# Special Meeting to Vote on BOCES Budget and Trustees and PUBLIC HEARING on EDUCATIONAL IMPACT STATEMENT - Northport High School Auditorium (Tuesday, April 27, 2021)

Generated by Beth M Nystrom on Wednesday, April 28, 2021

#### **Members present**

David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Larry Licopoli (arrived at 7:00 p.m.), Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

#### Members absent

None

#### Also present

Mr. Robert Banzer, Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Irene McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Dr. Dana Boshnack, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

Mr. Robert Howard, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Mr. Louis Bonadonna, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services

Public Attendance: 30 people in-person, approximately 634 virtually

1. CALL TO ORDER – President Badanes called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**2.** IF NECESSARY, THE CHAIR MAY ENTERTAIN A MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION - Note: It is anticipated that the Board will meet in public in the Faculty Dining Room at Northport High School at 6:00 p.m. to act upon a resolution, upon majority vote, to immediately convene into Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to the employment history of particular persons and matters pertaining to contract negotiations.

Action: 2.01 Motion to convene into Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to the employment history of particular persons and matters pertaining to contract negotiations.

Motion by Allison C Noonan, second by Thomas Loughran.

Final Resolution: Motion passes

Yes: David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C. Noonan,

David Stein

Not Present at Vote: Larry Licopoli

At 7:08 p.m. the Board reconvened in public session in the auditorium at Northport High School.

- 3. Mr. Badanes led those present in the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; and
- 4. Pointed out the EMERGENCY EXITS
- 5. PROPOSED WESTERN SUFFOLK BOCES ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR 2021-2022

Action: 5.01 Western Suffolk BOCES proposed 2021-2022 Budget

Recommendation to approve the 2021-2022 proposed Western Suffolk BOCES budget (The entire 2021-2022 proposed Western Suffolk BOCES budget was forwarded to the Board on March 19, 2021)

Motion by Allison C Noonan, second by David Badanes.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Larry Licopoli, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan, David Stein

# 6. CANDIDATES FOR THREE YEAR TERMS ON THE WESTERN SUFFOLK BOCES BOARD OF EDUCATION

Action: 6.01 Candidates for the Western Suffolk BOCES Board of Education

Recommendation to vote for Ms. Mary Ellen Cunningham and Mr. James Kaden for the Western Suffolk BOCES Board of Education (Letter from Ms. Joanne Klein, District Clerk of Western Suffolk BOCES, dated March 25, 2021, re: three nominations to fill two vacant seats on the BOCES Board):

6.01.1 Ms. Mary Ellen Cunningham

6.01.2 Mr. James Kaden

6.01.3 Mr. Joseph Savaglio

Motion by Thomas Loughran, second by Allison C Noonan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

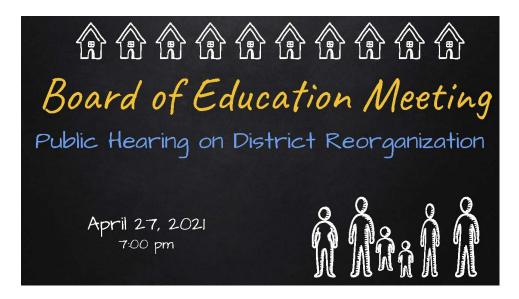
Yes: Victoria Buscareno, Larry Licopoli, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison C Noonan,

