

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING – March 23, 2020**  
**Via Zoom Meeting**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATION PRESENT</b>
Mrs. Archer Dr. Corcoran Mrs. Deforest Mrs. James-Murad Mrs. Petrosillo Mrs. Rhodes Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz Mr. Souser Mrs. Woodcock Dettor William Guisbond		Dr. Smith, Superintendent Mr. Decker, Business School Administrator Mr. Reyes, Assistant Superintendent

Via Zoom, Mrs. Petrosillo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. There was a roll call to confirm all present.

Others in attendance via Zoom that identified themselves: Cynthia Andreatta, Robin Carruthers, Kerry Coleman-Herrick, Susan Glisson, Joe Goldberg, Cynthia Heaslip, Donna Oppedisano, Mary Panek, Kitty Robinson, Christiana Semabia, Kevin Sommer, Amy Spitzer, Bruce Van Schaick, Rachel Wagner.

**District Status Report Regarding  
Response to COVID-19**

Dr. Smith updated the Board on the District's response to COVID-19. He reiterated that the District has had guidance provided by the NYSED, US Dept. of Education, the Onondaga Dept. of Health, and the County Executive and he turns to our legal counsel for interpretation and guidance.

The District has an Emergency Response Team which consists of Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent, Business Administrator, Principals and Asst. Principals, Director of Health and Physical Education, Director of PPS, Transportation Director, Director of Facilities and Director of Food Services. The focus is on student medical needs, continuity of education, meals and child care.

Dr. Smith explained how there has been some conflicting information regarding the 180 day requirement. Originally, County Executive ordered schools closed through Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. When the Governor closed, his Executive Order stated schools closed through March 31<sup>st</sup>. Currently, we are only closed through March 31<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Smith said he is expecting an update to that shortly and he reassured the Board that all of the days the district has been closed have been within the window provided by Governor.

Dr. Smith explained the meaning of continuity of education, which is informed by guidance from the State Education Department. He said that education must be designed for all students and information has been sent to all staff. The expectation is daily work should be provided to all students. As a District, we are able to grant credit through this work, while being closed, as long as a student has met state standards and has demonstrated growth. Modifications will be made as needed. At the K-8 level, counselors and/or school psychologists are checking in with the students via

email or phone. Dr. Smith stated that a detailed record of all work provided and completed will be maintained in case we are audited.

Dr. Smith reported that Phase 2 of the continuity of learning plan will be discussed at an administrative staff meeting tomorrow. Areas that will be addressed are how are we assessing progress, what are we doing for different skill levels, how well are students working independently, should more technology or less technology be used, and should we increase or decrease expectations.

He shared the update from New York State that all elementary and middle school assessments and/or testing have been suspended through the end of the school year.

Dr. Smith said with K-8<sup>th</sup> grades, to ensure that all students have equal access to learning, we are taking a low tech approach to work. In the High School, teachers are using Google Classroom as their primary learning platform. He said that he is extremely proud of the teachers and administrators in designing programs. He said there is no doubt that it is not perfect, and that they are receiving all kinds of feedback. He also said that a critical piece to this is to step back and identify what we have learned and continue to build on the strengths and adhere to statewide continuity of learning expectations.

Dr. Corcoran asked about grading and that she was curious how it would be done equitable. Dr. Smith responded that the question has come up and it is challenging. Mr. Gasparini has a lot of feedback at the High School level. Most of the conversation has been focused around feedback from the students, how are they progressing with the work they are doing. Some teachers are taking input and thinking about how we hold kids accountable while being sensitive to the unique circumstances. Mr. Gasparini is navigating this area with other principals. The middle and elementary school levels are identifying how kids are doing and progressing with the focus on learning.

Mrs. Archer asked if there has been any thought about how much contact students will have with teachers on a weekly basis. Dr. Smith stated that he has laid out of a series of expectations, part of which is accountability and an appropriate target to reach. He said we set the bar appropriately and the teachers will meet it.

Mrs. Archer asked about the access to Spectrum providing free internet for students. She said that if there is an outstanding bill, they can't get the free service. She asked if there is another plan in place. Dr. Smith responded that this is a countywide discussion. He is hoping that as a community, we can help to identify this resource for the students.

Will said he has received emails from teachers. He thanked the teachers and staff for all their hard work. He wanted to know what a prolonged closure might look like.

Dr. Smith stated that first, we would look for guidance as to students being allowed entry to regents exams. Dr. Smith has heard nothing from the State at this point.

