



General Library Item

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Scarsdale Board of Education Business Meeting Highlights May 9, 2022

Board of Education:

Karen Ceske, President
Amber Yusuf, Vice President
James Dugan
Carl Finger
Robert Klein
Jessica Resnick-Ault
Ron Schulhof

Interim Superintendent of Schools:

Dr. Drew Patrick

Superintendent's Cabinet:

Gerald Crisci, Director of Instructional Technology and Innovation
Stuart Matthey, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Facilities
Dr. Edgar McIntosh, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Rachel Moseley, Director of Informational Technology, Chief Information and Data Protection Officer
Ray Pappalardi, Director of Physical Education, Health, and Athletics
Eric Rauschenbach, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services

Special Meeting

At 5:00 p.m., Ms. Ceske convened a Special Meeting with student representatives from the High School. Topics discussed included the ways in which schooling has returned to “normal,” aspects of pandemic learning which students would like to hold on to, ways to improve wellness and organization, and a follow-up on DEI efforts discussed earlier in the school year.

Special Meeting/Tenure Recommendations

At 6:32 p.m., Ms. Ceske convened a Special Meeting for the purpose of reviewing tenure recommendations, noting that all Board members were present (Karen Ceske, Board President; Amber

Yusuf, Vice President; Carl Finger; James Dugan; Robert Klein; Jessica Resnick-Ault; and Ron Schulhof), as well as Cabinet members.

Dr. Patrick took a moment to recognize the teachers and nurses for their outstanding work in making a better learning environment for children. He also extended thanks for the expressions of gratitude that were curated and displayed last week. Dr. Patrick then read the following statement about this year's tenure class:

This evening, we are also celebrating 10 teachers and 2 administrators who are marking a very special milestone, as they are being recommended for tenure. Achieving tenure is a significant accomplishment in the career of an educator. Importantly, the action that will take place tonight the conferral of tenure cannot happen before a teacher, counselor, or administrator successfully completes a trial, or probationary, period of employment. The quality and effectiveness of a probationary educator's performance is gauged against professional standards. In Scarsdale, we use the Multidimensional Principal Performance Rubric to evaluate administrators, and Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching to guide our teacher evaluation process. The Danielson Framework describes effective practice across the domains of Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. Our appraisal system relies on a wide variety of inputs to inform a decision to recommend tenure, including:

- *Multiple formal, clinical observations annually, inclusive of a discussion, reflection, written report, and rating, conducted by supervisors. For administrators, these "observations" include school visits (in the case of building admins) and/or observations of meetings.*
- *An observation by an Assistant Superintendent or Director.*
- *Numerous informal "drop-in" observations by supervisors and evaluators.*
- *Formal and informal mentoring.*
- *A year-end conference, written appraisal, assessment of progress, and rating, annually.*
- *A portfolio of artifacts documenting professional practice, with written commentary and reflection.*
- *Feedback from parents and other parts of the school community.*
- *An administrative review panel attended by district administrators, building administrators, supervisors, and Board of Education members, annually.*

We believe that the rigors of the tenure process are commensurate with the importance of the achievement. The work of supervision and evaluation is ongoing, and is essential to the continuous development of all educators. We also believe in the importance of career-long reflective practice. The portfolio reflections written by tenure candidates speak volumes about their commitment to reflective practice. Their words, better than mine, characterize the quality of talent we have in our schools. Notably, this year being unlike any other, several of these reflections include thoughts on the pandemic's impact on teaching and learning.

One of the questions we pose is brief, but complex: "Why do you teach?"

One teacher responded, "I teach because I believe there isn't a more rewarding occupation than one that can give children the confidence to become anything they desire in life. Once my students have confidence in themselves, this will enable them to strive for and accomplish any goals they set for themselves. As a teacher, I get to help my students achieve their goals daily. Every day I have the chance to inspire a child, and I do not take that opportunity lightly. The lessons I teach have a distinct purpose to allow my students to learn through discovery."

Another said, "When beginning to write this new reflection on why I teach, I decided to look at my Year One submission. Just out of curiosity, I decided to look at the revision history of that earlier document. The last edited date was February 26, 2020, just a few days before we closed in March of 2020. In the two years that have elapsed, my work looks drastically different. Why I teach, however, remains the same. The primary purpose of teaching is to show one's love for learning and to grow through one's work, while supporting others to learn and grow in turn. I have done that during my time as a member of the Scarsdale community."

We also ask faculty to describe how they "create a climate and culture for learning?"