David Stein

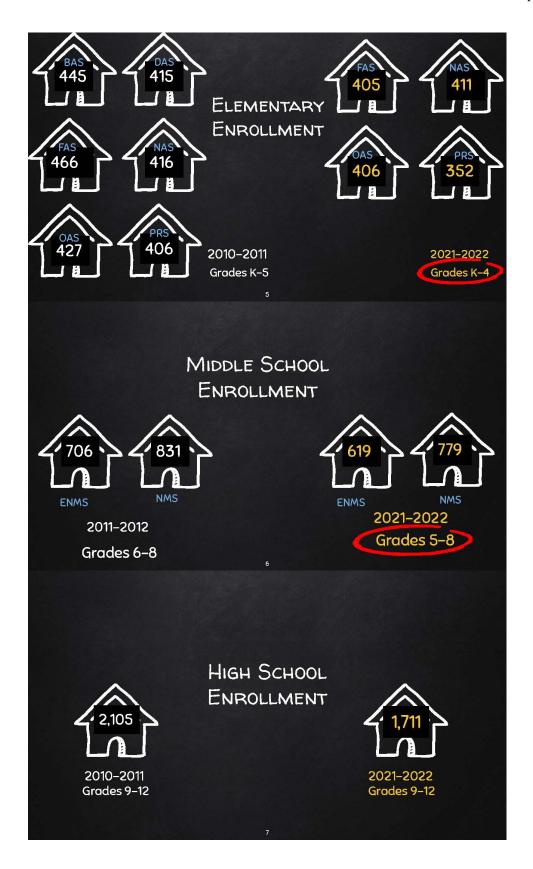
No: David Badanes

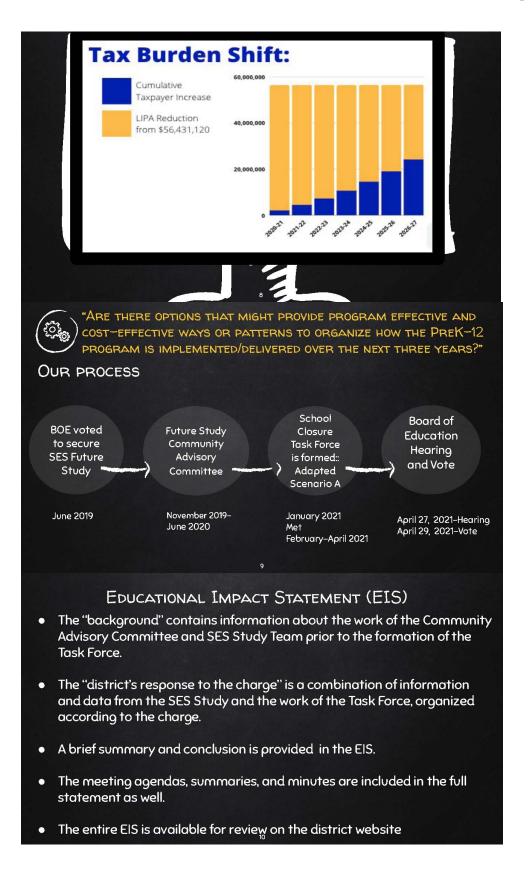
**7. PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED SCHOOL CLOSING EDUCATIONAL IMPACT STATEMENT** - Please Note: Community members are invited to share their questions, comments, or concerns with the School Board. To participate by Zoom please sign up using the following link: https://forms.gle/Cp4LTgMrHEe1URux6 by 4:00 p.m. on April 27th. When speaking, citizens should state their name and address for the record and limit their presentation to 5 minutes.

Report: 7.01 Educational Impact Statement









## CONCLUSION

"The committee has determined that this scenario affords the District the opportunity to deliver and enhance the excellent educational experience for our students and allocate resources to mitigate fiscal concerns for the District and community."

PG. 15, EDUCATIONAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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### SCHOOL VISITATIONS:

- -THREE WEEK WINDOW: MAY 24TH- JUNE 11TH
- -AFTER SCHOOL
- SMALL GROUP VISITATIONS FOR INCOMING FAMILIES
- -Communication will come from building Principals
- Additional orientation/welcome in late August prior to the start of school

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WHAT DOES THIS PLAN MEAN FOR OUR:

### K-4 STUDENTS?

- INCREASED STEM OPPORTUNITIES
- MAINTAINING SMALL CLASS SIZES
- Full Day Integrated Co-teaching program
- FULL-TIME ART TEACHER PER BUILDING
- VARIETY OF WELCOME PROCEDURES, INCLUDING IN-PERSON ORIENTATION

What does this plan mean for our:

FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS?

