

February 8, 2017

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of South Huntington Union Free School District was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2017, in the Performing Arts Center of Walt Whitman High School, 301 West Hills Road, Huntington Station, New York.

**Present:**      **Board Members:**

President

Vice President

Mr. Kaden

Mr. Ciappetta

Mrs. Brieff

Mrs. Carey

Mrs. DeGaetano

Mrs. LaCara

Mr. Nitkewicz

**Staff:**

Superintendent of Schools

Asst. Supt. for Business & District Operations

Deputy Superintendent

Asst. Supt. for Instruction & Curriculum

Interim Personnel Administrator

District Clerk

Dr. Bennardo

Dr. Centamore

Ms. Harris

Dr. Bloom

Mr. Fallon

Mrs. McLean

**Call to Order:**      Mr. Kaden opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**Executive Session:**      Motion by Mrs. DeGaetano, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss the employment history of a particular person.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mr. Ciappetta, be it Resolved that the Executive Session be adjourned.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Kaden opened the Business Meeting at 7:40 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Teacher of the Year Presentation:**      Dr. Bennardo welcomed everyone in the audience to this very special Board of Education meeting where tonight's recognition would be provided to each building's Teacher of the Year, as well as the district-wide selection. He shared that while growing up, everyone he associated with was either a teacher, or waiting to be a teacher. He added that he believed the grandest vocation was to serve as a public school teacher. After acknowledging the large number of parents, students, and staff in the audience, Dr. Bennardo introduced Mr. Frank Fallon, Interim Personnel Administrator.

Mr. Fallon thanked Dr. Bennardo and the Board of Education, and welcomed the families, students, and faculty in the audience. He added that this presentation provided an opportunity to recognize exceptional teachers who go above and beyond for our students. He asked those members in the

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audience who served on the selection committee for the Teacher of the Year to stand for recognition, as the process was a difficult one. Mr. Fallon also thanked Mrs. Padilla for her hard work and assistance in making this evening possible.

Mr. Kaden, Dr. Bennardo, and Assemblyman Lupinacci were invited to the podium to present the building awards. Assemblyman Lupinacci took the opportunity to speak and shared that he considered it such a privilege to be here this evening to recognize each honoree's contributions to the district. He added that each teacher was a great example, inside and outside the classroom. The Assemblyman congratulated the designated teachers and their families. He then stated that he would be presenting a New York State Assembly Citation for each nominee, as well as a New York State Assembly pin with *Excelsior* engraved. Assemblyman Lupinacci further shared that *Excelsior* is Latin for *Always Rising, Always Achieving*; a perfect testimony for this evening. Each principal was called to the podium and provided a synopsis of the unique characteristics of their Teacher of the Year selection as follows:

Mrs. Kerrigan, Principal of the Oakwood Primary School, spoke on behalf of Ms. Lendy Milo.

Ms. Kenny, Principal of the Countrywood Primary School, spoke on behalf of Ms. Susan Lamorte.

Mr. Ciccarelli, Principal of the Birchwood Intermediate School, spoke on behalf of Ms. Helma Adde.

Mr. Toto, Principal of the Silas Wood Sixth-Grade School, spoke on behalf of Mr. Robin Naggar.

Mr. Smith, Principal of the Stimson Middle School, spoke on behalf of Ms. Shari Daniello.

Mr. Murphy, Principal of Walt Whitman High School, spoke on behalf of Mrs. Kimberly Latko.

Dr. Vito D'Elia, Principal of Maplewood Intermediate School, spoke on behalf of Mrs. Lisa Hatton, the district-wide selection for Teacher of the Year. Dr. D'Elia communicated that at a recent conference, the phrase, "Where Knowledge Meets Inspiration," was utilized, and in preparing for this evening, that phrase spoke volumes in describing Mrs. Hatton's instructional style. Dr. D'Elia shared that Mrs. Hatton consistently stimulates curiosity in her classroom. She also spearheaded the Intel Space Station project and infused technology into every aspect of the curriculum. Her involvement with the Hour of Code was impressive, and Dr. D'Elia further shared the many characteristics and attributes Mrs. Hatton possessed. Mrs. Hatton received an overwhelming round of applause, and students approached the podium with flowers. Mrs. Hatton addressed the audience,

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and thanked the Board of Education and Superintendent for the honor of having been selected as the district-wide Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Hatton thanked her family for their support and encouragement, as well as her colleagues. Mrs. Hatton commented that the phrase, “It takes a village to raise a child” can, in her case, be revised to “It takes a village to raise a teacher.” The support she received at Maplewood and the appreciation for her instructional counterparts was beautifully and humbly articulated.

