

North Shore Schools
Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Minutes
February 16, 2023

The meeting was called to order by President David Ludmar at 6:30 p.m. in the Glenwood Landing Elementary School Auditorium. Present were Trustees Cashman, Colacioppo, Galati, Macari, Mosca and Russo. Also present were Superintendent Dr. Christopher Zublionis and Assistant Superintendents Dr. Carol Smyth and Mr. James Pappas.

At 6:30 p.m. on motion of Trustee Cashman and seconded by Trustee Mosca and all in favor, the Board convened an executive session in room 101 to consider matters leading to the appointment or employment of a particular person or persons and proposed, pending or current litigation.

At 7:45 p.m. on motion of Trustee Colacioppo and seconded by Trustee Galati and all in favor the Board came out of executive session and resumed the regular meeting in the auditorium. There were 5 people in the audience.

Pledge of Allegiance

President Ludmar led the public in the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes

The reading of the draft minutes of the meeting of February 2, 2023 being prepared and disseminated to all members in advance of the meeting, was dispensed. There being no corrections to the minutes, it was declared by President Ludmar that the minutes of February 2, 2023 were approved.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Prior to approving the Treasurer's Report President Ludmar noted that part of the treasurer's report, approved by the Board, is the budget status report. He explained that there was a challenge to the Commissioner regarding the inclusion of the budget status report, and accusations via blasts on social media that the Board was illegally withholding it. The Commissioner dismissed this appeal and found it to have no merit as the report was always there. However, there was no accompanying statement on social media, by those who filed the appeal, correcting the record leaving the community with innuendo and without the knowledge that the accusations were totally without merit. President Ludmar then explained that the Commissioner recently dismissed another appeal brought by the same group of people, who continually files appeals. This appeal was brought to overthrow the fairly held 2022 election based on a series of unfounded meritless accusations. Again, it was dismissed as the Commissioner found it to have no merit. However, those who brought the appeal blasted their baseless claims on social media, and through private unsolicited e-mails, resulting in some members of the community to sign on to it. He said when people only hear one side, and there is no room for the truth to respond, it is easy to be concerned and to become an echo chamber amplifying the accusations. President Ludmar explained that the New York State Commissioner of Education looks at both sides, and on January 26 she handed down a decision that dismissed the appeal in its entirety. He further explained that in her decision number #18230 the Commissioner stated: "Petitioner has not proven that respondents violated the Education Law, let alone that the named school officers possessed the requisite intent." "Petitioner has not explained how [their] actions violated any provision of the Education Law"; "These findings do not establish any wrongdoing by Trustee Ludmar"; "Petitioner has

failed to prove any impropriety – let alone impropriety attributable to the individuals whose removal [the petitioner] seeks”; “Petitioner failed to allege that any irregularities affected the outcome of the election or the electoral process was so informal to the point of laxity”. President Ludmar said it is important to state for the record that the accusations brought in the appeal and posted on social media are false and without merit. The district spent tens of thousands of dollars to defend the free and fair election and those funds could be spent on things for this community’s children. Further he invited anyone wanting to read the entire decision, could do so by logging onto the state website and looking up the decision number.

President Ludmar then spoke about a previous discussion regarding TANs borrowing and making that a topic for LAC. As discussed, the District is not permitted to borrow from reserves for this purpose. Now that interest rates have increased, borrowing costs are very high and he wanted to confirm that it is on the LAC agenda. He went on to explain the reason for borrowing is to meet cash flow obligations. Mr. Pappas noted we have reduced cash borrowing, but with the unpredictability of tax payments from collectors, borrowing more often has become a necessity.

On motion of Trustee Russo and seconded by Trustee Mosca and all in favor, the treasurer’s report of December 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 was approved.

On motion of Trustee Galati and seconded by Trustee Mosca and all in favor, it was:

Approval of Budget Transfers

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves budget transfers in the amount of \$16,187 to cover the cost of insurance coverage for underground storage tanks; \$45,461 to cover the cost of dental insurance for teachers and paraprofessionals; and \$150,000 to cover the cost of tuition reimbursement based on a Stipulation Agreement, for a total of \$211,648.

