

**MOUNT PLEASANT COTTAGE SCHOOL, UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLEASANTVILLE, NEW YORK 10570**

March 16, 2015

The Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Education of the Mount Pleasant Cottage School Union Free School District was called to order at 6:22 P.M. by Mrs. Rita M. Golden, President.

Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Golden, Mrs. Mann, Mr. Altman, Mr. Gelfman,  
Mr. Carter, Mrs. Irwin, Mr. Levene, Mrs. Stein,

Absent: None

Also

Present: Mr. Gaudette, Mr. Beovich, Ms. Leamon, Ms. Baron, Ms. Lee,  
Ms. Benjamin, Ms. Sanchirico

Oath of Office:

◆ For the record Ms. Irwin took the Oath of Office on March 6, 2015.

Executive Session:

◆ Mrs. Levene moved that the Board adjourn to Executive Session to discuss the employment history of particular persons at 6:22 P.M.

Seconded: Mr. Carter

Approved  
Vote: 6-0

Mrs. Mann and Mrs. Irwin were not present.

Reconvene to Public  
Session:

◆ Mr. Gelfman moved that the Board of Education reconvene to public session at 8:04 P.M.

Seconded: Mrs. Stein

Approved  
Vote: 8-0

Correspondence:

Mr. Gaudette shared with the board members:

◆ Copy of Andrea Aitken's Claim Audits, 12/2/14-12/19/14 and 1/2/15-1/29/15.

Approval of  
Minutes:

◆ Mrs. Mann moved that the minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of February 25, 2015 be accepted as presented.

Seconded: Mr. Gelfman

Approved  
Vote: 8-0

Business Matters:

Mr. Gelfman moved that

◆ the Board of Education the Treasurer's Report General Fund Checking, Trust and Agency Account and Federal Fund Checking Account for the period of January 1, 2015 through January 31, 2015 be accepted.

◆ the check runs for January 1, 2015 through January 31, 2015 be accepted as recommended by the subcommittee from:

48186 – 48269 \$584,908.91.

◆ the Board of Education approves the following budget transfers for the 2014-2015 school year:

DATE	ACCOUNT CODE	ACCOUNT NAME	From	To
1/8/2015	A 1620.442-00-0000	CONTRACT SER	\$0.00	\$500.00
1/8/2015	A 1620.161-00-0000	SALARY-O/T	\$500.00	\$0.00
1/8/2015	A 2110.451-00-1850	INSTR SUPP-MPCS COSMETOLOGY	\$0.00	\$50.00
1/8/2015	A 2110.451-00-3000	INSTR SUPP-MPCS COMPUTER LAB	\$50.00	\$0.00
1/8/2015	A 1240.406-00-0000	MISCELL	\$0.00	\$200.00
1/8/2015	A 1620.160-00-0000	SALARY-CONTRACT	\$200.00	\$0.00
1/21/2015	A 9010.800-00-0000	EMPL RETIREMENT	\$0.00	\$3,010.00
1/21/2015	A 2820.150-00-0000	PSYCHOLOGISTS	\$3,010.00	\$0.00
1/21/2015	A 2810.150-00-0000	GUIDANCE COUNSELORS	\$200.00	\$0.00
1/21/2015	A 2630.460-00-0000	SCHOOL SOFTWARE	\$0.00	\$200.00
1/21/2015	A 1240.401-00-0000	LEGAL ADS	\$0.00	\$100.00
1/21/2015	A 2825.150-00-0000	SOCIAL WORKER	\$100.00	\$0.00
1/21/2015	A 2820.150-00-0000	PSYCHOLOGISTS	\$64,531.30	\$0.00
1/21/2015	A 9040.800-00-0000	WORKERS' COMP	\$0.00	\$64,531.30
1/21/2015	A 1620.442-00-0000	CONTRACT SER	\$0.00	\$27.04
1/21/2015	A 1620.160-00-0000	SALARY-CONTRACT	\$27.04	\$0.00
1/21/2015	A 1620.440-00-0000	REPAIR-BLDGS	\$0.00	\$25,000.00
1/21/2015	A 2825.150-00-0000	SOCIAL WORKER	\$25,000.00	\$0.00
1/21/2015	A 2110.450-00-1700	CENTRAL SUPP-CSE	\$0.00	\$46.36
1/21/2015	A 2110.450-00-1000	CENTRAL SUPP-MPCS	\$46.36	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>			\$93,664.70	\$93,664.70 .

