



**BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Education Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, May 13, 2024, 7:00 PM – Board Room**

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**Present** R. Atwater, D. Carnes, C. Gancasz, E. Gow, J. Harris, J. Sweeney, Jr., V. Voss

**Excused** None

**Also Present** J. Reimer, M. Carter, M. Eadie, M. Learo, M. Love  
Public: 0

**Call to Order** Mr. Atwater called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. due to the Budget Public Hearing running longer. The pledge of to the flag was given.

**Approve Agenda** The agenda was reviewed. Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the agenda as presented.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Accept Minutes** The Board reviewed the minutes. Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris, to accept the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting dated April 8, 2024 and April 23, 2024, as presented.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Public Forum** None.

**Presentations** Department Presentation of 3-8 Science Investigations

Mrs. Calandra reviewed the development of the schedule investigations series commencing last year for Grades 3-5 with four investigations needed. Investigation 1, done by the Grade 3 Team, revolved around the Circle of Life. She noted the science standards relationship with this investigation. The group developed models to describe that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles but all have in common, birth, growth, reproduction, and death. The students used “Generations of Butterflies” science kits through BOCES as one component. They complete this cycle of life on butterflies, frogs, and plants and they read passages, created models, and used text-based evidence to find more complex features of each organism. The students learn to investigate, predict, explain,



infer, compare and contrast, and identify throughout the process. She showed examples of the work of the students during different stages. Mrs. Calandra noted that these investigations follow each student as part of their portfolio.

The Fourth Grade Team prepared two investigations which they noted was a lot of work for the students to complete with the other work that is required during the year. The first investigation was Light It Up and the students utilized a BOCES science kit. The topics addressed included types of energy, transfer of energy, difference energy sources, roller coaster (a hands-on activity), and circuits. The students made observations to provide evidence that energy is conserved as it is transferred and/or conferred from one form to another. They applied scientific ideas to design, test, and refine a device that converts energy from one source to another. Mr. Norris discussed the investigation and also talked about one activity the students really enjoyed and how these investigations meet the science standards. The second investigation as called What's in the Bag which is done in fifth grade this year, but will be done in fourth grade next year, which was the introduction into matter. The topics for this investigation included states of matter, properties of matter, using senses to make observations, and physical and chemical changes. The students needed to measure and graph quantities to provide evidence that regardless of the type of change that occurs when heating, cooling, or mixing substances the total amount of matter is conserved. They also made observations and measurements to identify materials based on their properties. The investigation culminated with a hands-on investigation correlating to its name.

In Grade 5, the students have state assessments to complete in addition to the investigations they worked on this year. The Grade 5 Team worked with students and completed an electricity/magnetism unit to prepare for the Light It Up investigation. This was followed by a Life Science Unit, a Physical Science Unit which culminated with the What's in the Bag investigation, and finally their Earth Science Unit which correlated with the Cloud in a Bottle, their final investigation. The Light It Up Energy investigation, although done in 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year, will be done in Grade 4 next year. During the unit on Weather, the students learned the dangers of pollution in the waters of Lake Ontario, and impact on different regional animals. They learned to develop a model using an example of ways the geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and/or atmosphere interact. They must also learn to describe and graph the amounts of salt water and fresh water in various reservoirs to provide evidence of the distribution of water on the earth. The students also obtain and combine information about the ways individual communities use science ideas to protect the earth's resources and environment.

The most in-depth science curriculum unit for Grade 6 science work revolves around weather and climate. There are five chapters addressing the atmosphere, weather state and tools, air masses, weather maps, and climate change. During this investigation, the students were required to collect and analyze data from various weather maps, draw conclusions, and provided evidence for how the



motions and interactions of air masses affect weather conditions in a region. This was all new learning for the students which made it challenging and interesting as they became “mini forecasters” while learning.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Grade investigation was It’s Alive and the purpose was to learn about cells and living/non-living things, how some organisms are unicellular and some are multicellular, the makeup of cell parts and how it contributes to its function, as well as how multicellular organisms are made up of different types of cells. The students use microscopes to identify different types of organisms, draw pictures, and answer questions pertaining to the slides and other drawings that are provided.

Grade 8 is a big year for the students also. There are two investigations, All Mixed Up, and Cool It. The purpose of All Mixed Up is to separate a mixture using its physical and chemical properties. The students must consider what are the three individual substances in the given mixture, and which methods and materials can be used to separate the given mixture of three substances into its individual components.

