

LaFayette Central School District  
Board of Education - Regular Meeting  
The Big Picture Common  
3122 US Route 20  
March 12, 2025

I. Opening

A. Call to Order - The 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. Gates, A. Roe-Ryan, M. LaCava, L. Podsiedlik, Superintendent Jeremy Belfield, School Business Official and Deputy Clerk Laurie Holtsbery. Trustee Stanton and Trustee Moore were not present.

1. Guests in attendance - Andy Hazeltine, Rusty Hass, Wendy Hass, Leah Haas, Rosalie Whipple, Danielle Robinson, Mary Mercurio, Michael Sestul, Chris Capella, Susan Hart, Jeff Shute, Rachael Shute, Emma Shute, Eva Shute, Maddy Shute, John Gizzi, Jason Ryan

2. Virtual Guests - James McKenna

B. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Trustee Reyburn at pm 5:30 pm

C. Opening Remarks - Trustee Reyburn thanked everyone, in person and virtually, for attending. Trustee Reyburn reviewed meeting conducts.

II. Approval of Minutes -

A. [Regular Minutes February 12, 2025](#) - Trustee Stanton was not present for this meeting

<b>Motion:</b> Carried	<b>1st:</b> Trustee LaCava	<b>2nd:</b> Trustee Gates
<b>Vote: Yes:</b> 6	<b>No:</b> 0	<b>Abstain:</b> 0
		<b>Absent:</b> 2

III. District Presentations

A. [Scholastics Award 2025](#)- Danielle Robinson, Chris Capella, Mary Mercurio - Mr. Belfield introduced the Art Teachers. Ms. Robinson introduced herself and presented certificates. Thirty-four certificates were awarded. Maddox Lazore's artwork was chosen for display at the Everson Museum. Ms. Robinson thanked the Board for their continued support. Mr. Belfield thanked the teachers.

## B. Mid-Year Report

1. [The Big Picture School](#) - Susan Hart - Ms. Hart shared highlights of the year. Forty educators visited the School so far this year. The Syracuse STEAM School, a visitor from Belfast Ireland, mental health educators and the District Attorney were among the visitors. They were eager to learn what's being taught. Forty more educators are scheduled to visit for this school year. Big Picture National pays the school for visitors to visit. These funds are used for Big Picture teachers to attend conferences. The school continued with Book Buddies - Ms. Hart shared what's involved in book buddies. PLC spent the year diving into executive budgeting. Ms. Hart shared the achievements and progress for the year. The students are being taught how to conduct research. The students will be showing their first research project at the Morrisville earth day celebration. Literature circle meets every Wednesday in small groups for reading and discussion. Ms. Hart shared what's involved in work-based learning. Attendance, cell phones and mental health continue to be a challenge. There have been some schedule challenges due to the WIN program at the high school. The school will continue to build opportunities in the community, and partnerships with other schools to learn how to meet the needs of students.

Trustee Reyburn asked about the adaptations in the progress slides.

Ms. Hart answered.

Trustee LaCava asked if attendance increased from last year.

Ms. Hart believes it about the same.

2. [Onondaga Nation School](#) - John Gizzi - Mr. Gizzi shared the goals and progress of the school. The first goal is to engage students academically and socially. Engage students in all activities. Mr. Gizzi shared what has been incorporated into project based learning. Teachers take part in a survey that is used to collaborate protocols, which are then implemented for students' growth. Mr. Gizzi talked about the impact of COVID on students' growth. He shared the children's progress as more teachers participate in the surveys and implement protocols. He shared other factors/activities connected with engagement - Deepening the relationship with the Onondaga Community - Community members are working in the school on a consistent basis. What is being done in the classroom as engagement is also connected to the community. Mr. Gizzi is looking forward to Cornell revisiting to see how the garden that was built in September fared over the winter. Connecting with the community is scarce and a challenge. The school struggles with

attendance. There has been a lot of sickness. Parents' preference of communication has been updated. Mr. Gizzi gave an update of DEI and meetings in the building. One of the Chiefs will be in on March 31st to visit and talk about how the school could be more important to the community. The challenges are beginning to be resolved. The children are progressing, and in terms of discipline, there has not been many since September. The idea behind engagement in a project based learning is to be positive with kids.