Mrs. Rhodes asked what we have to provide to show the continuity of education. Dr. Smith responded that he has submitted three different reports to the state concerning continuity of learning, food service, and child care.

Mrs. Rhodes asked if it was broken down by district or level and Dr. Smith responded both.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked what support is being given to teachers. Dr. Smith responded that there has been overwhelming resources available. These tools are all coming so fast and teachers need to wade through to see what will be useful to their students. We need to identify what resources we need, as we help kids become self directed learners. He said some kids will thrive and some will struggle, resources will be needed.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked if we are getting feedback from teachers or parents yet and is there any way to gage how they are adjusting? Dr. Smith said there is a lot of antidotal information coming in, and a lot of information from teachers.

Mrs. DeForest asked if we are concerned about Social Emotional Learning with the primary kids and how they learn to interact with others, how we help them continue the interactions in the future. Will this be part of Phase 2?

Mrs. Archer stated that Moses DeWitt's Social Worker is posting YouTube videos. She said it would be great to see this district wide.

Mrs. Rhodes asked, with all the resources that have popped out overnight, are the building level directors supporting them or is this part of curriculum development. Dr. Smith responded that there are teams of teachers, grade level and across the buildings which are also being supported by the principals as well. All grade level teams have an idea of where they need to go, they know the targets they need to hit and have the capability and experience to do so.

Dr. Smith stated that the availability and distribution of meals is guided by the State Education Department. He had to provide a plan to the State Education Department and Onondaga County. The County is making sure all kids have access to child nutrition. He said that as of today (3/23/20), the County has added a new piece which is reporting our daily numbers. The requirement is that we provide meals to all students who would normally receive free and reduced lunch, as well as to all students 18 and younger. Dr. Smith said he had hoped that everyone had seen the notices about the meals and the three locations, Jamesville Elementary, Moses DeWitt Elementary and the High School. He said there are grab and go breakfasts and lunch at the three locations every weekday. On Fridays, meals for the weekend can be taken as well. Dr. Smith reported the numbers for the last week at the different locations. He also stated that there is an email for people who need meals delivered. He said the numbers were fairly high and he was pleased that people were accessing and using this resource. He visited the sites and reported that things are going smoothly. He said the systems are set up to provide meals to anyone that shows up, in a way that maintains the social distancing guidelines. He said he spoke with the Food Services Director who said there is enough inventory to last for a

month. At some point, more food will have to be ordered. He said that this is a model program. The food service workers and manager are doing a great job. The people are working with a smile.

Mrs. Rhodes asked for clarification as she has had questions about who can access the free meals. She said she is not sure the community is 100% clear that any child in the district can access this. She said she thinks that this is a wonderful program and we should continue to keep the message going that it is available to all.

Mr. Souser stated that this phenomenal that we are able to do this. He stated that he thought the numbers seemed high and asked what Dr. Smith feels the numbers are attributed to. Dr. Smith responded that he has no basis to attribute the high numbers to. He said that on Wednesday, there was a low participation rate but he was surprised at the number of meals sent out for this weekend. Dr. Smith said that although there is no way to predict what this will look like over the next few weeks, the key is to make sure we are prepared for whatever comes at us. He is confident in the food service workers.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked what safety precautions are we taking for making deliveries. Dr. Smith responded that the standard social distancing protocols are being used while preparing food, standard handwashing and cleaning protocols utilized and with the deliveries, everyone is gloved and leaving food at homes within the appropriate distance.

Dr. Smith reported that we are required to establish a plan for child care. It was announced that we were required to submit a plan to the State Education Department last Thursday. He said that we scrambled to find out what we were supposed to do and during that time we gained more information. The School District is being used a conduit for child care. Primarily what we are doing is providing a list of child care providers within the school district. This information has been provided to the State Education Department. At this point, Dr. Smith said he is waiting for feedback.

Dr. Smith asked if Mrs. Archer, Dr. Corcoran or Mrs. DeForest has any more information on this or anything to share. Mrs. Archer replied no and Dr. Corcoran stated that we are all basically in the same boat and are collectively working on the problem.

With regard to students and staff, social and emotional needs, we need to level set staff and make sure we address accountability. We need to make sure they are reaching out to students and families and get a better understanding of what everyone is doing and set the expectation.

Dr. Smith gave a shout out to the High School counseling team. He said they sent a warm message out to all students. They gave the students their contact information and asked them to reach out to them if they need to talk.

### **Community Comment Time**

Due to the virtual nature of the meeting, there was no community comment time. The community was directed to email the Board with any comments.

