

Regular Meeting

A Meeting of the Board of Education of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District was held on Monday evening, June 6, 2011, beginning at 6:00 p.m., in the Board Conference Room at William J. Brosnan School, 158 Laurel Avenue, Northport, New York, with Mr. Stephen V. Waldenburg, Jr., Chairperson, opening the meeting and presiding.

Members present: Ms. Julia Binger, Mr. Joe Gannon, Mrs. Kristen Gavin, Mrs. Lori McCue, Mrs. Donna McNaughton, Mr. Andrew Rapiejko, Mrs. Jennifer Thompson, Mr. Stephen V. Waldenburg, Jr., Mrs. Karen Wills

Members absent: None

Also present: Dr. Marylou McDermott, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Terry Bouton, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources  
Ms. Kathleen Molander, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Mr. Matthew Nelson, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Administration  
Ms. Mary Anne Sadowski, Board Counsel

1. President Waldenburg called the meeting to order.

Motion was made by Trustee McCue, seconded by Trustee Gannon, to convene in Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to contract negotiations and matters pertaining to the employment history of particular individuals.

Unanimously carried.

At 7:55 p.m., the Board reconvened in public session in the large cafeteria at William J. Brosnan School.

Public attendance: There were approximately 100 persons present.

2. Mr. Waldenburg led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance; and
3. Pointed out the emergency exits.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, TREASURER'S REPORT AND MONTHLY SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Motion was made by Trustee McCue, seconded by Trustee Gannon, to approve all items under 4.01

- 4.01 Minutes

- 4.01.1 Public Hearing, May 9, 2011
- 4.01.2 Special Meeting, May 17, 2011
- 4.01.3 Special Meeting, May 31, 2011

Unanimously carried.

Motion was made by Trustee Wills, seconded by Trustee Gannon, to approve all items under 4.02

- 4.02 Treasurer's Report and Monthly Summary of Receipts and Disbursements:

- 4.02.1 Treasurer's Report for the period April 1, 2011 through April 30, 2011
- 4.02.2 Monthly Summary of Receipts and Disbursements for April 2011

Unanimously carried.

4.03 For Information: Claims Auditor's Report for Warrants and Schedule of Claims and Payroll Audit

4.03.1 Warrants and Schedule of Claims for payment dated:

February 2011 (Wire Transfer Report), February 15, 2011 (Accounts Payable Warrant), February 11, 2011 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), February 28, 2011 (Accounts Payable Warrant), February 25, 2011 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), February 2011 (Claims Audit Report), March 2011 (Wire Transfer Report), March 15, 2011 (Accounts Payable Warrant), March 11, 2011 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), March 31, 2011 (Accounts Payable Warrant), March 25, 2011 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), March 2011 (Claims Audit Report), April 2011 (Wire Transfer Report), April 15, 2011 (Accounts Payable Warrant), April 8, 2011 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), April 30, 2011 (Accounts Payable Warrant), April 21, 2011 (Payroll Trust & Agency Warrant), April 2011 (Claims Audit Report)

4.03.2 Payroll Audit for distributions dated:

February 11, 2011 (Northport High School), March 25, 2011 (East Northport Middle School), April 8, 2011 (Ocean Avenue Elementary School), May 6, 2011 (Dickinson Avenue Elementary School)

5. SPECIAL REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. McDermott announced that Relay for Life, a wonderful community event spearheaded by Mr. David Storch, was held at Northport High School on Saturday.

Dr. McDermott commended Dickinson Avenue Elementary School Principal, Anne Whooley, for assisting an ill parent during the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Washington Trip and for taking care of her Dickinson Avenue family. Dr. McDermott presented Ms. Whooley with a dozen roses.

5.01 Accomplishments of Staff and Students

5.01.1 Mr. Scott Pellegrino, Elementary Science Instructional Coordinator, introduced the following elementary student Science Fair Award Recipients:

Brookhaven National Laboratory Elementary School Science Fair

Meghan Guydish, Kindergarten, "Colors of Light: The Best Color for Beans"

Paige Schilling, Kindergarten, "Cloudy with a Chance of Lean Meatballs"

Peyton Schilling, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, "Gluten Free Paper Mache"

Leah Stratigos, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, "Which Toothpaste Works Best?"

Keito Judson-Teranishi, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade, "Will the Most Popular Chocolate for Eating Make the Most Popular Brownies?"