◆ the Board of Education approves the proposed 2015-2016 school calendar.

◆ the Board of Education approves the leasing agreement between the Mount Pleasant Cottage School U.F.S.D. and Pitney Bowes.

Seconded: Mr. Carter

Approved

Vote: 8-0

◆ Student enrollment for the month of January – 309 students, budgeted for 301 February enrollment 306.25 students, budgeted for 306.

Superintendent's  
Report:

Mr. Gaudette discussed Section 200.15(k) Incident Review Committee. The purpose of the committee is to review individual reportable incidents and incident patterns and trends to identify and implement preventative and corrective actions, which may include, but is not limited to, staff retraining or any appropriate disciplinary action allowed by law or contract, as well as opportunities for improvement.

The committee must be composed of at least one member of the governing body of the residential school. Mrs. Stein is going to represent the board on the committee with Mr. Carter acting as back up.

Mrs. Irwin moved that

Whereas there is agreement with Governor Cuomo that “access to education, from pre-kindergarten through college, can pave the way to economic and social opportunities- to better jobs and more successful lives,” many of the proposals in the Governor’s 2015 Opportunity Agenda are untenable and will have significant negative consequences.

Whereas, most schools in New York State successfully educate our children and prepare them for college, career and good citizenship, the Governor’s proposals are based on a premise that our schools and our teachers are failing our students. While failing schools and the link to issues of poverty require special attention, this one size fits all approach is inappropriate, costly, and counter-productive.

Whereas, the Governor states that there has been an unprecedented increase in state education aid over the last three fiscal years, in reality, the State dramatically cut education aid in 2010 and, has continued to underfund education while addressing its own deficit by redirecting state education funding through the Gap Elimination Act (GEA). In Westchester and Putnam, 47% of school districts received less state aid this year than in 2008. Since its inception, \$8.8 billion statewide, and \$403 million in Westchester and Putnam, has been lost to the State under the GEA.

Whereas, the State has a surplus this year, there is no indication that the GEA will end in 2015-16. In point of fact, the \$1.1 billion which the Governor promises if his reform agenda is approved could cover the \$1.04 billion in GEA outstanding statewide for 2014-15.

Whereas, Governor Cuomo asserts that his proposed reforms would encourage the most talented college graduates to consider teaching as a career, the proposed lock-step, standardized evaluation system which has no parallel in any other profession, would dissuade, not encourage, the most talented.

Whereas Congress, in working to re-authorize ESEA, is looking to de-couple high stakes assessments and teacher evaluations, address the punitive aspects of NCLB, and allow for more local accountability and flexibility, the Governor is proposing a rigid, standardized test-oriented model that will further diminish local authority.

Whereas, Governor Cuomo proclaims that the State will “enhance the teacher evaluation system to accord teachers and the profession the respect they deserve,” he sets forth an evaluation system that denigrates the professionalism of teachers and administrators and establishes a narrow, one-size-fits-all model. For grades 4-8, the proposed evaluation system would base 50% of the score on an annual state assessment (with a sample size of approximately 25) and 50% on at least two observations, one of which must be done by a trained administrator, independent evaluator or SUNY/CUNY faculty member and will be weighted at 35% of the 50%, with the remaining 15% allocated to an observation by a school administrator. A class score on the standardized test must equate to effective or higher for the teacher to be rated effective or highly effective (thus the tests core trumps everything else). Effective teaching is more than the sum of one standardized assessment and two formal observations. School boards and communities trust their local school district officials to implement an accountability system that appropriately evaluates staff and incorporates comprehensive professional supports. The requirement to employ an independent evaluator establishes a new, expensive unfunded mandate that compromises administrator authority and will siphon school district funds from the classroom and/or professional development.

Whereas, the Governor is proposing a new teacher tenure process which will require five *consecutive* years of an effective or highly effective rating, the evaluation system measures are problematic and policies such as LIFO remain in effect. Nevertheless, a five year probationary period is more appropriate, and the proposed language indicating that districts retain authority to dismiss probationary teachers at any time for any reason is a necessary clarification to 3012c.

Whereas, the current “expedited” 3020-a hearing process remains costly, time-consuming and often ineffective, the proposed changes would shift the presumption in favor of the administrator, strengthen evidentiary standards, and streamline the process. The same presumption of trust for the local administrator should be incorporated into the teacher evaluation proposal.