Report from the SGO

SGO co-president, Samantha Lockwood, reported on events and activities at the high school. She explained that Michael Fleming was not in attendance as he is on the school trip to Spain. The language department trips began this week with the Italian trip leaving on Monday and the Spanish and French trips leaving on Wednesday. All three trips are involved in an exchange program and from what has been reported so far, the students are all enjoying their time abroad. Samantha reported that students are excited about the upcoming Sports Night on March 2nd. The theme is TV Networks; seniors are Disney, juniors are Nick, sophomores are Cartoon Network and Freshmen are PBS Kids. The upcoming musical is in rehearsals and will be presented on March 24 and 25. Finally, she reported that the Mock Trial Team advanced to the second round.

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Zublionis congratulated two North Shore High School alumni, Angelo Antinori (Class of 2016) and Eileen Zhao (Class of 2022), who each received a Grammy as part of the New York Youth Symphony for “Best Orchestral Performance” at the 65th Annual Grammy Awards. He noted that this is the first time a youth orchestra has won in this category.

Dr. Zublionis reported on the many athletic accomplishments. He congratulated the Cheerleaders on their hard work to get them to Nationals. He reported that they moved past the first round and everyone is very proud of them. He congratulated the Girls Winter Track and Field Team for a successful season. They became Conference Champions, and were runner-up to the County Championship. 11 girls achieved All-County distinction, senior Sophia Demillio and sophomore Louisa

Ludmar both qualified for the New York State Winter Track and Field Championship to be held on Saturday, March 4 on Staten Island. He also congratulated the Boys Winter Track team member Caden Paradis who was named All-County for pole vault. The Women's Basketball Team won the Conference Championship, and their playoff game is February 18. Men's Varsity Basketball playoff game is tomorrow. Wrestler Kristos Vlahopoulos is a County Champ and he, along with Issac Bratter and Andrew Fabiilli, have qualified for the state championships on February 25 and 26 in Albany. Students will be recognized at a future Board Meeting.

Dr. Zublionis next thanked all of the organizations who sponsored the assembly by Chris Herren on his battle against addiction. He said the two presentations for parents and students, reached all students in grades 7-12, via in-person in the auditorium, or live stream, and was touching and emotional. He also noted that the evening presentation for parents was very well attended. He thanked the Booster Club, Arts Angels, SEPTA, HS PTO, Viking Foundation and especially NS CASA, Allison Camardella and the entire CASA Board.

Dr. Zublionis also mentioned the international trips students are participating in during the winter break. 10 Italian students are bound for Italy with Mr. Roberto Bongiovanni, 22 Spanish students will be exploring Spain with Ms. Madel Soriano and Mr. Josh Knight, and 19 French students will be in France with Mr. Eric Lepetit and Ms. Evelyne Pomateau as part of the exchange program.

Dr. Zublionis reported on a new re-envisioned summer program "T.E.N.S." (Talent Exploration at North Shore). He explained that this summer there will be a new structure for the summer program. Grant funds have run out, therefore a small fee will be charged in order to keep the program going. More information will be coming out shortly on this.

The final "Budget Boot Camp" will be held on March 1 at 9:30 a.m. in the Central Administration Office. This will have the most up-to-date information on the budget. After final budget adoption, he will begin budget talks in the community.

Finally, Dr. Zublionis explained that there will be another Parent University focused on the band program on March 8, which is also the new date for the high school faculty-student basketball game.

Regular Business

Budget Review---8:10 p.m.

The Board reviewed the following sections of the budget: Enrollment, Revenue Projections, General Support/Non-Instructional, Facilities, Commercial Insurance, Instruction/Supervision of Instruction, Regular Instruction, Special Education/St. Christopher, Occupational/Continuing Education, Library/Audio-Visual, Technology, Guidance & Health Services, Athletics/Co-Curricular, Transportation.