## **Minutes of March 9, 2020 Regular Meeting**

Mr. Souser moved and Mrs. Archer seconded the approval of the minutes of the March 9, 2020 Board Meeting, as amended.

Motion carried (9-0-0).

## **Minutes of March 15, 2020 Regular Meeting**

Mrs. Archer moved and Mr. Souser seconded the approval of the minutes of the March 15, 2020 Board Meeting, as amended.

Motion carried (9-0-0).

## **Claims Auditor Report**

Dr. Corcoran moved and Mrs. Archer seconded the acceptance of the Claims Auditor Report. (See Supplemental Minutes).

Motion carried (9-0-0).

## **Recommendations of the CPSE and the CSE**

Mrs. DeForest moved and Mrs. James Murad seconded the acceptance of the recommendations of the Committee on Pre-School Special Education and the Committee on Special Education from their meetings on January 30, 2020 and February 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 24, 25, 26, and 28, 2020 and March 5, 6, 9 and 10, 2020.

Motion carried (-0-0).

## **Superintendent's Personnel Recommendations**

Mrs. DeForest moved and Mrs. James Murad seconded the approval of the Superintendent's Personnel Recommendations as follows:

### ***INSTRUCTIONAL***

<b>Name and position</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b><u>Request for Leave</u></b> <b>Type of Leave</b>	<b>Effective</b>
Sarah Levesque Science Teacher	M.S.	Parental Leave (Paid)	6/18/20-6/30/20

<b>Name and position</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b><u>Extension of Leave</u></b> <b>Type of Leave</b>	<b>Effective</b>
Jamie Cottet Social Studies Teacher	H.S.	Parental Leave (Paid)	9/2/20-6/30/21

**Extra duty assignments/extended teaching 2019-2020**

**Coaching – Extended Season**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Stipend</b>
Robert Bewley	Boys Varsity Head Swimming Coach	
Patrick Gillette	Boys Varsity Assistant Track Coach	
Jeffrey Ike	Boys Varsity Head Basketball Coach	
Alanna Jones	Varsity Head Cheerleading Coach	
Paul LeBlanc	Varsity Head Wrestling Coach	
Emily Rowles	Boys Varsity Head Track Coach	
Steven Scaramuzzino	Boys Varsity Asst. Indoor Track Coach	
Robert Siechen	Girls Varsity Head Basketball Coach	

Motion carried (7-2-0). Mrs. Rhodes and Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz opposed.

**2020-2021 School District Calendar**

Dr. Smith stated that after much discussion, the Board has come to an agreement that they need to recognize the two Muslim holidays, Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha on next year’s School District Calendar.

Mrs. Petrosillo thanked Dr. Smith, Mr. Reyes and Mr. Decker for their work on making this happen.

Mrs. DeForest stated that she supports the calendar as a first step but asked the Board to reflect on our statement in our Equity Letter to the community that “We want all of our students and families to feel welcome and supported.” To that end, she asked that we continue to discuss how we support students and families of all cultures, races, and religions. She identified some possible considerations including:

- Board of Education - write a letter of support for NYS SENATE Bill 4038 in an effort to show support of the recognition of designated Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Sikh holidays
- Publicizing on our school calendar & school calendar website a list of religious & ethnic observances (Ithaca/Baldwinsville/Andover, MA)
- Establishing Policies regarding Religious Expression in Instructional Programs (Baldwinsville, FM, Ithaca); Accommodations for Religious Observances & Absences/ School Year Calendar Policy (Andover, MA; Needham, MA; Burlington, VT).

She concluded by asking the Board to be more thoughtful, inclusive, and proactive in our approach.

Mrs. James Murad said she agreed that this is a good step. She said we should give some consideration on how we treat other holidays. The first step might be listing all the holidays for educators, for example, when tests shouldn’t be scheduled.

Dr. Corcoran moved and Mrs. Archer seconded the approval of the 2020-2021 District Calendar.

Motion carried (9-0-0).

**Approve Funds to Implement Three-Year Contract  
With Jamesville-DeWitt Faculty Association**

Dr. Smith provided a tentative agreement to the Board for approval. He explained the challenges given during this unprecedented time and asked Mrs. Rhodes to offer any information as chair of the Finance Committee. Mrs. Rhodes explained that the pros and cons have been laid out for the Board and

encouraged the Board to make an informed vote. She said if there were more questions, the Board could adjourn to Executive Session. Both Dr. Corcoran and Mrs. Archer thanked everyone involved for their hard work and effort. Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked how prudent it is to vote on this tonight and Dr. Smith responded that we need to move forward and vote tonight or we could table it and vote at next meeting, but we can't extend the vote further. Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked what conditions would be different at the next Board meeting and Mrs. Rhodes responded that no conditions would be different and we will likely not have our State Aid numbers at that time. Mrs. Petrosillo stated that she is very uncomfortable approving a three year contract right now with the current state of the health care industry. She said she can't approve in good conscience and she can't approve knowing what is around the corner.