The students use magnets, sieves, funnels and filter paper, tweezers and hand lenses to separate the substances. The students enjoyed this part of the investigation. The challenging portion related to this assignment was the ten pages of writing required for this lab. The Cool It investigation taught the students to analyze data sets to determine how the type of metal and the initial temperature of the metal, when placed in room temperature water, affects the amount of heat energy transferred within the system. They had to consider what the type of matter is, the mass of matter, and the temperature change of matter can affect the amount of heat energy transferred by a sample of matter.

The correlation to all these investigations to the science standards was discussed. The State requires these investigations for each year. The next gen science structure and regents will be based off these investigations in their questioning in assessments. The teachers have been working on how to spread these out given the requirements of each grade and time available as some students are catching up as these were not done in third grade. This has been structured into goals for the District which is good. The teachers noted that whether the student transfers in or out of District, these investigations follow them, and for some coming into the District, more work will be required to catch them up.

#### Principal's Update - Mrs. Love

Mrs. Love thanked the Science Team for their presentation and work they do with the students.

Mrs. Love highlighted a few of the shared decision-making teams in their work this school year. She commented that in April, the District started a new shared decision-making team called the Behavioral Data Task Force, which will focus on



the District goal to increase student engagement in the learning process, which has a “reduction in suspensions, referrals, and incidents affecting classroom engagement” listed as a success measurement. The team, which includes teachers across the Elementary and Jr./Sr. High, aides, teaching assistants, administrators, and clerical staff, who reviewed the Code of Conduct between April and May for its preparation to be approved by the Board this summer. The team will be looking at behavioral data across the District per month, identifying areas of success and improvement, and looking at Tier 1 (big picture) strategies to support student behavior and engagement in the classroom, including revamping common language across the District regarding tiered behaviors and professional learning surrounding progressive discipline. Surveys were sent to staff members surrounding the cell phone policy and the hats and hoods policy to gauge any interest in changing/removing the policies or keeping them as written. Based on the feedback, we have decided to keep the language the same for next school year but we will continue to look at these topics, as there has been discussion across the region this year regarding cell phone restrictions in school, and the removal of hat/hood policies in schools. This team has begun the conversation of how these topics might impact instruction and engagement at Barker Central School.

Mrs. Love noted that throughout the year, the Attendance Team, made up of our school counselors, administrators, Instructional Support Specialist, nurses, and attendance officer, meet every five weeks to discuss attendance data, specifically focusing on students who have missed 10% or more of the school days or have been tardy for 10% or more of the year. The team was created to support the District goal to increase student engagement in the learning process, which includes “improve student attendance through various outreach and other procedures designed to reinforce the importance of attending school regularly” as part of its action steps. Through their work, the team designed and published informational images surrounding attendance found on the Barker website, currently piloting a 3-strikes policy to coincide with the language in the Code of Conduct surrounding tardiness to school, and shifted from only sending letters to families in the Jr./Sr. High with unexcused absences and tardies at 10% or more, to all families PK-12 whose children have reached 10% or more tardies or absences, since “chronic absenteeism” looks at all absences, even those that are excused. This correspondence is used as an informational tool to communicate the number of absences students have accumulated throughout the year and provide connections to resources from [attendancesworks.org](https://www.attendancesworks.org) to strengthen the partnership between families and school surrounding attendance. Additionally, the team sponsored the April professional development opportunity at the faculty meeting which focused on chronic absenteeism, looked at its own attendance data district-wide, and gave teachers time to collaborate regarding strategies to improve attendance and positive ways to welcome students who have been absent for a few days back to school. This team will continue to work on attendance initiatives next year and has already begun brainstorming positive ways to improve attendance.



Mrs. Love discussed the Guidance Logistics Team which meets biweekly to discuss courses, scheduling, programming, testing, and graduation requirements. This team is made up of guidance counselors, administration, and the Instructional Support Specialist. The logistics team is working towards the end of the school year, preparing for graduation, Honors and Awards, Moving Up Day, and building the schedule for the 2024-2025 school year. The scheduling process is intricate in order to ensure the maximum opportunities for the students and use of shared resources across the District in a strategic way. She commented that there will be a few teacher assignment changes in the Elementary to accommodate for a shift in the grade sizes in Grades 5 and 6 for next year. She noted that the teachers will know their general grade level assignments in the Elementary in the next few weeks. The Special Education sections and teacher placements will depend on student needs as the annual review process continues over the next couple of months. The majority of the schedule will be set before the end of the school year, and the specials, aides, service providers, AIS, and special education schedules will fall into place based on the core class structures. There will not be any major changes to the schedule, just the typical shifts based on student needs and course requirements.

