

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
March 1, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT	MEMBERS ABSENT	ADMINISTRATION PRESENT
Dr. Archer	Mrs. James Murad	Dr. Smith, Superintendent
Dr. Corcoran		Mr. Decker, School Business Administrator
Mrs. DeForest		Mr. Reyes, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Gross		Mr. Franz, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Leach		
Mrs. Rhodes		
Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz		
Mrs. Woodcock Dettor		
Max MiMaroglu		

Mrs. Rhodes called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Red Ram Recognition

Mrs. Rhodes recognized ex-officio student board Member, Max MiMaroglu for their selection to the U.S. Senate Youth Program. She shared Max’s accomplishments and said the board is fortunate to have them serving. In addition to the prestigious week long study of the federal government, Max will receive a scholarship.

Mrs. Rhodes recognized Ms. Amy Spitzer, middle school teacher, who has been keeping the J-D Middle School Group, YANA, active. YANA stands for You Are Never Alone which is comprised of LGBTQ students and allies who have been meeting virtually for support, friendships, laughter and a sense of normalcy.

Mrs. Rhodes also recognized Ms. Sabrina Scott, a teaching assistant at the high school for her work in leading the Umoja Club. The Club builds unity among African-American students and other students of diverse backgrounds at J-D and focuses on positive self-image and self-love. Ms. Scott has worked with students to create a virtual presentation highlighting Black History Month.

Community Comment Time

Jean Leiker, Benedicte Doran, Matt Doran, Gera Rezar, and Will Hartley made comments in support of the SRO.

Ben Hughes, Ronna Louise, Rachel Wagner, Ayeh Hajj and Acadia Gilchrist made comments opposing the extension of the SRO contract.

Ruth Arena commented against support of the SRO as well as COVID testing for student athletes.

Donald Sorbello commented about the return to full-time, in person learning.

Approve Minutes of Board of Education
Meetings, February 8, 2021

Mr. Gross moved and Dr. Corcoran seconded the approval of the minutes of the Board of Education meetings of February 8, 2021.

Motion carried (8-0-0).

Accept the Recommendations of the CPSE & CSE

Dr. Corcoran moved and Mrs. DeForest seconded the acceptance of the Recommendations of the CPSE & CSE from January 15, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, and 27, 2021 and February 3, 9, and 11, 2021.

Motion carried. (8-0-0).

Superintendent's Personnel Recommendations

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

INSTRUCTIONAL

Name and position	Location	<u>Change in Status</u>	Effective
Laurie Fabian Home and Careers	Middle School	Additional Class - (\$7,210)	2/1/21-6/25/21

Extra duty assignments/extended teaching 2020-2021

High School – Second Semester

Name	Assignment	Stipend
Jordan Berger	HS Musical Assistant	\$3,152
Dan Blumenthal	HS Musical Instrumental Advisor	\$3,642

Extra duty assignments/extended teaching 2020-2021

Coaching – Fall 2

Name	Assignment	Stipend
Jeffrey Cantor	Modified Football Coach	\$4,202
Jake Cline	JV Boys Head Volleyball Coach	\$3,530
John Lenish	Modified Boys Volleyball Coach	\$2,966
Kyle Michael	JV, Varsity & Modified Coach (Volunteer)	\$0
Brittany Siechen*	Modified Girls Volleyball Coach (7 th grade)	\$3,152
Brittany Siechen*	Modified Girls Volleyball Coach (8 th grade)	\$3,152

*Pending completion of the certification process

Request for Leave

Name and position	Location	Type of Leave	Effective
Kimberly Lewis K-6 Classroom Teacher	Moses DeWitt	Parental Leave (Paid & Unpaid)	3/21/21-6/30/21

Request for Extension of Leave

Name and position	Location	Type of Leave	Effective
Molly Anthony Math Teacher	Middle School	Parental Leave (Unpaid)	3/24/21-6/30/21

Resignation

Name and position	Location	Effective
Caitlin Pompo English Teacher	Middle School	7/1/21

Motion carried (6-2-0). Mrs. Rhodes and Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz opposed.

Mrs. Rhodes explained her reason, as well as Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz's reason for voting no, which is procedural in nature. She said they had a productive meeting with Dr. Smith and are optimistic that moving forward their questions will be answered.

