She mentioned that they have been advertising in Indeed and a few different recruiting systems. Mr. Pappas wanted to make sure that we advertise in our community. Mr. Moran suggested advertising in the Chief newspaper which is a Civil Service newspaper and to reach out to the Levittown and Wantagh Fire Departments for the recruitment of drivers. Ms. Reeves discussed the department's Budget Historical Perspective for 2021-2022 and noted that the year to year change for her department is 20.8%. Dr. Dillion reported that although it is a large increase the primary drivers are a certain fixed cost and the outside drivers are contractual. He stated that McKinney-Vento has been increased and the District cannot challenge it. Dr. Dillon explained that McKinney-Vento is when a student becomes homeless the District is required to provide transportation for them regardless of where they live up to 50 miles. Dr. McDonald remarked that where the additional expansion of this is that it also pertains to foster children. Mr. Pappas asked if the District can use smaller vehicles. Dr. McDonald responded that we can but it is not always advisable. Ms. Marengi asked how many students do we have at this present moment that fall under the McKinney-Vento Act. Ms. Reeves remarked that off-hand she did not know but would provide the information at a later time. Ms. Adrian commended the Transportation Department for the wonderful job they are doing during this pandemic. Dr. McDonald acknowledged what an incredible job Ms. Reeves is doing behind the scenes. Ms. Reeves shared that it is a team effort.

2. Follow-up to Prior Public Be Heard Questions
(none)
3. Follow-up to Board Questions
(none)
- D. Board of Education
 1. Comments and Reports
(none)
 2. Correspondence
(none)
 3. Student Liaisons

James Katcher, the student representative from MacArthur High School, reported on the events at his school: a successful toy drive was held run by the Business Honor Society; the Key Club created a sentimental "Thank You" card for each and every staff member and delivered them just before the break; best of luck to the approved athletic sports for a successful season; Science is running strong with virtual lectures and discussions; students are registering for discussions on various topics; NS the Junior College Planning Night will be held virtually via Zoom.

Student Liaison, Jasmeet Sahota, shared the events at Division Avenue High School: students in semester classes are preparing for Final exams; the PSAT is being offered; low risk sports will have the opportunity to start the Winter sports season; a senior has been selected as one of 25 High School seniors from New York State to be nominated for the 2021 United States Presidential Scholars Program; during the holiday season the Chamber Choir, Orchestra and Band performed three separate virtual performances; and this month Guidance Counselors are visiting English classes virtually to schedule students for the 2021-2022 school year.

Dr. McDonald shared that we have been hanging the pictures of all of the Student Liaisons along with their name plates on the wall in the hallway by her office. Ms. Lang commented that she loves hearing the student liaisons speak and she feels it is the highlight of the meetings. She stated that she is amazed by the student's and the stories they bring to us. It shows how resilient they all are and thriving in a situation that is heartbreaking and terrible in so many ways but yet there are so many wonderful things happening.

III. PUBLIC BE HEARD

Comments appear at the end of the minutes.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes - Approval of Minutes

RESOLUTION # 20-21-197

MOTION: "Make the necessary corrections and move the approval of the minutes of the December 9, 2020 Regular Board Meeting."

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

2. Business Office Reports

RESOLUTION # 20-21-198

MOTION: "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, accept the following reports from the Business Office:

- Appropriation and Revenue reports for the period 7/1/20 to 11/30/2020
- Treasurer's report for the month ending November 2020
- Trial Balance for the month ending 7/1/2020 to 11/30/2020
- Credit card statement from Citibank for statement dated 11/22/2020, 12/6/2020 and 12/22/2020."

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

3. Budget Transfers

RESOLUTION #20-21-199

Motion: "WHEREAS, in compliance with New York State Government Accounting practices, the attached budget transfers has been prepared and recommended by the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance,

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**JANUARY 13, 2021
REGULAR MEETING**

<u>Code</u>	<u>Code Description</u>	<u>Amount From</u>	<u>Amount To</u>
A2116.4750-00-2100	TRAINING/TRAVEL MUSIC	\$18,500.00	
A2110.4350-00-2100	INSTRUMENT EQUIPMENT RENTALS		\$18,500.00

Reason: To cover rentals of musical instruments. Note, each instrumental student pays the Instrument Maintenance Fee, the revenue of which offsets rental expenses.

A5510.1600-00-000	TRANS BUS DRIVERS	\$65,000.00	
A5540.4000-00-000	TRANS CONTRACTED BUSES		\$65,000.00

Reason: To cover increased cost associated with contracted routes for Special Education and McKinney-Vento students.

A2114.4800-00-2500	SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS	\$20,000.00	
A2115.4800.00-1500	WORLD LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS		\$20,000.00

Reason: To order workbooks for middle school Spanish for 2021-2022 school year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the attached budget transfers.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marenghi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

4. Town of Hempstead Cares Act

RESOLUTION # 20-21-200

MOTION: "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Levittown School District to sign all documentation associated with the Town Of Hempstead Cares Act Funding on the District’s behalf."

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marenghi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

5. Approval of School Clubs

RESOLUTION #20-21-201

MOTION: "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the attached Extra Classroom Activity Club Charters for the 2020-2021 school year."

