



**Minutes of the Barker Central School District
Board of Education Meeting
Monday, October 7, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Board Room**

Present	R. Atwater, D. Carnes, C. Gancasz, J. Harris, J. Sweeney, Jr., V. Voss
Excused	E. Gow
Also Present	J. Reimer, M. Carter, C. Cornwell, M. Eadie, M. Learo, M. Love Public – 14
Call to Order	Mr. Atwater called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The pledge to the flag was done.
Agenda	Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Harris, to approve the Board Meeting agenda as presented for October 7, 2024. Yes: 6, No: 0 Motion carried.
Minutes	Mr. Atwater asked for an edit on the past paragraph on page 12 to reflect that the work proposed would address 85% of the building needs vs. 85% of future needs. Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the September 9, 2024 regular meeting minutes as amended. Yes: 6, No: 0 Motion carried.
Public Forum	Mr. Tuper presented a formal letter of complaint to the Board of Education regarding a concern of his.
Presentations	<u>Principal's Update - Dr. Love</u> Dr. Love noted that the Homecoming celebration was a wonderful success. The students PreK-12 had dress-up days. The Pratt students had a pep rally (field day) in the morning on the turf. The Jr./Sr. High School students had a pep rally in the afternoon in the gym. The parade, games, and dance were also wonderful. She thanked the Student Council, class student officers, advisors, staff, families, community, Somerset Police Department, Barker Fire Department, and the town and village for the work they did and the support. She commented that this is one of her favorite times of the year, when you see and feel so much Barker pride.



The Student of the Month program is getting a revamp from the Behavioral Data Task Force, made up of staff from across the District. The new program, based on "Be A Bulldog", focuses on highlighting students for living out the foundational values found in the District's Strategic Plan. She noted that teachers will select a student from each grade level. Department teams will select at the Jr./Sr. High School level. There will also be the chance for other adult groups throughout the building (Support Staff, Counselors, Administration, etc.) to select students. She thanked the Grain House for donating pizza for the students, and the PTO and Barker Lions Club for donating the "Be a Bulldog" t-shirts. She responded to Mrs. Voss with regard to the selection process.

Dr. Loved noted that the District will be running its Emergency Go Home Drill (full evacuation) on Thursday, October 10, 2024 in the afternoon. Elementary will go to the Faith United Church and the Jr./Sr. High will go to the Barker Fire Hall. The Somerset Police Department will be blocking roads and managing traffic. Communication went home to families and information is posted on the website. She thanked the Safety Team, Somerset Police Department, Barker Fire Department, and the Faith United Church for helping with the planning of this trauma-informed drill.

A Code of Conduct Feedback Survey was sent out to families, students, and staff members to provide feedback regarding the dress code and cell phone policies. There were 150 responses so far to the survey with more being received before the meeting. 43% were from students in Grades 9-12. 63.8% to date prefer to keep the phone policies as is. 14% suggested various cell phone changes with regard to smartwatch language; use in class; ability to have all day access; usage in study halls, lunch, in hallways if teachers are okay with the usage; as well as other suggested changes. 60.4% selected to keep cell phone language as is for High School. 32.2% suggested some changes with regard to headphones and music; not taking phones to the office; ability to use in lunch and study halls; defining the school day times; as well as adding language for specific electronics. The majority of responses currently say to keep the policies the same, but there is some specific feedback regarding changes. With regard to Elementary phone usage, 65.8% currently opted to keep the same and 28.9% suggested some changes. With regard to hats and hoods, 43.9% selected to keep the policies the same, and there were other suggested changes just for hats, just for hoods, etc. Notes of safety and where worn were noted. Suggestions to define types of hats, leaving up to the teachers' discretion, etc. were also noted. With regard to dress code, 77.9% recommended leaving as-is, 29.1% suggested some changes which included specifying language on apparel types, lengths, ect. Dr. Love noted the current language allows for flexibility and interpretation. She discussed how long the Board would like the survey to run and after discussion suggested to run through next week. Dr. Love stated she would send another reminder out to everyone. She will provide the Board with a summary of the information for review and consideration.



