

# Orange County School Boards Association

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## MINUTES: DELEGATES' MEETING SEPTEMBER 1, 2021 VIRTUAL

**In Attendance:** Martha Bogart, Bill Boss, Dave Eaton, Ed Estrada, Bill Hecht, Jean Pavek (OU-BOCES), Sandy Nagler, John Pasichnyk (Chester), Larry Berger (Cornwall, OU-BOCES), Jim Creagan (Cornwall), John Redman (Florida, NYSSBA Area 9), Robert Scheuermann (Florida), Shannon Johnson (Goshen), Mathew Buckley, Michele Kayser, Sue Selser (Greenwood Lake), Faith Aprilante (Highland Falls), Karen Brooks (Marlboro), John Williams (Middletown), Joseph Flaherty, Nakia Hickman (Minisink Valley), Staci McCleary, Dawn Tauber (Monroe-Woodbury), Bill Harris (Port Jervis), Sarah Messing (Valley Central), Sharon Davis, Bill Fanos (Warwick Valley), Robin White (Washingtonville), Karyn Meier (OCSBA).

**Guest:** Heidi Longton (NYSSBA Director of Convention and Events)

### Call to Order

President Joe Flaherty called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and led all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Our guest was welcomed and OCSBA attendees were introduced.

### Secretary's Report Approval of Minutes

Secretary Sarah Messing asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the 5/5/21 and 6/2/21 meetings, which was m/s/c. She reported that welcome letters and emails were mailed to new board members and OCSBA Delegates.

### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Faith Aprilante reported that the Executive Committee met on August 10th to review OCSBA's financials for the past year, with all being found in good order. She reported the current checking account balance of \$15,554.63, and the money market fund balance of \$2,795.03. She reported that OCSBA membership dues were beginning to come in, as well as payments for the New Board Member Mandated Training sessions, and that OCSBA's 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter financial report will be shared at the October meeting.

### President's Report

President Flaherty took a moment to welcome newly elected board members to our OCSBA meeting. He then reported that the Executive Committee has decided to keep our meetings virtual for now, as current pandemic guidelines would limit in-person participation. He noted that we've experienced increased attendance through our virtual meetings. He confirmed that our October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting will focus on "Prevention Education for Substance Use & Misuse" with Mary Alice Kovatch from the Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Council of Orange County, with particular emphasis on their Teen Intervene program.

### Presentation: NYSSBA Convention Preview

NYSSBA Director of Convention & Events, Heidi Longton, gave a preview of NYSSBA's 2021 NYC Convention. She shared that NYSSBA remained hopeful that the convention would be held in-person and reviewed the pandemic protocols that would be used. She reviewed details about how NYSSBA would handle matters should the convention need to move to a virtual platform. Ms. Longton shared that the focus of this year's convention would be on social and emotional well-being of students and staff, and how districts can address any learning loss issues. She also reviewed details concerning the Virtual Annual Business Meeting, the pre-convention law session, and highly recommended several impactful Keynote Presentations.

### General Reports: Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Karyn Meier shared that due to pandemic concerns OCSBA would not be hosting a hospitality suite or dinners during this year's convention. OCSBA will host a virtual Meet & Greet for NYSSBA Voting Delegates from Orange County. She reported on the Mandated Training in Governance sessions that were held at OU-BOCES last June, and on-premises at TDWPM in Dutchess County in August. She also reported on the legislative meeting that several OCSBA members attended via NYSSBA with Representative Sean Maloney's Senior Legislative Assistant Beverly Hart. She noted the availability of NYSSBA's free webinar about

Managing Contentious Board Meetings, and finally discussed possible plans for an OCSBA's Board Officers' online Forum as suggested by Monroe-Woodbury BOE President Staci McCleary.

#### **OU-BOCES Report**

COO Bill Hecht reported that all things considered, OU-BOCES had a standard opening day and that students were happy to be back in school. BOCES continues to follow all CDC protocols, and because students come from all over Orange County, they are using a layered mitigation strategy to hopefully limit the amount of quarantining of students. He reported that OC Superintendents have met with the County Executive and the OC Commissioner of Health, who are taking a more hands-off approach currently, and allowing districts to do their own jobs in addressing their own needs in how to keep kids in-person.

#### **NYSSBA Area 9 Report**

NYSSBA Area 9 Director John Redman reported that their board has been in regular contact to keep abreast of how things are progressing with convention plans and with other events around the state. He also reminded members that he is running for re-election to his position and hoped districts would submit their vote for him. He expressed hope that all felt he has been providing good service to them and appreciated the opportunities he's had to meet with many districts virtually. He is hoping to continue meeting with additional districts in the future, possibly in-person as well.

#### **NYSSBA DEI Report**

Middletown BOE President John Williams gave a brief update of the DEI Committee's activities with their last meeting being held in July. The committee discussed the impact of their participation in Implicit Bias Training conducted by Dr. Marks, and shared their personal experiences happening in their home districts. Members welcomed Bishop John's offer to share information and articles the committee is reviewing. He acknowledged the challenges of approaching DEI conversations when confronted with the frustrations of the past year, including the pandemic and polarizing political times. He encouraged everyone to do so with a sincere heart and ability to listen. John Redman shared that the NYSSBA Board also participated in the same training and acknowledged its importance and recognized the value of Bishop John's input on the committee.

NYSSBA Resolutions Committee member Bill Boss thanked John Redman for helping him to be a part of the Resolutions Committee and recognized the good work done by previous committee member John Pasichnyk. Mr. Boss reviewed the purpose and process of the Resolution Committee and described how all our districts help in determining NYSSBA's advocacy efforts by participating in the Annual Business Meeting and voting on resolutions. He reported that Washingtonville CSD submitted three resolutions this year, of which two are being recommended for adoption. More information will follow at our October meeting.

#### **Delegates Comments/Concerns**

Many board members took the time to welcome our new board members to board service and being lifelong learners. Many board members also expressed their gladness to see students back on school premises. Additionally, each district present gave a brief overview of their main concerns. These concerns included:

- The struggle to find school bus drivers
- Managing school board meetings and public comments
- Hearing out differing views regarding mask mandates
- The possible need for local law enforcement involvement at meetings
- Managing large group school settings such as band and the cafeteria

Finally, OCSBA congratulates Middletown Board of Education President Bishop John Williams on his appointment as Area 8 Director of the NY State Caucus of Black School Board Members!

#### **Adjournment**

President Flaherty thanked all for attending. Motion to adjourn was m/s/c at 9:00 PM.