The Student Support Team (SST) meets weekly to discuss student concerns for students of all grade levels. She noted that the members of this team include guidance counselors, mental health counselor, school psychologist, behavioral specialist, school social worker, Instructional Support Specialist, and administration. The team discusses individual student needs in academics, social-emotional support, behavioral strategies, attendance, etc. The SST team focuses on the needs of the whole child and develops next steps to help support the student. She provided some examples of support including but not limited to, behavioral plans, student observations, check-ins, academic plans, parent contact/meetings, referring students to RTI or CSE process, etc. This year, this team organized and administered the CLYDE survey, which was a free resource through Northpointe Council to identify student mental health and SEL needs in grades 8-12. This was a completely anonymous survey. The team will be working to provide resources for students based on these results.

The Safety Team, which consists of stakeholders from the District and community, meets quarterly to review the District and Building level safety plans and to ensure the safety of the students and staff. Mrs. Love noted that the District has completed its 12 fire drills and 4 lock-down drills for the school year. She commented that after each drill, staff provide feedback for the Safety Team to review as part of the improvement process. The Safety Team is interested in running a full evacuation drill next school year and is hopeful to do so in the fall. The Safety Team is sponsoring a Traffic Safety Fair on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> for our Juniors and Seniors. Mrs. Thibault and Barker's own Cathleen Davis of the Niagara County Sheriff's Office of Traffic Safety have planned a wonderful, full-day educational event for students to meet with several county and state safety representatives, learn about traffic and road safety, hear from an impact speaker



from SADD, walk through a mock crash, and participate in a mock trial with an Assistant District Attorney. There will be hands-on activities throughout the day and a Battle of the Belts competition sponsored by Doug and Becky Thompson of Thompson's State Farm Insurance Agency, and door prizes sponsored by the PTO. Students who attend BOCES will have the option to stay for the full day or go to BOCES and participate in half of the day's events. She thanked Mrs. Voss, who has volunteered to help out with the day.

Mrs. Love thanked Mr. Adam Norris, who has stepped up to lead the Pratt Assembly Team, commenting that this impactful group includes members of the Pratt Elementary staff who have taken on the mission to provide the students with more positive, fun, educational opportunities and celebrate all of their hard work each trimester. They have planned several assemblies throughout the year including a Holiday Follies pep-rally spirit week competition to win free field trips, a BMX guest speaker who shared with students PK-12 about finding their passion and going for it, and most recently a musical performance from Kevin McCarthy that turned our auditorium into a motivational dance party! Mrs. Love gave a "huge thank you" to Mrs. Zablocki who led the charge for the NFL Play-60 program this year and the teachers and families for supporting movement throughout the day. Due to the students' amazing participation in the program, they earned this most recent assembly (last Friday) for free. Mrs. Love noted that she heard many students call it "the best day ever!" The Pratt Assembly Team is planning field day this year on Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup> in hopes of revamping and reinvigorating the field day activities for the students. The group has truly brought so much excitement and energy into the building this year Mrs. Love stated. The goal is to continue to provide assembly opportunities to the students across the District as much as possible.

Mrs. Love spoke about Mr. Cornwell's report that highlights the important work the Instructional Cabinet has been doing with the support of Christina Lesh to create a data culture and be live examples of teacher collective efficacy. They have done an amazing job diving into holding department meetings, selecting a District goal for their team to focus on, and looking at student data using the ATLAS protocol. She stated it is so powerful to see the teachers collaborate together to improve outcomes for the students and she thanked her team.

Mrs. Love discussed the 2024 Assemblyman Mike Norris Teacher Appreciation Week Award which was received by Mrs. Dabill at the elementary level. Mrs. Dabill is a special education teacher at Barker Central School who services the students in Grades 5 and 6. Mrs. Love stated that Mrs. Dabill truly goes above and beyond to meet the needs of all of the students in the classroom. Mrs. Dabill is a collaborative teammate and places students at the center of all she does. Her genuine care for each student's success is inspiring. Mrs. Monaco received the award at the Jr./Sr. high level. Mrs. Monaco is a high school history, Participation in Government, and Economics teacher at Barker Central School. Mrs. Love noted that the relationships Mrs. Monaco forges with students





profoundly impact their success. Mrs. Monaco works tirelessly to ensure students are prepared to be productive citizens and is leading the charge to create new history and social studies programming for our high school students. Her passion for developing life-long learners is impressive.

