

SCHOOL BOARD NOTES

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RECOGNITION

The Board recognized Williamsville East High School students who won the fifth annual BAND Against Bullying competition held April 27. A video highlighting the performances from each of the three high schools was shown.

The three outgoing board members - Dr. Patricia Losito, Mr. Michael Schmidt, and Mr. Ronald Shubert - were recognized for their service and offered some reflections about their tenure on the Board. Superintendent Scott Martzloff thanked each for their support and leadership saying, "You have made a huge difference in the lives of our children; you will be missed." [To hear all of the remarks, view the meeting video online at www.williamsville12.org]

Board Acknowledgements – Mr. Shawn Lemay acknowledged 2011 East graduate Gabrielle Walter, who was crowned Miss New York State May 28. Mr. Shubert thanked Board President Toni Vazquez for her leadership and service.



PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Nine people addressed the Board during the public expression period. A student from Williamsville South encouraged more education about Black history in our schools, saying "Black history is American history". An elementary school parent expressed concern about class sizes and student safety, adding that she was not in favor of eliminating class rank. Another parent thanked Board members for their volunteer service and asked them to consider down-time activities for middle school students. One speaker urged the Board to postpone extending the Superintendent's contract, while another said he hoped the settlement in the 3020a hearing would bring people together. Two individuals, including a current student, spoke in support of a Williamsville North music teacher who is leaving at the end of the school year. A high school parent spoke about retaining class rank and another speaker cautioned the Board about the consequences from their decisions.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION

- Under the **President's Report**, the Board reviewed the 2016-17 year-end reports for both the Board and District goals.
- Under the **Superintendent's Community Update**, Dr. Martzloff thanked Mr. Larry Militello, Acting Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, who is retiring in July, for service to the district and his nearly 40 years in education. Dr. Martzloff reported that Mr. Militello will continue on a part-time basis during the summer.
- The Board approved tenure for 16 certified staff members and hosted a short reception to congratulate the newly tenured faculty, who are:

Kate Bagley, Dodge Elementary, Special Education
Katie Cageao, Transit Middle, School Social Worker
Maureen Catanzaro, Maple West, Elementary
Jillian Cusenz, AIM, Social Studies
Stacy Dailey, Maple West, Special Education
John DeLellis, East High, Technology
James Flowers, North High, Social Studies
Leanne Meidenbauer, District, Speech Language Pathologist

Brandon Morrissey, Dodge Elementary, Library/Media Specialist
Minerva Moya, Transit Middle, ESL
Rebecca Norton, Dodge Elementary, School Psychologist
Kimberly Pfeffer, East High, ESL
Chelsea Russell, South High, English
Kelly Saramak, East High, Special Education
Elisabeth Spada, East High, Science
Shauna Taglis, North High, English

Dr. Martzloff congratulated the newly tenured faculty members for reaching this career milestone and invited them to speak. Many shared heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to work in Williamsville, thanking their principals, colleagues, administrators and, most importantly, the students with whom they work. "I found a home here in Williamsville and love the family I'm with," said Lisa LoVullo, an English teacher at Williamsville East who was granted tenure in January and invited to join in the evening's celebration.

- **Personnel** – Acting on the June 12, 2017 decision imposed by state hearing officer John T. Trela, the Board voted unanimously to terminate Dr. Kim Kirsch from her position of Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. Prior to the vote, Board members Suzanne Van Sice and Teresa Anne Leatherbarrow said they were voting for the resolution because it is required by law not because they agreed with the ruling. Dr. Martzloff read a brief statement, thanking several individuals and saying: "It is my fervent desire that this strongly worded decision will close the matter on issues identified by the hearing officer as frivolous and that as a school community we can continue to keep our focus where it belongs, on the wonderful students and families of our district."

In other personnel matters, the Board appointed **Jason Lehbeck** as the new assistant principal at Williamsville North. Mr. Lehbeck has been an assistant principal at Fairport High School outside of Rochester for the past two years and was previously a high school PE/Health teacher in Fairport CSD for 18 years. His appointment is effective July 10, 2017.

Also, the Board approved funding for the agreement between the Superintendent of Schools and the district's confidential employees.

- **Class Rank Presentation** – Assistant Superintendents Dr. Marie Balen and Dr. Anna Cieri, and school counselors from each of the high schools provided an overview on class rank including past and current practice. They shared results from a survey conducted in June 2016. According to Dr. Cieri, 1,770 students (high school and eighth graders) and 813 parents, as well as high school staff members responded to the online survey last year. The overwhelming percentage supported eliminating class rank citing the need to alleviate stress and the lack of uniformity across schools on how students were ranked. Most respondents said class rank creates undue stress and anxiety for students. Those respondents in favor of retaining class rank cited motivation and scholarships as their top reasons. The research presented showed that almost 60 percent of high schools across America do not rank their students and that the importance of class rank as a factor in the college admission decision process has declined over the past decade. Future considerations included the elimination of class rank, beginning with incoming ninth graders (class of 2021) and the need to develop a school-based process for selecting student graduation speakers. Also, the need to communicate the change with parents and middle school counselors.