World language exploratory course
Increased band and orchestra time
Increased STEM opportunities
Insulated in Separate hallways & 5/6 bathrooms
Full Day integrated co-teaching program
Full time 5th grade Counselor
Support Staff redeployed to accommodate additional students (nurses, Teacher Aides etc.)
In-Person Orientations

WHAT DOES THIS PLAN MEAN FOR:

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES?

- FULL DAY INTEGRATED CO-TEACHING PROGRAM OPTIONS AVAILABLE K-4
  - OCEAN/NORWOOD
  - O PULASKI/FIFTH
- Full Day integrated co-teaching program 5th grade for all academic classes
- REDUCED RATIO OF MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT STAFF TO STUDENT
- DESIGNATED FULL—TIME 5TH GRADE COUNSELOR AT EACH MIDDLE SCHOOL
- SUPPORT STAFF REDEPLOYED TO ACCOMMODATE ADDITIONAL STUDENTS (NURSES, TEACHER AIDES ETC.)

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WHAT DOES THIS PLAN MEAN FOR OUR:

### SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

#### PROVIDES STRUCTURAL CHANGE THAT:

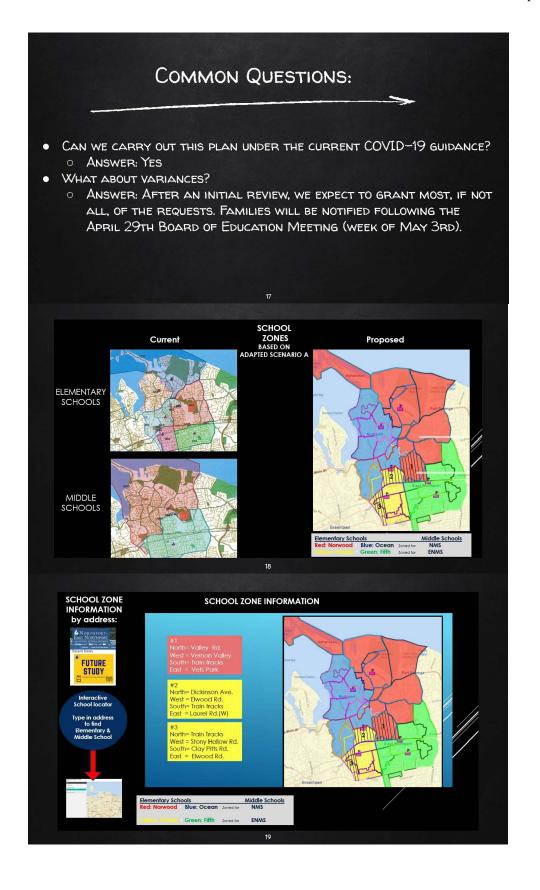
- MAINTAINS/ENHANCES EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM THAT MEETS THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY
- ADDRESSES DECLINING ENROLLMENT
- POSITIONS THE DISTRICT FOR FUTURE FINANCIAL STABILITY