Director of Instructional Services/Assistant Principal's Update - Mr. Learo

Mr. Learo provided an update noting that there were 36 CSE meetings and 5 CPSE meetings held between March 28<sup>th</sup> – May 13<sup>th</sup>. There will be 17 CPSE transition meetings coming up the remainder of May and into June. These meetings are meant to transition 4-year-old students out of PreK and determine if they will be referred to CSE for Kindergarten the upcoming year. The number of students transitioning from CPSE to CSE will determine the District's special education needs at the Kindergarten level for this upcoming school year. He gave a shout out to the teachers and the staff for the hard work related to all these meetings.

He discussed recent updates for special education. He noted that the special education teachers, general education teachers, related service providers, and CSE/CPSE committee have been working diligently to continue building relationships with families, preparing to support student needs, and growing everyone's knowledge to ensure that students are placed in the appropriate services and have attainable goals that are reflective of each individual student and their needs. He stated he is working closely with BOCES and other out-of-district programs to ensure the out-of-district placements are in the appropriate programs for the 2024-2025 school year, and also review the ultimate goal to bring students back to District when possible.

Reporting due for August includes the VR13: Preschool Children Provided Programs and Services During the 2023-2024 School Year which is end-of-year snapshot for preschool students from which data is taken from preschool student's latest finalized documents. VR15: Preschool Outcomes Report covers exited or declassified students, and VR16: Students Receiving Coordinated Early Intervening Services are both due. PD8: Suspension Data is also due and this reports all ISS, OSS, removals to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting, and removals by an Impartial Hearing Officer.

Mr. Learo listed d events he attended since the last meeting which included a Lions Club Dinner, a SEAC (Special Education Advisory Council) meeting, Handbook for Summer School Administrators and Principals, Best Practices for UPK Collaboration, School-Based Mental Health Clinic Resources, NYSED Q&A on Current NYS graduation Requirements, and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Accountability Rebuild Phase Information which explains how accountability indicators are calculated to make school and district accountability status determinations during the 2-year rebuild phase. He also participated in a School Law SPED Update Conference which focused on Manifestation Determination Reviews, Classification of ED or OHI regulations, and Parent



Consent; a Frontline IEP End of Year User Group which focused on topics such as guidelines based on type of disability, Frontline IEP enhancements, End of Year logistics and reports, and inactivating students in Frontline IEP; participating in professional learning with a program on School Law 101: Conducting thorough investigations for day-to-day student and personnel issues, and Mandatory Reporting relating to cooperation with the police and CPS. Student related activities he was at included softball, baseball and track and field events.

Financial Update - Mr. Carter

Mr. Carter thanked those who attending the Budget Public Hearing prior to the Board Meeting.

He provided an update on the impact of the solar panels are having on the District's electric bills since the array was connected and working. National Grid delivers the electricity to us. Energy Cooperative of America actually provides the electric itself.

With regard to budget transfers, the policy is if a transfer totals \$10,000 or more, it must be approved by the Board of Education. Mr. Carter noted that there is a request for approval of transfers this month which relate to contractual salary coding, in-lieu changes for not taking insurance, chaperone events, and other adjustments such as boiler and HVAC work and server work being performed.

Mr. Carter then discussed foundation aid which has been discussed a lot with the Board during the budget process. This aid can be spent how the District determines most appropriate. As noted from previous discussions the initial projected foundation aid in the Fall of 2023 was \$8.9 million which did not seem correct as it was so high, which can impact projections if not accurate and how the District moves forward. Subsequent to that, the amount per student has been adjusted from November at \$11,197, to January at \$11,047 which was off due to the number of students used in the calculation, to \$11,250 in February, and now is projected in March at \$11,109 per student. Mr. Carter noted the District is still seeing an increase in aid but the dollars per student has decreased. This is important information to the District as it accounts for approximately 70% of the budget. As part of the state budget, at the state level, research has been commissioned to look at the fund balance. This study is projected to be finalized in December. Any changes resulting from this research project will impact the District, as well as all districts he commented. The District has had an increase in foundation aid, but he noted, it has been underfunded for years, and it does not have any control over the amount received.

Mr. Carter noted that it is anticipated that the year-end external audit will begin next month.





## **Superintendent's Report**

**& Discussion** Dr. Reimer noted that the state office has been reviewing unappropriated funds, and the cap at 4%. Barker maintains its unappropriated fund at 4% or less. Some districts are higher he noted. He noted that this reserve was discussed often and the work the last few months was very prudent and timely in the development of the reserve plan to make it clear and transparent the District's use of funds.

Dr. Reimer then provided the following report on behalf of Mr. Cornwell who had a conflict this evening.