This question was asked and answered last year, during hybrid learning. This response was particularly poignant: "This year, my students' happiness was my motivation for growth. Faced with a pandemic, our students were asked to navigate technology and rely on executive functioning skills that are still developing. All of this while mourning the loss of peer interactions and grappling with increasing academic demands. I attempted to be a constant for those students who I've worked with over the past three years. I found that in order to do this I needed to not only show up, but also rise up! I greeted all my students at their classrooms to make a connection. I made sure they could see my smile, hear my laugh, and feel success. Even on the darkest of days, they needed to feel safe and heard. That meant making time for check-ins and small talks in our session. It meant reaching out to families to evaluate what was needed at home, and making my students feel that behind the mask there were people rooting for them here at school."

Finally, we seek candidates' reflections on professional growth and lifelong learning.

I will share excerpts of two responses to this question. "What I did not know in my first year of 2018 2019 was what an unpredictable few years would follow, all thanks to the COVID 19 pandemic. I did not foresee how a global health crisis would upend all of our careers and force us to be even more flexible, creative, and present for our students. As unimaginable as this pandemic has been, it has inevitably played a large role in shaping me into the teacher I am today and strengthening my previously held beliefs about what it means to be an educator and colleague. Quite frankly, I'm a better teacher because of it.

Though I always believed that flexibility was important in teaching, that was never one of my strengths. I'm someone who likes to walk into class with a specific plan. While I still plan extensively, the constant pivoting of the pandemic has shown me the importance of flexibility. Now, I am much more at ease in making adjustments to match my students' needs and skills, even in the midst of teaching a class. This will serve me well as we transition out of the pandemic and are left with the academic repercussions of the past three school years."

And the second reflection, "On a personal note, I continue to foster my own growth by taking advantage of opportunities around me. Over the summer, I took STI classes about the LATI classroom and supporting students with anxiety. Last spring, I participated in the Skillful Teacher STI, which helped me develop checklists so students clearly knew expectations for assignments or activities. When we were teaching remotely, I took numerous STI classes to try new technology and hear from other teachers about how to best support students during the pandemic. This fall, I began a master's degree focusing on Educational Leadership, pushing myself to learn about how schools work from the top down. I look forward to taking more STI classes this spring, including a follow up to the LATI classroom from last summer to find new ways to apply this type of curriculum in the classroom. Whether remote or in person, I continue to make connections with my colleagues, receiving advice and learning from those who have been at Scarsdale Middle School much longer than me. I am always

looking for new learning opportunities, whether for my own progress or so I can better support my students.”

I think these powerful reflections serve to demonstrate the level of practice and professionalism, care and commitment exhibited by our teachers. It is my absolute pleasure to introduce, without reservation, the teachers recommended for tenure.

Name	School	Tenure Area	Tenure Effective Date
Giustino, Jennifer	Edgewood	Music	8/28/22
Rappaport, Jill	Edgewood	Remedial Speech	6/30/22
Palladino, Christin	Quaker Ridge	General Special Education	8/28/22
Smith, Shannon	Quaker Ridge	General Special Education	8/27/22
Nolan, Kaitlin	QR/Edgewood	Physical Education	8/28/22
Holtzer, Talya	Scarsdale MS	Science	8/28/22
Turner, Benjamin	Scarsdale MS	Science	8/27/22
Summerfield, Kimberly	Scarsdale HS	English	8/28/22
Dutra, Meredith	Scarsdale HS	General Special Education	8/27/22
Gliksman, Shoshana	District	School Psychologist	8/28/22

It is also my privilege to recognize two extraordinary leaders this evening. Chris Welsh serves as one of the trio of assistant principals at Scarsdale High School. In a very short time, Chris has established himself as a trusted, highly capable, deeply committed leader who has, among other things, helped Scarsdale High School navigate the intricacies of remote and hybrid learning over the course of the pandemic. Chris Welsh, tenure candidate in the position of High School Assistant Principal.

And last, but certainly not least, is my colleague and friend, Dr. Edgar McIntosh. Over the past four years, Edgar has led some very challenging work in the area of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Throughout, he has kept the needs of students at the forefront, while never forgetting what it means to be a teacher in a classroom with myriad responsibilities. He has gained the trust of our educators, and reaches decisions through respectful discourse and dialog. Dr. Edgar McIntosh, candidate in the positions of Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

The Board voted unanimously to grant tenure.

Statutory Budget Hearing

The Statutory Budget Hearing was called to order at 6:52 p.m. Mr. Matthey presented an overview of the 2022-23 proposed budget. Members of the live and virtual audiences were invited for public comment on the 2022-23 proposed budget. No one spoke in person, one person spoke virtually.

Audit Committee Meeting

At 7:03 p.m., Ms. Ceske convened the Board as the Audit Committee and provided an update on the Board’s request for a review of internal controls at the April 4th Board Meeting and the review of the draft proposal from the District’s internal auditors Cullen and Danowski at the April 24th Audit Committee Meeting. The committee continued the discussion of the draft proposal including the comparisons of 941 filings to actual payments and the calendar year-end reporting to the IRS. A conversation ensued among committee members concerning the current draft proposal and hiring Cullen & Danowski versus retaining an outside firm to convene an internal audit on the District’s payroll processes. The committee reached a consensus to vote on the internal audit later in the meeting.

