

COOPERSTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES

DATE: August 18, 2021

KIND OF MEETING: Regular

PLACE: Cafeteria, Junior/Senior High School

MEMBERS PRESENT: Timothy Hayes, Wendy Kiuber, Marielle Ainsworth, Matthew Schuermann, Gillian Spencer, and Anthony Scalici (arrived at 7:00 pm)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Denise Hollis

OTHERS PRESENT: Sarah Spross, Superintendent of Schools  
Amy Kukenberger, Business Administrator  
Karl O’Leary, Junior/Senior High School Principal  
Tracy Durkee, Elementary Principal  
Ramona Luetzger, Director of Special Education  
Shirley Tyler, Coordinator of Athletics & Extracurricular Activities

President Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Under public comments, Doug Geertgens spoke about educating yourself. He then shared a letter about implications for society and education included diversity, inclusion, and equity, which he and others have said are “rooted in critical race theory, which is rooted in Marxism.” Paul Geertgens spoke about the words he was thinking of accept, nice, and affirm. He stated that kids are learning to separate and look down on others or turn against other kids (intentional or not) because they don’t agree with each other. Bruce Markusen expressed his disappointment that the school mandated mask enforcement of children without consulting parents or the community. He spoke about a study that doesn’t support mask wearing and how mask wearing has a negative effect on adolescents mental health. “The choice should be up to parents and their children on whether or not to wear a mask. Please allow us to make that decision.”

Superintendent Spross opened the floor for public comments on the Cooperstown Central School District-Wide School Safety Plan. Superintendent Spross stated that the Plan has been available for public comment for at least 30 days prior to tonight’s meeting and this is an opportunity for public input prior to Board adoption. The District-Wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17. There were no public comments on the proposed District-Wide School Safety Plan.

Motion by Marielle Ainsworth, seconded by Gillian Spencer. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, does hereby approve the Regular meeting minutes of August 4, 2021.

Ayes 4                      Noes 0                      Abstained 2 (Hayes & Kiuber)                      Motion carried.

Superintendent Spross reported on the District-Wide School Safety Plan, good news items of Girls’ Volleyball Team was recipient of the 2021 United States Marine Corps and the American Volleyball Coaches

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Association Team Academic Award, and that Governor Cuomo signed into legislation designating baseball as the official sport of the State of New York. This bill was proposed by Cooperstown Elementary School 4th grade class. Ms. Reis students are now 10<sup>th</sup> graders at Cooperstown. Senator Peter Oberacker thanked Anne Reis and her students at Cooperstown Elementary who researched the impact of baseball on our state and developed the idea for this legislation. Superintendent Spross then reported on Meet the Administrative Team event, Back to School Night, letters to Parents and Staff; Alumni Night, Recruitment update, Construction Project update; and Site work update. Ms. Spross then switched to a presentation to the Board on the opening plan that addresses opening from a district perspective.

Superintendent Spross provided an update regarding the Cooperstown Central School Districts' plan to open for learning for the 2021-2022 School year. She stated that New York State is not requiring Schools to have and/or submit a plan. She discussed new factors influencing her decision are (1) Health and Safety Guide for 2021-2022 School Year, (2) Letter from the Otsego County Department of Health, and (3) Otsego County COVID-19 outbreak news as of August 12. Ms. Spross reviewed the recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). In summary she stated that given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant, CDC has updated guidance for fully vaccinated people. CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 school, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place. She stressed in-person learning with utilizing layered mitigation strategies, vaccination, universal masking, physical distancing, handwashing & respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting, ventilation, and the monitoring of community transmission. Superintendent Spross spoke about transportation: universal masking, siblings to sit together, ride assigned bus and crack windows. She then spoke on the topics of remote learning, contact tracing and quarantine, social emotion, sports, and extracurricular activities Fall sports; and recommended prevention strategies. Ms. Spross moved onto sport related risk factors and the high risk sports. The only high risk sport we offer is Football. She presented to the Board three football options to consider. Discussion took place among the Members presents. By consensus, the Board favored Option 1 with masks being worn as tolerated. Also wearing a mask when on the bench a good practice to be encouraged.

Principal's Durkee and O'Leary presented a summer update of the goals and objectives in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year. They presented a PowerPoint on the Elementary and Junior-Senior High School Summer Updates. The presentation highlighted the subjects of Enrollment, Goals and Objectives that will focus on Culture – Collaborate – Stabilize. Goal #1 – Curriculum, Goal #2-Stabilization and Goal #3 – Professional Development. Questions and answers followed.

Coordinator of Athletics and Extracurricular Activities, Shirley Tyler provided an Athletics update on the preparation for the fall sports season. She went over the fall athletic teams; combining contract with other school districts; use of athletic fields; important dates to start the season.

Amy Kukenberger, Business Official outlined districts plans for the use of the ARP/ESSER funds. This plan can be found on the District's website under the Budget heading.

Motion by Marielle Ainsworth, seconded by Wendy Kiuber. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cooperstown Central School District Board of Education hereby ratifies the Employment Agreement By and Between the CCSD and Shirley Tyler, Coordinator of Athletics & Extracurricular Activities, effective August 9, 2021, through June 30, 2024, as presented; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education authorizes Sarah Spross, Superintendent, to sign said Agreement.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

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Gillian Spencer gave a report of the Curriculum and Extracurricular Committee meeting of August 12, 2021.

Timothy Hayes mentioned that the Board has an option to form a sub-committee for a policy on inclusivity; no deadline.

