

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION – February 14, 2022**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Archer
Mrs. Austin
Mrs. DeForest
Mr. Gross
Mrs. James Murad
Mr. Leach
Ms. McKenney
Mrs. Souser
Ms. Evans

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Zoghby

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Dr. Smith, Superintendent
Mr. Reyes, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Franz, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Timothy Decker

Mrs. DeForest called the meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the District Office.

In attendance were: Mahlon Godley, Delores Perry, Anna Morris and Jacqueline LaSonde.

**Board of Education Statement,
Mrs. DeForest**

Mrs. DeForest read the following statement on behalf of the Board of Education:

Welcome to the Jamesville DeWitt Board of Education meeting for February 14, 2022.

Before we proceed with our agenda, I would like to take a moment to make a brief statement.

As a Board of Education, we abide by the provisions of the New York State Open Meetings Law, which state, in part, that our meetings must be held in such a manner that members of the public are able to witness our discussions and deliberations. And, while not required by law, we do have a policy regarding “public expression,” or Public Comment Time that is a regular part of our meetings. Traditionally, our first Public Comment Time has been dedicated to speakers who wish to address an item on the agenda for the meeting. The second Public Comment Time has been dedicated to any other additional comment that a speaker would like to make.

At our meeting last week on Monday, February 7th, at Tecumseh Elementary, we heard from a number of members of the community, some present at the meeting and others attending virtually. We truly value this opportunity to hear directly from members of the public. And we hope and expect to continue to hear from members of the community in this and future meetings. Please know that some of the training we receive as members of the Board Advises us to listen intently, but not necessarily react to public comments. We recognize this is very different behavior than what may seem natural to many of us. Please be assured that we are listening closely to the feedback we are receiving. This extends to feedback we receive via other forms of communication, such as letters and emails. I, in my role as the President of the Board of Education, will begin a new practice of attempting to summarize comments to ensure we are properly understanding the speaker.

A number of the comments last week reflect what we know about the Jamesville DeWitt School District, and our broader community. There have been times when our systems and procedures have not met the needs of all of our students, staff and families. We can do better. There have been times when we have failed - failed to provide the resources needed by a student or staff member to achieve

at the highest levels. Failed to understand the ways in which language used about race, gender, sexuality or religion can make someone feel excluded and not accepted and welcomed. And even more harsh examples, when the n-word is used in our school buildings and that use is not challenged by those who heard it to call it what it is - wrong.

When we look at the data of our school district, broken down by race, by socioeconomic status, by status as an English Language Learner, by disability - we see differences. And those differences form the basis of the crucial work of the District, particularly as enshrined in one of the four main focus areas of our Strategic Plan. "The Jamesville-DeWitt School District stands united in support of all students, families and staff members. We are committed to providing a safe, caring, inclusive, equitable, and challenging learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment, and to building a community that recognizes diversity as one of our greatest strengths. We fully embrace our rich, diverse community as expressed through race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, natural origin, immigration status, language background, language proficiency, and family structure. We will continuously search for ways to improve the enriched learning environment at our schools, eliminate racism, eradicate disproportionality, and build equity for all students."

*Progress on each of our four Strategic Plan goals may be viewed by many in our community as not proceeding fast enough. We, as board members, all feel that urgency. We also receive questions about the need to prioritize certain work. We also hear this feedback. We are in Year 2 of our Strategic Plan, and we continue to make progress on significant initiatives that will improve our school district for **all** students. These initiatives were developed in collaboration with parents, teachers, administrators, and students in the District during the Strategic Planning Process and will continue to inform our direction moving forward. We will hear more about some of these initiatives tonight, and in future meetings of this Board.*

As we prepared the agenda for this evening, it can appear as though this is "business as usual." This is true and false at the same time. We, as the Jamesville DeWitt Board of Education are required to continue some of the seemingly routine work related to governance of this school district and to prepare a fiscally sound budget for our community which supports the initiatives of our Strategic Plan. And we also acknowledge there is much work still to be done. There is a proverb attributed to Lao Tzu that says "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." With a great deal of input from our community, and in ongoing conversations with our community, we are continuing to take steps forward with this work including - diversifying our workforce so as to reflect our student population; regularly reviewing our curriculum to ensure it is Culturally Response and Sustaining; eliminating barriers that get in the way of student achievement, wherever that exists; addressing social emotional learning and the mental health needs of our students and more.