Isabella DeBrino, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, "Weather the Weather"

Julia Bartlett, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Weather or Not"

5.01.2 Mr. Bryan Horan, Science Research Coordinator, introduced the following Middle School Science Fair Award Recipients:

Northport Middle School's Science Fair 1<sup>st</sup> Place Winners

Emily Ramonetti and Cheri Zheng-Fredericks, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, "The effect sounds have on the growth of green bean plants"

Katie Eyring, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Keep it hot!"

Olivia Wallace and Campbell Bereck, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, "Stained or smudged"

5.01.3 Dr. Patricia Schmitt, English Chairperson K-12, introduced the following English Award Recipients:

Dartmouth College Book Award  
Molly Baron

Fairfield University Book Award  
Janna Nunziato

President Waldenburg and Dr. McDermott congratulated the award recipients and presented them with a commendation from the Board.

5.02 For Information – Review of changes to the Elementary School Conduct and Discipline Handbook for grades K-5 and changes to the Middle School Student Handbook

5.02.1 Elementary School Conduct and Discipline Handbook for grades K-5

5.02.2 Middle School Student Handbook

5.03 The President of the Board reviewed the upcoming meetings of June 20<sup>th</sup>, July 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Organization, and August 29<sup>th</sup>

5.04. Review of Instructional Initiatives in the following area:

5.04.1 Mr. McGrath noted in follow-up to his Technology Initiative presentation that the Project Lead the Way program has been recertified and the certification process went quickly and smoothly. The certification representatives from Rochester spoke very highly of the department and its goals and initiatives.

Mr. McGrath stated that the 2010-2011 Science Initiatives include utilizing *Moodle* content management system as a tool to survey, assess, and revise current elementary science curricula to include opportunities for differentiation of instruction; utilizing professional development opportunities to improve articulation between the elementary science curriculum for grade five with the middle-level curricula for grades 6-8 to best prepare students for success on the Intermediate Level Science Assessment; and utilizing professional development opportunities to develop procedures for design and implementation of common mid-year assessments in all Regent-level science courses as a vehicle for measuring student growth.

Mr. McGrath noted strong achievement in the elementary level science performance and reviewed the Grade 4 data. Mr. McGrath also stated there was strong achievement in the intermediate level science performance and reviewed the Grade 8 level science assessment data. At the commencement level, Mr. McGrath noted strong overall performance levels in Regents, Advanced Placement and IB science course exams, and reviewed the corresponding data.

There was a brief discussion regarding science research sequence, the Brookhaven National Laboratory Environmental Stewardship, Regents exam results, intermediate level science assessment results, differentiation of instruction at the elementary level, and the AP and IB programs.

President Waldenburg thanked Mr. McGrath for his informative report.

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS

President Waldenburg read the following statement:

“I want to take this opportunity to speak to the community because there have been issues raised both in public meetings and the local media with regard to the Board’s conduct relating to Executive Sessions.

The Board of Education is the legally constituted corporate governing body of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District. As such, the Board acts in accordance with authority and responsibility vested in it by federal and state laws, rules, and regulations on behalf of the district’s students and citizens. Each member of our corporate board takes an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the State of New York to the best of his/her ability as a trustee. I believe all of our trustees are dedicated public servants who respect their ultimate responsibility of being stewards of the public trust. Nothing is more important to each of them and myself than our personal and professional integrity.

In its governance, the Board has a myriad of responsibilities: to assure high quality education for each of its students, to provide long range planning for the District, to craft district-wide policies, to monitor fiscal responsibility and to confer tenure on well deserving professionals.

Most of the Board’s work is conducted in public session through action where items are presented to the Board to review, discuss and vote upon. Sometimes however it is necessary for the Board to convene into Executive Session for topics that may not be discussed in public. The use of Executive Session to discuss these topics, protects the best interest of the District and protects the rights of an individual or corporation. Some of these topics include but are not limited to items that would endanger public safety, information related to a criminal offense, the employment history of an individual or corporation, or the sale or lease of real property.

In recent weeks there have been published statements indicating that the Board of Education through its advisory audit committee convened improperly into an executive session to discuss the District’s internal audit report. Although fact the reason stated for the executive session “to discuss the internal audit report” was not valid, two of the topics anticipated and ultimately discussed in that Executive Session were. It was anticipated that the employment history of both a corporation and an individual as they related to the internal audit were to be discussed. They were in fact discussed. If this individual and/or corporation were discussed in public, it would not only show a lack of respect for those being discussed, but could financially harm the district by exposing it to potential litigation.

Therefore, the intent of the Board was not to conceal the District’s financial information in the audit report since it was subsequently posted on the District’s website but to protect the identity of an individual or corporation and ultimately the District itself.

