

In Board Briefs, we summarize key agenda items and discussion topics from previous Board of Education meetings. Full meeting minutes are usually not available until approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting. The community is encouraged to attend each meeting, and the Board welcomes questions and comments. Previous Board Briefs can be found on the District website [here](#).

March 19, 2018 Board of Education Meeting

After an executive session and the Pledge of Allegiance, the regular monthly public meeting was called to order. The Syosset High School Association for Creative Thespians performed two songs from its recent production of "Cinderella," after which cast members introduced themselves.

Following the performance, the second of four Budget Information meetings was held. The meeting focused on the Program and Administrative components of the 2018-19 budget. The Program portion, which represents 78% of the District's annual expenditures, addresses salaries for teachers and support staff, special education, textbooks, equipment, instructional technology, athletics, co-curricular activities and several other expenditures. The administration portion, which represents 9.8% of the District's annual expenditures, includes operations of the District's business office, the office of the Superintendent of Schools and the District Clerk as well as auditing, purchasing and legal services, among other areas.

At the conclusion of the Budget Information Meeting, the regular meeting reconvened. The minutes from the February 12 regular meeting, the February 13 meeting to accept the results of the Phase II Facilities Improvement vote and the March 12 security forum were all approved. The Treasurer's Report was delivered and also approved.

The Superintendent's Report and Other Monthly Items

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tom Rogers announced that school would be in session on Thursday, May 24 and Friday, May 25 as a result of the inclement weather days used.

Dr. Rogers also provided a recap of the March 12 Security Forum, and reported on school security procedures as well as recent security enhancements executed and others being considered:

- Phase I security projects review: security vestibules; security and fire-rated corridor walls; reinforced classroom doors and locking mechanisms.
- Phase II security projects review: enclosed corridors replacing outdoor student walkways (Syosset High School, South Grove School); window air conditioning units replaced with internal units to eliminate open classroom windows; construction of an outdoor bathroom at SHS for outdoor athletic competitions which would allow the building to remain closed after school.
- Process to accelerate state approval of Phase I and II safety construction projects.
- Additional uniformed security guards and new visitor procedures.
- Panic button app used via smartphone as a supplement to 911 notification.
- Chip-enabled smart badges issued to all staff (can activate exterior door locks at the high school, in process of rolling out to all schools).

- Increased bid specification for guard and surveillance services, including additional law enforcement experience as a requirement for guards. Additional evening patrols and supervision.
- Fencing projects to enclose the perimeters of schools.
- More than 300 surveillance cameras installed in the last three years with more planned.
- Review of all internal processes relevant to security and emergencies.
- Enhanced drill procedures: Dr. Rogers said that there is room for improvement. More drills will be conducted earlier in the school year and during inconvenient times (for example during lunch, between periods, during dismissal).
- A series of changes are being implemented regarding visitor management. Immediately following the February break, additional security measures were put into place. The next phase is being looked at and will include the requirement that all guests have an appointment. This policy will extend to alumni coming to visit.

Dr. Rogers touched on programs that support student wellbeing as well as mental health and support services available to students. He stated that we are fortunate in this district to have the resources to provide significant support to students, including full-time psychologists in every school, a social worker and school counselors.

- The District is committed to providing a well-rounded education. Student wellbeing is a part of the curriculum, including stress management, peer pressure and being a good digital citizen.
- The District is beginning the adoption of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System), which will leverage the District's student management software to identify patterns of behavior that require additional student support.
- Dr. Rogers referred the audience to the School Security presentation on the district website for a more comprehensive overview of security and student wellbeing initiatives.

Vice President Tracy Frankel inquired about the use of social media monitoring/reporting services. Dr. Rogers indicated that the services are limited to public posts and produce many false positives so they need to be carefully evaluated. He stated how important it is that residents contact the District if they see something on social media that appears to be a threat or cause of concern. Frankel also inquired about new procedures for visitors, including how graduates who return to the buildings to visit their former teachers are affected. Dr. Rogers said they would be required to make appointments in advance, contrary to past practice, and similar to current outside visitors, would be assigned an escort upon entering any building.

