

North Shore Schools
Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Minutes
February 8, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Andrea Macari at 6:30 p.m. in the Middle School Cafeteria. Present were Trustees Cashman, Colacioppo, Galati, Ludmar, 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 Russo and seconded by Trustee Galati and all in favor, the Board convened an executive session in the faculty lounge to consider matters regarding proposed, pending or current litigation and the employment of a particular person or persons.

At 7:45 p.m. on motion of Trustee Cashman and seconded by Trustee Mosca and all in favor, the Board came out of executive session and resumed the regular meeting. There were approximately 50 people in the audience.

Pledge of Allegiance

President Macari led the public in the pledge of allegiance.

Report from the SGO

SGO president, Ava DiFeo, reported on events and activities at the high school. The Asian Student Alliance will be holding a celebration for Lunar New Year. They gave a presentation to the SGO requesting \$800 for the event. The SGO decided to give \$630 to fund the event which will be held on February 27 and is open to everyone in the school district. There will be music, decorations, and dumpling making. Sports Night has been moved to March 7th due to conflicts with Basketball and the music trip to Europe; students will leave for the music trip to Europe on February 15. Students are working on making banners for Sports Night and the SGO is setting up the dance and working on the tee shirts.

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Zublionis congratulated the cross-country team members who will be recognized for their accomplishments at the meeting. He reported that, as a result of Ava's remarks at the previous meeting, he and Dr. Smyth have been speaking about the mid-term exam schedule, and the short time between the break and the administering of mid-term exams, through the lens of student experience. Dr. Zublionis congratulated the North Shore Middle School Masquers cast, crew, and director Damien Chillemi, for an amazing job with their production of *Cinderella*. He also congratulated Vasilis Triantafyllou who recorded his 1,000th basket this week. He said "*I'm proud to know Vasilis since he was a 1st grader and like all of our seniors, it's been an amazing journey to watch their North Shore Journey.*" Dr. Zublionis reported that the swimming program is having great success with the varsity boys swim team participating in the county championship. The varsity wrestling team is also in the county championship.

Dr. Zublionis wished the students departing on the music tour to Europe next week an amazing adventure.

Dr. Zublionis reported that the new digital sign is in place, and he is working to keep the sign updated. He will be speaking to parents and booster organizations next week about how they can send him requests for items to be added.

Finally, Dr. Zublionis reported on his trip to Albany where he met with several elected officials to advocate for increased funding due to our revenue crisis related to the loss of utility (class 3) tax payments. He explained that they continue to ask for funding to protect our students and taxpayers as we are losing \$2.388 million dollars next year in funding. This will impact our budget planning which will be discussed tonight and throughout February, March and April. In addition, the District stands to likely lose \$8.4 million dollars in the 2027-28 school year alone.

Student Recognition

On behalf of the Board, President Macari, Superintendent Dr. Zublionis and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Smyth, along with Coach Neal Levy, and Coach Welch recognized the members of the Women's Cross-Country Team for winning the Nassau County Class III Championship. Members of the team included: Emelia Aguirre, Kristen Arena, Lila Bonvicino, Chloe Brady, Hannah Checo, Chloe Connolly, Sophia Glazarev, Annika Kaelin, Joanna Kenney, Nicoletta Kenney, Isabelle Lee, Louisa Ludmar, Sophia Marchioli, Bella Martocci, Jessica Palen, Dylan Reisberg, Hannah Sadowski, Kate Salerno, Michela Tálamo, Isabella Whalan, Greer Wilson, Miriam Zelkind

Approval of Minutes

The reading of the draft minutes of the meeting of January 25, 2024, 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 Macari that the minutes of the meeting of January 25, 2024 were approved.

Regular Business

Discussion: Independent Budget Review

President Macari noted that on December 14, 2023 the Board unanimously voted to enter into an agreement with Mr. Joe Dragone for an independent budget review for our District. She explained that this decision was the result of many board discussions, and requests from community residents. Tonight, as part of regular business, there will be that presentation and subsequent board discussion. President Macari thanked Dr. Zublionis and Mr. Pappas for their work on this as well as the Board for approving the review. She stated this is another example of how the Board is committed to being fully transparent to taxpayers, open minded to new ideas, both from residents and professionals, and dedicated to finding ways to preserve our uniquely North Shore education in the most cost-effective ways. President Macari noted that the Board was provided a draft report from Mr. Dragone, that was also posted online. She anticipates this conversation to yield additional areas of exploration that can be included in the final report which the Board will receive and make available to the public. President Macari then introduced Mr. Dragone and gave some background information on him.