Mrs. Rhodes moved and Mrs. Archer seconded the approval of funds to implement a three-year contract with the Jamesville-DeWitt Faculty Association.

Motion carried (7-2-0). Mrs. Petrosillo and Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz opposed.

### **Resolution to Establish a Budget Hearing In Lieu of Annual Meeting**

Mrs. Rhodes moved and James Murad seconded the motion to approve the following Resolution to Establish a Budget Hearing in Lieu of Annual Meeting.

#### **RESOLUTION TO REPLACE ANNUAL MEETING WITH A BUDGET HEARING**

**RESOLVED** by the Board of Education of Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District, as follows:

**Section 1.** A public hearing on the budget in lieu of the annual school district meeting of said School District shall be held at the Jamesville-DeWitt High School, Edinger Drive, Town of DeWitt, New York, on Monday, May 11, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

**Section 2.** The notice of said public hearing on the budget in lieu of the annual school district meeting shall be in the following form; to wit:

#### **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET IN LIEU OF THE ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING JAMESVILLE-DEWITT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Board of Education of Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District hereby gives notice that a public hearing on the budget in lieu of the annual meeting of said School District will be held at the Jamesville-DeWitt High School, Edinger Drive, Town of DeWitt, New York, on Monday, May 11, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., at which time the proposed budget for the School District for 2020-2021 will be presented for review and discussion in anticipation of the subsequent vote thereon by the qualified voters of said District to be held on May 19, 2020.

Notice is hereby given that a copy of the statement of the amount of money which will be required for the ensuing year for school purposes, may be obtained by any taxpayer in the School District at each school house in the District in which school is maintained between the hours of 9:00

a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on each day other than a Saturday, Sunday or holiday during the fourteen days immediately preceding such public hearing.

**Section 3.** The School District Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to cause notice to be given of said public hearing on the budget in lieu of the annual school district meeting in the form hereinabove prescribed by publishing the same in "The Post Standard" and "The Eagle Newspapers," said newspapers having a general circulation within the said School District, four times within the seven weeks preceding such hearing, the first publication to be at least forty-five days before such hearing.

**Section 4.** This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Motion carried. (9-0-0).

### **Approve Propositions for Annual Vote**

Dr. Corcoran moved and Mrs. Souser seconded a motion to place the following propositions before the District residents at the annual school budget vote on May 19, 2020:

#### **Proposition #1 School Bus Replacement**

Shall the Board of Education of the Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District ("District") be authorized and directed to purchase one (1) diesel bus with cameras at an approximate cost of \$96,074, three (3) gasoline buses with cameras at an approximate cost of \$110,000 each and one (1) micro bus with cameras at an approximate cost of \$64,766, not to exceed \$490,840, such sum to be raised by levy of a tax upon the taxable property of the District to be collected in annual installments in the years and amounts as the Board of Education shall determine in accordance with Section 416 of the Education Law and, in anticipation of such tax, issue obligations of the District?

#### **Proposition #2 Purchase of District Dump Truck/Snow Plow**

Shall the Board of Education of the Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District ("District") be authorized and directed to purchase one (1) dump truck/snow plow with an approximate cost of \$244,000 not to exceed \$244,000, such sum to be raised by levy of a tax upon the taxable property of the District to be collected in annual installments in the years and amounts as the Board of Education shall determine in accordance with Section 416 of the Education Law and, in anticipation of such tax, issue obligations of the District?

#### **Proposition #3 Library**

Shall the Board of Education of the Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District ("District") levy and collect a tax in the amount of \$1,489,406 Dollars for the support of the Community Library of Dewitt & Jamesville, pursuant to Section 259 of the Education Law?

Motion carried (9-0-0).

**Budget Discussion – 2020-2021  
Instructional Budget**

Dr. Smith briefly reviewed the budget process to date and then presented the proposed instructional budget for the 2020-2021 school year. (See Supplemental Minutes.) There is a projected overall increase of 2.92% for this segment of the budget. The increase is due to the addition of an Asst. Supt. of Curriculum, Instruction and Equity, increases in staff development/curriculum development, funds to support K-6 ELA program, increase in personnel to support special education model of instructions, increase in costs associated with BOCES Special Education programs, and a technology lease to bring in new technology and replace obsolete equipment. The Revenue and Levy portion of the budget will be presented at the next meeting. Public Forum is scheduled for April 13, 2020.