**Presentation – Athletics
Mr. Goodson, Athletic Director**

Mr. Goodson started out his presentation with thanks and praise to the school nurses for all they have done to support students, families and staff. He said that it has been very challenging but they continue to do their best to keep everyone safe. Next, he shared his presentation with the Board on behalf of Health, PE, Athletics and Nurses. (See Supplemental Minutes). He shared information on how Physical Education and Health are connected to our Strategic Plan, as well as information on learning standards, adaptive physical education, and coaching and certifications. Mr. Goodson shared recognitions that Jamesville-DeWitt has received in the past including best athletic program in Central New York, All CNY Awards, Championships and NYSPHSAA Scholar Athlete School of Excellence and School of Distinction Awards. Mr. Goodson spoke about participation numbers, Booster Club support, mental health awareness and Unified Sports. Mr. Goodson introduced Dante Santos, J-D student, who is the NYSPHSAA Student Athlete Advisory Committee representative. Dante reported

on what the advisory committee is tasked with, including Mental Health, Community Service Projects, and official and coaching appreciation. He shared a sample agenda of the meetings he attends. Mr. Goodson answered questions from the Board.

Red Ram Recognition

Mrs. DeForest congratulated the Jamesville-DeWitt Cheerleading Team for winning their first ever sectional championship. She also congratulated the cast, pit crew and production team of *Matilda*.

Community Comment Time #1

Rev. Bernard Alex commented on his concerns regarding the racial climate that has existed at J-D and requested the findings from the Perception Institute be shared.

Jacqueline LaSonde commented on DEI training and said it should include athletics. Ms. LaSonde said we should have an intentional plan of hiring in place for diverse representation.

Anna Morris commented on cultural connectivity in education and community and said we need to learn to appreciate each other as human beings.

Rachel Wagner commented on the lack of representation at the Board table. She said racial incidents are not being handled and there should be room at the table for these conversations.

Approve Consent Agenda

- a. Approve Minutes of February 7, 2022 Board Meeting
- b. Accept Internal Claims Auditor's Reports
- c. Accept the Recommendations of the CPSE and CSE
- d. [Approve Superintendent's Personnel Recommendations](#), and Substitute Appointments

Mrs. Souser moved and Mrs. Austin seconded the motion to remove item "d" from Consent Agenda to item "4A2".

Motion carried (8-0-0).

Mrs. Souser moved and Mrs. James Murad seconded the motion to remove "item a" from the Consent Agenda to item "4A3".

Motion carried (8-0-0).

Ms. McKenney moved and Mrs. Souser seconded the approval of the Consent Agenda.

Motion carried. (8-0-0).

Dr. Smith and Mr. Goodson answered questions regarding salaries for coaches.

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

INSTRUCTIONAL

Extra duty assignments/extended teaching 2021-2022

Coaching – Spring Season

Name	Assignment	Stipend
Michael Anderson	Girls Modified Lacrosse Coach	\$5,200
Allison Gallagher	Girls Modified Lacrosse Coach	\$4,008
Caitlyn Lawless	Girls Modified Track Coach	\$3,128
Hayley Nies	Girls JV Lacrosse Head Coach	\$6,792
Rebecca Peter	Girls JV Assistant Lacrosse Coach	\$5,020
Melissa Quinn	Girls Modified Lacrosse Coach	\$5,020
Elyssa Rosenbaum	Modified Softball Coach	\$3,006
James Tuck	JV Softball Coach	\$4,489

Extra duty assignments/extended teaching 2021-2022

Resignations Coaching

Name	Assignment	Effective
Kevin Hagan	Modified Baseball Coach	2/4/22
Alan Zimmerman	Modified Softball Coach	2/4/22

Request for Extension of Leave

Name and position	Location	Type of Leave	Effective
Katelin Giorno Math Teacher	MS	Parental Leave (unpaid)	2/28/22-6/30/22

Request for Leave

Name and position	Location	Type of Leave	Effective
Kimberly Kalil School Nurse	Moses DeWitt	Intermittent FMLA	2/7/22-2/6/23

**ADDENDUM TO PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING – February 14, 2022**

INSTRUCTIONAL

Request for Leave

Name and position	Location	Type of Leave	Effective
Ashley Carducci Principal	Tecumseh	Parental Leave (paid)	2/28/22-4/24/22

(See Supplemental Minutes for Substitute Appointments).

Motion carried (8-0-0).

Ms. McKenney moved and Mr. Gross seconded the approval of the Minutes of the February 7, 2022 Board of Education as amended.

Motion carried. (8-0-0).