Mr. Dragone has spent 54 years in Long Island public education. He has worked as a teacher, Special Education Director, High School Principal, Elementary Principal, and Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations. He is an adjunct professor in School Business Leadership programs at both LIU and Hofstra. And interestingly, he is a resident of Northport, a village which has also been affected by its own LIPA decommissioning.

Mr. Dragone explained that he was charged with conducting a comparative analysis of cost-per-pupil and total cost in the special education, elementary instruction, secondary instruction, facilities, transportation, technology, security, athletics, legal expenses and insurance, and food services areas of the budget. To provide a comparative analysis of personnel to student ratio and total personnel, and to provide considerations for possible savings for the North Shore School District. Mr. Dragone used the Herricks, Jericho, Manhasset and Roslyn school districts as comparable school districts to North Shore. Mr. Dragone then reviewed his findings. He explained that North Shore's cost-per-pupil was higher compared to the neighboring districts, however North Shore's enrollment was lower than those districts which did contribute to the cost being higher. Teacher salaries at North Shore are about the same as those comparable districts. North Shore offers additional programs which also adds to the higher cost-per-pupil. Mr. Dragone offered some potential solutions to reducing the cost-per-pupil. These include considering the possibility of reorganizing the elementary schools (i.e. The Princeton Plan); consider the possibility of imposing a minimum enrollment in class section before offering a class at the secondary level; consider services being delivered to see if they can be efficiently (and legally) reduced.

Dr. Zublionis then gave an overview of how this data might be used in the budget planning process. Keeping in mind everyone who is affected by the decisions that go into the budget including the taxpayers, both long term residents and residents who are parents, and of course the students. He reviewed the budget pressures with the loss of revenue to LIPA, as well as revenue from a grant, and the district efforts to control expenses and find new revenue. Dr. Zublionis explained that schools with larger student populations naturally have a lower cost per pupil because of fixed costs and economies of scale that cannot be cut as school populations decline. He further explained that trying to match the cost-per-pupil of other districts would render our schools inoperable and delete the programs and class sizes that brought many parents here. It would also result in far less than what other districts offer. Dr. Zublionis explained that our special education rate is higher than most districts and all comparison districts. This creates legal mandates for staffing; we are conducting a review of our special education program. Dr. Zublionis reported that other districts' cost-per-pupil is rising, as costs are rising each year for all districts, and few are making cuts. He went on to say that finding savings in class sizes, and other program efficiencies, is a way to move forward with per pupil cost in mind. He noted, eliminating programs will not necessarily create savings; students will still need a course that requires staffing. Dr. Zublionis also explained that taxes are not directly related to per pupil costs as North Shore has a lower tax rate than some districts with lower per pupil costs. Finally, he said that North Shore stands to lose \$8.4 million in the 2027-2028 school year alone and we need to determine how that factors into decisions that are being made now.

The Board discussed the presentation. It was noted that the Board commissioned the report after listening to the community. Trustees thanked Mr. Dragone, Dr. Zublionis and Mr. Pappas for the work that went into the analysis. Questions and comments raised included: Although North Shore's cost per pupil is higher than neighboring districts, there are no wasted dollars, every dollar is accounted for and goes to the excellent programming the district offers. Some Trustees expressed alarm with the idea of implementing the Princeton Plan or increasing class sizes. A question was raised of how much would actually be saved by taking those measures, and what that would equate to our average taxpayer. It was suggested to explore more prudent options. Other Trustees were open to exploring the Princeton Plan and higher-class sizes if needed. Some suggestions for changes/areas to review included: Decide whether to offer only IB or AP as other districts do. Reduce the number of FLES teachers in order to retain that program. Reduce the number of languages offered, from 5 languages to 3 languages. Conduct a building-by-building audit to determine if some positions can be consolidated. Investigate the possibility of participating

in a workers' compensation cooperative rather than continuing with a self-insured plan. Communicate with developers who are putting in a battery storage facility on the old LIPA property; get that back on the tax rolls. Suggestions for additions/revisions to the report included: adding the Cold Spring Harbor and Locust Valley School Districts for comparison, who are more comparable to our District. Also to compare some of the things that are unique to our District such as the St. Christopher Home, the management of our own Transportation Depot and School Lunch program. It was suggested that our core values should be driving the report and if some sections and offerings are not feasible, decisions must be made by what is best for our students and guided by our values. It was noted that it is important to take small steps, look at the recommendations and implications to see what the down sides would be. It was also noted that some programs are existential to what "makes us, us" and to ensure students enjoy a breadth of opportunities. In addition, the health of our schools has an impact on the value of our homes. It was reported that land is being developed in the district so it is possible our enrollment numbers will increase, lowering our per pupil cost. It was requested that the revised report include context to the data.