As with the Code of Conduct Survey, the District continues to provide for a student voice. Dr. Love noted that a group of Seniors met with her to request a senior privilege of leaving campus for lunch and lunch study hall (approximately 40 minutes) which would result in an open campus. They came with a proposal regarding expectations, qualifications to earn and maintain the privilege (passing, back on time, etc.). The proposal was discussed with the Administrative team, and she reached out to local WNY principals, and the subject was discussed in consultation with the District's school attorney. Barker does not currently have a Board of Education policy about this. The Board of Education discussed the pros and cons, but ultimately decided it would create a liability risk for the District. Dr. Reimer commented that he would not advise to allow this as it would create an open campus, increased risk, and a safety exposure as it would be difficult to monitor. After discussion, the Board of Education concurred, that though they appreciated the idea and work to bring it forward, this would not be one privilege they would support. Dr. Love noted that as student voice is being encouraged, she felt it was great to have students at the Board meeting so that they can see the process of student voice unfold, even if it may not be the answer they want. Mr. Atwater appreciated the Seniors who are doing well and it is important to recognize this positive behavior, and he also encouraged the students to continue having dialogues and coming up with ideas.

Coor. of Curriculum & Prof. Learning/AP's Update - Mr. Cornwell

Mr. Cornwell provided an update on the curriculum mapping process and distributed a summary report. For the elementary area, several grade levels including Kindergarten, Grade 5 and Grade 6 have completed mapping their curriculum in the four major content areas. A few others such as Grades 2 and 3 along with Pre-Kindergarten are mostly finished. This leaves Grades 1 and 4 with the most left to map. Continuing conversations are being held to ensure that this work is finished. For the secondary level, the Science and Social Studies Departments have largely mapped their entire curriculum for all courses. There is really only one grade level in each department that has yet to be mapped. He noted that he is confident that the Global II course in Grade 10 will be completed before the end of the school year. Many of the Math Department courses have also been mapped, with the key exception of the Geometry course which many Sophomores take. Elective and honor level courses in Science and Social Studies have also been finished. This leaves the English Department as the main area of focus for mapping at the secondary level. Work has begun on English 8, 10 and English 11 is furthest along to date. He discussed the Specials Areas, and gave a huge shout out to the PE Department who mapped their entire curriculum PreK-12. Health and FACS have also been completely mapped. Music at the intermediate level (Grades 3-7) is finished as well. The Art curriculum at the elementary and middle levels has been mapped and work begun at the HS level. The Library/Media Center curriculum at the elementary level is completed, and Spanish in the critical grades of 7 and 8 has also been finished. Overall, Mr.



Cornwell noted that the District is about two-thirds finished with all the District curricula being mapped in the span of less than two years. He then commented on next steps to look at overlap, gaps, and streamline and make the curriculum more robust. The mapping will continue and be a living document with ongoing dialogue between content areas and grades, and how to make it flow to keep it challenging and robust for the students. Mr. Cornwell noted that the current repository for all this information is in Google Docs for all to see and review but he is looking into a permanent repository so one could easily pull up the information pertaining to the course of study guide and the map of courses. He stated that this information is always available to the community if they want to see it.

Mr. Cornwell discussed the upcoming Staff Development Day on Friday, October 11. The staff will meet with Christina Lesh, facilitator, to work on data analysis with their departments/grade level bands led by the Instructional Cabinet members; there will also be 2-2 ½ hours of their own time to work on either curriculum mapping, the mandated reporter online training, and/or other professional responsibilities. Other topics that will be covered include a Science of Reading Literacy Briefs for the elementary staff; a Blue Ribbon Graduation Measures discussion for the secondary staff; and an overview of the TIG (Trauma, Illness & Grief) Training program.

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

Mr. Learo noted that the first month of the new school year has been busy in the Special Education Department. Special Education teachers met with general education staff and related service providers to review student IEPs. General education staff acknowledged and signed off that they have received and reviewed the documents for all classified students assigned to their classes. Mr. Learo has been meeting with individual teachers, support staff and teaching teams to discuss IEP students and how the year began for them. He commented he has been conducting in-class observations for some of the IEP students to gather more information on how they are doing. CSE and CPSE meetings are scheduled for October and November.

