

**EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023  
Bell Top Elementary School**

**1. A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER-** Mr. Buono- 7:01 P.M.

**B. ATTENDANCE**

	Present	Absent	Arrival
Mr. Buono	X		
Ms. Curtin	X		
Mr. Dunn	X		
Ms. Kennedy	X		
Mr. Mann	X		
Ms. O'Brien	X		
Ms. Skumurski			7:19 P.M.
Ms. Steinbach		X	
Ms. Taylor	X		

Also Attending

Mr. Simons	X		
Ms. Cannon	X		
Mr. Stiles	X		
Ms. Wager		X	

Student Council

Emma Marchiony	X		
Roan Butterfield	X		

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. EX OFFICIO STUDENT COUNCIL COMMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

A. Student Council Representatives: Emma Marchiony-President; Roan Butterfield-Vice President

Roan Butterfield mentioned that Student Council was running a booth at the Multi-Cultural Fair to raise money for the people of Turkey that were impacted by the earthquakes.

Emma Marchiony reported that Student Council is planning fundraisers to fund the end of the year field trip to Six Flags New England.

B. Bell Top Elementary School Presentation - Martin Mahar, Principal

Mr. Mahar explained how having a full-time library program has increased enrichment opportunities for the students. He said that having full-time access to the library has improved student engagement and increased the book circulation.

Mr. Mahar introduced students in the Bookworm Program. These second grade students started researching the history of Bell Top after the school received a plaque honoring Bell Top's 80th anniversary.

Using databases, old newspaper articles and help from the North Greenbush Historian, the students were able to present information from when the school was originally built in 1886 to today.

Ms. Devine also discussed the Difference Makers Program, where 5th graders read a book together, and then did a community service inspired by the book. She explained how the program taught the students the importance of community engagement & service.

Quinn Reilly, a fifth grader, spoke about his project, the HeartsHerd project. Quinn explained the book "*The Cat Man of Aleppo*", was about an animal sanctuary that took in orphaned animals after the war. After reading the book, he and his classmates visited the local HeartsHerd animal sanctuary and learned how the shelter cares for abused and abandoned animals. Quinn said Bell Top also held a fundraiser and raised \$538 to help support the organization.

Mr. Mahar thanked Mr. Simons and the Board of Education for supporting all the programs.

Mr. Dunn thanked the students, staff and families for all their hard work putting the presentation together.

Ms. O'Brien told the students that they did a great job on the presentation and that she learned many new things about Bell Top and the animal sanctuary

**4. MINUTES**

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING OF MARCH 22, 2023.

Motion by Ms. Skumurski, Second by Ms. Taylor

Resolved, upon the recommendation of the District Clerk, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting of March 22, 2023

Vote: Ayes- 5, Nays- 0, Abstentions- 3 (Buono, Mann, O'Brien)

Motion carried

## **5. BOARD FORUM #1**

Ms. O'Brien thanked all the persons who planned the Education Foundation Gala, and congratulated all the honorees.

Mr. Buono thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He mentioned a recent social media postings suggesting the District is looking into outside transportation companies to transport students. Mr. Buono stated that the postings are not true and that the District admires and thanks the Transportation Department for all they have done, not only during COVID, but also on an everyday basis transporting students safely to school, field trips, sporting events, etc.

## **6. PUBLIC FORUM #1**

Ms. Stephanie Perras, a Bell Top parent, stated her concerns about the projected class sizes at Bell Top. She stated she had submitted a petition to the Board via email on behalf of Bell Top families in support of smaller class sizes.

Ms. Paige Wood, a Genet parent, stated her request to have armed guards or retired police officers at each elementary school. She stated that recent school shootings have occurred at the elementary schools and feels officers should not only be placed at the middle and high school level. She also said many Genet parents have concerns about older students being in the building.

Mr. Buono acknowledged the concerns and agreed that recent events have been pretty disturbing and very traumatic. He stated that East Greenbush School District has a very strong history of school safety and always tries to keep those concerns in mind. Mr. Buono said the District will look closely at all the concerns to make sure it can provide a safe place for students.

Ms. Kristin Blais, a Bus Driver in the District since 1997, expressed her concerns about students on buses during lockdowns. She said the way the buses line up at the schools could be a dangerous situation, and she was very concerned about how everything played out on the recent lockdown.