3. Jr. Sr. High School - Jason P. Ryan - Mr. Ryan talked about how wonderful the WIN schedule is and the impact it has had in the school. Mr. Ryan shared a video of students' responses to the WIN program. All responses were positive from students and teachers. There are a lot of values to the WIN program but a few adjustments need to be made to include the Big Picture students and other students that currently cannot participate in WIN. Ms. Hart is working on another program called MINGA.

Trustee LaCava asked about the WIN pass system.

Mr. Ryan responded that it is a system that students have control of where they want to go. It is a virtual platform. Teachers can assign students location and students can make assignments for themselves. There are a few problems, one of which is students cannot assign themselves to see multiple teachers. Students also cannot change their pass. Overall something better needs to be done.

Kiera Reed voiced her opinion on the "no fly time" passes and she doesn't believe seniors should have to use passes. Mr. Ryan explained how the "no fly time" passes work including the restrictions on the passes.

Trustee Reyburn asked if the WIN Club is an outgrowth of the "Read with Equity Club". Mr. Ryan responded that it is. It is for kids that do not have a quiet space at home, Wifi or just what they need and it is also teaching the kids a level of accountability and time management.

Ms. Reed asked how WIN will be adjusted to benefit everyone. She also gave a solution.

Mr. Ryan responded that he will look into what adjustments can be made.

Trustee Reyburn asked about one of the students who previously attended BOCES Virtual Academy.

There was a conversation about this student.

- C. [Budget Presentation](#) - Revenue Budget - Ms. Holtsbery presented the expense portion of the revenue budget - contractual obligations, debts to be paid, meeting the needs of improvement plans, and property tax calculation. Foundation aid increased. Ms. Holtsbery explained the figures in the 2025-2026 Preliminary Expenditure Budget and the two major sources of revenue for these expenditures - State Aid and Property Taxes.

Trustee Roe-Ryan asked about the two PILOTS in the tax levy limit calculation.  
Ms. Holtsbery explained why there are two PILOTS in the calculation.

Trustee Reyburn asked if the recent construction in town will affect the tax rate.  
Ms. Holtsbery responded that the tax rate could go up.

- D. [SmartBond](#) - [Update Plan](#) - This is a public hearing - The public hearing opened at 6:41 pm. The District had a SmartBond and most of the funds were used. This hearing is to state how the remaining \$75,000 will be used in addition to \$169,245.74 that was not expended for the existing approved budget. The remaining funds will be used towards switches and chromebooks. Mr. Belfield shared the history leading up to the switches needing to be replaced. The public hearing closed at 6:44 pm.

Trustee Reyburn asked about tablets being replaced.  
Ms. Holtsbery responded that some tablets will be updated.

#### IV. Communications

- A. Student Board Member Updates - Ms. Reed talked about remembering the students from the Tully school district who recently passed. Ms. Reed shared how students and the community are showing support. There was a senior night celebration in February. Students were recognized at this event. Ms. Reed's update included a few sports team celebrations. What seniors are looking forward to in their final months was also shared.

Ms. Reed asked about the Hall of Excellence.

Mr. Belfield explained the nomination process which is still in the works.

- B. Board Members Updates - Trustee Reyburn shared information from the last BOCES meeting. The reserves budget was discussed. They talked about the Superintendent's salary and the formula used for calculation. BOCES is writing to the Governor about fixing the broken formula and about an increase in compensation for CTE teachers.

#### V. Policy Discussion

- A. LaFayette Board of Education Policy Review

1. Second Reading for Policy 1210, 3311, 6520, 6530, 6540

<b>Motion:</b> Carried	<b>1st:</b> Trustee LaCava	<b>2nd:</b> Trustee Roe-Ryan
<b>Vote: Yes:</b> 5	<b>No:</b> 0	<b>Abstain:</b> 0
		<b>Absent:</b> 2

2. First Reading for Policy 6550, 6551, 6552, 6560, 6562

**Motion:** Carried      **1st:** Trustee Podsiedlik      **2nd:** Trustee Gates  
**Vote: Yes:** 5      **No:** 0      **Abstain:** 0      **Absent:** 2