Resolution for Energy Performance Contract

Ms. McKenney moved and Mrs. Souser seconded the approval of the following Resolution for Energy Performance Contract:

RESOLUTION DATED FEBRUARY 14, 2022

RESOLUTION OF THE JAMESVILLE-DEWITT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT AUTHORIZING THE NEGOTIATION, EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN EQUIPMENT LEASE/ PURCHASE AGREEMENT AND OTHER AGREEMENTS RELATING TO THE ACQUISITION, FINANCING AND LEASING OF CERTAIN EQUIPMENT FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT.

WHEREAS, Article 9 of the New York Energy Law (the “Act”) authorizes municipalities and school districts to enter into energy performance contracts for the provision of energy services, including but not limited to, electricity, heating, ventilation, cooling, steam or hot water, in which a person agrees to install, maintain or manage energy systems or equipment to improve the energy efficiency of, or produce energy in connection with, a building or facility in exchange for a portion of the energy savings or revenues; and

WHEREAS, the Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District (the “School District” or “Lessee”) a school district duly organized and existing as a political subdivision, municipal corporation or similar public entity of the State of New York, is authorized by the laws of the State of New York to acquire, finance and lease personal property for the benefit of the Lessee and its inhabitants and to enter into contracts with respect thereto; and

WHEREAS, the Lessee desires to acquire, finance and lease certain equipment with a cost not to exceed \$1,603,657 constituting personal property necessary for the Lessee to perform essential governmental functions (the “Equipment”); and

WHEREAS, in order to acquire such Equipment, the Lessee proposes to enter into a certain Equipment Lease/Purchase Agreement or similar agreement (the “Agreement”) with a commercial lender, financial institution or other eligible entity authorized to do business in the State of New York and experienced with energy performance contracts, as lessor, (the “Lessor”), the form of which to be approved by the President of the Board of Education of the Lessee; and

WHEREAS, the Lessee issued a Request for Proposals for a performance-based energy savings and operations plan for School District buildings; and

WHEREAS, based on the School District's evaluation of proposals, Day Automation was selected to develop and implement a performance-based energy savings and operations plan; and

WHEREAS, Day Automation has provided the School District with detailed design plans for School District building retrofits, energy savings estimates and proposed financing plans; and

WHEREAS, the School District now intends to authorize the negotiation, execution and delivery of the Agreement and one or more Energy Performance Contracts in an aggregate original principal amount not to exceed \$1,603,657; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Lessee deems it for the benefit of the Lessee and for the efficient and effective administration thereof to enter into the Agreement and the other documentation relating to the acquisition, financing and leasing of the Equipment to be therein described on the terms and conditions therein and herein provided;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of the School District, as follows:

Section 1. In accordance with Section 9-103 of the Act, the School District is hereby authorized, subject to New York State Education Department approval of the energy performance contract and related matters, to enter into the Agreement, an escrow agreement and the other documentation relating to the acquisition, financing and leasing of the Equipment with the Lessor, in an aggregate original principal amount not to exceed \$1,603,657.

Section 2. It is hereby found and determined that the terms of the energy savings and operations plan presented to the Board of Education of Lessee at this meeting, are in the best interests of the Lessee for the acquisition, financing and leasing of the Equipment.

Section 3. The energy savings and operations plan is hereby approved as presented at this meeting, with such changes as shall be approved by the President of the Board of Education of the Lessee or other members of the Board of Education of the Lessee implementing such plan and the execution of the Agreement or such other documents as are necessary in connection with the plan, shall be conclusive evidence of such approval; and the President of the Board of Education of the Lessee is hereby authorized and directed to execute, and the Clerk of the Lessee is hereby authorized and directed to attest, the Agreement and any related Exhibits attached thereto and to deliver the Agreement (including such Exhibits) to the respective parties thereto, and to affix the seal of the Lessee to such documents.

Section 4. The President of the Board of Education, as chief fiscal officer of the School District, is hereby authorized to negotiate, execute and deliver on behalf of the School District the Agreement and all other certificates or instruments required in connection therewith provided, however, that all amounts payable by the School District pursuant to the Agreement shall be subject to annual appropriation of such payments by the Board of Education. The power to prescribe the terms, forms and covenants of the Agreement and the other documentation relating to the acquisition, financing and leasing of the Equipment, including the designation of the Agreement as a "qualified tax-exempt obligations" pursuant to Section 265(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, is hereby delegated to the President of the Board of Education, as chief fiscal officer.

Section 5. The officers and employees of the Lessee shall take all action necessary or reasonably required by the parties to the Agreement to carry out, give effect to and consummate the transactions contemplated thereby (including the execution and delivery of a final acceptance certificate, an escrow agreement, disbursement requests and any tax certificate and agreement, as contemplated in the Agreement) and to take all action necessary in conformity therewith, including, without limitation, the execution and delivery of any closing and other documents required to be delivered in connection with the Agreement.

