

LaFayette Central School District
Board of Education - Regular Meeting
Location: LaFayette Jr/Sr High School - Auditorium
3122 US Route 11 North
LaFayette, New York 13084
October 13, 2021

I. Opening

- A. Call to Order - the regular Board of Education meeting for the Lafayette Central School district was called to order at 5:30 pm by President Reyburn. In attendance were Trustee J. LeBlanc, C. Dwyer, M. Walker, S. Stanton, J. Gates, Amy Ryan-Roe, Superintendent Jeremy Belfield, School Business Manager and Deputy Clerk Cindy Daley.
 - 1. Guests in attendance - K. Reppi, M. Priest, Megan Remon, Mark Remon, Nicole Rose, Sheri Hopper, Simone Gonyea, Jennifer Jerkovic, Michael Johnson, Nick Moltion, Brook Moltion, Tom Zuker.
 - 2. Virtual Guests - Douglas Anderson, Willie Bennett, Jennifer Blossey, Ashley Brown, Leslie Byrnes, Julie Cage, Dan Cameron, Mackenzie Cook, Courtney Diefendorf, Alicia Fields, Heather Hoover, Oliver Knapp, Ashley Kolbeck, MaryEllen Long, Daniel Mahar, Jennie Mahar, James McKenna, Kevin Morel, Karrie NewKirk, Karen Ocque, Katherine Olrich, Leah R. Daphne Reyburn, Angela S., Megan Simmons, Alicia Sipfle, Kim Tingley, Jennifer Vossler
- B. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Reyburn at 5:30 pm
- C. Opening Remarks - President Reyburn spoke on addressing the Board as a whole and following Robert's Rule.

II. Approval of Minutes

- A. Regular Minutes - No Change

III. District Presentation

- A. External Audit Report for 2021-2022- Tom Zuber, CPA from Mengel Metzger Barr & Co. LLP, presented the external audit report for the 2020-2021 school year. The auditors issued an unmodified opinion and noted that the district's financial statements are an accurate representation of the state of district finances. The audit noted areas for improvement with purchasing, accuracy with a few time sheets, and other minor items requiring correction. School Business Manager Cindy Daley has submitted a corrective action plan to address these items. Very good financial results.

- Trustee Dwyer asked if this report will be used as the basis for next year's budget?
- Trustee Reyburn asked...How will the financial statement affect taking future bonds?

- B. Board Recognition - Next week is School Board Recognition Week. Superintendent Belfield introduced principals who shared thank you cards, t-shirts, and other mementos of thanks to our board of education. Our board members dedicated countless hours of volunteer service to our community. Throughout the pandemic our board has shown tremendous leadership and support for our school community by making sure that our students have access to live instruction five days a week throughout the pandemic.
- C. Legend of Learning - The board recognized Mr. Matthew Priest, Sixth Grade Teacher at Grimshaw Elementary School, as the Legend of Learning for October 2021. Mr. Priest was nominated by a student for making learning fun and going above and beyond. Matt is currently interning at the District Office. Congratulations Matt!
- D. Tenure Presentation - Sheri Hopper, Onondaga Language Teacher, presented highlights from her probationary period and thanked the board for the opportunity to serve our students from the Onondaga Nation.
 - 1. Tenure Roll Call Vote - Sherri Hopper - Tenure was approved by all.
- E. Red Ribbon Campaign - Superintendent Belfield introduced Ms. Hannah Fitzpatrick, LaFayette alumni from class of 2007 and Associate Director of SAFE Campuses. SAFE stands for Stop the Addiction Fatality Epidemic and looks to educate students and families that drug addiction is a disease. Mrs. Fitzpatrick shared that October 23-31 is Red Ribbon week, which is a campaign aimed at making a visible stance on drug prevention and treatment awareness... The opposite of addiction is connection.
- F. Claims Auditor- Ms. Kim Reppi updated the board on her role as district claims auditor and invited questions from the board on any issues with purchasing.
- G. Conversation with Onondaga County Health Commissioner Dr. Gupta- The board invited Dr. Gupta to address questions fielded by administrators and board members regarding health and safety precautions. Families and staff members were invited to submit questions in advance:

COVID Vaccine

What is the effectiveness of the vaccine for preventing infections or serious illness?
When will the vaccine become available for students ages 5-12?
Will the county provide vaccine clinics in schools for students?
Where should parents go when they have questions about the vaccine?