### Coordinator of Curriculum & Professional Learning/Assistant Principal's Report – Mr. Cornwell

Dr. Reimer presented Mr. Cornwell's report this evening. He noted that over the past four weeks, the District has successfully administered the New York State tests in ELA and Math to the students in Grades 3-8, and the New York State test in Science to grades 5 and 8. All this testing was done via computer and went off without technical issues. Now the District will await the results of these assessments. Mr. Cornwell thanked the teachers and staff who assisted in administering these tests, and Mrs. Thibault who helped organize this endeavor.

Beginning in the spring of 2025, there will be new Regents exams in Living Environment and Earth Science, with Chemistry and Physics occurring one year later (2026). These new exams in Science will be aligned with the new standards that focus on science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and cross cutting concepts. Recently, the state released sample questions for these new exams. On the new exams, there will be a cluster of information (readings, charts, graphs, diagrams, pictures, etc.) around the same topic (ex. Plate tectonics, coral reefs, etc.) and then a series of questions about that information. Some of the questions would be multiple choice, while others would be more open ended. Dr. Reimer noted that often with new exams, there is a dip in results seen statewide. A link to this information is available to anyone who would like to review the information.

With regard to the District data initiative and the Strategic Plan, the District's next steps for the implementation of its strategic plan and data initiative involve having department chairs working directly with the District's consultant, Christina Lesh, to facilitate department level meetings that focus on the following question, "What are we learning about how to lead teacher teams in a way that focuses around student learning?" This work across the various departments has begun to resonate with everyone, and the District is looking forward to how this will impact the students' learning. Dr. Reimer stated that Mr. Cornwell noted a big thanks to the department chairs.



Highlights from this work were noted. The Science/Math Departments are engaged in the process and are motivated to keep moving forward by keeping things 'small' and 'attainable' for right now. Currently, the focus is on literacy through interpretation of graphing. The team has been very motivated about graphing as it is the common thread for them. They immediately saw a connection between using common language across subjects, a need for more instructional time on interpretation (less on plotting), having students restate the question when they answer, and giving students time to do think, pair, share about the interpretation questions which has boosted the quality of their writing. With the Social Studies/ELA Department, they are investigating finding common instructional practices that will support their students across subject areas (i.e., academic vocabulary, writing structures, etc.). Their focus is on the literacy goal that all students, to be successful in both subjects, need to grow in their ability to understand and use complex text. For Grades 2-4, they are learning about the size of a data sets and matching the questions to the right data set. The team wanted to look at attendance data because they have never looked at their students' data through this kind of lens. This grade level band reviewed the student engagement goal and identified the chronic absentee rate for grades K-6 seems to have increased and impacts teachers' ability to engage all their students in learning consistently. They reviewed how many students per grade, across grades K-6 are chronically absent, and of the students who are chronically absent, what kinds of absences are they. They analyzed, of those students who are currently chronically absent, how many have been historically chronically absent. They also looked at what this group of faculty and staff can do with this data to help reverse this trend. The Grade 5 & 6 Team is fully behind this process and encouraged by thinking about the idea of engagement together, particularly what is their students' perception of their own engagement at school. The chairperson said it was first important to the team to understand how students were feeling about what was happening within the walls of their classrooms and what they could directly impact. They plan to gather student self-perception data about their own engagement; then do a lesson for the students about what engagement is, followed by having the students' re-rate themselves. They want to know more about what is causing students to rate themselves where they are on the engagement continuum so they can better understand what they are or are not yet doing to contribute to their own engagement.

Dr. Reimer then provided a capital project update. The 2022 Capital Improvement project continues to move forward and building out components. He stated it is a mess out there, but a good mess and he appreciates everyone's continued flexibility with regard to the project and changes. He commented that



the project takes a lot of his time but is important work for the future of the District. He noted that there is no approval from NYSED for Phase II yet. He anticipates it may be received in June, and then the request for bids will be sent out in July or August.

He noted that if any Board member would like to participate in the Battle of the Belts with students at the Traffic Safety Fair on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> to let Mrs. Thibault know.

Dr. Reimer reviewed the most recent budget handout which has an estimated \$400,000 surplus for 2023-2024. The administration team is reviewing the best usage of these funds and in particular, with regard to the items that must be addressed with the auditorium, as well as the concession stand which is not part of the project, nor aidable. Discussions are taking place with the architects and contractors in order to utilize the funds to address as much as possible with the surplus and next year's budget. He noted that if the District puts it in the reserve, which is capped as to how much you can take in and out over a time period, to put in the reserve for a very short time and then remove is not the best usage. After discussion the Board agreed that the two locations are an appropriate usage of the surplus.

