

DRAFT

GLENS FALLS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

Monday, October 5, 2015
District Office - 15 Quade Street - 7:00 p.m.

- BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. Poulos – President, Mrs. Burton, Mrs. Culliton, Mr. Deason, Mr. Graham, Mrs. Maurer, Mrs. Spector-Tougas
- BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Conrick, Mrs. Kunst
- ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Paul Jenkins – Superintendent, Robert Yusko – Business Director, Christopher Reed, Laurie Parker, Barbara Sealy, Jennifer Hayes, Carrie Mauro, Debbie Hall, Mark Stratton
- STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Katie Arney, Betty Brown, Allison Wolfstich, Heather Ovitt, Brandon Lis, Margaret Sawyer, Jeremy Bouteiller, Suzanne Leyden, Becky Vanderklish, Paul Streicher, Sabrina Columbus, Michelle Aleva, Ryan Aleva
- COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michael Goot, Kristin Greenwood, Nora Borgos, Elizabeth Giblin, Cathy Sweet, Patrick Dowd, Ward Sweet, Kieran Dowd, Brennan Down, Claudia Braymer, Heather Brechko, Scott Palmer

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Poulos, President, at 7:00 p.m.

1. **MINUTES:**
It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mr. Deason, **to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2015 Regular Board of Education Meeting.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)
2. **INFORMATION:**
 - 2.1 **Calendar of Events**

Wednesday, October 7	Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting – 6:00 p.m. Policy Committee Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, November 4	Public Relations Committee Meeting – 6:00 p.m. Technology Committee Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
Friday, November 6	Emergency Release Day – Students dismissed 15 minutes early
 - 2.2 **Superintendent's Report:**
 - Open Houses were conducted at the Middle School and the Elementary Schools. The High School Open House will be held on Wednesday, October 7th.
 - Congresswoman Elise Stefanik visited first grade at Big Cross Street Elementary School, and some of our High School classes. She had an open discussion with our students in Mrs. Strader's SUPA Public Policy class, and enjoyed lunch at the High School. She was very impressed with our school district.
 - Trent Clay put together a number of workshops for our October 9th Superintendent's Conference Day. We have a large number of faculty and staff who are presenting, and we are very proud of our staff and their accomplishments.

The New York Association of School Psychologists:

Elaine Keyes & Flora Corey, NYASP Chapter F Representatives, thanked the Board and said they were here to recognize Michelle Aleva as the Chapter F School Psychologist of the Year. The NYASP is a state-wide organization that represents the profession of school psychology. NYASP serves children, their families, and the school community by promoting psychological well-being, excellence in education, and sensitivity to diversity through best practices in school psychology. Chapter F encompasses the counties of Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Saratoga, Warren and Washington. The Chapter F School Psychologist of the Year award recognizes excellence in the provision of school psychological services. This award is presented by local chapters to individuals who spend the majority of their time (75%) providing direct services to children and families. Michelle's colleagues and administrators submitted outstanding recommendations for her nomination. Michelle is described as a leader in her building, student centered, compassionate, strong-willed, non-judgmental, and hard working. She has been a part of a number of initiatives that serve her students and community, including piloting a high school program that opens doors for students having difficulty attending school regularly due to significant anxiety and depression. She is an integral member of the concussion management team, and has participated in the Capital District Crisis Response Team. She has been a faculty advisor for several school clubs, a ski coach and adaptive ski instructor. These, and many more accomplishments, are all above and beyond her daily responsibilities as a valued school psychologist. We were able to witness Michelle's enthusiasm and drive first-hand during our NYASP Lobby Day this past May. Michelle went above and beyond to make connections with our local legislators to advocate for children's mental health services in schools. We wholeheartedly agree that, as Principal Mark Stratton noted in his letter of recommendation, Michelle embodies the National Association of School Psychologist (NASP) domains of practice. Elaine Keyes also announced they just found out that Michelle was selected as the NYASP Frank Plumeau School Practitioner of the Year, which means she is the top School Psychologist in New York State. Michelle will be recognized at the annual conference which is taking place at Turning Stone Resort, October 22 – 24, 2015. Michelle was given a plaque, and cake was being served after the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Sue Hildebrandt – Frank Plumeau was a school psychologist in the Glens Falls City School District for many years.

Claudia Braymer – Said she is a mom to a 2nd grader at Kensington and will have a child entering Kindergarten next year. She is concerned with the class sizes at Kensington. The second grade classes at Kensington have 26 and 27 students, and she feels they are too large. She said the teachers are having a hard time giving students the attention they need. She hopes the school board will continue to look at the issue not just at Kensington but at all of our elementary buildings. She realizes that some parents voluntarily transferred their children to one of the other schools in the district, which mitigated the problem somewhat but it is only a temporary solution. She asked the school board to consider hiring a third teacher to create additional sections in certain grades or consider hiring more Teacher Assistants.