Mr. Dennis Callahan, President of the South Huntington Teachers Association, addressed the audience, and provided praise and congratulations to Mrs. Hatton and each of the building-level Teachers of the Year.

Before introducing Dr. Bennardo, Mr. Fallon shared with the audience that our district has an extremely supportive Board of Education, and because of the value each Board trustee places on education, evenings such as this confirms that unique collaboration.

Dr. Bennardo concluded the presentation and shared that the Board and the administration care deeply for the students, the teachers, and the community. He then stated there would be a five-minute break for photo opportunities. The audience provided a resounding applause.

- Adoption of Agenda:** Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the revised agenda be adopted.  
Motion carried unanimously.
- Motion on Minutes through Schedule of Bills (Warrants):** Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District approve the following items:
- Minutes:** Minutes of Board meeting held on January 11, 2017.
- Schedule of Investment Accounts:** Schedule of Investment Accounts, as of December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1161.
- Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer's Report, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1162.
- Monthly Trial Balance and Bank Reconciliation:** Monthly Trial Balance and Bank Reconciliation, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1163-1182.
- Monthly Collateral Reconciliation:** Monthly Collateral Reconciliation, as of December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1183.

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**Revenue Status Report, General Fund:**

Revenue Status Report, General Fund, for December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1184.

**Revenue Status Report, School Lunch Fund:**

Revenue Status Report, School Lunch Fund, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1185.

**Revenue Status Report, Special Aid Fund:**

Revenue Status Report, Special Aid Fund, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1186.

**Revenue Status Report, Capital Fund:**

Revenue Status Report, Capital Fund, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1187.

**Budget Status Report (Expenditures) General Fund:**

Budget Status Report (Expenditures), General Fund, for December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1188-1195.

**Budget Status Report (Expenditures) School Lunch Fund:**

Budget Status Report (Expenditures), School Lunch Fund, for December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1196.

**Budget Status Report (Expenditures) Special Aid Fund:**

Budget Status Report (Expenditures), Special Aid Fund, for December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1197-1198.

**Budget Status Report (Expenditures) Capital Fund:**

Budget Status Report (Expenditures), Capital Fund, for December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1199.

**Budgetary Transfer Report:**

Budgetary Transfer Report, for December 2017, copies made part of these legal minutes, p. 1200.

**Tax Levy Schedule:**

Tax Levy Schedule, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1201.

**Library Tax Levy:**

Library Tax Levy, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1201.

**Extraclassroom Activity Fund Report:**

Extraclassroom Activity Fund Report, December 2017, copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1202-1210.

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<b>Schedule of Bills (Warrants):</b>	General (A)	Warrant 67	\$37,214.37
		68	\$2,647,911.96
		V046	(\$1,446,051.35)
		V059	(\$61,820.63)
	School Lunch (C)	Warrant 31	\$12,052.19
Special Aid (F)	Warrant 27	\$67,313.47	

Approved – Packet of January 27, 2017

General (A)	Warrant 66	\$309,975.31
School Lunch (C)	Warrant 30	\$14,900.16
Special Aid (F)	Warrant 26	
\$56,521.50		

**Vote on Minutes through Schedule of Bills (Warrants):** Mr. Kaden asked for any additional comments or questions on the above items, and then called for a vote on the motion.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Communications:**

1. Response from Assemblyman Lupinacci to Board of Education to Advocacy Letter
2. Invitation from the Countrywood Site-Based Management Team to Board Members re Read Across America on March 2, 2017

**Approval of 2017/2018 School Calendar:** Motion by Mrs. Brieff, seconded by Mr. Ciappetta, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the 2017/2018 School Calendar as recommended by the Calendar Committee, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1211-1212.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the Andrew J. Luebker Scholarship** Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the Andrew J. Luebker Scholarship in the amount of \$500 to \$1,000, annually, with the criteria for awarding identified in the memorandum from Principal Murphy to the Superintendent, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1213.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of DECA Field Trip:** Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mr. Ciappetta, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the field trip to the DECA State Conference in Rochester, from March 7 through March 10, 2017, for 20 Grade 9-12 DECA students.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Textbook/eTextbook, Immagina 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition:** Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the textbook, Immagina 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, an Italian IV textbook for Grades 11-12 students, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1214-1217.  
Motion carried unanimously.

