

GOUVERNEUR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
GOUVERNEUR NEW YORK 13642
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

MARCH 20, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

The REGULAR MEETING of the Board of Education of Gouverneur Central School District was called to order by President David Fenlong, at 5:30 P.M., in the High School Cafeteria, leading those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustees Present: Todd E. Bates, Brooke Bush, Dr. William Cartwright, David Fenlong, Naaman Lowry, Nickolas Ormasen, Laurie M. Roberts, Laura Spicer.

Trustees Absent: Mark Hendrick.

Also Present: Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools; Carol LaSala, Business Manager; Jessica Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum; Tatia Z. Kennedy, District Clerk

II. COMMENT PERIOD

Several parents spoke to the Board regarding their disagreement with the district's Student Gender Identity policy; specifically, the use of restrooms that corresponds to a student's consistently expressed gender identity at school. Many said they understand the policy reflects New York State anti-discrimination laws, but voiced they were having difficulty with their own children's complaints concerning restroom use.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Communications

1. BOCES Annual Meeting – April 5, 2023

President Fenlong reminded trustees to RSVP to the clerk if they planned to attend.

B. Student Recognition

Superintendent Kelly recognized the Odyssey of the Mind (OM) advisors and students. OM is a problem-solving program where team members present their solution to a predefined long-term problem that takes months to complete and involves writing, design, construction, and theatrical performance. At the regional competition in Watertown, the middle school team coached by Brandy Bogardus placed third, Alyssa Edick's elementary team received second place, and Carley Bearden and Kadie Haines' elementary team won first place. Those teams will compete at the NY State competition on April 15. A third elementary team coached by Marie Moore also did a fantastic job. Two middle school teams, coached by Melinda Schiszler and Jamie Hughes, were unable to compete due to the date change of the regionals, but will perform their presentations for the public on March 30. Ms. Kelly also reminded those present that the musical, *Into the Woods Jr.*, would take place March 24-25 at 7 PM in the high school auditorium.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. 2023-2024 Budget Discussion Items

1. BOCES Final Request for Services

Business Manager LaSala highlighted the few changes made since the last review. Estimated costs were added for purchasing Q Global Assessments, Science Kits for grades 3-4 elementary and 5-8 intermediate, NTS electronic voting services, and Summer School. The total BOCES costs are approximately \$6,067,877. She added that the aid ratio will increase slightly to 83.4%, up from 83.2% this year.

2. Three-Part Budget Review

Ms. LaSala presented the proposed budget in three components as state education law requires – Administration, Program, and Capital. The total proposed budget is \$42,727,273, an increase of 3.41% or \$1,410,266. This includes an increase of 4.83% in staffing costs, comprised of replacing the current high school AP/AD with a full-time assistant principal and a full-time athletic director; adding one teacher and a teaching assistant for a new 12:1+1 classroom; adding a keyboard specialist position at the elementary school; and three new cleaner positions. Other items of note include replacing two retiring teachers and reducing the business office by one position. Employee benefits are up 3.93% due to an increase in health insurance premiums. There is a decrease in rates for ERS and TRS and Medicare reimbursements. Equipment purchases are down almost 19%, due to reducing bus purchases from four this year to one next year. Other significant numbers include \$90,000 for estimated increases in tutoring costs due to new legislation, a reduction of \$95,000 in estimated diesel and gasoline costs, and a proposed transfer to a Capital Fund – Capital Project at the middle school for paving, lighting, sidewalks, and some interior work of \$1.2 million.

March 20, 2023

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT (CONTINUED)

A.2 2023-2024 Budget Discussion Items – Three-Part Budget Review (Cont.)

The district is appropriating almost \$3 million from the fund balance and reserves; proposing a tax levy at 2%, the maximum allowed; and anticipating over \$32 million in state aid, a 7.3% increase from last year.