4. REPORTS:

- High School Student Council – Nora Borgos reported that during the last week of September they held their Spirit Week and homecoming festivities. They had a different dress-up theme for each day, held the annual Homecoming Games on Thursday night, had a successful varsity football game on Friday night, and concluded the week with the Homecoming dance on Saturday night. This year, we started a new program called the “Clash of Classes”, where each grade earns points for different activities. The class with the most participation for each spirit day won 10 points, the class that won the homecoming games won 50 points, the class with the highest attendance at the dance won 35 points, so on and so forth. The whole point system is going to continue throughout the whole year, and it's going to encourage kids to become more involved in school events. Volunteer

activities and donations to canned food drives are some more examples of events that students can gain points for. The winning grade will receive a to-be-determined prize. Hopefully we will eventually be able to involve things such as good attendance and honor roll students being rewarded with this system as well, to encourage students to be well rounded. On October 1, the school had pink-out day for breast cancer awareness, and Student Council sold lavender ribbons in support of all cancer research for \$.50 each. The Student Council made a total of \$50.00 to donate to cancer research. As reported to you last May, Student Council will be choosing a President and a Vice-President from within the council. We will be holding these elections on Thursday, October 15th.

- Middle School PTSA – Kristin Greenwood reported this week was the Scholastic Book Fair. The Book Fair will be from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. each day. The evening hours will be on Thursday, October 8th from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. The annual fall fundraiser has kicked off. The fundraiser consists of catalogs which have items such as wrapping paper, candles, and gifts and so on. Orders are due on October 16th. The first 5/6 Activity Night is being held on Friday, October 16th from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., and it will be sponsored by the PTSA. The theme is Game Night. Some of the activities scheduled are Minute to Win It competitions, board games, a Wii room and more.
- Curriculum Committee – Dr. Poulos reported the Curriculum Committee met prior to the Board meeting. Mr. Clay gave a presentation on our test scores from the 2014-2015 school year with comparisons to the last couple of years. Mr. Clay also went over Regents testing, our graduation rate, which is going up, and initiatives to help improve scores.

5. ITEMS FOR ACTION:

- 5.1 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mr. Deason, to **arrange for appropriate special education programs and services as recommended by the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0) (A copy of the recommendations is included with these minutes).
- 5.2 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mrs. Culliton, to **approve Warrant 3A, 3B and the Internal Claims Auditor's Report.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0) (Attached).
- 5.3 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mrs. Culliton, to **approve the 8th Grade Field Trip to Boston, MA on Friday, June 10, 2016.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0) (Attached).
- 5.4 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mrs. Culliton, to **approve the Early Graduation of Sheana Ure.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0) (Attached).
- 5.5 It was moved by Mr. Graham, seconded by Mrs. Culliton, to **approve Two High School Performing Groups to attend a Music Showcase Festival in Hershey, PA on Friday, May 20, 2016 – Saturday, May 21, 2016.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0) (Attached).

Mr. Deason – With all the trips that we are approving, if a student cannot afford to pay, do they still attend? Do we lower the cost for students?

Mrs. Arney – Every 8th grader attends the end of the year field trip to Boston. If a student cannot pay, they still go on the trip. We start asking students now if they want to start paying in increments so they do not have to pay the money all at once.

- 5.6 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mrs. Culliton, to **approve Excessing Books from the High School Library.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0) (Attached)

- 5.7 It was moved by Mr. Deason, seconded by Mrs. Burton, **to approve Abolishing the Business Manager (Civil Service) position due to changing the position to a Certified Position.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

6. **PERSONNEL:**

- 6.1 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mr. Deason, **to approve the following Professional Leave of Absence:**
Sawyer, Margaret, Middle School Nurse, Effective January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2016

The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

- 6.2 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mr. Deason, **to approve the following Non-Teaching Appointments:**
Whalen, Louise, 5.50 Hour Teacher Aide, Effective September 23, 2015; Salary; \$10,643.05, Probationary Period: September 23, 2015 – March 23, 2016

Chiarella, Carol, 5.50 Hour Teacher Aide, Effective September 28, 2015; Salary; \$10,643.05, Probationary Period: September 28, 2015 – March 28, 2016

Schmidt, Donna, Cleaner, Effective September 21, 2015; Salary; \$25,245.00 + \$504 (Second Shift Stipend); Probationary Period: September 21, 2015 – March 21, 2016