Dr. Reimer discussed stimulus funding. He noted that the District should be able to spend all the funds except those allocated to the after-school category. He is working with staff to see how to utilize as much of those particular funds within guidelines as possible given the limited usage allowable.

With regard to the tax certiorari cases, Dr. Reimer noted that the case for the plant with the county and town have been settled, and the Board is being presented for review and if appropriate, approval of the settlement agreement with the school, along with the resolutions for the expenditure of the Tax Certiorari Reserves of 2022 and 2023, and resolution to liquidate the Tax Certiorari Reserves of 2022 and 2023. He commented that this will close out the six-year saga of the closure of the plant, energy cessation plan, and noted the lasting impact of the settlement on the District and community.

Dr. Reimer reported that US News and Work Report does an annual report and ranking of high schools. Nationally, Barker ranked 2,420 out of the 17,655 ranked this year, which is approximately the top 13.7% in the country. In NYS, Barker is now 229 out of the 1,210 ranked or 18.9%. In the Buffalo region, the school was 15 out of 65 ranked or 23%. In the District's BOCES, we are 2 out of 13 with only Starpoint being ranked higher. He noted the link to the results of the Board and others to further review if they so choose. He noted that it shows the work the District is putting into place is having a positive impact on the staff, students, and community.

Dr. Reimer reminded the Board that Commencement is set for Friday, June 28<sup>th</sup>.



Dr. Reimer then discussed the District's property where the hay had previously been bid out to be cut but has been growing the past two years. He noted the District has been in communications with the NYSDEC with regard to their Strategy for Grassland Bird Habitat Management and Conservation program and its efforts to maintain and restore grasslands to address concerns about long-term and continuing declines in grassland breeding and wintering birds and other associated wildlife. The program provides strategic methods to plan and mow grasslands and aligns with educational piece. The District is looking at the potential to receive mitigation funding from a company to move forward with the program if the Board concurs. Mr. Strong provided input on the changes in wildlife he has seen himself and the Conservation Club the past two years in the area discussed. The Board reviewed the pros/cons of grassland vs. mowing. Upon conclusion of discussion the Board asked Dr. Reimer to provide a recommendation next month about moving forward with the grassland, if it is the right thing to do, and the alignment with instruction. Mr. Sweeney inquired as to who would oversee this project and Dr. Reimer noted he would be the point person with Mr. Strong and Maintenance helping as there would be one section every three years which would need to be moved if the Board moved forward with the grassland project.

Dr. Reimer noted that legal team interviews for services for the 2024-2025 school year will be taking place at the beginning of June, and asked if the Board would be interested in participating in the interviews. Mr. Atwater and Mrs. Carnes volunteered to participate in the panel.

Dr. Reimer reminded the Board of the Senior Citizens Breakfast which has been brought back for the first time since COVID and noted they are invited to attend. The breakfast will be held on May 16, 2024 from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. in the High School Cafeteria.

**Policies/Plans** Mr. Atwater presented policies for a second review. Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve policies: 7621, 7631, 7632, 7640, 7641, 7642, 7643, 7660, 7670, 7680, 7690 as presented.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

**Education** Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the Class of 2024 Senior Class Trip to New York City from June 10-13, 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the Conservation Club's overnight trip to Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario Canada from August 6-9, 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.



Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the American Field Service Club's trip to Niagara Falls, Canada on Saturday, June 1, 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the Soundcraft Mizer Board soundboard purchased in 2017 be declared excess property and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to dispose of said item.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve of the 2024-2025 Board of Education Meeting Schedule.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the following library items as listed be declared excess property and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to dispose of said items.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

## **Personnel Items**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of Ashley Cieslewicz for the full-time probationary Special Education Teacher position effective September 1, 2024. Her probationary period would be effective September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2027, and in the tenure area of Special Education. The expiration date is tentative and conditional only. In order to be eligible for and considered for tenure, she must meet all requirements of the Educational Law and corresponding regulations. Her annual salary rate at MA, Step 12, 2024-2025 BTU salary schedule at \$62,447.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Reimer noted that Ms. Cieslewicz went through multiple interviews, had great references, and a lot of experience and he is looking forward to her joining the District. Mr. Atwater congratulated Mrs. Cieslewicz on her appointment.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Voss, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointments of the following Barker employees as Summer School Teachers, Teacher Aides, and Substitute Teachers to be paid at their 2024-2025 contractual hourly rate; as well as Shelby Pasquale, John Stodolka, and Vincent Strollo at a rate of \$32.00 per



hour for the 2024-2025 Summer School Program running Monday, July 1, 2024 through Thursday, August 1, 2024.