Section 6. Nothing contained in this Resolution, the Agreement, an escrow agreement nor any other instrument shall be construed with respect to the Lessee as incurring a pecuniary liability or charge upon the general credit of the Lessee or against its taxing power, nor shall the breach of any agreement contained in this Resolution, the Agreement, an escrow agreement or any other instrument or document executed in connection therewith impose any pecuniary liability upon

the Lessee or any charge upon its general credit or against its taxing power, except to the extent that the rental payments payable under the Agreement are limited obligations of the Lessee, subject to annual appropriation, as provided in the Agreement.

Section 7. This resolution is intended to constitute the declaration of the Lessee's "official intent" to reimburse the costs of the improvements described in Section 1 of this resolution with proceeds from the Agreement, as required by Treasury Regulation Section 1.150-2.

Section 8. This resolution is not subject to a mandatory or permissive referendum.

Section 9. The Board of Education hereby determines that the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act and the regulations thereunder have previously been satisfied with respect to the expenditures authorized by this resolution.

Section 10. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its approval and adoption.

Motion carried. (8-0-0).

Potential Consideration for Future Meetings

Ms. McKenney said she would like the Board to have a discussion about community comment time and where they should be on the agenda. Mrs. DeForest indicated that would be discussed later in the Board Discussion section of the meeting.

Dr. Archer asked if the Board could get quarterly updates from the Equity Council.

Ms. McKenney asked for a review of technology (how to prepare for meetings), coaching pay tiers, hiring and training process for coaches and policy for residency and procedure for violation of it.

Mrs. DeForest suggested data to track extra-curricular activities and how it helps students feel more connected at Middle School and High School levels.

Mr. Gross suggested looking at election procedures, to see if there is an alternative to majority election.

Mr. Leach asked for us to look into a way to get input from students on what changes they would like to take place at school.

Ms. McKenney would like a report on inclusion rates for J-D and Mrs. DeForest said this will be part of the PPS report in June.

Budget Discussion – Fringe Benefits

Dr. Smith reviewed the budgeting process to date and presented the Fringe Benefits segment of the budget. Dr. Smith said there is a 5.88% increase in this segment of the budget over last year's budget. He said this is mainly due to increases in the TRS contributions, Workers Compensation, health insurance cost, vision insurance contributions and an increase in unemployment insurance. The Athletics and Central Office portions of the Budget will be discussed at the next meeting. Dr. Smith

shared important upcoming dates for the budget process. (See Supplemental Minutes for Budget Presentation).

Board Discussion: Board Governance Handbook

Mrs. DeForest asked for an ad hoc group to work on the rules and responsibilities of the Board of Education. Dr. Archer will chair the committee and Mrs. James Murad and Ms. McKenney will be on the committee.

Mrs. DeForest gave a history of the Board Governance Handbook Community Comment Time and opened up the floor for discussion.

Mrs. Austin suggested having a full first community comment time and opening it up to those waiting for second comment time, if there was time. Mrs. DeForest shared our rules, which are on the website.

Ms. McKenney asked how people were prioritized if they are in person or virtual. Mr. Decker responded that it is difficult when people email him and don't indicate whether they want to speak on an agenda item or not. Mr. Decker suggested this be clarified. There was a board discussion regarding this topic. Mr. Gross shared the importance of community comment time #1 being based on an agenda item, as these are comments that may inform the decision of the Board on the agenda item. Mrs. Souser said she believes comment time #1 should remain for agenda items, and if there is time left, allow comments from time #2. Mrs. DeForest said she appreciates the time at the end of the meeting for time to make a comment based on reflection of the meeting. It was discussed that a motion could be made to add time. Mrs. DeForest said the most difficult thing right now is not knowing what topic our community members want to speak about. Dr. Archer suggested creating a google form. Mr. Gross suggested increasing the time limit to five minutes for group comments but wondered how to clarify what is a group and also asked for person speaking to put in phonetic pronunciation of name. Ms. McKenney likes the summarization but hopes it won't affect the three minutes for speakers.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Smith provided an update to the Board regarding the investigation into the incident on January 31st where the Zoom meeting was interrupted and the n word was shouted at Ms. Johnson. Dr. Smith said the incident is still being investigated and the police are moving forward. Dr. Smith reflected on the work that needs to be done and shared that he has had conversations with representatives from Vera House, in addition to having a meeting with faculty at Syracuse University surrounding the work they are doing with local schools around hot topics and how to make them learning opportunities. Dr. Smith said he has reached out to the County to reflect on the Promise Zone resources to expand to all schools as well as expanding the Mental Health Clinic to the High School. In addition, Dr. Smith reported that Tecumseh Elementary School held a community wide dialogue with InterFaithWorks that was well attended and well received. He said that we are working with InterFaith Works to extend this community wide dialogue to the other elementary schools and thanked InterFaith Works for working with Mrs. Carducci at Tecumseh. Dr. Smith said that he is concerned that we are not hearing from students about incidents taking place on school grounds and that we are working on how we can better hear, better get incidents reported and better respond. Mr. Franz added that through shared updates in the community through the Equity Council, we need to figure out how to connect early and be sure we are planning for the right problems, understanding what happened and moving forward. The Board asked questions to Dr. Smith about the investigation. Dr. Smith responded that the investigation is in the hands of the Town of DeWitt Police Department and that we are checking in with them regularly. He said Zoom has been responsive and is talking with the Town of DeWitt PD. Dr. Archer said