Mr. Learo provided an enrollment update. As of October 3, 2024 there have been 22 total students who have withdrawn from Barker, of which 8 are SPED students. He noted the breakdown with one from Grade 2, three from Grade 3, two from Grade 7, one from Grade 8, and one from Grade 10. Three students have enrolled in a private school (DeSales Catholic), 12 students have moved out-of-district, 6 students moved out-of-state, and 1 student withdrew to be home schooled. With regard to new entrants to the District as of October 1, 2024, there are a total of 42 new students. The breakout of the new students has been listed below. He noted that there were 9 classified students and pending CSE referrals will determine if out-of-district placement is needed. He also noted that there were three students enrolled that were previously home schooled.

Grade	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
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# New Entrants	10	1	3	3	4	2	4	2	3	5	1	3	1
# SPED			1	1	4			1	1				1

Financial Update - Mr. Carter

Mr. Carter discussed the Appropriations Report provided to the Board. He commented that after first two payrolls of the year have been completed in the month of September, he has encumbered the remainder of the year’s payroll salaries. This will provide a clearer picture of the unappropriated budget expenditures for planning purposes.

Mr. Carter noted that Buildings and Grounds have been working on water leak issue impacting the concession stand. The holding tanks have been pumped out quite often but the issue is with the waste holding tank. He noted that something had changed. In the interim more port-a-potties are being brought in as the water needs to be cut off to the stand. Prior to the Capital Improvement Project, the tanks were deemed fine. If the issue was caused by contractor work, the District will address this with the contactor and have remediated. He noted however, that during construction there were no changes made to the waste lines or anything that would have caused a problem. If it is not a result of the work done, then it will be up to the District to fix and pay for.

Mayer Bros. sent a letter to the District dated September 24, 2024 stating they are massively downsizing their operation. As a result, Mr. Carter is researching and reviewing with the Niagara County Industrial Development Agency how this will affect the PILOT agreement, revenue, and possibly the District’s tax cap calculation as the PILOT agreement is a part of that. If the PILOT is removed, it would go back on the tax assessment. They are still within 80% of their promised jobs, so they might be still in compliance. Industrial Development Agency is aware and looking into it. Any change would impact next year’s tax payments.

Mr. Carter noted he has been looking into a cyber security insurance policy the past year. Instances of cyber-attacks continues to increase. A separate policy in addition to the current coverage would provide much higher and wider arrange of coverage for the District. He has reached out to neighboring districts and noted most of have these policies. He noted that the biggest issue is cyber extortion and noted the District’s current coverage amount which provides for limited assistance to address an issue, and commented that most extortions are well over \$100,000, need to be in Bitcoin, etc. Should a breach or issue occur, these cyber security insurance carriers will help with the overall process, public relations, handling the situation, etc. He noted the amount of a policy at approximately \$11,000 for one year, with about \$3,000 in credit from the insurance company. This would be an unbudgeted expenditure, and noted it would be budgeted for in the following years. After discussion, the Board concurred that coverage was a prudent decision.



Mr. Carter noted that the annual electric bid is being presented for approval this month. He stated that this usually takes place in September but due to the timing of the bid opening and date of the Barker September Board meeting, it is being presented this month. He noted that the rates presented are only good for a few more days.

Mr. Carter discussed the interest being made on the Extraclassroom Activity accounts and noted he was reviewing how best to allocate the interest being earned from the collection \$90,000 - \$100,000 in the fund. He noted there is no policy to address the distribution of the interest as historically this account is not interest bearing. He reviewed what other districts do and discussed with Dr. Reimer and noted that he thought the best option would be to give to the Jr. High and Sr. High Student Council groups which would benefit all the students.

Mr. Carter then provided an update on the school tax collections. As of Friday, October 3rd the District has collected \$2.8 million for school, \$56,000 for library, which equates to approximately 63% of the taxes being collected. About \$500,000 in checks from Corelogic (mortgage lender escrow) has been received but not processed as the District is waiting for receipt of a correct report needed to process it. Based on a question from Mrs. Voss, Mr. Carter noted that the District does keep the late penalty fee monies received.

Mr. Carter distributed the 2025-2026 budget calendar draft for review and comment. He asked the Board to provide any questions or feedback they may have prior to the next meeting so it can be finalized and presented for approval. He noted there will be one Budget Advisory Committee Meeting added to the schedule which has not been set as of today due to changes in calendar.