Whereas, we share a commitment to universal high-quality early education, the current practice of reimbursing districts rather than providing seed money makes it difficult for high need school districts to initiate or expand a pre-K program. It is imperative that future initiatives include start-up funding and a front-loaded payment schedule.

Whereas, Westchester is home to six Special Act School Districts which cannot appropriately meet the needs of their unique student population under the current tuition methodology, and there is no language in the 2015-16 NYS budget to address their needs, we support the inclusion of language establishing annual increases to the tuition rate.

Whereas, Governor Cuomo’s 2015 Opportunity Agenda includes the Education Investment Tax Credit which defacto shifts money from public education to private while public school districts are underfunded by NYS, we support using public dollars for public education.

Whereas, charter schools were initially intended as lab schools for innovation, have not proven to out-perform regular public schools and many do not mirror the local community in their enrollment and retention practices, and whereas, NYS grants the charter but local school districts are financially impacted, we rebuff the Governor’s proposal to raise the charter cap by 100.

Whereas, mayoral control has had mixed results nationally, we support the concept of local control and reject the Governor’s suggestion that it be expanded beyond New York City.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Board of Education of the Mount Pleasant Cottage School Union Free School District urges State Legislators to review these proposals in details, gather input from research and from those in the field, and rebuff the elements of the Cuomo Education Reform Agenda which will instill inappropriate measures of accountability and negatively impact the classroom learning environment and local control.

Seconded: Mr. Carter

Approved

Vote: 8-0

Personnel Matters:

Mrs. Mann moved that

◆ the Board of Education appoints the following Civil Service employees:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
1. Akbar Grant	Teacher Aide, 12-52 week probationary period	\$13.26 per hour	1/22/15
2. Patrick Sullivan	From: Teacher Aide To: School Monitor, 12-52 week probationary period	\$27,000 pro-rated	3/2/15
3. Herode Montilus	Teacher Aide, 12-52 week probationary period	\$13.26 per hour	3/16/15
4. Jasmine Sabater	Teacher Aide, 12-52 week probationary period	\$13.26 per hour	4/6/15.

◆ the Board of Education appoints Ms. Elizabeth Faraone, Teacher Aide to the position of Testing Coordinator at a rate of \$40.00 per hour effective 3/17/15-6/30/15.

- ◆ the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Mr. Benjamin Faber, Math Teacher effective 6/30/15.

Seconded: Mr. Gelfman

Approved  
Vote: 8-0

- ◆ Mrs. Levene moved that upon the recommendation of Mr. James Gaudette, the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education pursuant to Section 3031 of the Education Law terminates Ms. Maria Alvarado's probationary appointment as a Social Studies Teacher Grades 7-12 tenure area employee, in the Mount Pleasant Cottage School, Union Free School District effective April 3, 2015.

Seconded: Mrs. Irwin

Approved  
Vote: 8-0

- ◆ Mr. Altman moved that he Board of Education approves Ms. Maria Alvarado's request for an additional one-year extension of her probationary period as a Social Studies Teacher Grades 7-12 tenure area employee commencing 4/3/15 and ending 4/3/16.

Seconded: Mrs. Mann

Approved  
Vote: 8-0

- ◆ Mrs. Irwin moved that the Board of Education approve Ms. Melissa Cortes's request for an additional 15 days of sick leave for the 2014-2015 school year.

Seconded: Mr. Gelfman

Opposed  
Vote: 8-0

Committee on  
Special Education:

- ◆ Mrs. Stein moved that the recommendations of the Mount Pleasant Cottage School Union Free School District's Committee on Special Education be approved as recommended by the subcommittee with the removal of IEP #103025.

Seconded: Mrs. Levene

Approved  
Vote: 8-0

Public Comment:

Ms. Gina Sanchirico, President of the Teachers' Association stated "The leadership of the MPCSTA would like to take this opportunity to express regret regarding the impact of the recent anonymous reports, and the time and resources that it has caused the district. We appreciated the Superintendent's recognition of NYSUT as being a reliable representative through which our differences should be vetted. We look forward to a continued effort of communication and trust."

Meeting Notification:

The next Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at 7:30 P.M. in the library.

Adjournment:

◆ Mrs. Levene moved that the Board of Education adjourn the Regular Public meeting at 8:22 P.M.

Seconded: Mrs. Mann

Approved

Vote: 8-0

Respectfully submitted,

Marcella Freimark  
District Clerk

MF