Approve Extension of the School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding through June 25, 2021

Dr. Smith started out by recognizing the extreme division in the community facing this issue as well as the challenge facing the board. He thanked Mr. Franz and Ms. Johnson for their work in facilitation and the members of the task force for their willingness to engage and learn. He explained that although the task force did not come to a consensus on whether or not to move forward with a Memorandum of Understanding, they identified a number of important areas that need to be addressed. Dr. Smith recommended the board move forward with approving the extension of the MOU through June 25, 2021. This timeline will provide the district time to completely rewrite the Memorandum of Understanding using input from the SRO Task Force. Dr. Smith shared a timeline to engage the District Safety Team to review and revise the District Safety Plan as well as present the updated safety plan at a public hearing and a thirty-day public comment period.

Mr. Leach said he thinks it is very important to have an SRO in our building and that it would be irresponsible to not have one.

Dr. Corcoran asked if there has been any study done around emergency response times for the SRO to other buildings and if there was an emergency, would the building use the SRO or call 911.

Dr. Smith responded that 911 should be called if the SRO is not in the building. He also said that if there is any emergency in the building the SRO has a direct channel to emergency responders during a crisis.

Mrs. Woodcock Dettor stated that one board member was absent and that board member served on the Task Force. She asked what would happen should the vote be tied.

Mrs. Rhodes stated that it would need a majority vote to pass and that should it not pass, it would be up to Dr. Smith to bring forward in a subsequent meeting.

Dr. Smith said the MOU will sunset on March 26th and the next Board of Ed. Meeting is March 15th.

Max asked if the current MOU specifically states the SRO is not to be used as a disciplinarian. Dr. Smith responded yes.

Max stated that if they were a voting member of the Board, they would vote to not extend the MOU as we have not taken into account minority voices and because we are asking to extend a policy without changes, which has been harmful to at least some students.

Dr. Archer asked where the Task Force is with the specific qualitative data that described perceptions of students of color.

Mr. Franz stated that both he and Ms. Johnson have followed up with individuals to learn how they can learn more.

Dr. Archer asked if there has been any analysis of the data and Mr. Franz responded not yet, and that there is still collection to be done.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked about when the Safety Team will be meeting to discuss the results of the SRO Task Force and Dr. Smith stated that he is firming up a couple of members and has slated meetings from the end of March through the end of April.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked if the Board is being asked to approve the MOU before the safety team convenes. Dr. Smith responded yes, that was the plan from the beginning. The Task Force would provide a recommendation and the safety team would use that input as part of revisions to the safety plan.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked if she was correct to say none of the data says schools are safer with an SRO. Mr. Franz responded that is accurate based on research and from speaking with experts.

Max asked if the District Safety Team is the group that originally recommended hiring the SRO. Dr. Smith responded correct.

Max asked if this the same team that is questioned for its make-up and how it represented our school. He also asked if we have made strides to diversify the team and have members been added.

Dr. Smith stated that is what is being worked on and why the dates are not firm.

Mr. Gross stated that he is voting yes tonight as he does not want to leave the school without a resource and feels we should make staff and students aware of the roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Leach moved and Mrs. Woodcock Dettor seconded the approval of the Extension of the School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding through June 25, 2021.

(4-4-0) Motion failed. Dr. Archer, Dr. Corcoran, Mrs. Rhodes and Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz opposed.

Approve Participation of School Athletes in Higher Risk Sports of Football and Volleyball and the Modified, JV and Varsity Levels

Dr. Smith shared that to date, we have been testing all athletes every week and have had no positive cases of COVID-19. Dr. Smith reminded the Board that when the higher risk winter sports were approved, it was agreed that spectators would not be allowed, but the topic would be revisited. With the successful start of winter sports, Mr. Goodson, Athletic Director, is recommending that we open up sports to spectators limited to senior parents for the final games of the season. Dr. Smith recommended this as well. He said that higher risk fall II sports are scheduled to begin on March 8. These include boys and girls volleyball at all levels, football at all levels and cheerleading. He said the Athletic Department was responsible for creating a sports specific preparedness plan which has been approved by the school's physician. (See Supplemental Minutes).