Since the head of the CDC has come out and said that the vaccine does NOT STOP THE TRANSMISSION OF COVID, the "new" quarantine /exposure guidelines make no sense. Also I want to make sure since this is the case our district will not be seeking to mandate any children to be vaccinated now or in the future?

Regarding Vaccinations: For children - risk vs. reward, children's natural immunity and shedding studies? VAERS data on hospitalizations and death rate? Breakthrough cases in the county are hovering around 36-40% for hospitalizations and death. Why are mandates and quarantine rules against unvaccinated with this info? Will a fully vaccinated population eradicate Covid 19 and its variants? Please discuss the Israeli study revealing that vaccinated are approx. 27 times more likely to contract Covid.

Indoor Mask Wearing

While we understand that it is a state requirement for students and staff to wear masks indoors, what does the scientific research say about the effectiveness of masks, what kind of masks should students and staff wear, and how long should we anticipate wearing masks indoors?

In terms of indoor mask-wearing in schools, what do you expect over the next few years? Will this look differently for students who are/are not vaccinated?

Regarding Masks: Please discuss the size of droplets and airborne particles and ability of cloth mask, surgical mask, and N-95 to filter the virus. Any studies showing the effects of masks on children? Has masking made an impact here vs. states or countries that did not require masking for school age children? Why would FDA (9/15/2021) state that masks are not personal protective equipment claiming that surgical and fabric masks do not block small particles from coughs, sneezes nor germs.

COVID Testing

Why pool testing? Why should we be testing students who are not symptomatic? Are there plans to open up more testing locations in the county so that students can return to school quickly?

Regarding Testing: Timing is critical in treatment. How is the county making testing for family members more accessible?

Quarantine and Isolation -

What are the exposure guidelines for quarantine? My children have had what sound like close exposure during unmasked time and have not been required to quarantine.

If a family member is quarantined or symptomatic, is a student still allowed to come to school? I am concerned that irresponsible people are still sending children when others in the home are quarantined.

The CDC guidelines state: exposed individuals have to quarantine for 10 days unless—only for 7 days after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later). Why is this not the standard for “exposed” kids? Missing an entire week of school when there is not a virtual option is really not helping our children at all.

While the county and state have made strides to reduce the number of students and staff that are subject to quarantine when exposed to a positive case, it seems that COVID is not spreading in schools when the proper mitigation measures are in place. Is there any plan to eliminate quarantines due to close contact? How can we reduce the number of students placed into mandatory quarantine when they come in close contact with a COVID positive individual?

If a vaccinated student or teacher can still get and transmit COVID, why do they not have to quarantine?

What is the percentage of positive cases we see come out of quarantine? Is it effective in direct correlation to covid-19? Do you think the negatives of missing school, isolation, and poor family home lives (access to meals, abuse) outweighs the positives? If there is no data, why are we not collecting data to determine its effectiveness?

Other Questions

Regarding Building Immunity: What supplements, prophylactics, lifestyle choices would build immunity to fight the virus?

Regarding Therapeutics: What is readily available for children and adults and how to access? Who is able to get the therapies, what is the criteria?

Regarding Mandates: What is mandated vs. recommended by the various governmental entities?

Wouldn't children eating in their own classrooms vs the cafeteria, help contain the spread of Covid?

Dr. Gupta responded to questions as time allowed. Here is the video recording of this meeting [link](#).

IV. Old Business - No Old Business

V. Communications

A. Board Member Updates - Shawn Reyburn gave an update on BOCES

VI. New Business

A. Proclamation in Honor of coach Carl "Ket" Weist

WHEREAS, Coach Carl "Ket" Weist after graduating from Mt. Herman School for boys in Northfield, Massachusetts, where he played two years of lacrosse, and graduated from Dennison University in 1957, where he played four years of lacrosse; and Coach Weist, married Mary Alice Paul in the summer of 1958 and began his teaching career at LaFayette High School in the fall semester of 1958; and

WHEREAS, Coach Weist started a lacrosse program at LaFayette to help welcome Native American students from the Onondaga Nation and form better relationships with the LaFayette school community and Onondaga Nation families; and