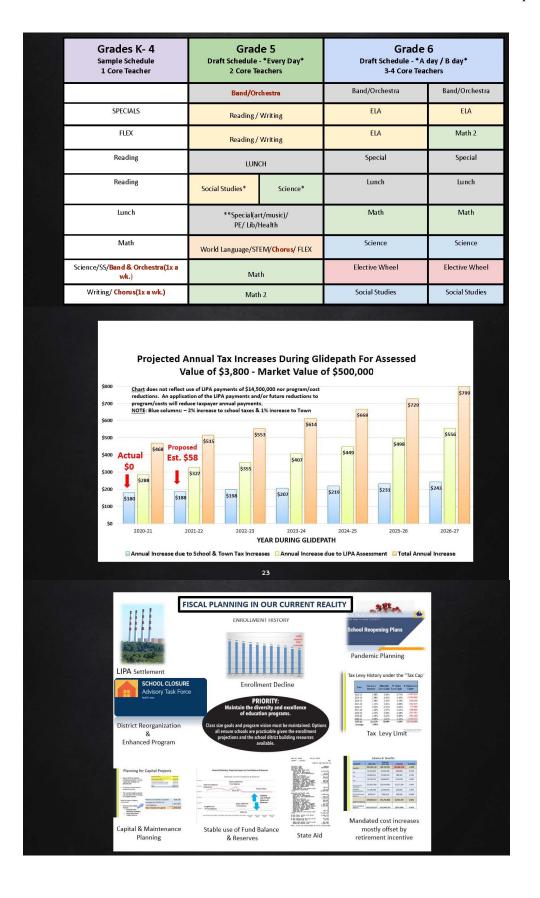
-SAVINGS OF \$6.9 MILLION AFTER REDEPLOYMENT OF FUNDS FOR ENHANCEMENTS

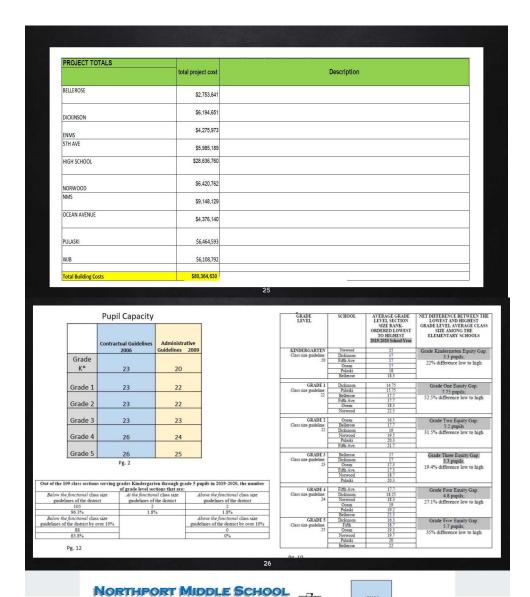
-approximately \$336 for the average taxpayer (house assessed value at 3,800) for next year and every subsequent year.

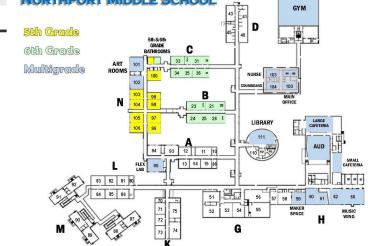
-REDUCED THE PER PUPIL COST BY APPROXIMATELY \$1,400.

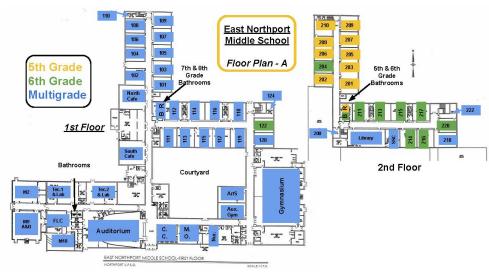
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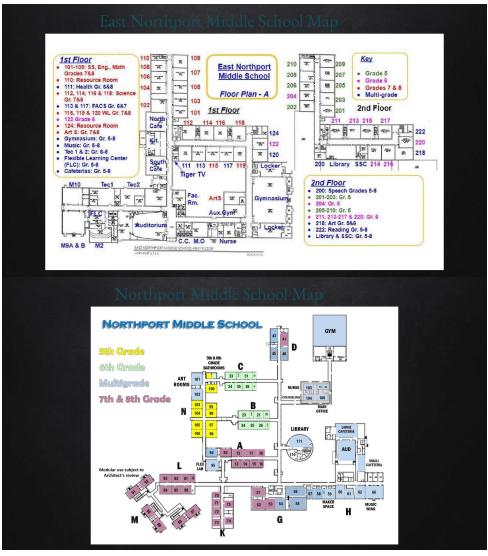












Name Comment

Christen Kuhn Asked for a pause. It is not the right time to close two schools and increase

class size. COVID is still here.