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

6. Modification of Employment Agreements

RESOLUTION #20-21-202

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the Modification of the Employment Agreements between the Levittown Union Free School District and Dr. Tonie McDonald; between Levittown Union Free School District and Mr. Todd Winch; and between Levittown Union Free School District and Dr. Christopher Dillon as per the terms of the attached agreements;

NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the Board of Education is authorized to sign the attached Extension of Employment Agreements.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

7. OATH OF OFFICE

Dr. Tonie McDonald, Superintendent, was administered the Oath of Office by Mr. Cohen.

8. Memorandum of Understanding - Confidential Employee

RESOLUTION # 20-21-203

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Levittown Union Free School District and confidential employee: Gean Moringiello as per the terms of the attached Memorandum of Understanding dated January 1, 2021;

NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the Board of Education is authorized to sign the attached Memorandum of Understanding.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

9. Contract for June 2021 Commencement - Hofstra University

RESOLUTION #20-21-204

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the attached contract between the Levittown Public Schools and Hofstra University for two high school graduation rehearsals and ceremonies for Division Avenue HS and MacArthur HS to be held at the David S. Mack Sports Complex of Hofstra University on June 2, 2021 and June 19, 2021;

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

10. Out of District Contracts for Health and Welfare Services RESOLUTION #20-21-205

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the attached contract between the Levittown Public Schools and the following school districts to provide health and welfare services to students attending schools in these districts for the 2020-2021 school year:

- Seaford Union Free School District
- Uniondale Union Free School District

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education President is, hereby, authorized to execute these contracts.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

11. Special Education Contracts RESOLUTION # 20-21-206

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the attached contracts between the Levittown Public Schools and the following vendors to provide special education services as indicated:

- Cleary School for the Deaf

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education President is, hereby, authorized to execute these contracts.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

12. Obsolete Equipment

RESOLUTION # 20-21-207

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, declare the equipment on the attached list obsolete and that the item may be discarded and/or sold at the highest possible salvage value.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

13. Obsolete Books

RESOLUTION # 20-21-208

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, declare the books on the attached list obsolete and that the item may be discarded and/or sold at the highest possible salvage value.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

14. Schedules

RESOLUTION # 20-21-209

MOTION: That the Levittown Board of Education approve the following Schedules:

- 1001 “Resignations, Certified Personnel”
- 1002 “Resignations, Non-Instructional Personnel”
- 1003 “Appointments, Certified Personnel”
- 1004 “Appointments, Administrators”
- 1005 “Coaching”
- 1006 “Designation, Consultants”
- 1007 “Appointments, Non-Instructional Personnel”
- 1008 “LOA, Certified Personnel”
- 1009 “LOA, Non-Instructional Personnel”
- 1010 “Salary Change”
- 1011 “Permanent Status, Non-Instructional Personnel”
- 1012 “Students with Disabilities”

AMEND AS FOLLOWS: Schedule 1001.2, #28 the resignation date is changed to 1/15/2021.

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marenghi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

15. Add An Agenda Item

RESOLUTION # 20-21-210

MOTION: “RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, suspend the policy rules to add an agenda item, #16.

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Marianne Adrien
SECONDER:	Mike Pappas
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marenghi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

16. Personnel Agreement

RESOLUTION #20-21-211

MOTION: “RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby ratifies the agreement between the Levittown Union Free School District and Employee No. 3961.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Christina Lang, Vice President
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Secretary
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marenghi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. New Business

1. Gifts to Schools

RESOLUTION #20-21-212

MOTION: "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, accept with thanks the following gifts:

- Hand sanitizers and face masks to be donated to the District from Ms. Judy Rooplal AC Solution Services, 220 Sprucewood Drive, Levittown, NY 11756
- Musical instruments as per the attached to be donated to the Gardiners Avenue Jazz Band from Luz Flores, 65 Ring Lane, Levittown, NY 11756.”

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	James Moran
SECONDER:	Marianne Adrian
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

NOTE: Dr. McDonald commented that in these difficult times it is amazing to that at every single Board Meeting people are still donating to our District. She stated that we have a nice community.

VI. AD HOC

1. Board Policies - First Read

Policy No. 3421 Title IX and Sex Discrimination

Ms. Rifkin discussed this policy stating that we are not required to have a new policy, not an update to our existing policy #3421. She explained that this new policy is similar to our policy our Sexual Harassment Policy. She remarked that the new policy is specifically for Title IX Federally Funded Programs. The Board agreed to place this policy on the next meeting Agenda for approval.

VII. MOTION TO ADJOURN

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED (7-0-0)
MOVER:	Dillon Cain
SECONDER:	Marianne Adrian
AYES:	Adrian, Lang, Marengi, Moran, Pappas, Cain, Messina

The Board adjourned the public meeting at 9:10 PM.

Elizabeth Appelbaum
District Clerk

NOTE: Tapes of the meeting are available for review at the Levittown Library.

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'S OFFICE.

The guidelines pertaining to Public Be Heard were read by the Board President.

