

JOHNSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL  
Monday, December 16, 2024  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
Minutes

Board Members Present: Rachel DeGroat  
Melissa Freebern  
Erwin Morris  
Tom Ordway  
Tara Sears  
Sarah Williams

Board Members Absent: Chris Jay

**Call to Order:** Rachel DeGroat opened the meeting at 6:00 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Minutes:** Tara Sears made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2024, Board of Education Meeting, seconded by Sarah Williams and carried.

Tara Sears made a **MOTION** to accept the minutes of the CSE/CPSE/504 report, seconded by Melissa Freebern and carried.

**Agenda Changes:** Rachel DeGroat added and Executive Session under Section XII for hiring personnel with no action.

**Presentations:** **Eric Gelber:** Eric Gelber presented a PowerPoint presentation to demonstrate to the BOE what his elementary lessons look like and his high school interaction. He is tech-forward - and teaches coding, which helps with typing skills. He showed different grade skill sets. Talked about “G” suit and Google Docs, spreadsheets, research skills, plagiarism, AI, 3D printing. He also spoke on non-library tasks that he does throughout the year. Sarah Williams asked if high school students are reading less and Eric said yes

**Motions:** Tara Sears made a **MOTION** to accept the 2025 Legislative and Budget Priorite Resolution:

JOHNSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGARDING ADVOCACY PRIORITIES FOR THE 2025 LEGISLATIVE  
SESSION

WHEREAS, the Johnsbury Central School District strives to provide an  
outstanding education and post-secondary pathway for each and  
every student; and

WHEREAS; the district recognizes the deep commitment shown by the  
legislature and the Executive to fully fund the foundation formula;  
and

WHEREAS, the District works diligently to meet the needs of all students while  
still fulfilling its core mission, and

WHEREAS, the District is facing significant increased costs due to inflationary  
factors for labor, fuel and goods; and

WHEREAS, property tax levy legislation at the state level has provided an  
increased need for State Aid to maintain quality programs; and

WHEREAS, public schools are being asked to do more for students than ever  
before, so they are prepared for college, military or a career; and

WHEREAS, each child in Johnsbury Central School District only has one  
opportunity to go through the full elementary and secondary  
educational experience;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Johnsbury Central Board of Education  
calls on the New York State Legislature and Governor Kathy Hochul  
to act upon the following priorities:

**1. School Aid Including Foundation Aid**

- A. Fully fund the current law Foundation Aid Formula for the 2025-26 school year.**
- B. Consider and propose recommendations for change in funding only in the context of all data points.**
- C. Phase in any changes to the Foundation Aid Formula over multiple years to allow for local and state financial planning.**
- D. Fully fund expense-based aids.**

**2. Graduation Requirements**

- A. Fund professional development for faculty and staff to properly support and transition students under the new requirements.**
- B. Increase the BOCES Aid reimbursement rate, allowing for the first \$60,000 in salary for CTE instructors to be BOCES aidable, rather than the current \$30,000.**
- C. Fund model curriculum development for districts to consider and adopt, at local option.**

### **3. Workforce Development**

- A. Extend the ability of retirees to work in school districts without pension penalty or a 211 waiver.**
- B. Reduce requirements for professionals certified in other states and other mid-career professions to enter the teaching profession by allowing them to demonstrate their proficiency.**
- C. Continue to align Tier 6 retirement benefits more closely with those offered to Tier 3 and 4 members by allowing retirement at age 55 with 30 years of service.**

### **4. Zero-Emission Buses**

- A. Amend relevant funding streams to ensure that needed changes and supports are supported by state aid. These include funding streams such as building aid for bus depots, aid streams for items such as electricity needed by visiting buses and other currently unanticipated needs.**
- B. Hold all stakeholders accountable for supporting this transition, including clear guidance on who should be responsible for financing needed updates to the state electrical grid to support this transition.**
- C. Evaluate how delays from vendors, including bus and charger manufacturers, energy providers, and**

**consultants for needs assessments and transportation systems, may impact school districts' success, and adjust timelines as necessary.**

- D. Immediately adopt a procedure and guidance for alternatives to address defeated bus bond initiatives.**

**Seconded by Tom Ordway and carried.**

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to appoint Amanda Tervino as a Guidance Secretary, Level 1, per the JCSTA contract, effective December 4, 2024, seconded by Tara Sears.

Mike Markwica explained that Amanda Tervino has been subbing in the building for a while, so she is known among the staff.

**MOTION carried.**

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to appoint Cindy Homer, Mary Cooper and Cassie Noel as Election poll workers for the January 16, 2025, special election at their current pay rate, seconded by Tara Sears and carried.

Tara Sears made a **MOTION** to approve the resignation of Tanya Zahray, teaching assistant, effective December 18, 2024, seconded by Erwin Morris and carried.

Rachel DeGroat recognized Minerva Central School's appointment of Eric McCauliff as a volunteer coach for the Girl's Varsity Basketball team for the 2024-2025 school year.

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to appoint Kate Sauer-Jones as coach for the 5-6 grade girl's basketball program, as per JCSTA contract, for the 2024-2025 school year, seconded by Tara Sears. Rachel DeGroat asked if all the coaches had been informed of our expectations? Mike Markwica said he will speak to Minerva Central school and ask if they do that. He then went on to say he received an email on how pleased a person was with the coaching style this year over last year. The person was very happy in what they have seen so far. **MOTION carried.**

Tara Sears made a **MOTION** to approve Jake Sauer-Jones as a volunteer coach for the 5-6 grade girl's basketball program for the 2024-2025 school year, seconded by Sarah Williams and carried.

Tara Sears made a **MOTION** to accept the resignation of Brooke Thissell, teaching assistant, effective December 20, 2024, seconded by Tom Ordway and carried.

**Committee Reports:**

**Policy:** Mike Markwica stated that the Policy Manual is being refreshed. Erie 1 broke the policy out to different groups, who will review it and give it back to the Policy Committee. Rachel DeGroat stated the Board had received their portion and asked each member to look over their sections.

**Financial:** Mike Markwica reported that the Financial Committee meeting was canceled because the budget has yet to be given out. The committee can't work on it until we hear from the governor.

**Update Reports:**

Heather Flanagan spoke on StudentSquare. A program similar to Parent Square but for students in grades 5-12. She stated that Sarah Fink will speak to all students and explain the purpose of the App and use.

Heather Flanagan also told the Board that the new microphone stands that we use at these meetings were made by Eric Gelber and our 3D printer.

Mike Markwica informed the Board that at today's faculty meeting, staff were informed that parents of students in grades 5 & 6 would decide for the student to join StudentSquare. Mike Markwica also reminded the Board that it was their initiative to purchase ParentSquare. Parents are using it, and it is very helpful in getting information out to all.

**Adjournment:**

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 6:48 pm to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss hiring personnel, seconded by Erwin Morris and carried.

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 7:00, seconded by Sarah Williams and carried.

District Clerk: Cindy A. Homer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_