Since that time, the Board has been most deliberate about the reasons stated for convening into Executive Session, adhering strictly to the letter of the law. Even the Committee on Open Government opined that the District, with regard to its Executive Session, is in full compliance with the Open Government meetings law. Although the reasons for an executive session must be posted, minutes are not taken because these discussions must remain confidential for reasons already stated.

As President of the Board of Education, I ask that you understand the Board’s collective commitment to the honor of our District and community. We will continue to serve our children and fellow residents with the sincerity and integrity this community deserves.”

Vice President Wills read the following statement:

“I moved to this District in October of my freshman year of high school. I was already enrolled in an all-girls’ Catholic High School in Syosset. Although I’d lived in East Northport, I did not feel like I was a part of this community until my children attended the Northport-East Northport Schools. I began volunteering as the recording secretary of SEPTA. Eventually, I was elected the Co-President of SEPTA,

Co-President of PTA Council, and President of FRIENNDS. When I was first elected to the Board of Education in 2008, I felt that it was an honor and a privilege to hold the title of Trustee. I immediately rolled up my sleeves and went to all of the trainings that were required and spent nearly 3-4 evenings a week attending various meetings and functions as a representative of this Board. I took this responsibility very seriously and have always respected the rules by which to carry out the stewardship to which I was entrusted. In this role, nothing has been more important to me than my personal honor and integrity.

At the suggestion of a community member, I decided that I would attend the audit committee meetings. In fact, many Board members have sat in on these meetings, so that we may become more informed. Recent editorials in a local paper stated that I was an “architect of moving a discussion of the audit committee’s financial audit behind closed doors”. This is untrue. To suggest that this action was “suspicious and unfair to the public” is not a matter of debate. It is a matter of ethics and morality.

In all of my ten years plus of dedicated service to the Northport-East Northport Schools my professional integrity has never been called into question. I have enjoyed many years of volunteering and have gotten to know some wonderful people. I can comfortably say that this is my home.

My most memorable and rewarding personal experience was handing my daughter her diploma. I have been there when your children reached milestones of progress, big and small. I have also been there to share in your unimaginable losses. I have attended many events where your children have set records and broken them! When I look to the accomplishments of your children, I feel so proud to have served them and you.

As I look forward to my final days in office, and putting this subject behind me, I would like to thank all of you who have sent me an email, a card, stopped me in passing, or made a phone call. It has really meant a lot to me that you have shared your unwavering support for the work I have done. I’d also like to thank my fellow Board members and Superintendent McDermott and all of her staff. And, thank you for giving me this tremendous opportunity.”

6.01 E-mail from Mr. Will Sneid, received May 23, 2011, re: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade German

Mr. Sneid did not attend the meeting. There was a discussion of middle school German enrollment, the possibility of merging classes via video link, and offering German in a hybrid online environment.

6.02 E-mail from Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Josephson, received May 31, 2011, re: Special Education

Mrs. Josephson addressed the Board and stated that she is concerned about the change in the Special Education Department in the District, noting that the Special Education philosophy, culture and organization are changing. Mrs. Josephson stated that approximately 900 students are classified and more and more students are going to BOCES for screenings. Children not fitting into a mold are being forced out at every level which is unfair and discriminatory. Mrs. Josephson stated that special needs children should not be isolated and only taught with special needs students.

Vice President Wills stated that the Board of Education cannot supersede a CSE determination and that the District has always been very accommodating in terms of reaching out to students and providing programs. Mrs. Wills stated that she supports and recommends to her fellow trustees that they support Special Education in the District to the fullest extent possible.

President Waldenburg stated that he agreed with Vice President Wills and encouraged Mrs. Josephson to setup a meeting with the Superintendent.

There was a request for the Special Education department to present initiatives.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

President Waldenburg stated that all communications go to the Board members and the entire board sees all communications.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Lori McCue Board Trustee	Stated that the Art and Music Festival was held on Sunday and the talent of the students in art, music, fashion and individual performances was outstanding.
Jenna Rugile Parent	Stated that she has four kids in the district and the Bellerose 5 <sup>th</sup> grade chorus won gold with distinction honor at NYSSMA and should be honored at a Board meeting. Mrs. Rugile requested an opportunity to discuss privately with other parents the personnel issue at Bellerose.

Dr. McDermott stated that the District was directed by Board Counsel not to discuss personnel matters.

Ms. Mary Anne Sadowski, Board Counsel, stated that it is not appropriate to entertain a discussion back and forth and that matters of personnel are subject to privacy.

