



**Thursday, October 17, 2019**  
**Board of Education Minutes - Regular Meeting**

**Approved: November 21, 2019**

**Meeting Location:**

Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School Library, 1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton, NY

**Meeting Time:**

6:00 pm

Present: Michael Tuttle, Michael Hiser, Michael Charsky, Shelley Palmer, Sherri Gibson, Bruce Romanchak, Christian Olsen and Charles Peter

Absent: Daniel Grandinetti

Also present: Jason Chevrier, Brian Carey, James Derby, Michael Bennett, Jodi Sullivan, Jacqueline Hill, Keri Rosher, and Michele Reickert

**1. MEETING OPENING**

- A. President Michael Tuttle called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
- B. President Tuttle asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- C. Michael Hiser moved to approve the present agenda, Bruce Romanchak seconded, all present in favor.
- D. Michael Hiser moved for approval of the minutes of September 19, 2019 regular meeting, Bruce Romanchak seconded, all present in favor.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

A. Members of the Public May Address the Board

**Nicole Henderson** – parent of two 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, expressed concern about the class sizes of the current 4<sup>th</sup> grade and teaching of Science and Social Studies at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level.

**Amy Hirschhoff** – teacher in the current 6<sup>th</sup> grade spoke about the ELA curriculum changes in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, class sizes at Castleton Elementary School, and social media bullying of teachers.

**Rebecca Newell** – parent of a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student, expressed that she didn't feel all questions asked by parents have been answered and asked the district to come up with a contingency plan moving forward.

**3. REPORTS**

#### A. Program Report - Special Education

Michael Bennett talked about the Special Education program, the success of the new classroom in the elementary school that has allowed 5 students that would have been placed out of district to remain in the district, disability classification trends since 2013-14, where the special education program is going and the needs of the program.

#### B. Program Report - Business Office

Brian Carey and Jill Filkins talked about the work of the business office and the workload of the treasurer and payroll clerk, departmental concerns, segregation of duties, additional unfunded mandates in ESSA Reporting, Federal Reporting, potential retirements of staff in the next 3 years, which would present loss on institutional knowledge.

### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

#### A. Members of the Public May Address the Board

**Melissa Graziadei** – 4<sup>th</sup> grade parent, expressed that the special education presentation was fantastic, and stated that she will wait to speak about 4<sup>th</sup> grade class it is too soon she will continue to watch.

**Nicole Henderson** – thanked Michael Bennett for the presentation on Special Education.

### 5. DISTRICT / BUILDING / COMMITTEE UPDATES

#### A. District Updates

- Enrollment Report attached for review.
- Vaccination Update – it was reported that all students are in compliance or on track with the new regulations
- Homecoming and Fall Sports Weekend – Mr. Chevrier talked about Homecoming and Fall Sports Weekend and acknowledged Michael Silver's hard work, thanked the Booster Club and all the volunteers that help out through the weekend. A tour was also given that weekend to a group of alum from 1969 that were in town for a reunion. They were appreciative for the tour and memories.

#### B. Building Updates

- Castleton Elementary School – Ms. Rosher talked about training that Teachers and Teaching Assistants received in curriculum for ELA and Mental Health training on the October 9 conference day. Mr. Derby talked about 4<sup>th</sup> grade and his interactions and visits to the classrooms, he expressed that enrollment remains the same, discipline and attendance are in line with last year. Mr. Derby spoke to the public comment about the Science and Social Studies program in 4<sup>th</sup> grade as well as the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade levels, how they have been taught historically, changes for the instruction in the current year introducing Reading and Writing into the classroom. He shared some of the things that have taken place in the Innovative Learning Lab at CES. Fishing derby and the Community Fair were a success. The PTO is looking for a Chair for the Halloween Party this year.

- Mr. Derby spoke to the parent comment during public comment and talked about how Science and Social Studies are taught at CES for grades 4, 5 & 6, the test scores for ELA not being where the district wants them to be and professional development that has been completed to change teaching of ELA at CES.
- Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School – Jodi Sullivan talked about spirit week and the mental health initiative developed by the Mental Health Committee called “Word of the Month”. Seniors came in on their day off and painted their parking spots. Jacqui Hill talked about the annual 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade flag football tournament on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will be invited up to participate. An alum brought a friend from Japan to tour the building.