WHEREAS, Coach Weist officially formed the first LaFayette High School lacrosse team in 1960, with the team earning their first championship in 1963 with consecutive championships in 1964, 1965, and 1966; and

WHEREAS, LaFayette High School lacrosse has contributed positively not just to the student athletes, but also has brought a great sense of pride for the LaFayette and Onondaga Nation communities; and Coach Weist developed several players who played lacrosse at the collegiate level with some players earning the distinction of team captains and college all-Americans; and

WHEREAS, the service of coaches, such as Coach Carl “Ket” Weist, makes a lasting impact in the fabric of our school community and in the lives of our student athletes; and

WHEREAS, thanks to Coach Weist, LaFayette lacrosse has become known and respected throughout the lacrosse community; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the **LaFayette Central School District Board of Education**, extends their thanks and appreciation to Coach Carl “Ket” Weist and congratulates Coach on his induction into the Upstate Lacrosse Foundation’s 2021 Hall of Fame.

VII. Superintendent Report

- A. Superintendent Belfield attended the Fall Leadership Summit for the New York State Council of School Superintendents. The theme of the summit focused on rediscovering the joy of school leadership and returning our students to classrooms this fall. The highlight of the summit included the announcement that Dr. Donna DeSiato, Superintendent from East Syracuse Minoa CSD, as the New York State Superintendent of the Year. Sessions at the summit included updates from the New York State Education Department, innovative programs from schools across the state, and a focus on meeting the needs of all of our students. The state and federal advocacy committees met at the conference to discuss advocacy efforts with state and federal officials. As the local representative for the legislative committees, Superintendent Belfield will work with area Superintendents to highlight the great work that is happening in our schools when dialoguing with state and federal officials.
- B. Superintendent Belfield received a letter of support from New York State Senator Timothy Kennedy to address the facility needs at the three Nation Schools. Senator Kennedy chairs the Native American Relations Subcommittee in the New York State Senate. The subcommittee will be looking to invite testimony from the three schools requesting this funding increase so that improvements can be made soon to school facilities serving Native American students in New York State. Asking \$20 million for each school.
- C. On September 30th and October 8th, students and staff recognized “Every Child Matters” Day by wearing orange t-shirts to remember Native Americans impacted by residential boarding schools. Community member Virgil Braverock relayed his own story of when he was sent to a boarding

school in Canada as a child. The experience for those that attended was traumatic and many children did not return home or returned scared forever from the experience of boarding schools. Superintendent Belfield thanked Mr. Braverock, Clanmother Freida Jacques, students and staff, and Trustee Roe-Ryan for honoring the memory of those who were impacted. Thank you for spreading the message that every child matters.

- D. Superintendent Belfield thanked the team from Ashley McGraw Architects for providing a virtual reality tour of our capital improvement project approved by the voters in December 2020. Students and staff had the chance to do a virtual tour of the design. The project was submitted to the New York State Education Department Office of Facilities Planning in mid-September. We hope to have approval back by the end of the month and announce the project for bid in November (pending NYSED approval) and hopefully have bids in December.
- E. Superintendent Belfield updated the board on the Emergency Project to replace the 1981 bus lift. The contractor arrived on Tuesday and is removing the old lift. A new concrete floor will be poured and will need to cure for the next three to four weeks. We are hopeful that the new lift will be installed by the end of November or beginning of December. The bus garage has been using temporary lifts which are being rented while the 1981 bus lift is replaced. The 2004 bus lift is in need of a new cylinder, which has been ordered. Once the new cylinder arrives and is installed, the lift will be able to resume operation. Now renting lifts to continue with regular maintenance.
- F. Superintendent Belfield updated the board on the recent camera upgrades installed on 15 exterior cameras. The new cameras will provide a much clearer image - Funded through NYS building aides.
- G. Superintendent Belfield thanked our staff members and families for participating in open houses. Grimshaw Elementary and the Onondaga Nation School held virtual open houses to review important information for families on what to expect throughout the school year. Families attended an in-person open house at LaFayette Jr/Sr High and had the chance to follow their child's schedule and hear from each of the high school teachers.
- H. Superintendent Belfield updated the board on the current status of vacant positions. The district has attempted to secure a long term substitute Spanish teacher. The position has been offered to three different candidates who ended up accepting a permanent position in another school district. The search for a Spanish teacher will continue. Mr. Ryan has been in touch with parents regarding grade reporting and programming for Spanish II students using GradPoint. The district has been unsuccessful in filling a long term substitute special education assignment at the Onondaga Nation School. The district has been in conversation with a current elementary teacher who is certified in special education and we have switched gears to recruiting for an elementary teacher so that our staffing needs are covered. The district has secured a