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**Approval of Superintendent's and Vice President of Board of Education's Travel to Washington, D.C.:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the travel to Washington, D.C. for the Superintendent and the Vice President of the Board of Education on April 20-21, 2017, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1218.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Bennardo shared that both he and Mr. Ciappetta will travel to Washington, D.C. to meet the Stimson Middle School's National Junior Honor Society and spend the day touring the various sites with the students.

**Approval of New Courses:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, to amend the agenda consolidating New Business Items 6, 7, and 8.  
Motion, as amended, carried unanimously.

Motion by Mrs. Brieff, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the following new high school courses: AP Capstone, Introduction to Hospitality, Tourism and Recreation, and Applied Chemistry, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1219-1224.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Recommendations for Placement by CSE/CPSE:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed minutes of the Committee on Special Education dated December 23, 2016, January 3, 6, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 26, 29, 30, 2017, and the Committee on Preschool Special Education dated January 19, 20, 23, 26, 2017, is satisfied that the procedures of Chapter 853 of the Education Law were followed and accepts the recommendations for placement set forth, copies made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1225-1235.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Request to Extend SHTA Sick Bank for Teacher:**

Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the SHTA request to have the SHTA sick bank extended for 110 days for the teacher as discussed during Executive Session, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1236.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion of Grade Weighting Data:**

Dr. Bennardo stated that there had been a Board discussion regarding this matter at a previous Board meeting with an attempt to be more reflective of how other Long Island school districts address grade weighting. Our current practice was subtracting a student's grade from 100 and then applying a multiplier to the remainder.

The following were weight samples: .2 Regents; .4 Honors; and .7 AP.

Dr. Bennardo provided an example of a SHSD student with a grade of 99 in

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an AP course: With the sample,  $100 - 99 = 1 \times .7 = 7$ , the 7 points were added to the 99 original grade, which equated to a grade of 106 averaged into student's final cumulative GPA.

A student with a 78 would have a grade of 93.4 as follows:  
 $(100 - 78 = 22 \times .7 = 15.4 + 78 = 93.4)$

Dr. Bennardo shared that much time has been spent in searching for a formula that positioned our students on a similar footing with neighboring districts, and at the same time, with little harm at the lower grade levels. Dr. Bennardo reported that "we could not serve both masters perfectly." The recommendation presented was as follows:

Regents → maintain 1.04  
 Honors → 1.08  
 AP → 1.15

The recommendation places our district in the middle of what was currently being done by other districts. Dr. Bennardo commented that in the overall cumulative average, it does not do quite as much as one would think; it was more helpful to a greater number of students. Mr. Ciappetta agreed that the "system" is not perfect, but rather imperfect. It is, however, the best that can be done.

Mrs. LaCara articulated that we are the only district who hasn't done this; she shared that she appreciated the amount of work and time involved that had been put into this matter, and she thought it was a good solution.

Mr. Nitkewicz recalled a previous Board meeting in 2009 when the district approved lowering the passing grade from 70% to 65%, and the community did not respond favorably. Mr. Nitkewicz had specific recollection of a community member's statement in protest of lowering the passing grade to 65%. Regarding the students it would benefit, she stated, "They should go to another district." Relative to the current discussion, Mr. Nitkewicz suggested that perhaps the grade the student earns was the grade, without any weighting whatsoever.

Mrs. Brieff agreed that the solution offered by Dr. Bennardo was the right thing to do, it ensured our students would compete with other districts on a more level playing field. She also stated that the AP courses were difficult, and students worked at a higher level with these courses; the weighting recognized the additional effort.

