



Board Briefings

ITEMS FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD'S AUG. 10 MEETING *(conducted in-person & remotely via Webex)*

- **HAMBURG CONNECTS SUMMER PROGRAM** — For 360 PreK-Grade 12 students who attended the district's Hamburg Connects summer program on any given day, the joy of learning returned through hands-on experiences and time spent with peers and adults, said Principal Rose Kowalski in her presentation to the board. The four-week, in-person program emphasized academic and social-emotional components. At its core were opportunities for students to create, care, solve challenges and discover, as highlighted by Mrs. Kowalski. Feedback on surveys of students, parents and staff who participated in the program was overwhelmingly positive.
- **"DISCOVER 2021" CAPITAL PROJECT** — A public vote date of Wednesday, Oct. 13 was set for "Discover 2021," a proposed \$68.5 million capital project that would bring health, safety, accessibility and code compliance improvements districtwide. While renovation would be done at all six Hamburg schools, the most extensive work would occur at the Middle School and High School. School-by-school details were presented by Assistant Superintendent Barbara Sporyz. Of note were plans to build an addition at the Middle School for a new pool, technology classrooms, team rooms, concession stand and storage, with direct access to outside athletic facilities. The old pool area would be converted into a music suite. Art rooms at the Middle School would also be renovated. The pool at the High School would likewise be filled in and converted into multi-use fitness space. Also planned at the High School are reconstruction of the art studio suite and music wing. Site work on the Legion Drive campus would involve reconstructing the track and synthetic turf field, while adding a new synthetic turf multi-sport field, and synthetic turf softball and baseball fields. Upgrades are planned at each of the elementary schools as well. As for financing the project, Mrs. Sporyz said that \$1.8 million in capital reserve "seed money" and a \$200,000 donation from the Hamburg Alumni Foundation would be applied. Financing is timed so that new debt would be offset by retiring debt service from prior projects, keeping a level tax impact until 2030-31.
- **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT** — The district plans to welcome students back to full five-day per week, in-person learning on Sept. 8 and is awaiting guidance from the State Education Department and Erie County Department of Health on measures that may have to be taken in relation to COVID, said Superintendent Michael Cornell. There is heightened awareness about students' social-emotional well-being after the disruptions of the pandemic. On another note, he expressed pride in the fact that Kathy Hochul, who will become New York State Governor, is a 1976 graduate of Hamburg High School, as well as a 2017 inductee in the Hamburg Alumni Foundation Wall of Fame. He called Mrs. Hochul a friend of public education and advocate for leadership.
- **TAX RATES 2021-22** — The 2021-22 tax levy of \$39.4 million was approved, establishing tax rates as follows: Hamburg, \$39.81 per \$1,000 assessed valuation, an increase of 2.2%; Eden, \$32, decrease of 2.2%; Boston, \$22.36, increase of .6%; Orchard Park, \$37.96, increase of 1.8%.
- **RETIREMENTS** — The board accepted the retirement of Linda Schupp, clerk typist, Middle School, effective 7/16/22, with 14 years of service and Linda Fox, cleaner, Armor Elementary, effective 10/30/21, 28 years.
- **PERSONNEL** — Appointed to the staff were Kristina Grazier, cook, High School; Jena Petrocy, AIS math teacher, Boston Valley/Charlotte Avenue Elementary; Brandon Safe, special ed. teacher, Middle School; Britton Thomas, AIS reading teacher, Charlotte Avenue/Boston Valley Elementary; Paul Thompson, school social worker, districtwide; Cassidy Vorndran, AIS math teacher (p-t), Armor Elementary.
- **PUBLIC COMMENT** — Speakers commented on mask mandates and softball fields.
- **NEXT MEETING** — Tuesday, Sept. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

Michael Cornell, Superintendent
Aug. 12, 2021