President Macari ended the discussion by noting that the North Shore community has a long tradition of investing in our schools. She pointed out that more of our budget goes to instructional programs. She feels the important question is how much do we want to change our schools? Children will be affected by these decisions. Children with special needs, new home buyers, employees who devoted years to the district. These are questions everyone needs to continue to think about.

Dr. Zublionis, Mr. Pappas and Mr. Dragone addressed questions. Dr. Zublionis explained that eliminating the IB Program would not generate the kind of savings they are looking for. He suggested a separate meeting to discuss IB and AP and to engage the high school faculty. Mr. Pappas explained that he has reached out to the Workers' Compensation cooperative. In the initial year it is expensive, and we would need to keep our reserve to cover past claims as the cooperative will not cover anything prior to when we might join. It would not be less expensive, but we would not have to worry about peaks and valleys, we would be sheltered from one year to the next. Regarding the FLES program, Dr. Zublionis explained that he will look at schedules and find efficiencies due to retirements, similar to how they handled the recent librarian retirement. Considering the number of language offerings, Dr. Zublionis explained that as students finish their cycle of language, and depending on what students are selecting, together with teacher retirements, would drive what languages run. Mr. Dragone agreed it is important to take small steps now to avoid the cliff in 2027-2028. Mr. Dragone commended the Board for commissioning this report and for the thoughtful questions. He noted to preserve the education you have you will need the support from your community as a contingent budget would be devastating.

Comments from the Public – 11:05 p.m.

There was no public in attendance at this point of the meeting.

The Board decided to act simultaneously on action items 9 and 10

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

Personnel

Increments for Advanced Study

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves an increment for advanced study for Harrison Berglin, Physical Education, from Step 8 of the MA+30 salary schedule to Step 8 of the MA+45 salary schedule effective, February 1, 2024

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves an increment for advanced study for Christopher Gill, Social Studies, from Step 14 of the MA+45 salary schedule to Step 14 of the MA+60 salary schedule, effective February 1, 2024

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves an increment for advanced study for Christopher Gish, Special Education, from Step 12 of the MA+45 salary schedule to Step 12 of the MA+60 salary schedule effective, February 1, 2024

Family and Medical Leave Act "FMLA" Leave of Absence

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District approve an unpaid Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") leave of absence for a period of twelve (12) weeks that will run concurrently with any available paid leave, for employee, Adrien Kaye, Teacher, that includes the period January 16, 2024 through February 5, 2024

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District approve an unpaid Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") leave of absence for a period of Twelve (12) weeks that will run concurrently with any available paid leave, for employee, Arlene Fern, Teacher, that includes the period January 3, 2024 through March 29, 2024

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District approve an unpaid Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") leave of absence for a period of Twelve (12) weeks that will run concurrently with any available paid leave, for employee, Nicole Giametta, Teacher, that includes the period January 29, 2024 through April 26, 2024

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District approve an unpaid Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") leave of absence for a period of Twelve (12) weeks that will run concurrently with any available paid leave, for employee, Darlene Skaee, Teacher, that includes the period January 10, 2024 through April 5, 2024

Leave of Absence/Part-time Appointment-Certified

BE IT RESOLVED that, on the recommendation of the Superintendent, and due to special circumstances, the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves a leave of absence for science teacher Adrien Kaye, with such leave to commence February 6, 2024 and end February 29, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Adrien Kaye be appointed to a .6 encumbered position in the science tenure area for the period February 6, 2024 through February 29, 2024

Amendment to Appointment - Certified

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby amends the January 11, 2024 appointment for Christine Messina as follows:

Christine Messina, Elementary (STEAM), 1.0 appointment is extended through February 5, 2024 and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT Christine Messina is hereby appointed to a 0.8 FTE, effective February 6, 2024 through February 29, 2024

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby amends the January 25, 2024 appointment for Pamela LoSchiavo as follows:

Pamela LoSchiavo, Literacy, appointment is hereby extended through February 6, 2024

Resignation - Non-Certified

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby accepts the resignation of Carlos Tasayco, Part-time Cleaner at Glenwood Landing, effective January 26, 2024

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby accepts the resignation of Ihor Levenets, Part-time Cleaner at North Shore High School, effective February 14, 2024

Employee Benefits for Full-Time Security Aides

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby authorizes the following employment benefits for all full-time appointed Security Aides employed by the District:

Sick Leave:

Effective January 1, 2024, all Full Time Security Aides that are assigned to a 33.75 hour (or more) work week on a consistent basis shall be entitled to a maximum of (4) four paid sick days per year. The policy of paid sick leave in cases of short-term illness shall be subject on the District’s discretion. The District’s discretion shall be exercised to deny sick leave where there is a determination that the unit member is abusing the sick leave policy. Unused sick days are not accrued and are not available for payment if not used.