### C. Committee Updates

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|---|--|---|
| CES Building Planning Committee             | Michael Tuttle, Sherri Gibson, and Charles Peter         | 10/21                                       |
| Jr/Sr High School Planning Committee        | Shelley Palmer and Michael Charsky                       | 10/17, 11/12, 1/16, 2/13, 3/18, 4/23, 5/14  |
| Professional Development Planning Committee | Bruce Romanchak  | 10/17, 11/21, 1/16, 2/13, 3/19, 4/23, 5/14  |
| Technology Committee                        | Bruce Romanchak and Sherri Gibson                        | 10/16, 11/13, 12/11, 1/15, 3/18, 4/22, 5/20 |
| NYSSBA Legislative Liaison                  | Michael Hiser  | Updates as things change at State Level     |
| Health and Safety / SAVE Committee          | Michael Tuttle and Michael Hiser                         | 10/21                                       |
| Audit Committee                             | Daniel Grandinetti, Christian Olsen, and Michael Charsky | 1/2020 and 6/2020                           |
| Policy Committee                            | Bruce Romanchak, Shelley Palmer and Charles Peter        | As changes in policy are necessary.         |
| Building Visitation Committee               | All members as a whole                                   | TBD   |

Board Members and Administrators participating on the committees gave updates from meetings that took place since the last board meeting.

## 6. ACTION ITEM FOLLOW UP / BOARD DISCUSSION

### A. Action Item Follow-up

- Tech Vision Committee will be updated at a later meeting.
- Transportation Review Rensselaer Share in Fall 2019 – a meeting will take place with a NYAPT representative and Schodack and Rensselaer City Schools to discuss the transportation share, an update will be coming.
- SRO options will be updated at a later meeting.

### B. Board Discussion

- Topic for Questar III presentation at December 19, 2019 meeting – Mr. Chevrier suggested New Visions or the future of programs, the board favored New Visions

- Community Group Discussion – The Board discussed creating a community committee group to meet once a month and discuss various topics.
- Contract discussions for the Superintendent
- There was discussion about what space is available at the elementary school for classrooms if there needed to be an increase in class sections, how the classes would be split up if it became necessary.
- Mr. Derby will update on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the building update section of the board meetings.
- Are there lessons learned in the last year, plus at the 7-12 environment, guidance is getting more involved with 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, the structure is working well with interaction with upper classmen, scheduling discussions have taken place.
- Retribution comment at September 19, 2019, board meeting, Mr. Chevrier talked with Tim Ryan and Mary Moser to see if faculty felt that they would get retribution if they spoke out against Administration, he thanked them for their follow-up with the faculty, he expressed that there wasn't an indication of concern of retribution.
- Sara Lant has a twitter account, follow her for updates on the Innovative Learning Lab.
- There was discussion about any feedback from the multipage letter sent to parents. It was encouraged that communication continue throughout the year. Mr. Derby will update parents a couple times through the year.
- Social Media Bullying of teachers was again mentioned.

## **7. FINANCE**

**Christian Olsen moved to approve items A. through D., Michael Hiser seconded, all present in favor.**

- A. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- B. Acceptance of Claims Auditor Report
- C. Approval of Monthly Cellular Phone Reimbursement
- D. Acknowledgement of Corrected Tax Roll

## **8. OTHER ACTION**

**Michael Hiser moved to approve items A. through B., Christian Olsen seconded, all present in favor.**

- A. Approval of the recommendation of the District Committee on Special Education and Preschool  
Special Education
- B. Approval to Declare Surplus

## **9. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS**

**Michael Charsky moved to approve items A. through D., Bruce Romanchak seconded, all present in favor.**

- A. Probationary Appointment of Teacher
- B. Appointment of Part-time Teacher
- C. Approval of Regular Substitute Teacher
- D. Appointment of Staffing Action(s)

## 10. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Members of the Public May Address the Board

**Mary Mosher** - thanked Michael Bennett for his presentation and expressed that he has great knowledge of Special Education and compassion for the families. She also spoke about a committee from years back that dealt with Kindergarten being half day or full day and expressed that the capacity at CES, grade level etc. might be something that would benefit from a committee like that.

**Melissa Graziadei** – talked about the social media comments, not as bad as everyone thinks, certain people got very angry, but it has stopped, Mr. Chevrier’s explanation tonight was good and she wished the other parent had stayed for the whole meeting.

**Kolby Flach** – talked about an article on school start times.

**11. ACTION ITEMS:** Tech Valley presentation including Schodack students if possible, continue discussion on a Community Forum, forward Robert Hendrick’s capacity study and the Merger Study document to the board and update on Solar Project after Town Vote

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

A. Having no further business before the board, President Michael Tuttle adjourned the meeting at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Michele A. Reickert*  
District Clerk