Dr. Corcoran asked if the athletes will be tested right away and Dr. Smith responded the first test will be March 10th.

Dr. Corcoran asked if we are talking about other activities and Dr. Smith responded that advisors for the High School musical have been approved and other activities are beginning.

Mrs. Rhodes asked how many times the athletes have been tested so far. Dr. Smith responded that he was unsure but once they began the testing, it has taken place every week. Mrs. DeForest shared that as a parent of an athlete, she said it has been three or four times they have been tested. Mrs. Rhodes asked if we need a motion for the spectators and Dr. Smith responded that he believes it is more of an understanding that this will be allowed pursuant to previous discussions and the District Preparedness Plan.

Dr. Corcoran asked who will manage the plan and Dr. Smith responded Mr. Goodson and the Athletic Department will chaperone and monitor the events.

Mrs. Rhodes asked for any concerns, otherwise, they will understand they are flexing the plan to meet county guidelines.

Dr. Archer asked if spectators are subject to temperature checks.

Dr. Smith responded that he was not sure about that but will be documenting who is in the building for contact tracing.

Dr. Archer asked if allowing spectators at contests is consistent throughout the section. Dr. Smith responded no.

Mrs. Woodcock Dettor stated she believes the issue of spectators is an operational decision. There was a decision about whether or not the Board would vote on spectators and at that time, it was decided that the board will not vote on spectators but give direction and guidance to Dr. Smith.

Dr. Smith confirmed that for the remainder of the current season, senior athletes would be allowed two spectators. For the upcoming sports season all athletes would be allowed two spectators as long as we stay within capacity limits provided by the county. Mrs. DeForest asked if the contests would continue to be live streamed. Dr. Smith said yes. Mrs. DeForest asked if we would allow spectators from other districts and Dr. Smith said we will be starting out allowing spectators from our district and will need to do an assessment of the capacity of bleachers.

Mr. Leach moved and Mr. Gross seconded the approval of participation of School Athletes in Higher Risk Sport of Football at the Modified, JV and Varsity Levels.

Motion carried (8-0-0).

Mr. Leach moved and Mrs. DeForest seconded the approval of participation of School Athletes in Higher Risk Sport of Girls Volleyball at the Modified, JV and Varsity Levels.

Motion carried (7-1-0). Dr. Archer opposed.

Mr. Leach moved and Mr. Gross seconded the approval of participation of School Athletes in Higher Risk Sport of Boys Volleyball at the Modified, JV and Varsity Levels.

Motion carried (7-1-0). Dr. Archer opposed.

Policy Review – Second Reading

The following policies brought to the board for a first reading were reviewed:

- 6470 [Tutoring for Pay](#)
- 8260 [Title I Parent and Family Engagement](#)
- 8320 [Selection of Library and Multimedia Materials](#)
- 8330 [Objection to Instructional Materials and Controversial Issues](#)
- 8340 [Instructional Materials](#)
- 8350 [Use of Copyrighted Materials](#)
- 8360 [Religious Expression in the Instructional Program](#)
- 8420 [Opening Exercises](#)
- 8430 [Independent Study](#)
- 8440 [Home Instruction \(Home Schooling\)](#)
- 8450 [Home Tutoring \(Homebound Instruction\)](#)
- 8460 [Field Trips](#)

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz said Policy # 8260 needs to be customized for the district. Mr. Franz said we compared how other districts customized this policy. He said after completing the Title I application this year, many of the components are included and required for submission of the grant.

Mr. Gross asked for an extenuating circumstance related to tutoring for pay. Dr. Smith responded, one student is enrolled in a class where there is only one teacher in the district that teaches that class.

Mr. Reyes said there was one change to Policy #8320, letter (a) to speak to equity and includes more information.

Mrs. Rhodes asked if there was any input from the Metro Center. Mr. Franz said not for this particular policy.

Mr. Reyes said in Policy # 8330, Mr. Franz's title was added, as well as an appeal process.

Mrs. DeForest asked about the district website and the list of who to contact and alignment with new policies. Dr. Smith said we need to review the website to make sure that is up to date. Mrs. Rhodes asked if while we are reviewing the website the district would look at the staff search function.