The Board began their discussion with enrollment. Questions/concerns raised were that enrollment seems to be outpacing projections; whether there is room for additional students without contingency positions; thoughts for the future if there is an influx of students into one school; where is the breaking point. Dr. Zublionis explained that projections are just projections, they try to build in contingency positions, this can be applied flexibly, but this year they are finding efficiencies. If there is an influx of students into one school would be a discussion for a future year.

The Board then discussed revenue projections. Dr. Zublionis explained that they are looking at \$3.5M in loss of revenue and a raw budget pressure of \$10M which includes new additional expenditures amounting to \$7.1M. \$2.5M in state aid is projected for this year which is not enough to offset new expenses. He explained some of the changes in revenue, where it went up – increased interest income, increased out-of-district tuition, and where it went down – lost funds through LIPA (move to PILOTs and Direct Assessments), exhausted grant from Marcellino/Lavine. Some of this lost revenue is being offset by the LIPA settlement and the use of the TRS/ERS reserves. Dr. Zublionis went

on to explain that the estimated tax levy is 3.7% which is under the maximum levy of 5.52%. This percentage comes from the tax cap formula which allows for certain exclusions. Dr. Zublionis also noted the importance that not only is there a loss of revenue from LIPA being removed from the tax rolls, but we also lose the tax increase on LIPA paying those taxes year-to-year. A question was raised regarding how funds not utilized by going to the tax cap this year might be recouped in future years. Concern was expressed for using the LIPA settlement funds too quickly and whether the Senator Gaughran bullet grant is secured for the future. Projections for use of the TRS and ERS reserves was requested. Mr. Pappas explained that because most of the exclusions in the tax cap have to do with construction and capital expenditures, he is not sure we can utilize what is left on the table in future years. He further explained that next year's cap will probably be high as well. Dr. Zublionis explained that we do already have the Gaughran grant for next year and are hoping to retain, through our lobbyist and LAC, grants through current legislators. In the short-term they will work on that year after year. Mr. Pappas explained that there is a plan for the use of TRS and ERS reserves knowing how it affects our rating.

The Board then began their line-by-line review of the budget. A question was raised regarding the amount budgeted for LIPA hearings. Mr. Pappas explained that the cost of the lobbying firm's fee is included in that amount. It was noted that if the District were able to borrow from themselves for TANs/BANs it would be a savings of over \$200,000. Mr. Pappas explained the primary reason for the increase in architect fees is due to the Annual Visual Inspection done every 5 years by outside Engineers. There was a request for the square footage of each building and a comparison for custodian costs to surrounding districts. Dr. Zublionis noted that this budget is a year that costs need to be flat as a correction year. Going forward next year they will look to see what may need to be added. Mr. Pappas added that anything for health and safety was included. President Ludmar said it is important to note when something is not added, or remains flat, it is actually a cut. There is a large increase in cyber security due to the difficulty of getting affordable insurance with all of the cyber-attacks. In addition, commercial insurance has increased by 15%. President Ludmar noted that the section of Supervision and Instruction is seeing a decrease of \$440,000 – something that has never been seen before. Mr. Pappas explained that middle school mandated expenses went down due to a plan to utilize current calculators. Dr. Smyth explained that some of the other mandated costs have decreased as they are now using service providers instead of retired teachers to score tests. This not only has created an efficiency, it informs us how kids are performing. Concern was expressed over having only one contingency position in the special education budget. There was also concern regarding whether there was enough in the budget to provide for all those who are struggling or have special needs. Mr. Pappas said they budgeted the same amount as in previous years for contingency. Dr. Zublionis added he believes there is enough in the budget to provide for all students and if necessary, overages can be used. He went on to say the District always meets the individual needs of all students. It was suggested to discontinue the District's enrollment in the BOCES program Long Island School for the Arts. It was noted that the District has an exemplary Arts Program, which is being reinforced, and at a time when we are discussing cutting teaching positions, which affects hundreds of students, this may be an expense that should be revisited. It was also suggested to add positions, such as lighting design and/or stage craft, to enhance our theatre program. Dr. Zublionis said they are having those discussions, looking to offer programs around careers and have discussed tuition paying student programs. A question was raised regarding the issuance of Chromebooks to kindergarten students. Dr. Zublionis explained that he and Dr. Smyth will be meeting with the principals to discuss how to scale that off in a meaningful way. In response to a question regarding cell phone use in the classroom, and monitoring cheating, Dr. Zublionis again noted that the principals are looking at our policies and how that can be strengthened. Concern was raised about the equity of not offering the PSAT during the week, and the strain that may cause some parents. Dr. Zublionis explained this decision centered more about the loss of instruction time. He further explained that most districts offer the PSAT this way, but we will continue to look at it.