Erin Biener 23 Hollow Lane, Levittown

Ms. Biener, an alumni and current school district parent, spoke about her displeasure at the Board's letter addressing the comments made by a teacher on his personal social media. She commented that she did not receive any letter from the District when a gay epithet was displayed on school grounds. Ms. Biener asked where the Board's disheartened feelings were then. She shared that as a student, she was harassed in the hallways at the high school for being openly LGBTQ and denied a gay straight alliance club. She feels that the letter does not represent what the community is all about. Ms. Biener pointed out that the District only protects certain students not all of them. She does not want any disciplinary action to be taken against this employee.

Lin Testamark 86 Tanager Lane, Levittown

Ms. Testamark wanted to address the Facebook post made by a District employee. She commented that while the post was ill-advised and arguably more aggressive in nature than it should have been, she believed that it was made by someone who felt a sense of rage and disbelief at the event that unfolded on Wednesday, January 6th. Although she felt the profanity was inappropriate, the sentiment was felt by many in our community that members of a minority and or protected group. Ms. Testamark stated she thinks it is imperative that we all remember that members of these groups felt overwhelmingly attacked and terrorized by the sites of nazi and neo-nazi flags posted in our capitol building and the inherent threats that they symbolize posed to their safety. Seeing police that opened barriers or took selfies left many feeling hopeless, helpless and betrayed. I would also like to address the people who say if an employee said such hateful things towards black people, they would be fired. I would like to remind everyone that race, religion and nationality are protected classes unlike one's choice of a profession or career. Finally, I would like to state that all of us in the community do appreciate those hard-working decent members of our police force but we must acknowledge that there are those that are not living up to their oath. I do not think that any further action should be taken against this employee.

Carol Donohue 140 Haven Lane, Levittown

Ms. Donohue came here tonight to offer support to the teacher. She remarked that she heard his apology for the first time tonight, and she believes it is heartfelt and sincere. Ms. Donohue remembers her Father, a World War II Veteran, telling her that the worst day in America's history was Pearl Harbor. She commented that she lived in New York City on 9/11 and thought that was the worst day in history but last week on January 6th, what she witnessed by terrorists made her outraged and very upset. Ms. Donohue feels we need classes on empathy and to have empathy in our hearts for this employee. She feel that what he expressed was felt by many that day. She does not feel that any further action should be taken against this teacher.

Walter Hetzel 96 Cotton Lane, Levittown

Mr. Hetzel, a proud graduate of Division Avenue High School and a policeman of 18 years, wanted to apologize to everyone for his mistake of talking to a reporter on Channel 12 News during the recent rally. He felt his remarks were taken out of context and had nothing to do with Blue Lives Matter or being a cop. He explained that the reason he is upset is because he teaches his children to listen to both sides of every story. He pointed out that we have a lot going on in our lives with the Presidential race, COVID, and everyone is under pressure. Mr. Hetzel does not blame this teacher for being very upset as we all are. He reported that he was in front of the school the other day because of the hatred and anger that was displayed from this teacher. He understands what this employee was going through since we are all going through it. He advised that we need to fix this by showing more compassion than hate in the school. He stated that he does not want this teacher to lose his job because of his comments especially since so many people are out of work due to this virus. Mr. Hetzel accepts the teacher's apology. He commented that we all need a way to come together and stop the hate.

Laura O'Brien 82 Lea Ann Terrace, Wantagh

Ms. O'Brien wanted to know what the plan was going forward for students. She asked if plexiglass will be ordered for the future so that we can start having the option of getting these children back to school. She reported that she had an endless amount of data to support schools going back. Ms. O'Brien noted that she teaches in a school on Long Island that is adding more days to be in school. Additionally, she stated that several neighboring schools have been back full time since September. She feels that the hybrid version is awful and creating a very lazy environment for children. Ms. O'Brien stated that if children are back at school they will be more serious and it will improve their mindset. She wanted to thank all the teacher who are absolutely amazing and always there for the children. Ms. O'Brien asked that we try really hard to get our children back in school.

Ms. Marengi, stated that although the Board does not usually comment during the Public Be Heard, she want to address Ms. O'Brien. She advised that all of the Board members agree that there is nothing more important than education and having all of our students back at school. Ms. Marengi commented that the number one issue is safety and the number two issue is education. She explained that every decision made by the Central Office Team led by Dr. McDonald is made based on the guidelines given to us by the State. Additionally, she remarked that we have space constraints in our middle schools and high schools which is determining whether we are in school full-time or part-time/remote/hybrid. She mentioned that it is not because we don't want our students back. Ms. Marengi shared that as a former Administrator at another school District, there is no doubt that our children are being hurt emotionally, socially, academically and psychologically. She noted that we work hard every day to try every way we can to fill every single space so that we can have as many students back at school. Ms. Marengi reiterated that she does not want anyone in the community to think that the Board likes this hybrid model. She told Ms. O'Brien that we hear you and agree with you but we are doing every single thing we can staying within the guidelines of the State and the Department of Health.

Ms. Marengi thanked everyone who spoke this evening and expressed how they feel. She stated that it is very important to use our Board Meeting to express what we think should be going on in the Community.