Mr. Reyes said that there was one change in Policy # 8340; we removed language regarding instructional materials for access. He said we have several different resources. Mrs. Rhodes asked for elaboration on that and Mr. Reyes said the specific company the policy services called out is NIMAC, National Instructional Materials Access Center, for larger print materials. He said the district personalizes materials for students as needed. Mrs. Rhodes suggested including language in the policy that says we will work to provide accessible materials to students. Dr. Smith said there is a line in the policy that we can use that meets the intent of Mrs. Rhodes' recommendation. Mrs. DeForest asked where software fits in. There was a discussion around this and it was decided that it would be brought back with changes.

Mr. Reyes said in Policy # 8360, language was removed to make it more inclusive. Mrs. Rhodes asked about if the policy service recommended best practices around this policy as so much of historical music is intertwined with religions. Mr. Reyes responded that the spirit of the policy is to include religious music in historical and cultural context rather than to elevate faith. Dr. Smith said he believes our teachers would welcome this language as guidance.

Mr. Reyes said Policy # 8420 had a slight modification where language was clarified.

Mr. Reyes said Policy #8440 had some necessary edits including adding his title, as well as the district not allowing use of facilities, textbooks, materials or extracurricular participation.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz said with regard to Policy # 8460 we elected to keep the policy we currently have. Mrs. Rhodes added that this policy has language which provides no child will be excluded due to financial reasons.

Potential Consideration for Future Meetings

Dr. Smith shared that there is a virtual meeting scheduled for March 15th, with the Town of DeWitt to discuss areas of common interest. He said Mr. Decker, Dr. Corcoran, Mr. Gross and Mrs. Rhodes will attend and an invitation will be extended to Max as well.

Budget Discussion: Athletics and Central Office

Dr. Smith gave a review of the budgeting process to date and presented the Athletics and Central Office portions of the budget (see Supplemental Minutes). There is a 5.48% increase in the Athletics segment of the budget with the drivers being salaries, training, and uniforms. There is a 7.19% increase in the Central Office segment of the budget with the drivers being salaries, communication services, and BOCES capital and rental costs. He noted that the communication services line of the budget is aidable and we will receive approximately 50% of the cost as revenues in the following year.

Dr. Corcoran asked about what the communications cost covers. Dr. Smith responded that this covers two dedicated days of service as well as additional hours. These additional hours have been used to revise the newsletter and will be used to redo the district website. In the future, hours can be used to increase the district's social media presence. Dr. Smith explained that the Instructional portion of the budget will be discussed at the next meeting. He also said they are waiting on information regarding revenue and how the federal stimulus package will impact the budget.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Smith updated the Board on discussions around additional in-person learning opportunities. He talked about the reduction of the six foot social distance requirement to three feet and how it would significantly change our capacity. He is expecting updates from the County Executive and the Department of Health within the new few days. He said that the administration is working on a parent survey to be sent out after more information is received. Dr. Smith reported that he has been working on a data dashboard and is expecting to have the first version of that ready for the next meeting. He said it will include attendance and performance data. Dr. Smith updated the Board on the number of positive COVID-19 cases and noted that there has been a significant decrease in the numbers.

Board President's Report

Mrs. Rhodes reminded the Board of the upcoming Board of Education retreat on March 22nd. She said it will be virtual and it will be facilitated by the NYSSBA with the focus on building the Board Operations Manual. She said the NYSSBA sent out a survey link and asked board members to complete it if they have not yet done so. Mrs. Rhodes reported that three board members' terms will expire on June 30th. She shared information regarding requirements and submitting petitions and asked anyone interested in board membership to contact Tish Hauser at the Superintendent's Office. Lastly, Mrs. Rhodes shared that she is continuing conversations around the Super Eval product, which is the online format of the Superintendent's Evaluation. She said she is working to set up a meeting to learn more about this product. She said that any money paid towards it is BOCES aidable.

Community Comment Time #2

There were none.

Unfinished and Continuing Business

There were none.

At 9:23 p.m., Dr. Corcoran moved and Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz seconded the motion

Motion carried (8-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Decker
Clerk of the Board

BOARD APPROVED: