

**EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024  
Central Administration Boardroom**

**1. A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** Mr. Buono - 7:04 P.M.

**B. ATTENDANCE**

	Present	Absent	Arrival
Mr. Buono	X		
Mr. Dunn		X	
Ms. Kennedy	X		
Mr. Mann	X		
Ms. O'Brien		X	
Ms. Skumurski			
Ms. Steinbach			X 7:05 P.M.
Ms. Taylor	X		
Mr. Temple	X		

Also Attending

Mr. Simons	X
Ms. Cannon	X
Mr. Mulligan	X
Mr. Stiles	X

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**BOARD FORUM**

Mr. Temple wished the 5th graders a positive experience on their ELA testing.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None at this time.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Temple asked for some clarification of Item C, the Extra Trip Settlement.

Mr. Simons explained that it is a contract interpretation disagreement. He said the language in the contract reads that bus drivers will be paid a minimum of 4 hours for an extra trip, such as for an athletic event. The Superintendent stated that during COVID and when there were shortages of drivers, some drivers had to split runs and thought that both drivers should receive the 4 hours of pay, not split the payment. He said the District has tried to negotiate with the unit, but could not come to terms. The Superintendent stated that in order to avoid further costs of the grievance process, the District has agreed to pay the drivers involved and has updated the language to be more specific with an agreement to a minimum of 3 hours pay. Mr. Simons also stated the District will review the language again when the CSEA bargaining unit contract expires in 2025.

A. Instructional/Instructional Support Personnel Memo

A. DISCONTINUANCE

1. Resignation

- a. Pauli, Abigail - Home Instruction/Tutor, effective 5/1/24.

B. APPOINTMENTS

1. Per Diem Substitute Teacher

Name	Certification Area	Degree	Status	Effective Date
Hulett, Jennifer	Physical Education	M.S.		4/10/24
Pratt, Virginia	Degree in Kinesiology	M.S.		4/10/24

B. Non-Instructional Support Personnel Memo

**Discontinuance as listed:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Reason</u>
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Barrington, Helen	Food Service Helper-Genet	4/9/24	Rescind Appointment
Harrat, Richard	Mechanic-Transportation	6/27/24	Retirement
Tucker, Sondra	Typist-CHS	4/26/24	Resignation
Waters, Mark	Custodial Worker-CHS	4/11/24	Termination
Wyant, George	Head Custodian-Green Meadow	4/10/24	Resignation

**Substitute employee as listed:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Salary</u>
Coons, Brooke	Bus Aide	4/10/24	Step 1 (HS) = \$17.11 per hour
El Mekaoui, Kaoutar	Aide	3/25/24	Step 1 (BS) = \$21.19 per hour
Hulett, Jennifer	Aide	4/10/24	Step 1 (BS) = \$21.19 per hour
Pratt, Virginia	Aide	4/10/24	Step 1 (BS) = \$21.19 per hour

**Transfer:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Fodor, Logan	Custodial Worker	4/10/24	Transfer from DPS to Green Meadow

C. Extra Trip Settlement Agreement - CSEA

D. Snow Day Settlement Agreement - CSEA

E. Odyssey of the Mind State Tournament Trip April 2024

F. Approval of Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

Motion by Ms. Taylor, Second by Ms. Skumurski

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Consent Agenda.

Vote: Ayes- 7, Nays- 0

Motion carried

**4. DISCUSSION**

**A. UPK RFP's**

Mr. Stiles reported that an RFP was sent out on March 7, 2024, and after review he is recommending that the District grant Universal Kindergarten programs to two additional community based organizations and add a program to Holy Spirit. He stated that the additional providers have agreed to accept the \$5400 grant money as tuition, so there will be no additional cost to the District. He said the lottery is tentatively scheduled for April 24, 2024.

Ms. Steinbach said she was so happy to hear that the District received responses from the community based organizations, and will be able to serve so many additional students. She asked the District to notify the families of the locations with before and after care options when announcing the locations and providing information about the lottery process. She also expressed her concerns about quality control when having different providers and suggested continuing to have oversight and monitoring of their services.

Mr. Buono agreed with those concerns and also stated he wanted the District to announce to the families that some of the locations will have before and after care options, but those costs will be paid for by the families.

Mr. Stiles asked to move forward with the preparation needed, and said if the Board agrees he would like to reach out to the families with locations, time of programs, and before and after care information. He said he will bring a formal resolution to the April 23, 2024 meeting for approval.

Mr. Mann asked if the District pays the providers upfront.

Ms. Mulligan explained that the District pays for the services, and then applies for a grant for reimbursement.

Ms. Kennedy asked if this was a one year contract, or if the providers would be able to increase the cost of their programs next year.

Mr. Stiles said the RFP will still be viable next year, but the contract agreement is only for one year.

The Board agreed to allow Mr. Stiles to proceed with sending the information to the families.

**B. 2024-2025 Budget**

Mr. Buono stated that he and Mr. Mann met with Mr. Simons and Ms. Mulligan to discuss the budget, review questions and talk about strategies for the future. He said with the low tax cap, largest capital project ever, and also an extensive bus proposition, the Board needs to decide what can be done now, and what can be done in the future to make sure the District is conservative, but still using what is available to make sure there is a balance between the impact to the taxpayers, the programs, and what can be afforded financially.