Mr. Simons said that the lockdown showed there is always room for improvement. He said he is dedicating the next Administrative meeting to discussions what can be done with the buses during lockdown, and other safety issues that arose.

Ms. Jennifer Crewell, a Genet parent, said she felt that police presence at Genet should be a priority since it has four different access points.

Ms. Jill Bonesteel, a bus driver, said the transportation department had met to discuss and brainstorm ideas for buses during a lockdown, and she hoped Dr. McQueen could present those ideas at the meeting. She said she also wanted to make sure that as far as 19A stuff goes, the CSEA staff are thought of first before 19A work is handed out.

Mr. James Trifiletti, a Genet parent also requested police or armed guard presence in the elementary schools. He also asked the district to look into updating the security systems.

Ms. Deanna Lena, a parent at Genet, said she agrees that the elementary schools should have police presence and thought it would also help the students not be afraid of police and feel more comfortable going an officer for help outside of school.

Mr. Buono agreed with the concerns and asked the families to reach out to local and State Representatives to advocate for funding to offset costs of the SRO programs. He said the District can only do so much, and community support at the State level is always needed.

Mr. Simons reported that when the Advocacy Committee went to the Legislature, school safety funding was one of the issues they discussed.

Mr. Dunn said he is a retired police officer and had a child in Columbia during the 2004 shooting, so he understands the families concerns. He said he wishes the District could provide resources in all the schools, but there are many factors to consider and the District is bound by State rules and regulations. He also encouraged the families to reach out to Representatives and continue to advocate.

A husband of a bus driver spoke of the dedication and care that all the drivers portray. He said it takes a special person to be a bus driver. He encouraged the District to talk with the drivers, ask their opinions and give them a say to try to boost morale.

## **7. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS - SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

A. Utica National Insurance Group - "School Safety Excellence Award" for 2023 - Superintendent Jeffrey Simons

Mr. Simons announced for the last 20 years the District has received the School Safety Excellence Award. He said this year the District has received the highest level of award because of the low number of accidents on the properties, low number of bus accidents, the DVM rating the Transportation Department receives, the care and work by the staff and students within the buildings and other safety indicators.

Mr. Buono thanked everyone for all they do to keep everyone safe, and for the drivers for being safe on the roads.

## **8. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

A. K-5 Enrollment Projection 2023-2024

Mr. Simons reviewed the preliminary enrollment projections and explained that the numbers ebb and flow throughout this time and will change right up until school opens. He said they are continuing to watch the numbers and access the class sizes.

Mr. Buono said they are also looking at academic data, services being received and discussing having teaching assistants for added support. Mr. Buono stated that Bell Top is a very high performing school, not many students are receiving academic intervention services and there is a lot of family support. He said using these factors will help them to make decisions to support the student. He asked for patience from the families at this time.

Ms. Skumurski asked if there was an ideal class size that the District strives for.

Mr. Simons said there is not really an ideal. He explained the parameters set by the State allow 25 students in Kindergarten and 27 students in grades 1- grade 5. Mr. Simons reported the District likes to keep class sizes in grades K-2 lower to focus more on academics and reading and grades 3-5 tend to be a little higher depending on enrollment. He said the District rarely has classes at full capacity.

Ms. Taylor said she shares concerns with the families about class sizes. She stated that she didn't feel it was fair to penalize the parents because they are participating. Ms. Taylor said it is not fair to put more stress on the students and the teachers, because the families are engaged.

Mr. Buono said he apologizes if his statement came across that way, but he just meant Bell Top is a very good community and the parents are involved, just like at other schools. He said it was not his intention to infer that the District would consider parent engagement in determining class sizes .

#### B. Preliminary Budget 2023-2024

Mr. Simons reported that the New York State budget has not been finalized, but is expected to be approved around the week of April 17, 2023.

Mr. Simons said there have not been any changes to the school budget since the March 22, 2023 meeting, and gave a quick overview for the Board and community members showing the revisions that were made to get the tax levy down to a .5% increase.

### 9. REGULAR BUSINESS

#### A. Approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities

##### RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PROGRAMS FOR RESIDENT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Motion by Mr. Dunn, Second by Ms. Skumurski

Resolved, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities.