Concern regarding enough funds for team uniforms and safety equipment was raised. It was also suggested to look into grant money for proper equipment for students who cannot afford it. Dr. Zublionis explained that Mr. Lang is doing a uniform and safety equipment audit this spring. In addition, they are adding an additional part-time trainer to help with coverage at the high school. Dr. Zublionis will follow up with Mr. Lang on possible grant funding. A request was made for detail on "other expenses" for clubs. Dr. Zublionis will get more specifics on that. Regarding the transportation budget, it was noted that although transportation costs have increased, contracted services have increased much more than our own costs. President Ludmar noted that beyond the cost benefit of owning our own bus depot, with a reliable high-quality fleet, we are able to control how we provide transportation. Concern was raised that we are not budgeting for a new bus this year and did not budget for a new bus last year either. Mr. Pappas explained that last year those funds were used for the gym floor and in this budget, the decision was made to keep costs down. In addition, he noted it does not make sense to buy a diesel bus when in 10 years we will need to make the entire fleet electric; a diesel bus will last approximately 20 years. He further explained that there is no intention of putting off purchasing buses indefinitely. There was some uncertainty expressed as to whether the transition to electric buses will actually happen. President Ludmar noted our fleet is still in great shape, but we should not wait too long to continue with the replacement schedule. Dr. Zublionis added that as electric buses start coming in having our own facility and mechanics on staff will help get more life out of our buses. The budget discussion was then closed.

Comments from the Public – 10:40 p.m.

There were no comments from the public.

On motion of Trustee Russo and seconded by Trustee Cashman and all in favor it was:

Increment for Advanced Study - Certified

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves an increment for advanced study for Audra Boyle, Elementary from Step 7 of the MA salary schedule to Step 7 of the MA+15 salary schedule, effective February 1, 2023

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves an increment for advanced study for Michele Keohan, Physical Education, from Step 18 of the MA+60 salary schedule to Step 18 of the MA+75 salary schedule, effective February 1, 2023

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves an increment for advanced study for Nicole Giametta, Speech Language Pathologist, from Step 5 of the MA salary schedule to Step 5 of the MA+15 salary schedule, effective February 1, 2023

Amendment of Appointment - Certified

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby amends the February 2, 2023 appointment of Abbe Mait as follows:

Abbe Mait's appointment as a regular substitute (leave replacement) is hereby extended to March 3, 2023 (originally March 1, 2023)

Appointments - Non-Certified

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves a provisional appointment for Lenore Kornfeld, Typist Clerk, on Step 9 of the Typist Clerk salary schedule, effective February 17, 2023, with a 26-week probationary period

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves the appointment of Maria Buchholtz, Teacher Aide at Glenwood Landing Elementary School, effective February 17, 2023

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves the appointment of Ian Donohue, Food Service Worker, effective February 27, 2023

Per Diem Substitutes

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves the addition of the following names to the per diem substitute list:

