

## **Northport-East Northport UFSD**

### **Districtwide Health and Safety Meeting**

#### **Minutes of the Meeting – September 26, 2024 via Zoom**

Attending: Robert Howard, John Lackner, John McEnroe, Carol Taylor, Susan Boyle-NYSIR, Lisa Todaro, Chris Cascio, Matthew Stanton, John Piersa, Stephen Kerekes, Angelo Cocchiola, Alan Tener, Elisa McVeigh, Patricia McGrane, Lori Beekman, Sabina Larkin, Tom Harrison, Michelle Petro, Allen Earle, Lisa Rankin, Wendy Meyer

Bob Howard began the meeting by welcoming everyone to the first Health & Safety Committee meeting of the 2024-25 school year. Bob presented a PowerPoint highlighting the Committee Purpose & Norms and Proper Process & Protocols, then opened the floor for any questions.

#### **Question from Chris Cascio:**

1. *How do I go about finding out who my building rep is for Ocean Avenue, as there seems to be a lack of information?* Bob Howard replied that this is the first meeting of the year and he anticipates this will be resolved. Bob recommended that an offline follow up discussion should take place with Sabina Larkin, Principal of Ocean Avenue Elementary School.

Bob Howard asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 2, 2024 Health and Safety meeting. A motion was made by Patricia McGrane; John Piersa seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **Old Business/New Business**

Bob Howard noted the smooth, positive start to the school year and provided the following updates:

- **Building Leases** – The district has secured a lease for Bellerose Avenue Elementary School with Variety Child Learning Center. Variety offers preschool and elementary special education services. They will provide their own security and greeter, however will share custodial responsibilities with the district to be paid for by Variety. WS BOCES has signed a lease with the district for use of space at Dickinson Avenue Elementary School. The lease is for one year, however with the investment in the property made by WS BOCES, we are anticipating the lease may be extended for a longer period of time. As with Variety, WS BOCES will provide their own security and greeter, and will share custodial responsibilities with the district which will be paid for by WS BOCES.
- **Dickinson Avenue Elementary School Playground** – Community members were commenting on social media questioning why the playground at Dickinson Avenue Elementary was being excavated. The district is required each year to maintain playground surfaces and add woodchips as needed to maintain a proper fall height to keep the playground safe for community use. Our thanks to Susan Boyle from NYSIR for recently doing a walkthrough, providing John Lackner with a draft report of any items to be addressed. Being that this is in draft form, I would like John to report at the next meeting how the district has responded to any items listed in this report.
- **Ocean Avenue Elementary Contractor Fall Report** - It was reported to the district this week that in August a construction worker fell while working on the roof. There was no ambulance report or incident report. The construction company has indicated the worker went about his normal work schedule on the noted date of accident. It is our due diligence to review any video footage and follow up on the claim. We are listed on the contractor's insurance so we are able to shift any liability directly to the contractor.

- Board of Education Belonging and Safety Committee – The Board has established a Belonging and Safety Committee. We will work closely with Lou Bonadonna, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Special Education & Assessments to address overlap and share mutual information.
- Northport Middle School Arrest – Swift action was taken by the district in response to the arrest. Any information we have was shared with the community in an email sent by the Superintendent. The charges are unrelated to school.

Prior to introducing John Lackner, Bob Howard paused to allow for everyone to introduce themselves.

John Lackner welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2024-25 school year and provided the following updates:

- Water Sampling for Lead – Samplings were completed. Any areas that failed were labeled as non-potable and are rescheduled for September 30, 2024. Sampling is done only in potable areas (kitchens, faculty rooms), areas such as bathrooms and science labs are not required. Bob Howard explained how the requirements have changed. (Excerpt from 5/2/24 meeting minutes: The current Department of Health requirement is 5 parts per billion. John Lackner responded that sampling will be done in the morning after water has been sitting for a minimum of 8 hours. Bob Howard added that the district has taken additional measures to stay within stringent DOH requirement of 5 parts per billion, such as adding filters to already lead-free equipment (bottle filling stations). Following a sampling, JC Broderick places a sticker with a QR code that anyone can scan to see the results.)
- ENMS Concrete Blockwork – We have received the engineer's report of next steps needed to repair brick and blockwork in the auditorium. Work will be completed shortly.
- NMS Roof – Roof work over the NMS gym has been completed.
- OAS Roof – Roof near completion.
- Other: Many abatements have been completed (flooring, bathrooms, pipe wrap)

Bob Howard thanked John and his staff for their hard work. Bob added, for example, the stark difference that has been made to the tennis courts at NHS and WJB. Previously the courts had large cracks, now they are beautiful and have added pickleball lines to enhance the community's use of the courts.

Bob Howard welcomed John McEnroe.

John McEnroe thanked everyone for their participation on the Health & Safety Committee and provided the following updates on district security:

- Building and District-level Safety Plans – NYSED notified the district of changes in legislation regarding safety plans. The district-level plan was pushed out and presented for public hearing at the June 20, 2024 BOE meeting. In July when the State rolled out the new rules, we already had a plan in place. October 23, 2024 BOE meeting, the Board can vote to adopt the plan and post on the district website. The State requires notification of all drills – 8 drills by 12-31-24, 2 of which must be lockdown drills. Parents must receive notification no less than 7 days prior to the drill, and staff and students will receive announcements at the time of the drill.
- State Protocols - New recommendations by the State include adding protocols for elopement and swatting into building level plans. The D/W team voted unanimously to accept the State's recommendations. We also are planning to do some table-topping swatting during spring training, pending budget approval.
- Glass Mitigation Pilot Project at NHS – The vendor backed out as a result of not wanting to pay prevailing wage. We are looking at some alternative options.