Vote: Ayes- 8, Nays- 0

Motion carried

#### B. Tax Litigation Settlement Proposal - Mannix Road Associates, LLC

##### RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE TAX LITIGATION SETTLEMENT - MANNIX ROAD ASSOCIATES, LLC.

Motion by Ms. Taylor, Second by Ms. Curtin

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Tax Litigation Settlement - Mannix Road Associates, LLC.

Vote: Ayes- 8, Nays- 0

Motion carried

#### C. 2023-24 School Calendar

##### RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Motion by Ms. O'Brien, Second by Ms. Curtin

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the 2023-2024 Calendar.

Vote: Ayes- 8, Nays- 0

Motion carried

### 10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### A. Marissa Cannon, Director of Human Resources - Staffing Update

Ms. Cannon presented a staffing update.

#### B. Linda Wager, Director of Business and Finance

None at this time

#### C. Roy Stiles, Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

None at this time

#### D. Jeffrey Simons, Superintendent - Health and Safety Committee Meeting 3-27-23

Mr. Simons reported on the recent Health and Safety Committee meeting. He said the SRO's reported they are going into classrooms to engage with students. He said they are also bringing in resources to provide training about drug, alcohol, and online safety.

Mr. Simons said the grace period is ending on April 5, 2023 for the Bus Arm Camera Program, and the County will begin issuing fines for persons who pass school buses illegally.

The Superintendent stated emergency drills have been occurring in all the schools as scheduled, and more unconventional drills will be added, such as while students are at lunch or changing classes and moving throughout the hallways.

Mr. Simons announced the new anonymous reporting system, StopIt which is now available through an app, will allow anonymous reporting of persons intending to do harm to themselves or others. He explained a call center will receive the call, and will contact an administrator or law enforcement officer depending on the nature of the incident.

Ms. Skumurski asked for an update on vaping and the detectors. She asked if the detectors that were purchased are efficient and effective.

Mr. Simons said he thinks it would be a good idea to purchase additional detectors with the settlement money. He also stated that any student disciplined for vaping is referred to the drug and alcohol prevention program through the County.

Mr. Mann suggested the settlement be reinvested into vaping detectors.

### 11. TABLED MOTIONS

None at this time

### 12. OLD BUSINESS

None at this time

### 13. CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Buono asked if the Addendum approval could be included in the approval of the Consent Agenda.

Ms. Taylor congratulated all the new retirees on their upcoming retirements. She also gave a shout out to Maggie Glennie for her years of service to the District and always being proactive and reaching out to have the students perform at the Dessert Nights.

Mr. Mann suggested the District check the State Department's website for travel advisories in regards to the Costa Rica trip. He also stated he would like parents to receive this information so they can also check for themselves.

#### A. Financial Reports

2023-04-04 Claim Auditor Reports for Warrants - 0089, 0091, 0092, V074, V087

2023-04-04 Extraclassroom Treasurer's Report-CHS- February 2023

2023-04-04 Extraclassroom Treasurer's Report-Goff- February 2023

#### B. Instructional/Instructional Support Personnel Memo

##### A. DISCONTINUANCE

###### 1. Resignation for the Purpose of Retirement

a. Clifford, Carol - Teaching Assistant, Green Meadow Elementary School, effective 6/30/23

Date of Hire: 9/7/93

b. Glennie, Margaret - Music, Bell Top/Donald P. Sutherland Elementary Schools, effective 6/30/23

Date of Hire: 9/4/01

c. Gregorewsky, Patricia - Teaching Assistant, Howard L. Goff Middle School, effective 6/24/23

Date of Hire: 9/7/93

##### B. MISCELLANEOUS

###### 1. Volunteer Coach 2022-2023 Spring Sports Season

The following will volunteer for our spring athletic programs. He holds current certification in CPR/AED, First Aid, Blood Borne Pathogens, DASA, Concussion Management, SAVE and Child Abuse.