Name	last	Position
Paul	DerSarkissian	Summer School Physical Education/Pool Teacher
Leslie	Mocarski	Summer School 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher
Virginia	Hambruch	Summer School High School Credit Recovery Teacher
Mary	Dudek	Summer School 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher
Jacquelyn	Moffitt	Summer School 6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Teacher
Vincent	Strollo	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Karen	Schian	Summer School STEAM/FACS Teacher
Mark	Scofill	Summer School High School Credit Recovery Teacher
Krista Beth	Feltz	Summer School Art Teacher
Sara	Thibault	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Jeffrey	Pyskaty	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Michelle	Pask	Summer School Kindergarten Teacher
Amanda	Lamb	Summer School Teacher Aide
Jamie	Schwab	Summer School Teacher Aide
John	Stodolka	Summer School Physical Education/Pool Teacher
Ashley	Atwater	Summer School 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher
Lori	Costello	Summer School Physical Education/Pool Teacher
Alicia	Montesanti	Substitute Summer School Teacher
Kyle	Sosnowski	Summer School 6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Math Teacher
Erin	Zablocki	Substitute Summer School Teacher
Jessica	Annable	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Katie	Snell	Summer School PreK Teacher
Bethany	Tabone	Summer School 3rd Grade Teacher
Joel	Strong	Summer School 6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher
Christopher	Post	Summer School 6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Tech Teacher
William	Bruning	Summer School Physical Education/Pool Teacher
Bethany	Duchow	Summer School Teacher Aide
Joy	Dabill	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Christine	Donovan	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Erin	Zablocki	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Adam	Norris	Summer School Substitute Teacher
Shelby	Pasquale	Summer School 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Voss, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the appointment of the following individuals as Summer Music Teachers for the 2024-2025 school year





at a rate of \$35.00 per hour with a total budget cap of \$10,000: Cheryl Johnson, Jeffrey Rappold, Amanda Burdick, and Judy Peterson.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Voss, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the following Parent/Community Volunteers as listed with effective dates subject to receipt of reference and background clearance checks: Erin Adams, Erick Hugill, Brigdett Lehner, Erica McCarthy, Samantha Upton, and Ashley Williams.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the resolution conferring tenure of Ashley Atwater in the area of Special Education Teacher effective August 31, 2024, subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby confers tenure upon Ashley Atwater subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Dr. Reimer noted that Mrs. Atwater left the area, came back, and is back at the District making great connections with the students, and it is fun to watch her at work. Mrs. Atwater said it is good to be home and a blessing.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Gow to approve the resolution conferring tenure of Katie Snell in the area of Elementary Education Teacher effective August 31, 2024, subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby confers tenure upon Katie Snell subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Dr. Reimer commented that Mrs. Snell came to the District with a lot of experience, rolled into a supplemental role and has made really good connections with the students making them feel comfortable and safe here at the District.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the appointment of the two Barker Central School District's students, Aiden Mescall and Titus



Wedekind, to shadow/intern as part of their BOCES Building Trades program with the Buildings & Grounds Staff from May 13, 2024 in mid-June.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the change in appointments for Natalie Bruning to be a district-wide lifeguard effective May 13, 2024 at a rate of \$18.00 per hour.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Voss to accept the Separation Agreement between Barker Central School District and Adrienne Laufer, and resignation as Teaching Assistant and Junior Class Advisor effective March 25, 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Voss to approve the acceptance of the resignation of Jackie Keller as 10-month Typist effective May 31, 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

## **Business & Financial**

### **Items**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to accept the Warrant Report dated April 30, 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to accept the Treasurer's Report for April 30, 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to accept the Extraclassroom Report dated April 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the following Budget Transfers relating to contractual salary coding, in-lieu changes and other adjustments as outlined.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.



Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the town, county, and Somerset Power Plant tax certiorari case settlement agreement and related resolution.