Matthew Schuermann gave a report of the Facilities and Finance Committee meeting of August 10, 2021.

Timothy Hayes gave a report of the Personnel, Policy and Public Relations Committee meeting of August 12, 2021.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Matthew Schuermann. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District does hereby accept the following resignations:

- Erica Roecklein, Special Education Teacher, effective August 31, 2021
- Corisa Aufmuth, Speech Language Pathologist, effective September 6, 2021.

Ayes 6                      Noes 0                      Motion carried.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Gillian Spencer. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby accepts the Monthly Treasurer's reports for the period of May 1-31, 2021, and June 1-30, 2021, as prepared by Amy Kukenberger, Business Administrator.

Ayes 4                      Noes 0                      Motion carried.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Gillian Spencer. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District pursuant to Section 3012d of the Education Law and in compliance with Part 30.3 of the Rules of the Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, does hereby appoint Kelly Jennings to the full-time (10 months plus up to 20 days) position of School Psychologist in the Special Subjects - School Psychologist tenure area for the first year of a probationary period of three (3) years, to commence on November 1, 2021, and to expire on October 31, 2024, who holds a School Psychologist Permanent Certificate; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that during the period November 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, she is paid a prorated base salary of \$65,000; and for the period of September 1, 2021 through October 31, 2021 that she be paid a set per diem rate of \$44.83 per hour to attend meetings as identified by the District.

Ayes 6                      Noes 0                      Motion carried.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Matthew Schuermann. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District, pursuant to Section 4.5 of the Rules and Regulations of the Civil Service Law, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, does hereby appoint Janelle Brown as a provisional Civil Service employee as Secretary effective August 23, 2021. Said conditional appointment to the twelve months, full-time (8 hours per day) Secretarial position, at an hourly rate of \$19.69 is contingent upon the successful completion and score on the required Otsego County Civil Service Secretary I exam; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, all benefits as designated by the Negotiations Agreement with the Service Unit shall apply to this position.

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Ayes 4

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Gillian Spencer. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, does hereby grant the unpaid leave of absence request of Tammy Dingman, Licensed Teaching Assistant, for the period of September 7, 2021, through December 23, 2021.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Marielle Ainsworth, seconded by Marielle Ainsworth. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District, hereby accepts the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and pursuant to Section 4.5 of the Rules and Regulations of the Civil Service Law, does hereby appoint the following individuals to a 10 month, full-time position of Teacher Aide, for a probationary period of 52 weeks, effective September 1, 2021; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, each person be paid \$17.04 per hour, per the Agreement between the Cooperstown Central School District Service Unit and the Superintendent of Schools on behalf of the Board Of Education. Said appointments are contingent upon fingerprint clearance.

- Stephanie Hoster
- Emily Begin
- Amy Mulligan
- Matthew Sivacek
- Amanda Brundage

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Wendy Kiuber. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District, pursuant to Section 3012d of the Education Law and in compliance with Part 30.3 of the Rules of the Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, does hereby appoint Alyssa Ketcham to a four (4) year probationary appointment as an Art Teacher in the Visual Arts tenure area, commencing September 1, 2021 and expiring August 31, 2025, who holds an Initial NYS Visual Arts Certificate permitting her to teach subjects in art education; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, she be paid an annual salary of \$47,500 for the 2021-2022 school year.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Anthony Scalici. BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District hereby adopts the District-Wide School Safety Plan for the 2021-2022 School Year, effective September 1, 2021.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Gillian Spencer. BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District hereby adopts the District-Wide School Safety Plan for the 2021-2022 School Year, effective September 1, 2021.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

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Sarah Spross led a discussion with the Board about an opportunity for the District to join a pending lawsuit against Juul Labs, Inc., on behalf of school district nationwide seeking damages for costs incurred and potential future cost related to the vaping epidemic. Ms. Spross recommended not to join the lawsuit based lack of known expenses incurred and the good amount of time that would be required to be involved.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Anthony Scalici. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Cooperstown Central School District, upon the recommendation of the Director of Special Education to the Superintendent of Schools, does hereby approve the recommendations of the Committee on Preschool Special Education as listed in the Board Action Sheet for the meeting date range August 10, 2021, through August 11, 2021.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Under Public Comments Doug Geertgens spoke about efforts to work together with staff, K-12 students, and students 18+ years of age, to teach the good – not to turn kids away from our Country-diversity, inclusion, and equity. “School should focus on the culture of their school. Look at their abilities and let each one become what they can become. Think about what is coming down from State Ed.” Paul Geertgens spoke about safety guidelines, and to look at data not just what CDC says. Gwen Sheldon referred to the STAR Benchmark program that is being used at the elementary school and asked if we have AIS support for students in 7-12.

Timothy Hayes stated that he is looking forward to students returning in person. He reiterated that Susquehanna Avenue will be closed the afternoon of September 7 through September 8 for the National Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. The parking lot at the Junior/Senior High School will be available for public parking; no lawn space will be used for parking this year. He announced the next Board Meeting is September 15, 2021, at 6:00 PM, Cafeteria, Junior/Senior High School.

Motion by Timothy Hayes, seconded by Wendy Kiuber, move to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation at 8:49 pm.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Marielle Ainsworth, seconded Wendy Kiuber moved to return to regular to the business of the regular meeting at 9:34 pm.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

Timothy Hayes, seconded Matthew Schuermann moved to immediately adjourn at 9:35 pm.

Ayes 6

Noes 0

Motion carried.

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Clerk