Superintendent's Information

Dr. Reimer discussed the new law which goes into effect July 1, 2025 which requires all school boards to appoint at least one student member who will attend public meetings so the students have a voice. The student will be a non-voting, ex-officio board member. As there is no policy or process to appoint student(s) to the Board, he asked the Board for their view on how they felt best to select the individual(s). He noted some districts have elections, some have student council pick, etc. The Board discussed the term length of the individual as there is no term limit, groups that could run the process such as Student Council, and how to have the students interested be sure they are considered as a candidate. After discussion, the Board agreed to let the Student Council and its advisor come up with a process which will be provided to the Board for review, and run the process through to have a student ready to start in July. They noted too that they were not apposed to have the student start before July if they ready.

Dr. Reimer noted mandated reporter training that the Board is required to do and the information which will be provided to them.



Dr. Reimer discussed a NYS regionalization project being coordinated through all BOCES for school districts, with Dr. Farrar for the Orleans/Niagara BOCES areas. He noted that this is not a project that will result in school mergers, rather to look at district needs and tools to provide more for the students. The survey will look at three areas: (a.) academic, (b.) social/emotional, and (c.) capacity. Within the three questions. The end purpose is to provide an accurate account of what a district currently has, reflect on what it wants to do and need, and its vision for the future of what it would want to do. The results of the survey go to the BOCES, and a regional plan would be developed. The goals would be not just how local BOCES could collaborate and share services, but would also connect schools to other BOCES. Information from districts is due November 1, 2024. Dr. Reimer reiterated that this was not to have districts merge but rather, to provide information on how we can provide depth and breadth of all opportunities to provide similar academic experiences and level the playing field for students and schools. He noted this is a very in-depth process for school districts to complete by November, with district superintendents to then complete their analysis by spring to have a final report to put a plan in place by approximately the start of the 2025 school year. Dr. Reimer noted he will share this report with the Board once complete.

Dr. Reimer revisited the Blue Ribbon Commission. This Commission addressed pathways to how a student gets to graduate. He noted that this is very similar to how a college has different ways to graduate. This means that a Regents diploma will no longer be the only ways for students to graduate in NYS. There would be other ways, such as a P-tech program, which someone would be able to graduate by showing mastering of knowledge. This will crystalize the Blue Ribbon and regionalization initiatives and drive and tie to collaborative and multiple districts ways and paths for students to graduation. Dr. Reimer felt it was a really good process to tie together the regionalization initiative and Blue Ribbon together for the students to graduate.

Dr. Reimer noted that the District continues to focus on absenteeism in correlation to the ability of students to learn. How chronic absenteeism is calculated is being changed by the state. The current state formula does not include all students, the new one will. There are two levels of absenteeism that will be reported and once the information is finalized and established, it will be reported on the report card.

With regard to Phase I of the 2022 Capital Improvement Project, Dr. Reimer noted that all substantial items are completed and filing of reports has begun with final cost reports being pulled together. Dr. Reimer wants this information provided by NYSED prior to 12/31/2024 for aid benefits. He commented that based on additional cost analysis, the potential Phase II cost allowances vs. building level analysis needs to be adjusted and will mostly likely need to be changed into a couple of phases to make sure it will be aidable and not have an impact on the tax payer/community. He stated he felt the District would still be able to get more work done earlier but he wants to be clear when it articulated the project to the



Board and Community. At this point, with the 45-day window for a December 18, 2024 vote, it should be able to be completed in time but if necessary, the vote could be pushed to January if need be.

Dr. Reimer noted the staff will be asked who would like to volunteer and come in to the Board meetings to present with the first presentation of the school year to take place in November.

Policies/Plans

The first reading of the following policies was presented. There were no comments or questions brought forward.