Discussion ensued, with topics ranging from electric bus funding and possible grants; the increase in students with disabilities necessitating the new 12:1+1 classroom; and debt service, with Ms. LaSala confirming one bond is almost paid off. Trustee Ormasen questioned if inflation had been factored in to projected costs and whether the additional positions would be sustainable. Ms. LaSala responded that she did add additional monies to factor in inflation, and the positions have been carefully considered with the concern that the additional federal and state money will sunset. President Fenlong opened a conversation asking what is generating the need for three additional cleaners with COVID over. Ms. Kelly asked Harold Simmons, Director of Facilities III, for his response and he clarified that in addition to the increased sanitation and cleaning requirements, there are now more rooms at the middle and elementary schools following the last capital project; some athletics have moved to the middle school; the buildings are open more now for public use than in the past; and the new positions will be utilized on weekends to decrease the current overtime costs incurred now. Prior to COVID, a study was done by Hillyard, one of our vendors, that showed at that time they were understaffed for the size of the buildings. Ms. LaSala added that the new positions were budgeted estimating the family insurance coverage benefit, but the actual cost may be lower. Trustee Roberts questioned the addition of a keyboard specialist at the elementary school. Mrs. Kelly said that would staff three in the main office and one in the guidance office, stressing that one person works solely with transportation due to the needs of that age group. Additional discussion took place regarding enrollment and class sizes, with Mrs. Kelly confirming that based on current numbers the fifth-grade teaching team will be reduced from 6 to 5 sections, with one team member teaching AIS Math to provide more support to our students. President Fenlong and the board thanked Ms. LaSala again for her efforts in putting the budget together.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

President Fenlong asked if any member on the Board wished to have any item on the Consent Agenda removed for special consideration and discussion. No member asked that any items be removed.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Dr. William Cartwright, and seconded by Trustee Naaman Lowry, that the Board of Education approve the following items, A-E, as a consent agenda:

A. Minutes

Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 6, 2023, as presented.

B. Claims Auditor's Reports

(See Sheet #1, Board Minutes File Folder)

Approve the Claims Auditor's Reports for the period 03/06/2023 – 03/17/2023, as presented.

C. CSE Business

(See Sheet #2, Board Minutes File Folder)

Approve the services, including additions, modifications, and deletions, for the following classified students, as reflected in the attached CSE Meeting Minutes report:

CSE Student ID#:

5102084	5104383	5102836	5103292	5103917	5104219
5103509	5100263	5101130	11924	11344	5102813
5104004	5103177	5102888	5102531	5101105	5104147
5104309	5103137	5104446	5104043	5104032	5104696
5103122	5104038	5104123	5102999	5101566	5104122
5102309	5103188	5103818	5103871	5103395	5104530

D. CPSE Business

(See Sheet #3, Board Minutes File Folder)

Approve the services, including additions, modifications and deletions, for the following classified students, as reflected in the attached CPSE Meeting Minutes report:

CPSE Student ID#:

5104473	5104278
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VI. CONSENT AGENDA (CONTINUED)

E. Treasurer's Report – February 2023

(See Sheet #4, Board Minutes File Folder)

Accept the Treasurer's Report for February, 2023 as presented.

Vote on Consent Agenda Items

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. CONSENT AGENDA, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL

President Fenlong asked if any member on the Board wished to have any item on the Consent Agenda – Personnel removed for special consideration and discussion. No member asked that any items be removed.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda – Personnel

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Laurie M. Roberts, and seconded by Trustee Laura Spicer, that the Board of Education approve the following Personnel items, A-B, as a Consent Agenda:

A. Appointments1. Extra-Curricular

- a) Advisors. Approve the following advisors for the period 1/1/23 – 6/30/23, compensated in accordance with the 2022-23 Club Salary Schedule of the GTA contract, as presented:

FFA ASSISTANT	KATRINA MOORE	CLASS E	Step 1
MILITARY KIDS CLUB HS/MS - .5	SARAH STEDMAN	CLASS E	Step 1
MILITARY KIDS CLUB HS/MS - .5	KELLY WILSON	CLASS E	Step 1
MILITARY KIDS CLUB ELEM - .5	KATHERINE DOSTER	CLASS E	Step 1
MILITARY KIDS CLUB ELEM - .5	HEATHER DELITY	CLASS E	Step 1

- b) 2022-2023 Spring Coaches. Approve the following coaching recommendations, pending completion of any outstanding certification requirements, and compensated in accordance with the 2022-23 Coaching Salary Schedule of the GTA contract, as presented:

ASSISTANT BOYS TRACK	Rescind Robert Webster		
ASSISTANT BOYS TRACK	CORTNEY EVANS	CLASS 3	Step 1
JV BOYS BASEBALL	Christine Cognetti – resigned		
JV BOYS BASEBALL	ROBERT WEBSTER	CLASS 3	Step 1
MODIFIED SOFTBALL	JENNIFER WILCOX	CLASS 4	Step 1
MODIFIED BASEBALL	JENNIFER PRASHAW	CLASS 4	Step 1

2. Instructional

- a) Gouverneur Middle School Afterschool Tutoring – Instructor. Appoint the following personnel for the 2022-2023 school year, to be paid at the rate of \$30/hour, funded through the ARP SLR Comprehensive After School grant: Melissa Sweeney.