- Blue Strobe Visual Lockdown Communication System – We are expanding the Blue Strobe system. WJB is the last building to be done, adding strobes and signage. Additionally, we will be expanding NHS to include larger areas such as the auditorium, commons, and library.
- PRS Pedestrian Crossing – Regarding the crosswalk on Pulaski Road, the plan is to remove the old crosswalk and have the crossing guard station moved to the Elwood/Pulaski crosswalk. Currently two guards are positioned there, and a third will be added.

John welcomed SCPD Homeland Security Officer Elisa McVeigh and Northport Police Officer Stephen Kerekes and thanked them for being very responsive and proactive in increasing district awareness.

Bob Howard thanked John McEnroe and our law enforcement partners, Officer McVeigh and Officer Kerekes for their valuable partnership.

Bob Howard welcomed Dr Alan Tener.

Dr. Tener welcomed everyone and updated the committee on the following Social Emotional Health updates:

- Screenagers – Northport High School presented a screening of Screenagers, showing the connection between technology and mental health.

**Comment from Lisa Rankin:** *Thank you, Dr. Tener. I went to NHS to see Screenagers Video and thought it was phenomenal. Is it possible to add a link on the district homepage so all parents can view the video? Also, who could I speak with regarding some thoughts and ideas I have for the middle schools?* Dr Tener replied that Anthony Ferrandino would be the best resource. Additionally, NHS has a new policy that students must place their cell phones in cubbies prior to entering a classroom. The feedback so far is this is working out well.

- NHS Freshmen/Counselors Meetings – Small “get to know you” meetings will take place the first week of October.
- RAP Week – Week of 10/21 will be filled with many activities and resources supporting mental health:

**NHS:**

- Guest speakers who have lived with mental health struggles shared coping strategies and the process of recovery. There will be resource tables and incentive for students to attend – tickets for drawings for gift cards to local businesses (i.e., Starbucks).
- Commons – Students will create and hang signs regarding drug awareness and statistics.

**MS:** Activities included, but not limited to:

- Purple ribbons, posters with anti-drug messages, and drug awareness discussions in Health classes.

**Elementary:**

- Anti-drug theme-based days
- Developmentally appropriate classroom lessons
- Purple pinwheels in front of schools – “Make a Wish for Your Future”

- Color Run – This celebration for a healthy living run will take place on 10-26-24.
- Fall Panorama Survey – This administration will take place from November 4-19, 2024. The survey will be done for grades 3-12 to gather information used to help build and develop SEL services; provides awareness of how our kids are doing.

Bob Howard thanked Dr. Tener for his presentation and opened the Committee Participation segment of the meeting.

- **Comment from Chris Cascio:** *I'm curious about AC at Ocean Avenue Elementary School. The lack of it is causing an educational/safety issue. Rooms are hot so areas are left open for ventilation, causing a safety/security issue. AC is not so much an issue this time of year, however what is the district plan for the Spring?* Bob Howard replied NYS approved a law that any classroom over 88 degrees can't be used. This law has not been signed by the Governor yet, however if signed and the law is enacted, we will have 12 months to have AC installed, meaning reallocating resources to fund AC. Adding AC is not a simple process of putting units in windows, rather it also includes electrical service upgrades, panels, etc. If the law is not signed into action, then we have plans to reach out to the public for input on a multi-year AC installation plan through a bond referendum.
- **Comment from Patricia McGrane:** *Wanted to express appreciation to the Maintenance crew for the wonderful job they did relocating the Transportation Department.* Bob Howard replied with thanks to Trish, staff, and drivers of our Transportation Department for their kindness and acceptance of relocating again. They are valued members of our team.
- **Comment from Matt Stanton:** *Parent communications – what is the district pushing out to remind kids of what to do/not do and the impact/repercussions of their actions?* Bob Howard reiterated that everyone should be careful about what they say and do. The district has existing assemblies, etc. to reinforce this message with students. As time moves on, we can circle back and see if the district and parents need to do more. Dr. Tener added that at the elementary level, we teach digital citizenship; grade 4 lessons focusing on the power of our words – “teachable moments”. Matt replied: *Thank you, Dr. Tener. Let's keep the momentum going, however is there anything new that the district is doing this year, in light of recent activity?* Dr. Tener replied that he will discuss new ideas with the Belonging Committee. John McEnroe added there is the Safe School Anonymous Helpline, available 24/7, on the district website. Bob Howard added that in addition to district resources, parents should talk to their kids and teach them how and when to use the available tools.

Bob Howard thanked everyone for their participation and reminded all of the next meeting date – November 21, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. He wished everyone a great day!

### **2024-2025 Districtwide Health and Safety Meetings**

**September 26, 2024 @ 3:45 p.m.**

**November 21, 2024 @ 10:00 a.m.**

**February 27, 2025 @ 3:45 p.m.**

**May 1, 2025 @ 10:00 a.m.**