Dr. McDermott stated that she cannot talk about reasons why people may or may not be coming back to the District. Dr. McDermott stated that no decisions are made lightly. They are made with careful judgment, always with the best interest of the children. Dr. McDermott noted that any action taken is done with very careful consideration and a full evaluation of any professional that works in the District.

Debbie Sullivan Patch.com	Asked if there was an update on contract negotiations
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President Waldenburg stated that there has not been an update.

Pete Mainetti Parent	Stated that the Board should discuss as much as possible in open session before going into executive session. Mr. Mainetti asked if there will be a point in the future when the public will be able to get information on what happened with the Bellerose Avenue teacher.
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Ms. Mary Anne Sadowski, Board Counsel, stated that personnel decisions are reserved to the purview of the Board of Education and to protect the rights of the individual employed by the District.

Monica Greenwood Parent	Stated that this is the second time in a short period that a teacher has been terminated midyear. Ms. Greenwood stated that the Board should consider the audience when the news is presented and a better procedure is needed.
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Antoinette Blanck UTN President	Stated that she is greatly concerned about the confidentiality of the individual being discussed and urged the Board of Education to do whatever it can to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the UTN's members and staff.
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Rob Dennis Language Teacher	Stated that he is concerned that there will not be enough interest in the German language at the high school next year. Mr. Dennis stated that he wants a global department that offers a variety for students.
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President Waldenburg stated that he would personally welcome any suggestions to increase interest in the German language.

Fred Trudwig, Jr.  
Parent  
Asked if the legal matter regarding reimbursement for the special needs program from Albany has been resolved and if the District has received money from the State.

Ms. Kathleen Molander, Assistant Superintendent for Business, stated that the District has received approximately \$1.4 million from the State through the assistance of Special Education Chairperson Allison Giaimo.

Andrew Rapiejko  
Board Trustee  
Asked if there was a possibility of offering an introductory German class in the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade.

There was a discussion of offering German as a second language choice, student interest in sign language, and assuring students that their language choice will be available in the higher levels.

Motion was made by Trustee Gannon, seconded by Trustee McCue, to approve all items under 8. and 9., including Supplemental 8.01.2 (Schedule B #7-11) and Supplemental 8.02.2, and excluding severed item 8.01.5

8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, GENERAL

8.01 Personnel Schedules, each dated June 6, 2011, and each attached and made part of the official minutes:

- 8.01.1 Schedule A – Certified Staff
- 8.01.2 Schedule B – Non-Instructional Staff (including Supplemental #7-11)
- 8.01.3 Schedule D – Extra Pay
- 8.01.4 Schedule J – Committee on Special Education
- 8.01.5 SEVERED
- 8.01.6 Schedule M – Tenure

8.02 Receiving for a first reading the following textbooks:

- 8.02.1 Reading for Writers English Composition, Grade 11  
Jo Ray McCuen-Metherell, Anthony C. Winkler  
Wadsworth, Cengage Learning
- 8.02.2 Go Math! Math, Grades K-5  
Dixon et.al. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

8.03 Approving a request to the State for an exemption from the requirement for a breakfast program

8.04 Rescinding the following policies (second reading):

- 8.04.1 Policy #4116.24 “Personnel – Duties and Responsibilities”
- 8.04.2 Policy #9410 “Date of Board Elections”
- 8.04.3 Policy #9510/9520 “Absentee Ballots/Disabled Voters”

8.05 Authorizing the Superintendent to sign a Revocable License between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District for use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Northport Medical Center's pool in Building 88 to provide Continuing Education and Recreational Programs

8.06 Approving requests for travel for students to countries outside of the United States

during the 2011-2012 school year:

Italy (Verona, Venice, Florence, Rome) April 4 – April 13, 2012

Spain/Portugal (Lisbon, Seville, Cadiz, Malaga, Morocco) February 17 – February 26, 2012

9. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT FINANCIAL

9.01 Taking specified action on the following BIDS:

EDUCATIONAL:

9.01.1 Award – Science Supplies & Equipment

9.01.2 Award – Art Supplies & Equipment

9.01.3 Award – Technology Supplies & Equipment

9.01.4 Award – District-wide Printing

9.02 Receiving the following donations to the District:

9.02.1 \$1,000 from Martha Florin to the Michael C. Kauffman Memorial  
Scholarship

9.02.2 \$500.00 from David Quigley to the Laurene G. Quigley Memorial  
Scholarship

9.03 Approving transfer of general fund appropriations in the 2010-2011 budget

9.04 Authorizing the Board President to sign a contract with the following district to provide Health Services for Northport-East Northport students attending school in that district during the 2010-2011 school year:

9.04.1 Commack Union Free School District, twenty (20) students attending Holy Family Regional School, and two (2) students attending Jewish Academy @ \$550.95, totaling \$12,120.90

9.05 Approving a New York State Bar Association Grant in the amount of \$6,366.10 to be used to support the expenses related to the 2011 Law and Civic Education Summer Institute to be held at Northport High School June 27 through June 30, 2011.