Mr. Simons announced that the District has made some adjustments, but will keep the budget at \$111.7 million. He said keeping at the tax cap of .55%, and utilizing monies from the appropriated reserves and appropriated fund balance the District can bring the gap down to \$527,488. He explained that if the foundation aid in Governor Hochul's budget is restored, those monies will close that gap. The Superintendent reported that if the foundation aid is not restored, they will then need to make decisions about how to fill the gap. He stated that there is news that the Legislature is expecting to agree to a budget in the next few days, and he asked the Board if they would be available on April 17, 2024 to have further conversations about the budget.

Ms. Skumurski said the more the District uses the fund balances and reserves, there is increased risk of the District becoming a challenged district, needing to raise taxes significantly.

Mr. Simons explained that the Employee Retirement System reserve and Employee Benefit Leave and Accrued Liability Reserve have been very well funded.

Ms. Mulligan described the three types of reserves, the operating reserves, that are for retirement, worker's comp, etc., the non-operating voter approved reserves, such as ones for capital projects, and buses and also the tax certiorari reserves. She said outside of the bus reserve, the District has not really utilized the other reserves, but have funded them whenever the fund

balance was larger than 4%. She said that using the guidelines put forth in regards to the ERS reserve that states the reserve should be funded to cover one year of expenses, they realized both reserves had an excess of funds. She said they felt if they appropriate some of the funds yearly towards the budget, in about 10 years the fund would be down to the equivalent of one year of expenses. She said the usage would need to be managed responsibly and carefully so the reserves do not become depleted. Ms. Mulligan explained that in upcoming years the trend looks like the expenditures are going to continue to be greater than the revenues. She said they will need to review expenditures, and see where adjustments can be made, seek other revenue options, such as investing and look to use the unrestricted fund balances. Ms. Mulligan stated there are limitations on the amount of revenues generated outside of the tax levy, and going forward will be a balancing act using a combination of expenditure reductions, increasing the tax levy and managing the fund balance.

Mr. Temple asked if there were ways to make expenditure reductions in areas that don't impact student education, such as insurance or gas expenses.

Mr. Simons explained that these expenditures are looked at on an annual basis. He stated that the seven positions that are being eliminated through attrition, are a very small part of the current 397 teachers, and will have little impact on the students. He reminded the Board members that they added many positions during COVID to help the students regain from the learning losses they experienced during the pandemic, and planned to reduce those positions when they are no longer needed. He said the data has shown the kids have regained and are performing well.

Ms. Skumurski agreed and stated that they discussed and did expect to cut the added positions through attrition after the federal funding ended.

Mr. Buono explained that in their meeting, they went through the expenditures line by line to ensure the District is doing their due diligence to make sure to keep the non-staff expenditures down.

Mr. Buono said he does not want to increase the tax levy to the community just to have excess money to put into reserves next year.

Mr. Mann agreed and said the Board needs to be prudent now, but look to the future. He stated they don't know if there will be new businesses or other additional revenues in the future, but he does expect to see some cost savings with the new capital project upgrades. Mr. Mann also referenced the recent class size projections for next year and stated he was happy to see the K-5 class sizes have pretty much remained the same.

Ms. Taylor said class sizes were significantly lower than just a few years ago.

Mr. Simons said all the supports, such as the Academic Intervention Specialists, Social Workers and Counselors to address mental health concerns, and additional staffing to allow teaming at the middle school are all still included in the 2024-2025 budget.

#### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Ms. Deanine Lena, parent, asked if School Resource Officers for the elementary schools are included in the budget.

Mr. Simons said that the SRO's are only included in the high school and middle schools for the upcoming school year. He explained that the District has had many conversations with local law enforcement agencies, but unfortunately cannot fit these positions in the budget at this time. The Superintendent stated it is an important issue, and there will be ongoing conversations to try to address this concern.

#### **BOARD FORUM**

Ms. Steinbach thanked Ms. Lena for the question, and asked Mr. Simons to discuss the items included in the Capital Project that address safety and security.

Mr. Simons stated there will be upgrades to the building access controls and camera systems, but payment of the officers cannot be included in capital project funding. He reported that this is a topic the Advocacy Committee has been discussing with the Legislators. He said he feels the State should be responsible for some of the costs.

Mr. Mann reiterated the District's commitment to try to bring School Resource Officers to the elementary schools. He said they have had numerous talks with local law enforcement and would like to get this in place, but it may take a while for that to be possible.

Mr. Temple said he appreciates the long term view, and said he hopes the District will continue to research different vendors that would allow cost savings to some of the line items.

Mr. Simons stated that during the year the Business Office continues to look at expenses. He said he realizes the District should be more transparent with the process not only at budget time, but throughout the school year and will try to bring those to the attention of the Board and community at future meetings.

Mr. Buono said the budget process is going well. He said the Board is trying to be careful but also thoughtful to address the needs of the students, staff and community, and is hopeful the community will be supportive of all that is proposed.

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mr. Temple, Second by Ms. Steinbach to Adjourn the Meeting

Vote: Ayes- 7, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 8:13 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Pangburn  
District Clerk