



# Oceanside Schools

## *Anchored Together*

### BY PURPOSE, PASSION, AND PEOPLE

## **In Case You Missed It**

### **Summary of 10-18-17 Board of Education Meeting**

#### **School Boards Recognition Week**

Although School Boards Recognition Week begins October 23, the Oceanside Council of PTAs chose this BOE meeting to commemorate the contributions of the Oceanside BOE trustees: President Kimberly Grim Garrity, Vice President Sandie Schoell, Trustees Seth Blau, Michael D'Ambrosio, Donald Maresca, Mary Jane McGrath-Mulhern and Robert Transom. Patricia Abela, PTA Council Co-President, spoke about the work that BOE members do on a voluntary basis (they are not paid, nor do they receive tax breaks) and how this week is a small way to appreciate their efforts. Ms. Abela presented the Board with new name plates which sit on the table at BOE meetings to identify each individual. The name plates feature the district's colors of blue and white and its anchor logo. (Ms. Abela's fellow Co-President Marie Pette was unable to attend due to a work conflict.)

#### **Auditors Report**

A representative from the district's auditing firm spoke to report on the results of the annual audit. She summarized by stating that no management letter was issued, a rare occurrence in auditing and evidence of sound fiscal management procedures.

Board of Education President Kimberly Grim Garrity stated that she has spoken with the auditing firm and was told that the school district "gave them a perfect picture [of financial practices] that no other district provides."

Dr. Harrington added that the school district is one step closer to being removed from the fiscal stress susceptibility list (a state list monitoring districts for fiscal stress and using reserves in fund balances, among other factors, as one measure of susceptibility) and hopes that by the end of the year, if measures to remedy the fund balance reserves continue to be as effective as they have been, Oceanside will no longer be on the list.

## **Presentations**

Several short presentations highlighted upcoming events and initiatives:

### ***Veterans Flag Ceremonies***

Brendon Mitchell, OHS Castleton Principal, and OHS Castleton Student Council President Joshua Myrick, introduced a new initiative in which OHS Castleton students will organize regular events to honor veterans. The first event will take place on November 9 at 9:30 am at Schoolhouse Green and will be a flag ceremony to honor local veteran Fred Morse.

### ***Campaign on Driver and Pedestrian Safety***

Mitch Bickman, Director of Social Studies, reported on a program launching to “take learning out of the four walls of the classroom into students’ lives to show them that one person can make a difference.” The first initiative will be a Driver and Pedestrian Safety Campaign which will kick off with a driver/pedestrian safety PSA video that all students Pre-K-6th grade will watch in their classrooms on October 20. Their teachers will introduce discussion about the video and will provide materials for students to make posters and flyers about the topic of safety. Students from Laura Trongard and Jennifer Frasca’s 9th grade Integrated Program course will hang the posters on October 30 (weather permitting) to allow for maximum visibility as children and parents trick-or-treat.

The campaign is the first activity in a year long program in solutionary thinking and making a difference in the world. The video was created by Audrey Miller and her broadcast students and GEM mentoring students were featured.

**Construction and Enrollment Reports** were as submitted. See [Agenda](#).

### **School Boards Convention**

Board Vice President Sandie Schoell reported on having watched the legislative session of the New York State School Boards Association’s (NYSSBA) annual convention. NYSSBA works on advocacy and legislative change. Mrs. Schoell pointed out that local school boards do not always agree with or support every NYSSBA action.

Among the items discussed for legislative action were:

- Amending NYSSBA bylaws to add another board member who will be from the Black School Board Member’s Caucus
- Opposing legislation supporting charter school expansion
- Supporting creation of regional high schools only when local districts feel it is prudent for their region
- Requiring teacher colleges to show evidence of quality programs that turn out well-qualified teaching candidates
- Continuing to require a rigorous process for granting teacher certification

- Opposing any action that would allow charter schools to certify their own teachers
- Supporting testing accommodations for students with disabilities
- Requiring that school districts have a seat at the table if PILOTS (payments in lieu of taxes) are to be negotiated
- Supporting amendment of the foundation formula
- Making the 3020 process more streamlined and therefore less costly
- Amending the Triborough Amendment of the Taylor Law
- Opposing the state tax cap and calling for its repeal or making meaningful reforms to include making sure that no district should face a negative tax cap, which is very damaging to schools
- Allowing fund balances to be greater
- Insisting on funding of mandates, in particular, for mandates on English Language learners and undocumented minors
- Supporting the protection of student privacy when reporting data to state by using locally generated ID numbers versus names
- Supporting additional funding to expand career tech programs
- Data - work with state es leg and gov to protect privacy of students w locally generated is numbers instead of student names

### **Opportunity for the Superintendent**

Dr. Harrington announced that acclaimed artist Bren Bataclan would be visiting elementary schools thanks to PTA cultural arts committees. She also reported on the launch of OSD Go...Read, The Sequel, a continuation of the very successful literacy program that the district initiated last year. This year's OSD Go...Read features a contest to identify famous sequels. More information is on the website: <http://oceansideschools.org>

### **Opportunity for the Board**

Sandie Schoell reminded the audience that the Oceanside Community Service dinner is October 26. While OCS rarely presents honors at its dinner dance, this year felt the need to honor its biggest supporters, the Oceanside Federation of Teachers. Those wishing to attend may contact OCS.

Kimberly Grim Garrity reiterated that there is a difference between public and charter schools, even though charters are funded with tax dollars. Public schools require teachers to have a master's degree or be working towards one. Charters seek lesser requirements that would allow individuals not possessing a master's OR a bachelor's degree to teach in charter schools.