Mr. Matthey presented the corrective action plans related to the external audit FYE 2020 and internal audits FYE 2020 and 2021. The District is required to develop corrective action plans following completed internal and external audits which are then submitted to the Audit Committee for approval by the Board at a subsequent meeting.

The committee approved the recommendation that the Board accept the amended corrective action plan for the external audit FYE 2020 and the corrective action plan for the internal audit FYE 2020 and 2021. The committee also voted on the recommendation to the Board to accept the engagement letter from the internal auditor but there was not a majority vote. The committee reached a consensus to start the RFP process to hire a new internal auditor for the purpose of this particular engagement.

Business Meeting

At 7:47 p.m., Ms. Ceske convened the Business Meeting, noting that all Board members were present. She began by welcoming Dr. Patrick to his first meeting as Interim Superintendent, describing the many qualities he has that made him a great fit for the position, and stressed the Board's confidence in Dr. Patrick's leadership and fitness for the role.

She also provided an update of the earlier Audit Committee meeting, where the determination was made to issue an RFP for an internal auditor. Ms. Ceske reported the Board met with their external auditor, and were assured that no significant errors or improprieties were discovered. The video of the Special Meeting can be viewed [here](#).

Ms. Ceske provided the following update from the District's Tax Counsel:

- *The Board held an Audit Committee meeting earlier this evening to review the draft proposal of the District's current internal auditors to conduct an audit of the District's payroll tax process, including a review of internal controls. The Audit Committee determined that it would send out an RFP for a third party internal auditor to do this work.*
- *Last Thursday, May 5th, the Board held a special meeting with the District's external auditor, EFPR Group, to provide an update and review of the accounting treatment of the IRS matter. They provided an overview of how the IRS penalties and tax payments impact the District's financial statements, proposed budget, and fund balance and confirmed that the IRS matter does not affect the tax rate, the tax cap, or the educational program proposed for our students in the 2022-2023 budget. This meeting was recorded and is available in the Board of Education Video Library on the District's website.*
- *Tax counsel has provided the following update on the Q2 2021 matter: The Revenue Officer confirmed that the District's request for abatement of the Q2 2021 penalty has been assigned to the appropriate representative in their office and is making its way through the stages of the review process. In addition, the Revenue Officer confirmed that their request to hold any determination on the lien action until a determination on the penalty abatement request has been granted. The Revenue Officer has requested from the appropriate representative a resolution on the penalty abatement request within 30 days and told the District's tax attorneys to follow up with her after Memorial Day if they do not hear from her earlier.*
- *Tax counsel has provided the following update on the Q3 2021 matter: The same Revenue Officer confirmed receipt of the District's tax attorneys' letter bringing to her attention the Q3 2021 matter and enclosing both the IRS Notice and the District's response regarding the same. Because the response was not submitted directly to the Revenue Officer, she was unable to confirm at this time the status of the processing of the response and, more importantly, the Form 941 Schedule B for Q3 2021.*

However, the Revenue Officer offered to conduct some research and see if she could locate the District's response and request that the enclosed Form 941 Schedule B for Q3 2021 be processed as soon as possible. Again, the Revenue Officer told the District's tax attorneys to follow up with her after Memorial Day if they do not hear from her earlier.

In addition, both the Revenue Officer and the District's tax attorneys have again recommended that the District begin e-filing its Forms 941 and the District is and has been looking into options regarding the same.

Tax counsel has provided the following update on the Q4 2020 matter: The same Revenue Officer noted that the District's account for Q4 2020 still showed a balance of what the Revenue Officer presumed to be the remaining penalties and interest. The Revenue Officer was not privy to any information other than that and, as such, could not expand upon the same. Recall, though, that the Appeals Officer indicated that her final request and approval for penalty abatement would take approximately two to three weeks to process, and we have not yet exhausted that timeframe. Tax counsel will continue to follow up with the Appeals Officer on a regular basis.

- Please know that the Board will provide further updates to the community as we continue to work on this matter and the investigation into it.*

Ms. Ceske also reminded the public that the Budget Vote and Board Election is next Tuesday, May 17th from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. in the Middle School gymnasium.

Dr. Patrick once again thanked members of the community for their showers of support for our faculty and staff. He also highlighted events occurring around the District, including elementary school fairs, musical performances at the Middle School, the Science Research Symposium at the High School, and the Girls Varsity Lacrosse Senior Night game.