few more bus drivers or drivers in training. Superintendent Belfield thanked Mr. Cooper for his efforts to recruit new drivers. Schools along with businesses have been negatively impacted by declining participation in the workforce as a result of the pandemic. We continue to strategize on ways to attract new members to our team and retain our dedicated employees who serve our students and families.

- I. Superintendent Belfield updated the board on planned homecoming activities for LaFayette Jr/Sr High. On Friday October 22nd, there will be a homecoming parade at 1:00 PM where each class will have a homecoming float. After the parade, there will be an outdoor pep rally. At 7:00 PM on Friday October 22nd, our homecoming football game will be played in Tully as the Southern Hills Storm takes on Jordan Elbridge. There will be a homecoming dance for students in grades 9-12 at 7:00 PM on Saturday October 23rd. Superintendent Belfield thanked Mr. Ryan, Mr. McKenna, and student-council for finding fun and safe ways to celebrate homecoming.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Board Action Items
 1. CSE, CPSE, and 504 Recommendations
 2. Budget Transfers - June 2021
 3. Treasurer's Report - June 2021
 4. External Audit Report and Corrective Action Plans for 2020-2021
 5. Combining Contract - Indoor Track and Wrestling
 6. Reserve Balance at 6/30/2021
 7. Surplus Items
 8. Donation

Motion: Carried **1st:** Trustee LeBlanc **2nd:** Trustee Gates
Vote: Yes: 7 No: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

- B. Approval of Personnel Items
 1. Non-Instructional Appointment
 2. Substitute Appointment
 3. Leave of Absence
 4. Transportation School Bus Drivers Salary and Hours
 5. Food Service Salary and Hours 2021-2022
 6. Salary Increase for Graduate Hours for Teachers
 7. Winter 2021-2022
 8. Resolution to Abolish Position

Motion: Carried **1st:** Trustee Walker **2nd:** Trustee LeBlanc
Vote: Yes: 7 No: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

- IX. Board Non-Action Items
 - A. Strategic Plan Update
- X. Financials - FYI
 - A. Cindy Daley spoke on financials
- XI. Calendar Review
 - A. Upcoming Events
 - Early Dismissal for PLCs every Monday - 1:45 GS/ONS; 2:00 HS/BP
 1. October 15th - Spirit Day - Wacky hair day at GS
 2. October 18th - Lyon's Club Eye Exams at GS
 3. October 19th - Dollar Dog / Empower at GS
 4. October 20th - School Photos - Picture Day at GS
 5. October 22nd- Spirit Day - Dress to Impress at GS
 6. October 22nd - Homecoming Parade and Pep Rally 1 PM - HS/BP
 7. October 23rd - Homecoming Dance HS/BP Grades 9-12 7:00 PM
 8. October 29th - Jr. High Dance
 9. October 29th - Senior Class Pumpkin Carving
 - November 17th BOE Meeting will be moved to The Big Picture Commons - All approved
- XII. Public Comments
 - A. Public Communications to the Board -
- XIII. Proposed Executive Session - Subject to Board Approval
 - A. Enter into the Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation, and medical and employment history of individuals at 7:53 pm.

Motion: Carried **1st:** Trustee LeBlanc **2nd:** Trustee Gates
Vote: **Yes:** 7 **No:** 0 **Abstain:** 0 **Absent:** 0
 - B. Reconvene into Open Session at 9:41 pm

Motion: Carried **1st:** Trustee Walker **2nd:** Trustee Dwyer
Vote: **Yes:** 7 **No:** 0 **Abstain:** 0 **Absent:** 0
- XIV. Adjournment
 - A. Adjourn the meeting at 9:41 pm

Motion: **1st:** Trustee LeBlanc **2nd:** Trustee Roe-Ryan
Vote: **Yes:** 7 **No:** 0 **Abstain:** 0 **Absent:** 0

This meeting was recorded and is available [here](#).

Respectfully Submitted,
Paula Hibbert