- VI. Superintendent Report - Mr. Belfield talked about his advocacy efforts in Albany. He is grateful for the opportunity to attend. He met with several elected representatives with whom he shared the great work teachers are doing. It has been a good year to advocate. LaFayette saw a decent increase in aid. The one-vote budget came out yesterday. Mr. Belfield shared the plan for capital project allowances. Mr. Belfield thanked the elected officials. He shared what's happening behind the scenes in the District. SmartSites which is a sister company to ParentSquare will be rolling out soon. There was an update on the work of the Architects and the teacher's involvement in the design process. The District has one of the best construction managers in the business - Chris Gray of Turner Construction. The District is \$2mil short for the project and there will be a few deletions from the project. Mr. Belfield asked for permission for these deletions.

**Motion:** Carried      **1st:** Trustee LaCava      **2nd:** Trustee Gates  
**Vote: Yes:** 5      **No:** 0      **Abstain:** 0      **Absent:** 2

VII. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Board Action Items

1. CSE, CPSE, 504 Recommendations
2. Treasurer's Report - February 2025
3. Budget Transfers - February 2025
4. Donation of Chromebooks
5. Combining Contract - Boys Varsity Tennis - Faith Heritage
6. Native American Tuition Contract Agreement

Mr. Belfield shared details about the chromebooks donation from Lyncourt.

Trustee LaCava asked about the shelf life of a chromebook

Mr. Belfield answered - four years.

There was a discussion on the depreciation of chromebooks.

**Motion:** Carried      **1st:** Trustee Podsiedlik      **2nd:** Trustee Roe-Ryan  
**Vote: Yes:** 5      **No:** 0      **Abstain:** 0      **Absent:** 2

B. Approval of Personnel Items

1. Resignation
2. Leave of Absence
3. Substitute Recommendations
4. Non-Instructional Recommendations
5. Interscholastic Recommendations

**Motion:** Carried      **1st:** Trustee LaCava      **2nd:** Trustee Roe-Ryan  
**Vote: Yes:** 6      **No:** 0      **Abstain:** 0      **Absent:** 2

VIII. Financials - FYI

- A. Warrants and Claims 2025
- B. Financials 2025
- C. Cash Flow 2025

Ms. Holtsbery shared responses to RFP for Bond Counsel, Legal Counsel and School Physician.

There was a bit of discussion on the Legal Counsel.

Mr. Belfield briefed the Board about the School Physician.

Ms. Holtsbery explained the Native American Tuition Contract.

Mr. Belfield thanked Ms. Holtsbery for all her work with NYS Ed. on contracts.

IX. Calendar Review

A. Upcoming Events

- Co-Curricular Club meets during the week 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm - Refer to the District Calendar for specific club meeting dates.
- Mar. 14th - High marking period 4 ends (Report cards mailed on the 21st)
  - High school musical "Gone with the Breeze" 7:00 pm
- Mar. 15th - High school musical "Gone with the Breeze" 7:00 pm
- Mar. 18th - 11th grade field trip - Oncenter for college fair 8:45 am - 10 am
- Mar. 24th - US Air Force Band Concert 6:00 pm @ the HS auditorium
- Mar. 19th - Academic Galleria at ONS 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
- Mar. 26th - BOE Meeting at the Big Picture Commons 5:30 pm

X. Public Comments

A. Public Communications to the Board -

XI. Proposed Executive Session - Subject to Board Approval

A. Enter into the Executive Session for the purpose of discussing employment history and matters of specific student placement at 7:18 pm.

**Motion:** Carried      **1st:** Trustee Gates      **2nd:** Trustee Roe-Ryan  
**Vote: Yes:** 5      **No:** 0      **Abstain:** 0      **Absent:** 2

B. Reconvene into Open Session at 8:45 pm

**Motion:** Carried      **1st:** Trustee LaCava      **2nd:** Trustee Gates  
**Vote: Yes:** 5      **No:** 0      **Abstain:** 0      **Absent:** 2

XII. Adjournment

A. Adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm

**Motion:** Carried      **1st:** Trustee Roe-Ryan      **2nd:** Trustee LaCava  
**Vote: Yes:** 5      **No:** 0      **Abstain:** 0      **Absent:** 2

Respectfully Submitted,  
Paula Hibbert