Board members commended the group on its research, feedback and presentation. Board action on class rank is expected in the near future. *[The Class Rank PowerPoint presentation is available on the district website, www.williamsvillek12.org]*

- In other business, the Board
 - ➔ Approved summer hiring authority for particular District personnel.
 - ➔ Approved year-end reserve funding in accordance with Board policy; increase Tax Certiorari Reserve to \$400,000 due to the Town of Amherst's reassessment program; and re-authorized administrative approval of change orders up to \$35,000 during the summer months.
 - ➔ Approved a five-year Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA) with Erie 1 BOCES, which provides the district with the ability to lease/purchase computer and printer hardware through 2021-22.
 - ➔ Approved a State Environment Quality Review Assessment (SEQRA) Resolution for 520 Campbell Blvd., property owned by the district and under consideration to be sold to Ciminelli Real Estate Corporation.
 - ➔ Approved a SEQRA Resolution for the district's Smart School Bond Project, which will include new wiring for access points in all school buildings.
 - ➔ Approved increases in school breakfast and lunch prices. Lunches will increase from \$2.20 to \$2.30 for grades K-4, and from \$2.50 to \$2.60 for grades 5-12. The K-8 breakfast cost will increase from \$1.25 to \$1.40. The Child Nutrition is a self-funded program and any revenues are used to support the program.
 - ➔ Approved a new high school science textbook in accordance with Board policy.
 - ➔ Reviewed the Environment Committee Annual Report, which included information about the water testing protocol that was completed in accordance with state law requiring all water outlets in public school buildings to be tested for traces of lead. *[Detailed water testing results are available on the district website.]*
 - ➔ Received updates on work associated with the district's comprehensive facilities plan, including the athletic field projects at East and South, which are on track to be completed in September.
 - ➔ Reviewed the annual report on Compliance and Performance Results for Students with Disabilities.
- The Board accepted the resignation for the purpose of retirement of **Deborah Coyne**, part-time clerk typist, Student Services, after three years of service, effective July 6, 2017; **Donna DeLeon**, Computer Support Technician at Transit Middle School after 23 years of service, effective July 28, 2017; Mary Hagner, part-time teacher aide at Maple West Elementary, after 25 years of service, effective June 23, 2017; **Charles Panepinto**, a Bus Driver after 21 years of service, effective June 23, 2017; and **Nancy Peters**, part-time teacher aide at Williamsville North High School, after 25 years of service, effective June 23, 2017.
- The Board accepted the following donations on behalf of the district: \$500 from the Jacquie Hirsch for A.L.L. Foundation to Heim Elementary to purchase books for the school library; \$6,585 from the North High PTSA to North High School to install updated directional hallway signage; and \$230 from the Transit Middle Social Committee to purchase a tree for school grounds.
- **Committee of the Whole:** Mr. Schmidt made a motion to name the high school athletic fields as follows: South High – Kevin Lester Field; East High – Dr. James Rusin Field; and North High – Dr. Scott Martzloff Field. Dr. Martzloff thanked Mr. Schmidt but declined the nomination, asking the Board to consider another name for the North fields. "I don't belong in that list," he said. "I haven't been here nearly long enough, done nearly enough to deserve even consideration let alone having something named for me." The Board voted and the motion passed, 5 to 3 (*No – Mecca, Leatherbarrow, Van Sice*). Mr. Schmidt also made a motion to vote on eliminating class rank, however the Board tabled its discussion. Mrs. Van Sice asked if board members could have more input into the school visitation schedule. District Clerk Mitzie Serafin said the visitation schedule would be discussed at the July reorganizational meeting.

This Board of Education meeting will be televised on Time-Warner Cable Channel 20 on Sat., June 17 at 7:30 P.M. and Sunday, June 18 at 1 P.M. Also, the meeting video is available for viewing anytime at www.williamsvillek12.org; click on the "Video On Demand" icon on the homepage.

All 2016-17 BOE meeting videos are available for viewing on [Williamsville Central School District YouTube!](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqW7k12k12k12k12k12k12k)

UPCOMING MEETINGS (held in District Office Boardroom): Wednesday, July 5, 2017 • 2017-18 Organizational Meeting • 7:00 P.M.