

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
LEVITTOWN UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
LEVITTOWN, NY**

DATE: JANUARY 26, 2022

BUDGET PLANNING MEETING

MINUTES

THE BUDGET PLANNING MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, was duly called and held on Wednesday, January 26, 2022 in the Board Meeting Room of the Levittown Memorial Education Center.

CERTIFICATION:

The District Clerk certified that pursuant to Section 104, Open Meetings Law, notice of meeting was sent to the local newspapers, the Public Library and posted on the district's website. Further, all members of the Board of Education had due notice of said meeting.

Board of Education

Peggy Marengi, President
Jennifer Messina, Vice-President
James Moran, Secretary
Marianne Adrian, Trustee – Excused absence
Dillon Cain, Trustee
Christina Lang, Trustee
Michael Pappas, Trustee

Administration:

Dr. Tonie McDonald, Superintendent
Dr. Christopher Dillon, Assistant Superintendent
Debbie Rifkin, Assistant Superintendent
Todd Winch, Assistant Superintendent

Others:

Suzanne Mallozzi, District Clerk

Recommended Motion: "BE IT RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, move to Executive Session for the purpose of seeking legal advice from the Board's Attorney."

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED [6-0]
MOVER:	Michael Pappas, Trustee
SECONDER:	Dillon Cain, Trustee
AYES:	Moran, Pappas, Cain, Marengi, Lang, Messina
ABSENT:	Adrian

RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED [6-0]
MOVER:	Dillon Cain, Trustee
SECONDER:	Michael Pappas, Trustee
AYES:	Moran, Pappas, Cain, Marengi, Lang, Messina
ABSENT:	Adrian

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Marengi asked all in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and observe moment of silence for all those serving at home and abroad. Mr. Pappas asked everyone to remember the NYPD officers, Jason Rivera and Wilbert Mora, who died in the line of duty last week.

STATEMENT FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION: Read by Ms. Marengi: *“At this time, we would like to address current issues regarding mask wearing in our schools. As you are probably aware, on Monday, a New York State Supreme Court Judge struck down the mask mandate in New York State as unconstitutional. The Levittown School Board and Central Office team took immediate action to be in full compliance with the ruling. Yesterday, the New York State Appellate Court heard arguments from the State Attorney General’s office asking for a stay of the Judge’s order. That stay was granted but additional arguments will be heard on Friday and a decision will be handed down which should clarify mask wearing in school. As soon as this decision is made, whether it be on Friday or over the weekend, we will inform the Community as soon as we know. Until then, masks are required in all schools. Thank you.”*

II. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Budget Presentation - Second Draft Budget - Dr. Christopher Dillon

Dr. Dillon presented the revised numbers indicating that the budget increase from the January 12th meeting to this meeting went from 3.40% increase to 3.04% increase. Slides were presented to show increase and decreases to specific line items, including State Aid estimates (Foundation Aid, Universal Pre-K, upon voting in April). The District is currently waiting for numbers regarding the Tax Levy. Mr. Pappas questioned the 57% decrease of employee benefits health insurance from first to second draft of budget. Dr. Dillon noted that this number is difficult to forecast as employee benefits don’t coincide with school district’s schedule. Costs are estimated to increase 10% due to people not seeing their doctors during COVID. Ms. Messina asked what the parameters are to spend Foundation Ai. Dr. Dillon and Dr. McDonald replied none, and noted that expense based aid is something you receive only if you spend the money. In reply, Mr. Pappas asked what the Foundation Aid number should be to make us whole. Dr. Dillon will try to get a true number but he and Dr. McDonald believe it should be another 3.8 million. Dr. McDonald continued that the District should’ve been getting foundation aid for all these years, but the State did not fully fund it. So we should’ve been getting an additional 7.6 million. Dr. Dillon replied that this was related to a court case that was settled and due to online gambling, recreational marijuana, the really heavy estimate of what the State is bringing in, they are very confident that Foundation Aid will materialize. Dr. McDonald acknowledged the Board’s hard work in the past and currently to successfully keep healthy reserves available. Ms. Marengi requested information about the \$1,153,000 number for Universal Pre-K and how many people were serviced by that number? . Mr. Winch replied that it was a grant that we applied for, bumped up by federal funds with approximately 230 people were serviced. Mr. Pappas questioned if COVID was to blame, but Ms. Marengi replied it was a timing issue with parents already enrolling their children in other schools. Mr. Pappas requested the tax cap information due to a 40 year high in inflation. Dr. Dillon said we don’t have that number yet but estimates it may be around 2%.

i. Transportation Budget - Ms. Dajuana Reeves:

Ms. Reeves presented the Transportation budget for 2022-2023 school year, assuring

the Board that the department (the largest in-house school district transportation department in Nassau County) strives to be progressive in thought and action while planning for the present and future by working willingly to ensure that the best possible service is provided. Mr. Moran confirmed that the number of buses (51) includes spares. Mr. Pappas questioned if the 19 buses that are over 20 years old are currently servicing routes, with a yes response by Ms. Reeves. Mr. Pappas asked Ms. Reeves what the current lifespan of a bus is and that for 51 buses, we should be purchasing 3 buses per year for 17 years which we have not been doing. Ms. Reeves responded that we are now replenishing buses on a yearly basis so we can get back on track. Mr. Pappas noted that his concern is that these large bus purchases will impact the District in about 15 years, just like it did in 2000. Dr. Dillon responded that the District thanked the Board for their commitment and that a balanced replenishment does not hit the budget as hard as it did in 2000. Ms. Lang questioned what happens to the buses we are replacing, are we auctioning off the old ones and that money goes into the General Fund? Ms. Reeves responded affirmatively. The District is currently awaiting the arrival of buses purchased in the 2020-2021 school year. Estimated delivery is February, 2022. Ms. Reeves informed the board of a new procedure of setting up separate text message groups (by bus route) to alert parents of delays in pickup/drop-off and allow parents to make the decisions as to whether or not to have their child use the District transportation. The Board thought that was a very smart idea and thanked all involved who made that happen. Lastly the issue of the District needing capable drivers was discussed. Mr. Pappas asked how many drivers we have in the pipeline to be hired. Ms. Reeves replied that 4-6 drivers are being vetted and that the District is doing everything they can to hire drivers but have been thwarted by Civil Service delays of up to 3-4 months. Mr. Pappas' concern is that with a 26% decrease in drivers, is the District able to maintain the existing routes? Ms. Reeves said everyone in the Transportation department is working hard to make sure routes are not disrupted. Dr. McDonald echoed that, thanking all involved for their hard work and diligence in getting the students to and from school.

Dr. McDonald and the Board of Education thanked Ms. Reeves and Transportation Garage Supervisor Jesse Tomeo for their diligent work in keeping things running smooth in light of the current conditions .

i. III. MOTION TO ADJOURN

RESULT:	MOTION CARRIED [6-0]
MOVER:	Dillon Cain, Trustee
SECONDER:	Jennifer Messina, Vice-President
AYES:	Moran, Pappas, Cain, Marengi, Lang, Messina
ABSENT:	Adrian

The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Suzanne Mallozzi, District Clerk Notes from meeting are available at Levittown Library