9.06 Approving an engagement letter from Albrecht, Viggiano, Zureck & Company, PC for the preparation of the June 30, 2011 financial statements.

9.07 Approving the following resolution:

“BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the Employee Benefit Accrued Liability Reserve pursuant to General Municipal Law Section 6-p for the 2010-2011 fiscal year in the amount of \$6,703.96 and to increase the appropriations A9089.1601.00.6001 by \$6,703.96”

Vote on Trustee Gannon’s motion to approve all items under 8. and 9., including Supplemental 8.01.2 (Schedule B #7-11) and Supplemental 8.02.2, and excluding severed item 8.01.5 was unanimously carried.

President Waldenburg congratulated High School Assistant Principal Nelson Iocolano and District Chairperson of World Languages Jennifer Nesfield on their tenure approval.

Motion was made by Trustee Gannon, seconded by Trustee McCue to approve item 8.01.5

8.01.5 Schedule L – PDC UTN



In response to a question, Principal Whooley stated that regular substitute special education teachers will be provided and there is a strong teaching assistant for support in the classroom. Ms. Whooley stated that she is confident that there will be appropriate support for the students on that day.

Vote on Trustee Gannon's motion to approve item 8.01.5 was unanimously carried.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

10.01 Schedule H – Use of Facilities

10.02 Schedule I – Home Instruction

10.03 Student Activity Account Reports for April 2011 from:

10.03.1 Northport High School

10.03.2 East Northport Middle School

10.03.3 Northport Middle School

10.04 Investment Report for April 2011

10.05 Collateral Schedule for April 2011

10.06 Bank Reconciliation Report for April 2011

10.07 Monthly Revenue and Budget Status Report as of April 2011

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

11.01 Motion was made by Trustee Gannon, seconded by Trustee Wills, to approve the following resolution:

“BE IT RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association support an amendment to the Suffolk County Tax Act, Bill A03911, to adjust the tax collection schedule to coincide with the encumbrances that are incurred by school districts starting with each fiscal year commencing July 1, so as to reduce the interest incurred as a result of the acquisition of tax anticipation notes (commonly referred to as TANs)”

Vice President Wills stated that she spoke with Dr. Mensch from Western Suffolk BOCES asking their support in cosponsoring the resolution. Mrs. Wills requested a letter be sent to Western Suffolk BOCES and the Commack Union Free School District asking for their support.

Dr. McDermott stated that this will have far reaching implications for all of Suffolk County.

Vote on Trustee Gannon's motion was unanimously carried.

12. NEW BUSINESS

12.01 Discussion of school bus seating capacity

Vice President Wills stated that on May 3, 2011 the State Education Department released a clarification of the Commissioner's decision regarding providing a bus seat for every student. Mrs. Wills asked if the administration could investigate what kind of cost savings the District could possibly see.

President Waldenburg stated that on counsel's advice the District has based seating calculation on every potential child in a bus route. Mr. Waldenburg stated that the Commissioner's statement gives more latitude to base decisions on typical ridership.

Trustee Thompson asked if the exit polls from the May 17, 2011 Budget Vote could be evaluated and a summary report given to the Board.

Dr. McDermott stated that Ms. Mathers will work with the District Clerk to put the results in a format to the Board.

12.02 Motion was made by Trustee Waldenburg, seconded by Trustee Wills, to approve the following resolution:

“RESOLVED, that the President of the Board of Education is authorized to execute an Employment Agreement dated June 6, 2011 between the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District and Dr. Marylou McDermott”

Unanimously carried.

District Clerk Beth Nystrom administered the Oath of Office to Superintendent McDermott.

At 10:30 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, motion was made by Trustee Wills, seconded by Trustee McNaughton, to adjourn the meeting and to convene into Executive Session to discuss the appointment of particular persons and the employment history of particular employees. These matters cannot be discussed in public because doing so would violate the right of privacy.

Unanimously carried.

At 1:00 a.m. the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

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Beth M. Nystrom  
District Clerk

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