Mr. Schulhof reported that he and Mr. Matthey presented the budget to the SMS PTA. Mr. Finger reported that he and Mr. Matthey had a similar presentation with the Fox Meadow PTA. Mr. Klein presented the budget with Mr. Matthey for SNAP, the Scarsdale Neighborhood Association. Ms. Resnick Ault and Mr. Matthey joined the Edgewood PTA for their presentation, and Mr. Dugan reported he'll be presenting to the Greenacres PTA with Mr. Matthey this week.

Personnel Report

Dr. Patrick presented the *Personnel Report* including the announcement of new faculty appointments which may be viewed [here](#).

Hearing From Those Present

Members of the public were invited to address the Board. One audience member spoke in person. There was one virtual participant.

Written Communications

Ms. Yusuf reported the Board had received 50 messages between March 30th and May 3rd as listed in the [Board meeting agenda](#), all of which received a response from the Board and/or District Administration.

Consent Agenda

The Board approved the items on the Consent Agenda, including the Personnel Report.

Information and Discussion Items

The Board considered items under the *Information/Discussion* portion of the agenda.

- Second Reading of Draft McKinney Vento Policy and Proposed Changes to Existing Policies: Mr. Rauschenbach presented the second reading of new policy 5151 - *Homeless Children*, and revised policies 5100, 5150, and 5420. Being that no further revisions were recommended by the Board, these policies will be presented for adoption at the June 6th Board meeting.
- Tax Certiorari Reserve Establishment: State law requires that tax certiorari reserves be established by action of the Board prior to June 30th for each year of outstanding claims. Mr. Mattey provided an overview of the process and timeline for establishing the reserves and noted that the resolution establishing the reserve will be presented to the Board at the June 6th Board meeting.
- Facilities Update: Mr. Mattey shared the facilities update and work that is expected to take place this summer.
- Day Automation Proposal (BOCES) - Integration of District Emergency Systems: Mr. Rauschenbach reported that this security based project will replace all current card readers and allow schools to be locked down instantly in the event of an emergency. This project will utilize BOCES and will generate BOCES aid resulting in a net cost of 59 cents on the dollar.
- Smart Schools Bond: Mr. Crisci provided a brief overview, timeline, and estimated funding allocations for the Smart Schools Bond which will need to be finalized before Board approval.
- Proposed New Textbooks for the High School: Dr. McIntosh presented the proposed textbooks for the High School including Our Declaration, for the AT Government class.
- Westchester Putnam School Boards Association (WPSBA) Administrative Budget and Board of Directors Slate, 2022-23: An overview of the WPSBA budget and slate of upcoming Board of Directors was presented by Ms. Resnick-Ault. The Board will cast its vote on the ratification of the 2022-23 WPSBA budget and slate of 2022-23 Officers and Members of the Board of Directors later in the meeting.
- Succession Planning for the Superintendent: Mr. Schulhof provided an update on the request for a proposal (RfP) process for superintendent search firms, and thanked Mr. Mattey and Ms. Pisano for their work in finishing the proposal and getting it out the door.
- Quarterly Treasurer's Report & Schedule of Investments: Mr. Martin answered a question from Mr. Dugan regarding the timing of the appearance in these reports of the Q4 IRS payment that was made this past April.

Action Items

The Board approved the proposed new textbooks for the High School; adopted the resolution to reject the capital improvement bid for the Middle School; and cast its vote on the ratification of the 2022-23 WPSBA Budget and Board of Directors Slate for 2022-23. The Board also accepted the Quarterly Treasurer's Report.

Gift

The Board accepted with thanks, the gift of \$3,750.00 from the Giants Foundation to partially offset the costs to operate the Scarsdale Girls' Flag Football Team in the 2022 Spring pilot.

Hearing From Those Present

Members of the public were invited to address the Board for the second time. One person spoke in person, two spoke remotely.

Wrap-Up Items

Ms. Yusuf presented the meeting dates for the upcoming month:

Upcoming Meetings

Tuesday, May 17, 2022:

- Public Budget Vote and Board Elections, 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., Middle School Gymnasium
- Special Meeting to Certify Vote Results, 9:30 p.m., Room 170-172, Middle School Gymnasium

Monday, June 6, 2022:

- Retirement Recognition, 6:30 p.m., Room 170-172, High School
- Business Meeting, immediately following, Room 170-172, High School

The Board adjourned into executive session at 8:59 p.m. to seek advice of legal counsel. At 9:40 p.m. the Board returned from executive session and reconvened the Business Meeting. Ms. Ceske reported that documents pertaining to the IRS matter will be available on the website the following morning. The Board also voted on a FOIL appeal and authorized the Board president to sign the letter of declaration. The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

The Board meeting may be viewed on the District website, under Scarsdale Cable TV/Board of Education VOD, [here](#).

Administrative Content

Executive Content