Name	Sport
a. Gildart, Daniel	Boys' Lacrosse

#### C. Non-Instructional Support Personnel Memo

Discontinuance as listed:

Name	Position	Effective Date	Reason
Baird, Chelsea	substitute typist	4/7/2023	per employees request
	substitute senior typist	4/7/2023	
King, Jeff III	Custodial Worker-CHS	4/5/2023	resigning to accept Central Receiving Worker position
Roberts, Catherine	Bus Aide-Transportation	4/5/2023	resigning to accept School Bus Driver position
Timmons, Emily	Typist-CHS	4/5/2023	resigning to accept Senior Typist position

Appointment as listed:

Name	Position	Effective Date	Salary
King, Jeff III	Central Receiving Worker-CHS Provisional	4/5/2023	Step 7 = \$25.62 per hour 8 hours/12 months
Kristiansen, Carrie	Sr. Monitor-CHS Probation: 4/5/23-12/4/23	4/5/2023	Step 1 = \$15.74 per hour 6.75 hours/10 months
Racquet, Iin	Human Resources Recruiter Provisional	4/19/2023	Step 1 = \$28.74 per hour 8 hours/12 months
Roberts, Catherine	School Bus Driver Probation: 4/5/23-12/4/23	4/5/2023	Step 3 = \$26.18 per hour 6.5 hours/10 months
Timmons, Emily	Senior Typist-CHS Guidance Provisional	4/5/2023	Step 1 = \$18.99 per hour 7.5 hours/11 months

Substitute employees as listed:

Name	Position	Effective Date	Salary
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Brooks, Sydney	Aide	4/5/2023	Step 1 (AS) = \$18.30 per hour
Kelly, Edith	Aide	4/5/2023	Step 1 (BS) = \$19.97 per hour
Morrow, Wayne	Educational Technology Specialist	5/1/2023	Step OS = \$53.23 per hour
Serian, Jennifer	Typist	4/5/2023	Step 1 = \$18.38 per hour
Snedaker, Haley	Aide	4/5/2023	Step 1 (HS) = \$16.13 per hour
Weaver, Sarah	Bus Aide	4/5/2023	Step 1 (HS) = \$16.13 per hour

Transfer:

Name	Position	Effective Date	Reason
Emery, Daniel	Custodial Worker - CHS	4/10/2023	Voluntary transfer from 3rd shift to 2nd shift Step 1 = \$18.11 per hour

- D. Acceptance of Gifts and Authorization to Increase the 2022-2023 Budget
- E. Health and Welfare Services Contract- South Colonie Central School District
- F. Columbia High School Costa Rica Field Trip Request
- G. Howard L. Goff Middle School Science Olympiad State Competition - East Syracuse, NY
- H. Genet Elementary School Grade 5 Field Trip to Six Flags New England
- I. Approval of Consent Agenda

#### 14. ADDENDUM

A. Odyssey of the Mind State Tournament Trip Request

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS A -I INCLUDING THE ADDENDUM

Motion by Mr. Dunn, Second by Ms. Kennedy

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Consent Agenda Items A-I, and the Addendum.

Vote: Ayes-8, Nays- 0

Motion carried

#### 15. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

#### 16. PUBLIC FORUM #2

Natalie Mulligan, a Bell Top and CHS parent, stated there is a law in New York City that no more than 20 students be in a class. She said research has shown class sizes of 19-20 students is ideal. Ms. Mulligan stated that even though Bell Top kids have support at home it does not mean they do not deserve more individualized attention, smaller class sizes for success after a pandemic, and teachers that aren't exhausted. Mr. Grignon gave a shout out to the Character Ed Committee at Genet for all their work to bring about the successful Family Reading Night. He thanked local author, Veronica Backmon, for her presentation. He reported that 83 students participated in the recent STEM fair. He reported that Genet has two teams involved in Odyssey of the Mind, and one will be advancing to the State competition in Syracuse.

#### 17. BOARD FORUM #2

Ms. Curtin thanked Mr. Simons and the Committee for Global Education on the recent One District-One Community- One Book Initiative. She said she has heard a lot of talk about it in the community and thinks it was a great event.

Ms. O'Brien said she was glad it was such a successful program, not only across the District, but also within the community. She said she enjoyed having the opportunity to read a chapter to a class of second graders, and would love to continue this idea every year.

#### 18. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Mr. Dunn Second by Ms. Curtin to enter Executive Session for student issues and disciplinary actions.

Vote: Ayes- 8, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 8:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Pangburn  
District Clerk

#### 19. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Dunn, Second by Ms. Skumurski to Adjourn the Meeting

Vote: Ayes- 8, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 9:52 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Kennedy  
Assistant District Clerk