students experiencing racism and not disclosing it might be a function of the make-up of staff moving forward. Grace said that even after attending high school for four years, she is not aware of the formal reporting process. Dr. Smith provided the Board with an update on COVID-19 including the District's numbers and information on masking and guidance. He discussed where we currently are with lifting of the mask mandate and said he anticipated further guidance after the upcoming vacation break. Dr. Smith said while Governor Hochul will be making a determination based on metrics, there is a possibility that the decision may be left to the District. Dr. Smith said that we are starting to see a shift in language where we are now hearing language on how to keep individuals and/or themselves safe. Dr. Smith shared information on the search plan for the High School Principal with the Board which included where the position has been advertised, the timeline and the make-up of the interviewing committees. Dr. Smith congratulated the athletes as well as all involved with the Hoops for Courage to benefit Camp Good Days. He talked about the success of the Multi-Cultural night at Tecumseh and also congratulated the cast and crew of *Matilda*. Dr. Smith shared information on the Mental Health Clinic which is now open at the Middle School. He said there is a staff member from Helio Health who is working at the clinic. He said that he is aware of the need for greater information about the clinic to be made available to families and that there will be information going home in the form of a flyer with information as well as a plan for one or two nights when families can come to the Middle School and tour the space. Lastly Dr. Smith provided the Board with upcoming events.

Student Board Member Report

Ms. Evans provided the Board with her report which included student compliments, concerns, and suggestions. (See Supplemental Minutes).

President's Report

Mrs. DeForest thanked the Board for their continued participation in the Book Study and appreciates the open and honest dialogue. Mrs. DeForest addressed the community and informed them that the Public Forum scheduled for Thursday, February 17th has been postponed so that the Board can focus on small group dialogue. Mrs. DeForest asked the Board to think about and consider topics for the upcoming Board retreat on March 28th. She said she will be providing an updated list of items for potential consideration, ahead of the next meeting for prioritization. Lastly, Mrs. DeForest said that the community wide dialogue which is taking place at Tecumseh tomorrow is for the Tecumseh community and that Board members should not be attending unless they are "wearing the hat" of a Tecumseh parent and have signed up for dialogue.

Community Comment Time #2

Tiffany Gratien commented on what is being done for the mental health of all students, her concerns with block scheduling at the Middle School and the need to unmask students.

Mahlon Godley requested to comment in person but was not in attendance at the time.

H. Bernard Alex commented on the urgency of releasing the Perception Institute data and making it available to the community.

Christina Sorbello commented on her concerns about block scheduling at the Middle School and the unmasking of students.

Rachel Wagner commented on being culturally responsive, aware of being a white Board, finding ways to make Black and Brown students safe and on the need to conduct an equity audit.

Ruth Arena echoed Rev. Alex and Rachel Wagner's comments and asked for safe spaces for Black and Brown students, and the need for culturally competent counselors.

Christiana Semabia commented on making sure our practices include hiring racially literate and culturally competent employees, and making sure we support the Promise Zone Specialists as well as staff representing our students.

Unfinished and Continuing Business

Mrs. Austin asked if we would be hearing more about the block scheduling and Dr. Smith said yes.

At 10:40 p.m., Mr. Leach moved and Mr. Gross seconded the approval of the adjournment to Executive Session for the purposes of discussing the employment history of a particular person.

At 11:40 p.m., Mrs. Austin moved and Mr. Leach seconded the approval of the adjournment of Executive Session.

Motion carried. (8-0-0).

At 11:42 p.m., Mr. James Murad moved and Mrs. Souser seconded the adjournment of the meeting.

Motion carried. (7-1-0). Mr. Leach opposed.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Decker
Clerk of the Board

BOARD APPROVED: 3/7/22