Mr. Kaden asked when this recommendation would be implemented; Dr. Bennardo responded not this year. Mr. Kaden suggested implementation with the upcoming Freshman class, as Sophomores and Juniors have structured schedules. Discussion ensued with Mrs. DeGaetano disagreeing that students have schedules that were structured to achieve the highest grade-point average possible. She did agree that the top five students may,

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but not all the students taking AP courses. Mr. Kaden's position was not to change the rules for the "top five." Mrs. LaCara interjected that she thought four years was too long to wait for implementation. Dr. Bennardo added that upon implementation, it will be a new rating system, with hand calculations. Mr. Ciappetta suggested 11<sup>th</sup> grade for implementation; Mrs. Brieff articulated her support of Mr. Ciappetta's suggestion. Dr. Bennardo spoke in support of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade as well and stated that students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade would have the benefit of the new system with their eyes wide open; it would not affect the Senior class this year.

The consensus of the Board was to move forward with the new weighting system as follows: Regents → maintain 1.04; Honors → 1.08; AP → 1.15

Mr. Kaden stated that a resolution was not required; it was an administrative prerogative.

**Personnel:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. Carey, to table the approval of the resolution regarding Schedule 22 with regard to the last revised appointment. Motion, to table, carried unanimously.

Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed the recommendations of the Chief School Administrator, is satisfied that the provisions of Section 3012 of Education Law were followed, and thereby accepts those recommendations as set forth in schedules made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1237-1246, and authorizes implementation thereof:

Schedule 2: Probationary Appointments (Instructional)

Schedule 9: Coaching/Extracurricular Appointments (Instructional)

Schedule 11: Terminations (Instructional)

Schedule 13: Salary Change (Instructional)

Schedule 15: Appointments (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 16: Terminations (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 17: Leaves of Absence (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 20: Re-Appointments (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 22: Substitute Employee appointments (Inst./Non-Inst.)

Motion carried unanimously.

**Committee Updates:**

Mr. Ciappetta reported that at the February 6<sup>th</sup> Facilities meeting, no decisions were made; it was an information gathering. Mr. Ciappetta was hopeful that the basketball court matter at Stimson will soon be resolved.

Mr. Ciappetta also shared that he attended the February 3<sup>rd</sup> Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association meeting where the legislative priorities of the organization were discussed. Mr. Ciappetta commented on the numerous priorities, however, he did point out three that are new. The first relates to a bill that prevents a negative tax cap. The second item addressed the need for greater efficiency with expediting the NYSED building plans approval



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process by authorizing BOCES to perform initial clearance steps. Lastly, there was a push for the Governor not to make any mid-year cuts to school aid once the State budget was passed. Dr. Bennardo communicated that the State was concerned they may lose Federal money.

Mr. Kaden reported that he had attended an advocacy session at Longwood on Saturday, February 4, 2017, where many legislators were present. He expressed his deep concern for the negative cap and felt the cap should reflect the cost of living. Mr. Kaden stated that the tax cap is now at 1.26%, a cost of 2. The cost of living is 7%, therefore, we lost 5%. Sadly, he stated, the Legislature knows the Governor will not slide on the tax cap issue. Mr. Kaden cited the forthcoming appointment of Ms. Betsy DeVos; he stated he would prefer not to have a Federal Education Secretary at all. Mr. Kaden referenced the increasing rate of poverty on Long Island; it has increased 50% in the last ten years. The poverty level has affected Long Island's performance scores, where Long Island led the State a decade ago, now that is not the case.

**Comments from  
Board Members and  
Staff:**

None provided.

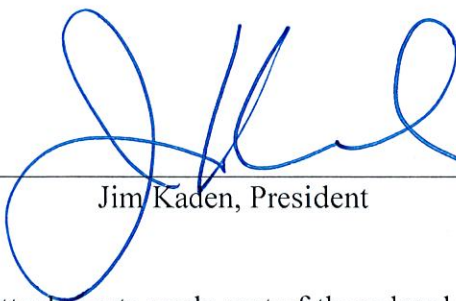
**Voice of the  
Residents:**

Visitors were invited to participate.

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the meeting be adjourned.  
Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was declared adjourned at 9:48 p.m.



Jim Kaden, President



Laura McLean, District Clerk

Attachments made part of these legal minutes, pages 1160 through 1246.