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOLS DISTRICT**

**Whereas**, the Somerset Operating Company, LLC (“Somerset”) commenced tax assessment challenge litigation against the Barker Central School District (the “District”), the Town of Somerset (the “Town”) and the County of Niagara (the “County”) which sought to reduce Somerset’s tax obligation on various properties for the past several years and continuing into future years (“Litigation”); and

**Whereas**, the District has been working cooperatively with the County of Niagara and the Town of Somerset in defending the Litigation; and

**Whereas**, the parties to the Litigation have been engaged in extensive settlement discussions in an attempt to resolve the matter without conducting further proceedings and a trial, resulting in a settlement proposal which has been negotiated and recommended by District Counsel; and

**Now Therefore Be It Resolved:** that the Board of Education hereby approves the terms of a Settlement Agreement as presented to the Board, and authorizes the Superintendent and/or District Counsel to execute the Settlement Agreement and other necessary documents by and between the Somerset Operating Company, LLC; Barker Central School District, County of Niagara, and Town of Somerset, including minor/grammatical changes that do not alter the intent of the agreement nor financial obligations of the District, in order to settle the tax certiorari litigation between the parties, and

The Board of Education hereby approves the expenditure of settlement funds in order to reimburse the County for tax advances and authorizes the Superintendent to effectuate the payment of same to the County of Niagara.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the resolution for the Board of Education to approve the expenditure from the Tax Certiorari Reserve 2022 in the amount of \$215,372.85 expend the funds to pay the tax certiorari claims related to the 2022 fiscal year,



**Resolved**, that the Board of Education approves an expenditure from the Tax Certiorari Reserve 2022 in the amount of \$215,372.85 to pay a claim arising out of a tax certiorari proceeding and agreement related to the tax certiorari index numbers E175615/2021, E177864/2022, and E180556/2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the resolution to liquidate the Tax Certiorari Reserve of 2022,

**Liquidation of Tax Certiorari Reserve 2022**

**Whereas**, the Board of Education, in accordance with section 3651 of the education law, has reviewed the balance in the tax certiorari reserve fund, and has determined that no amounts remaining in the 2022 Tax Certiorari reserve are reasonably required to meet anticipated judgments or claims arising out of tax certiorari proceedings.

**Be It Resolved**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of schools that the 2022 tax certiorari reserve fund is hereby liquidated and any balance therein shall be promptly returned to the general fund unassigned fund balance.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the resolution to liquidate the Tax Certiorari Reserve of 2023

**Liquidation of Tax Certiorari Reserve 2023**

**Whereas**, the Board of Education, in accordance with section 3651 of the education law, has reviewed the balance in the tax certiorari reserve fund, and has determined that no amounts remaining in the 2023 Tax Certiorari reserve are reasonably required to meet anticipated judgments or claims arising out of tax certiorari proceedings.

**Be It Resolved**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of schools that the 2023 tax certiorari reserve fund is hereby liquidated and any balance therein shall be promptly returned to the general fund unassigned fund balance.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the SEQR resolution regarding the Yorker House Demolition Project,



## RESOLUTION

**Whereas,** the Board of Education of the Barker Central School District reviewed the Yorker House report and determined that the Yorker House was deteriorated to such an extent that repair and/or rehabilitation was not feasible and would result in a waste of District resources; and

**Whereas,** the proposed elements of the Yorker House removal are routine activities of an educational institution for the purpose of maintenance or repair of existing structures and facilities; replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a structure or facility, in kind; and/or routine activities of educational institutions including expansion of existing facilities by less than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area; and

**Whereas,** such actions are deemed, pursuant to the regulations adopted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, to be “Type II” actions and are not subject to the requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act;

**Whereas,** the regulations adopted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation does not require documentation in connection with the classification of Actions as Type II Actions, however, it is recommended that agencies add a note to the project file indicating that the Action was considered under SEQRA and met the requirements for a Type II Action;

**Now Therefore It Is Resolved,** that the proposed proposition is a Type II action pursuant to 6 NYCRR § 617.5(c) and that review pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act is not necessary.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Dr. Reimer brought forward for the Board to discuss the makeup of the Adhoc Facilities Committee membership with regard to Board participation. After discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Atwater as Board President, Mrs. Carnes, and Mrs. Gow would participate.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the formation of the Adhoc Facilities Committee and the membership of: Jonathan Dewart, Alexandra Fuerch, Thomas Mallon, Todd Sukdolak, Francine Ware, Randy Atwater, Deanna Carnes, and Emily Gow.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.



**End of Public**

**Session** Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Gow to adjourn public session at 8:38 p.m., and move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's evaluation and contract negotiations between the Barker Support Staff and Barker Central Services.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Executive**

**Session** Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mrs. Harris, to approve the adjournment of the Executive Session at 9:16 p.m., and return to Public Session.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Public Session/**

**Adjournment** Motion by Mr. John Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Gow, to approve the end of the Public Session and adjournment of the meeting at 9:16 p.m.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Prepared by,

Mary H. Eadie  
District Clerk