Personal Business Leave:

Effective January 1, 2024, all Full Time Security Aides that are assigned to 33.75 hour (or more) work week on a consistent basis shall be entitled to a maximum of (2) two paid personal business leave days per year. The request for personal business leave shall be filed with the Director of Facilities, (1) week in advance of the anticipated absence. The reason for the “Personal Business” must be given for the absence. The granting of personal business leave days shall be subject to approval of the Director of Facilities. Unused personal business leave days are not accrued and are not available for payment if not used.

Bereavement Leave:

Effective January 1, 2024, all Full Time Security Aides that are assigned to 33.75 hour (or more) work week on a consistent basis shall be entitled to a maximum of (3) days bereavement leave per school year for death of a member of the immediate family. “Immediate family” is defined as the Full Time Security Aide’s mother, father, brother, sister, (or corresponding in-law), spouse, child, grandparent, grandchild or legal guardian.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall supersede any prior Board resolution regarding leave benefits for full-time appointed Security Aides employed by the District.

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
Paige Barwick	School Nurse Substitute
Elyse Kushel	Teacher Substitute
Melissa Rispoli	Teacher Substitute

Extra-Curricular Activity Coaches

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

Sport	Coach	Step
Assistant Varsity Baseball	Kraig Binick	1
JV Baseball	Paul Keil	1
MS Lacrosse	Colin Dunne	1

Approval of Spring 2024 Community Education Instructors

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves the following Community Education Instructors for the Spring 2024 Semester:

Course	Instructor
Northwinds Symphonic Band	Helen Bauer
North Shore Community Chorus	Stephen Goldstein
Yoga	Patty Mitchell
Yoga in the Afternoon	Patty Mitchell
Residential Landscape Design	Steve Dougherty
Watercolor Painting	Charles Van Horn
Basic Drawing	Leonard Antinori
Advanced Volleyball	Kenny Liu
Basketball	Sacha Jean-Louis
Beginner/Intermediate Tennis	J. Jerome Vivona
Intermediate/Advanced Pickleball	J. Jerome Vivona
Planning for Your Child with Special Needs	Jerry Silverman
Keep the Income Flowing During Retirement	Jerry Silverman
America's Boating Course	Cyril Fabijanac
Curvebreakers SAT Prep	Joseph Choi & Ryan Russo

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

Acceptance of a Donation from the North Shore Women's Club to the North Shore High School

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby accepts a donation of \$196 from the North Shore Women's Club to the North Shore High School to cover the cost of optional AP exams for a high school student

Acceptance of a Donation from New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) to the North Shore CSD Science Department

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby accepts a donation from the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) Department of Biological and Chemical Sciences, of seven (7) Microscopes, to the Science Department of the North Shore CSD, at an approximate value of \$525

Acceptance of a Donation from the Sea Cliff School PCA to the Sea Cliff Elementary School

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby accepts a donation of \$300 from the Sea Cliff School PCA to be used for a visit by Therapy Dogs of Long Island to the Sea Cliff Elementary School

The Board decided to act simultaneously on action items 12 and 13

On motion of Trustee Mosca and seconded by Trustee Colacioppo 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 of the disposal of the following inventory items:

Quantity	Description	School
1	Computer	High School
2	Printers	High School
13	Cafe Tables	Middle School

Approval of a Change Order from Inshallah Mechanical Corp.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the North Shore Central School District hereby approves a credit change order No. MC-09 from Inshallah Mechanical Corp. for Phase Two bond work at the North Shore High School in the amount of \$600 (deduction)

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

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 (IEPs) as per the recommendations of the Committee on Special Education (CSE)

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business discussed.

New Business

Trustee Russo noted she was glad the report for tonight's meeting was posted for the public and requested that all reports and presentations be posted so people have access at home before the meeting to topics that might interest them.

Trustee Mosca pointed out some issues with the electronic sign that need addressing. The Board had a brief discussion about how information is added to the sign.

Trustee Cashman commended the high school masquers for their support of the middle school masquers at the recent production of *Cinderella*.

Adjournment

At 11:13 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Elizabeth Ciampi
District Clerk