The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

- 6.3 It was moved by Mr. Deason, seconded by Mrs. Culliton, **to approve rescinding the following Sixth Class Assignment:**
Winter-Walton, Christal, Special Education Teacher, Effective Friday, September 18, 2015

The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

- 6.4 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mr. Deason, **to approve the following Change in Officers:**

<i>Payroll Certification Officer</i>	Robert Yusko, Jr.
<i>Purchasing Agent</i>	Robert Yusko, Jr.
<i>Investment Officer</i>	Robert Yusko, Jr.
<i>Civil Rights Officer</i>	Robert Yusko, Jr.
<i>Records Access Officer</i>	Robert Yusko, Jr.
<i>Title IX Coordinator</i>	Robert Yusko, Jr.
<i>Medicaid Compliance Officer</i>	Robert Yusko, Jr.

The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

- 6.5 It was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mr. Deason, **to accept the following Coaching Resignation:**
Hall, Ethan, Varsity Volleyball, Effective September 28, 2015

The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

- 6.6 It was moved by Mr. Deason, seconded by Mrs. Culliton, **to approve the following Coaching Appointment:**
Kotulak, Wioleta, Varsity Volleyball, \$2,022.50, Effective September 28, 2015

The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

Mr. Jenkins received an email from Liz Giblin, a parent at Kensington Road Elementary School, regarding class size.

Dr. Poulos said she sent Liz an email with a link to a great article regarding class size. If anyone would like the link you can email her. Liz also came in and spoke to Mr. Jenkins.

Mr. Deason asked if we could talk about the process of class size and how we come up with how many sections we need at each grade level. He also asked if we could talk about it in the spring because it may help parents understand how the process works and what it entails.

Mr. Jenkins said we can discuss it in the spring, but that's just one piece. The numbers fluctuate over the summer and it changes. The principals play a big part in what they need for the upcoming school year.

Mr. Graham asked if we had a board policy on class size.

Mr. Jenkins - no.

Mr. Graham - there was a time when they kept the class sizes at 22.

Dr. Poulos - that was prior to the tax cap and the GEA. This is the first year in a long time that we have had a balanced budget.

Mr. Jenkins - cautioned against the board setting a policy on class size. The class size is contractual with the teachers' union. If a policy is implemented then the district may be right back at the bargaining table to discuss class size.

Mr. Deason - moving forward our numbers looked pretty good this year.

Mr. Jenkins - we have neighborhood schools and we cannot control where families are locating. If families do not have transportation, we can't ask them to go across town to another school. We create class sections so we have some cushion to accommodate students that register over the summer. He said that he didn't think any of us were advocating for a change in neighborhood schools, because that's what Glens Falls is. We have students moving in and out throughout the school year. We had fourteen students move out between the beginning of September to the beginning of October. The principals do a great job working with teachers, making sure they have the supports they need. The teachers divide up classes into smaller groups of students for instruction, so they are not always working with twenty-five children at once. We have aides, assistants, reading teachers, speech teachers that are working with our students one on one or in small group sessions.

Dr. Poulos - we can't just keep looking at a number, we have to see what is happening in the class. We need to listen to the teachers, administrators and superintendent to assess what is needed. We have to look at the types of students and their individual needs. What is the magic number?

Mr. Deason - we may have a philosophical difference, but we need to keep talking about it.

Mr. Jenkins - it's on the top of our priority list for our next budget season.

Mrs. Burton - where would one teacher go? We can't afford to add teachers to every building.

Mrs. Culliton – where are we at with aides? How many aides for each school?

Mr. Jenkins – it depends on the needs.

Mrs. Culliton – how many teacher assistants?

Mr. Jenkins – we can give you a breakdown, but again you have to look at what is needed.

Mrs. Culliton – my biggest concern is that teachers are able to make connections with children, and the more children they have, the less time they have for it. It's not just the educational piece.

Mr. Jenkins – teachers do a great job. I have been to all the classrooms this year in the district, and you can't tell if there are 25 students or 15. It also depends on how they set up their classrooms. Teachers are professionals, and they do a great job in this district with our students.

Mr. Graham – we should introduce the new Business Manager.

Mr. Jenkins – introduced Bobby Yusko and welcomed him.

8. **OLD BUSINESS:** None

9. **NEW BUSINESS:** None

10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

11. **ADJOURNMENT:**

At 7:25 p.m., there being no further business, it was moved by Mrs. Burton, seconded by Mr. Graham, **to adjourn the meeting.** The motion was carried unanimously. (7-0)

Amy Towers
Clerk, Board of Education