Dr. Rogers also proposed four long-term initiatives to improve security:

- The creation of a Director of Security position.
- An additional \$1 million in security spending for the 2018-19 school year, some of which would be supported by savings identified in other budget categories with the balance supported by the tax levy. This would be used for one-time expenditures.
- The creation of a Capital Reserve for Security to fund future infrastructure and facilities projects that address security. This would be beneficial if new security regulations in the future are forthcoming.

- Explore the suitability of renovating the Woodbury School and relocating some administrative functions there.

Following questions from the Board regarding the role, recruitment and impact of a Director of Security, the Board authorized Dr. Rogers to move ahead in creating/defining the parameters of the position.

Dr. Rogers provided examples of security enhancements that could be addressed with the one-time \$1 million security allocation, including equipping buses with GPS systems and surveillance cameras, additional surveillance cameras in and around schools, additional door electronics and door ajar alerts as well as other security projects/measures that would be compromised if disclosed to the public. Trustee Chris Di Filippo asked Dr. Rogers to research how the door electronics would work in the event of a fire evacuation. The Board indicated its support of this additional security spending.

The Board also supported the creation of a Capital Reserve for Security and during the New Business portion of the meeting, approved a resolution to place a proposition on the May ballot for the public to vote on the creating this reserve (required by law). Should voters approve the Capital Reserve for Security, a “savings account” would be created into which the Board could save up to \$5 million, which would then require additional voter approval for any future spending.

President Michael Cohen said that the Board is committed to engaging the public in future discussion regarding Dr. Rogers’ proposal to explore an alternative use of the Woodbury School. He asked Dr. Rogers to develop a plan for gathering community feedback.

Audience to the Public

- A parent of a member of the Rowing Club asked the Board to reconsider underwriting transportation to Centre Island, where the team practices. Dr. Rogers told the parent he would contact him after speaking with the District Director of Athletics, Physical Education and Health on the matter. The discussion came up in the fall and at the time Dr. Rogers expressed concerns regarding District liability and supervision of the club, which is not a Section VIII sanctioned interscholastic team, and providing transportation for non-residents.
- A parent asked the Board to consider social media monitoring services. Dr. Rogers said the District is looking at all available services and security products. He shared concerns about the challenges presented when using third-party intermediary companies to coordinate with police. He also reiterated concerns about the limitations of social media monitoring services and the privacy concerns they raise, but he is speaking with schools that use these services. The parent also asked if the facilities improvement projects underway will adhere to any future state regulations. Dr. Rogers said that anticipating specific regulations would be speculation, but that creating a Capital Reserve for Security would help to mitigate future costs incurred to comply with unforeseen regulations.
- A parent asked if consideration was being given to a particular visitor management system that incorporates ID scanning. Dr. Rogers said that the District is exploring

systems that integrate with other District systems such as the student information system.

New Business

- Various resolutions were approved relating to compensation, staff appointments and leaves of absence. Vice President Frankel questioned a significant difference in the proposed compensation of two similar coaching positions. Deputy Superintendent Adele Bovard said that salaries are based on a point scale and years of service.
- The Board approved a number of resolutions related to the management of the District, including committee meeting minutes, legal action, policies, purchases, settlement agreements and student club charters.
- The Board certified the results of the February 13, 2018 Facilities Improvement Initiative vote for authorization of Phase II projects.
- The Board set July 10, 2018 as the Reorganization Meeting for the 2018-19 school year.
- The Board approved a number of resolutions related to financial operations of the District, including the awarding of bids, piggybacking for the purchase of supplies, service contracts, and the disposal of old equipment.
- The Board approved the dedication of the Baylis School library in honor of the late Judy Jacobs and accepted a donation of plaques for this purpose.
- The Board approved a resolution seeking public approval for a security-related Capital Reserve not to exceed \$5 million.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at South Woods Middle School, beginning at 8 p.m. A Budget Information Meeting will be held at 7:45 p.m. (same location).