- 1410: Policy and Administration Regulations
- 1510: Regular Board Meetings and Rules (Quorum and Parliamentary Procedures)
- 1520: Special Meetings of the Board of Education
- 1530: Minutes
- 1540: Executive Sessions
- 1610: Annual District Meeting and Election/Budget Vote
- 1611: Business of the Annual District Election
- 1620: Annual Organizational Meeting
- 1630: Legal Qualifications of Voters at School District Meeting
- 1640: Absentee Ballots
- 1650: Submission of Questions and Propositions at Annual Election and Special District Meetings

The second review of policies was done. There were no changes the following policies presented:

- 1110: School District and Board of Education Legal Status and Authority
- 1120: Board of Education: Qualifications, Numbers, and Terms of Office
- 1210: Board of Education Members: Nomination and Election
- 1220: Reporting of Expenditures and Contributions
- 1230: Resignation and Dismissal
- 1310: Powers and Duties of the Board
- 1320: Nomination and Election of Board Officers and Duties of the President and Vice President
- 1330: Appointments and Designations by the Board of Education
- 1335: Appointment and Duties of the Claims Auditor
- 5633: Gender Neutral Single-Occupancy Bathrooms

A motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz to approve the above referenced policies as presented.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.



Education

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the following items be declared excess property and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to dispose of said items as outlined.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the Class of 2029 8th Grade Trip to Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 - Friday, April 11, 2025.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Personnel Items

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the appointment of Francine Ware as a Full-time Teacher Aide effective October 9, 2024 with a probationary period from October 9, 2024 - October 8, 2025, at a rate of \$15.00 in accordance with the Support Staff Contract.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the acceptance of the resignation of Francine Ware as a Substitute Teacher, Substitute Teaching Assistant, and Substitute Teacher Aide effective October 9, 2024.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the appointment of Christine Kelemen as a Full-time Teacher Aide effective October 9, 2024 with a probationary period from October 9, 2024 - October 8, 2025, at a rate of \$15.00 in accordance with the Support Staff Contract.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the acceptance of the resignation of Christine Kelemen as a Substitute Food Service Helper effective October 4, 2024.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the appointment of Alura Steel as a Part-time Food Service Helper at a rate of \$15.00 per hour effective October 2, 2024.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.



Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the appointment of Deanna Nestoros and Loriann Martell as Mentors for the 2024-2025 school year.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the following appointments as Musical Club Advisors for the 2024-2025 school year being paid per the Category and Step noted on the agenda with the stipend based on the Barker Teachers' Union Agreement.

- 1 @ Category A, Step 4: Musical Producer/Director: Cheryl Johnson
- 1 @ Category C, Step 4: Orchestra Director: Jeff Rappold (approved 7/3/2024)
- 1 @ Category D, Step 4: Vocal Director: Sandra Lewis (approved 7/3/2024)
- 1 Non-BTU Contract Position: Accompanist: Tim Dyet (will submit blue slip for hourly wage as did last year)
- 3 @ Category E
 - 1. Step 3, Production Assistant (1): Sound: Ruth Scofill
 - 2. Step 4, Production Assistant (2): Set Builder: Tom Mallon
 - 3. Step 1, Production Assistant (3): Lights: Andon Wedekind (Andon is a BCS graduate, brother of cast member, and community member and is subject to background and fingerprint clearances.)

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the appointment of Blake Schwab as a volunteer Football Assistant for 2024-2025 school year Fall 2024 season.

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the appointments for the individuals as noted for the 2024-2025 school year Winter Sports season with the paid coaches being paid per the Steps noted with stipend based on the Barker Teachers' Union Agreement.

William Moeller	Modified Girls Basketball	Step 1
William Bruning	Modified Wrestling	Step 4

Yes: 6, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to approve the following Community/Parent Volunteers:

Taylor Ginavan
Kathleen Kipfer



Amanda Schaefer
Kayley Stack

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

**Business & Financial
Items**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to accept the Warrant Report though August 31, 2024.

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to accept the Treasurer's Report dated July 2024 and August 2024.

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

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

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the transfer of the remaining treasury balance from the Class of 2024 to the Class of 2025.

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the electricity bid to purchase electricity to Energy Coop of America at the indexed adder rate of \$0.01798 per kwh used for the 2024-2025 school year.

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

**End of Public
Session**

Motion by Mrs. Carnes, seconded by Mrs. Harris to adjourn public session at 8:19 p.m., and move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing employment of particular persons.

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

**Executive
Session**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the adjournment of the Executive Session at 9:14 p.m., and return to Public Session.

Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

Public Session/



Adjournment

A motion was then made by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to end the Public Session and adjourn the meeting at 9:14 p.m.
Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

Prepared by,

Mary H. Eadie
District Clerk