B. Leaves

Acknowledge the unpaid leave covered under the FMLA for Employee #510 from March 20, 2023 to approximately March 27, 2023. The employee will incur approximately 6 unpaid days. Time on this unpaid leave of absence will not count toward seniority.

Vote on Consent Agenda – Personnel Items:

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Department Chairperson positions and Curriculum Committee Leaders

Assistant Superintendent Jessica Sullivan explained that the district is using the federal ARP funding to create these positions to frame a solid curriculum in Math and Reading moving forward. She stated that teachers have been asking to bring back department chairs at the middle and high schools, and curriculum maps done many years ago are outdated. The ARP funding will be used for the 2023-24 school year to appoint grade and department level leaders to build a consistent curriculum that will serve us after the funding is gone.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

B. BOCES Final Request for Services 2023-2024*(See Sheet #5, Board Minutes File Folder)*

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Bush, and seconded by Vice-President Bates, that the Board of Education approve the 2023-2024 BOCES Final Request for Services, as presented.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. BOCES 2023-24 FINAL REQUEST FOR SERVICES, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

C. 2023 Transportation Capital Reserve Resolution*(See Sheet #6, Board Minutes File Folder)*

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Roberts, and seconded by Vice-President Bates, that the Board of Education approve the 2023 Transportation Capital Reserve Resolution, as presented.

DISCUSSION: Business Manager LaSala confirmed that based on guidance from our attorney and financial advisor, she included the language that the EV will not be limited to just bus purchases.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. 2023 TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL RESERVE RESOLUTION, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

D. SEQRA Resolution*(See Sheet #7, Board Minutes File Folder)*

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Lowry, and seconded by Vice-President Bates, that the Board of Education approve the SEQRA Resolution, as presented.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. SEQRA RESOLUTION, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

E. Annual Meeting and Budget Hearing Resolution*(See Sheet #8, Board Minutes File Folder)*

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Vice-President Bates, and seconded by Trustee Roberts, that the Board of Education approve the Annual Meeting/Budget Hearing Resolution, as presented.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. ANNUAL MEETING AND BUDGET HEARING RESOLUTION, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

F. Authorization to Declare as Surplus and Sell/Dispose of Equipment

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Lowry, and seconded by Vice-President Bates, that the Board of Education declare the Bus #228, VIN # 4DRBUSKN2FB669848 as surplus and authorize the Business Manager to sell/dispose.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. BUS #228 DECLARED SURPLUS AND BUSINESS MANAGER AUTHORIZED TO SELL/DISPOSE.

G. Resolution Authorizing Partial Settlement of Vaping Litigation*(See Sheet #9, Board Minutes File Folder)*

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Roberts, and seconded by Trustee Spicer, that the Board of Education approve the Resolution Authorizing Partial Settlement of Vaping Litigation, as presented.

DISCUSSION: Responding to Trustee Roberts, Superintendent Kelly shared that the district was in a class action lawsuit against Juul labs. The settlement will be distributed over a 4–5-year period, and it is her intent to use the money for vaping and drug education in the school for students.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARTIAL SETTLEMENT OF VAPING LITIGATION, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

IX. COMMENT PERIOD

Additional comments were made by audience members opposed to portions of the Student Gender Identity policy. Following audience comments, board members and Superintendent Kelly discussed the issue with clarifying information provided by Middle School Principal Robert Kotz. Board members expressed their desire to help find a solution that would alleviate parent concerns while remaining compliant with the policy and education law. President Fenlong thanked everyone again for coming and voicing their concerns.

X. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Vice-President Todd E. Bates, and seconded by Trustee Naaman Lowry, to adjourn to executive session in Conference Room 310R of the Dolan wing of the High School, to discuss the employment history of particular persons, and to discuss pending litigation.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:47 PM.

President Fenlong announced that the Board would have no further business to take place in open session.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Open session resumed at 8:00 PM.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, motion made by Trustee Dr. William Cartwright, and seconded by Trustee Laurie M. Roberts, to return to open session in Conference Room 310R and adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM.

YEAS: All Trustees Present. NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file
Tatia Z. Kennedy, District Clerk

Signature on file
David Fenlong, President

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