Mrs. Petrosillo asked if there is any indication of state aid at this point. Dr. Smith stated that at this point, he does not expect any increases in State aid coming to school districts. Mr. Decker confirmed.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Smith stated that he had nothing more prepared other than to recognize the unprecedented times we are in. He said that he has confidence in all our employees and that our food service workers, maintenance, transportation, all staff are stepping up. We are seeing our social workers and teachers reaching out to students and families. Dr. Smith has all the confidence in the work in the Jamesville-DeWitt community. He recognizes the efforts to benefit the students and knows we will continue to strive to do the best we can. He said that we are taking upon ourselves to do our best and he is really proud.

### **Board President's Report**

Mrs. Petrosillo shared the following statement:

Good evening, and thank you for joining us via Zoom!

While most of the country shelters in place and adjusts to this new reality, it's important to recognize our many blessings and be grateful for the opportunity we have to come together as a community to provide a positive example for our children on how to embrace and overcome adversity. This past week presented a new, if not surreal, experience for everyone: teachers, students, parents. The beauty of it all is that we forged our way through the week together; figuring out how to navigate home life, educate our kids, manage our jobs remotely and most importantly, support one another through a new and confusing time in our country's history.

As we begin week 2, it's important that we reach out to people who may be isolated. Use technology to make face-to-face connections. Show your smile. This too shall pass. But as we wait for that day, let's use this opportunity to display our humanity, to exemplify grace and lift each other up. Our children are watching.

### **Unfinished and Continuing Business**

Mrs. Petrosillo thanked Mrs. DeForest for getting the survey out regarding future topics for discussion and asked everyone to please respond to the survey if they hadn't done so yet.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked about a follow-up to the question at last Board meeting on the hiring committee for the assistant principal at the High School and whether we would have the same for the Asst. Superintendent. Dr. Smith responded that he is working on the Committee that will interview the Asst.

Superintendent and currently there will be the Supt., Asst. Supt., representative from the JDFA and the Administrators Association. The candidate will meet with the Board of Education. He stated he is focusing on the expertise of the candidate on leading the school district on curriculum, instruction and equity. He said we are following a model that we have used in the past.

Mr. Reyes also stated that this is part of a model we have used in the past. He said the description is expansive as to what is needed for that position and the different pieces combined lend us to the process we have been following.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz said she would love to see families and students as part of the stake holders of this committee. Mrs. Rhodes agreed and asked how many applications have been received and how many have moved to the first round.

Mr. Reyes responded he has received approximately 70 applications. He is reviewing them now and then Dr. Smith reviews them.

Mrs. James Murad stated that it is important that we have community and parents input in this process.

Mrs. Petrosillo stated that the High School search was broader and asked if we could mirror that for the district position. Dr. Smith stated yes.

Mr. Reyes explained how a candidate field is narrowed down. He said that he separates by all qualified and not qualified. Then he digs into their experience, proper degrees, and certification and moves those candidates to the side. He selects who he would like to see as does Dr. Smith.

Dr. Corcoran asked if the draft of the strategic plan and if the Board would be receiving it to review before next meeting.

Dr. Smith responded that he will get the plan to the Board. He said the management plans are not done but the draft is ready.

Mrs. Petrosillo asked when it will be presented at the Board meeting and Dr. Smith responded April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Mrs. Rhodes asked for an update on the Tecumseh Principal search.

Dr. Smith stated that the first round of interviews had to be postponed but are rescheduled for Thursday of this week. He is hoping to have finalist interviews on April 13, meet with the Board on April 20, and Board appointment on May 20. This will allow plenty of on-boarding time before July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mrs. Rhodes asked how many candidates sent resumes and Mr. Reyes stated between 30 and 40. He indicated that there are 11 candidates that will be screened.

Mrs. DeForest wanted to close the meeting with a huge thank you to everyone in the community; the administrators, teachers, food services workers, etc. She said habits are life skills, as well is persisting in this unprecedented time. She thanked everyone for being open to learning new processes and thinking flexibly.

At 8:37 p.m. DeForest moved and Mrs. James Murad seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried (9-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Decker  
Clerk of the Board

**Board Approved: 5/11/20**