Name	Category
Danielle DiMartino	Social Worker
Patricia D'Agate	Teacher Substitute
Evelyn Dominguez	Teacher Substitute
Anna Martakis	Clerical Substitute
Anyah Moody	Teacher Aide Substitute

Extra-Curricular Activity Coach

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves the following extra-curricular activity coach:

Sport	Coach	Step
Intramurals (MS)	Norma Perez	1

On motion of Trustee Galati and seconded by Trustee Macari and all in favor, it was:

Adoption of the 2023-2024 School Calendar

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby adopts the calendar for the 2023-2024 school year

On motion of Trustee Colacioppo and seconded by Trustee Cashman and all in favor, it was:

Acceptance of a Donation from the Cactus Cafe to the North Shore High School Senior Class

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby accepts a Donation of Gift Cards from the Cactus Cafe to the North Shore High School Senior Class (Class of 2023) to be used as prizes for a Fundraiser Spike Ball Tournament, to offset the cost of senior year activities, at a value of \$1,000

On motion of Trustee Mosca and seconded by Trustee Cashman and all in favor, it was:

Approval to Dispose of Inventory

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves the disposal of the following inventory items:

Quantity	Description	School
1	Laptop	High School
1	Computer	High School
1	Printer	Middle School
5	Projectors	Middle School

Prior to approval, Trustee Mosca expressed concern for using an outside consultant for services that might be handled in-house. Trustee Macari asked that going forward it would be helpful to have the credentials of speakers who come in to work with students. Dr. Zublionis explained that this individual

has worked with several school districts, and he invited Board members to attend the assembly program.

On motion of Trustee Galati and seconded by Trustee Cashman and all in favor, it was:

Approval of an Agreement between the North Shore Central School District and Infinity Growth and Development

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves an Agreement between the School District and Infinity Growth and Development to provide professional development for middle school faculty and three workshops for middle school students as per the terms and conditions set forth in the attached agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Education authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the necessary documents to effectuate said agreement on behalf of the Board of Education

Approval of a Facilities Use Agreement between the North Shore Central School District and The Roman Catholic Church of St. Rocco

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves the Facilities Use Agreement between the School District and the Roman Catholic Church of St. Rocco for the use of space for AP and IB testing for students between April 28, 2023 and May 24, 2023, at a fee of \$30 per half-hour, as per the terms and conditions set forth in the attached agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the necessary documents to effectuate said Agreement on behalf of the Board of Education.

The Board decided to act simultaneously on action items 15 and 16

On motion of Trustee Macari and seconded by Trustee Colacioppo and all in favor, it was:

Approval of an Agreement between the North Shore CSD and Uniondale UFSD

BE IT RESOLVED That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby enters into a contract for Health Services with the Uniondale Union Free School District for 15 students residing within the North Shore CSD and attending non-public schools within the Uniondale UFSD for the School Year school year at a cost of \$968.39 per student as provided under the Education Law of the State of New York

Approval of Special Education Services (IEP)

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves special education services (IEP) as per the recommendations of the Committee on Special Education (CSE)

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business discussed.

New Business - 10:50 p.m.

Trustee Russo said parents have expressed concern to her over the third-grade math program. Their concern is it moves too quickly and does not stay on topic. She wondered what type of support or training there is for parents to address their concerns. Dr. Smyth explained that there was a Parent University last week for the third-grade parents and they are addressing the approach and pacing. They are seeing some impacts of the pandemic and responding to that. They did get feedback from parents on how they want to support their children at home and plan to work together to offer that support. There is also a plan to offer videos of lessons for parents to use at home. Once they are ready, Dr.

Smyth will email those out to parents. She went on to explain that she meets with the math team every 6 days, when they review pacing and filling in gaps that exist.

Trustee Macari attended a recent SEPTA meeting. She said the membership would like Special Education highlighted on the District website. She also noted that the District social media pages are full of wonderful things happening throughout the district and thanked Shelly Newman.

Adjournment

At 11:00 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Elizabeth Ciampi
District Clerk