Christina Karman Stated she is opposed to closing schools. Closing Bellerose will affect the

mental health of students and the school community. Asked why there were no other options considered. The future study is based on opinions and

biased.

Diane Motchkavitz Reed Stated that the Board needs to listen to the parents of Bellerose and Dickinson

and not close the schools. The Board should close William J. Brosnan School and wait until the pandemic is resolved and come up with a better plan.'

Danielle Winnegar Stated that she is a graduate and attended Bellerose. Closing the schools will

not only affect all the children with increased class size. Class size is vital to the learning of all students and smaller class sizes are essential. Asked how the Board can justify closing schools when getting an increase in state

funding.

Jacque Achee Stated that her current 4<sup>th</sup> grader will be entering middle school at an

extremely young age. Developmentally and emotionally they are too young to be in middle school. Kids are under a tremendous amount of stress and it is important to build self-esteem especially before going to middle school.

Asked the Board to take extra time and come up with a well thought out plan.

Kyle Halm Asked the Board to press pause for the 2021-2022 school year. How is the

district going to keep COVID rates low and keep children safe when closing two schools. This is a short amount of time to make this happen. Need to

rethink 5<sup>th</sup> graders at the middle school for various reasons.

Lynn Cromeyn Stated she is a parent of a 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Bellerose, a teacher at the high school

and served on both committees. As a resident and teacher she is concerned that if we do not restructure what opportunities will be here for all other children of the community. Change is never easy. As a community we value forward thinking and have education professionals who support the efforts.

Buildings aren't connections, staff members are.

Lisa Becker Thanked Mr. Banzer, administration, Board of Education, future study and

educational impact committee for their work on this unenviable task. She understands the need and solution and understands tough decisions need to be made for the good of the district. Asked the Board to do the job they were tasked to do. She is confident the children and community will adapt and

evolve for the better.

Rosanne Fischer Read a letter to the Board stating that the closing of the schools will balance

long term fiscal responsibility and maintain the outstanding education program and small class sizes. Asked the Board to allow our children to enjoy the newly improved academic and programming excellence by adopting

adapted scenario A.

Tara Fagan Asked the Board to pause one year and give the children some time to recoup

the losses from this past year. She is concerned about 5<sup>th</sup> graders going to the

middle school, concerned about crowding, and the 5<sup>th</sup> graders not having lockers. SEL and education losses due to the pandemic have not been recovered yet.

Peter Forsch

Stated that this past year has been really hard for the children and he recommends pausing and thinking about it from a standpoint of doing what is best for the children.

Lauren Handler

Stated that many have called in and expressed their concerns and that the district is not prepared to close schools. There needs to be playground equipment at the middle schools and stated her concern about a student that called into the Q&A regarding vaping in the middle schools. The portables are expired and should not be used.

Leigh Boodoo

Asked the Board to vote for a pause on the school closures and to analyze how this will affect the district as a whole. She is excited about the new curriculum but not at the expense of the children. It is not worth the risk, not worth putting more distance between the Board and the community.

Nicole Richichi

Stated that it is not too late for the Board to press pause. It is astonishing that the Board is considering moving forward with closing two elementary schools during a national pandemic when children have already been stressed. Take a pause and have more time to address the social emotional needs of the children.

Jen Falasco

Stated she understands the changes but can't understand the timing of them. One year would help the community understand and one more year will not cost the district much but would be costly to students.

Marie Martello Angelo

Implored the Board to put a pause on closing Dickinson and Bellerose and put a pause on adapted scenario A. To implement all the changes before September is wrong and irresponsible and we will not know what effects the pandemic will have on the children.

Melissa Baker

Stated that she is the Ocean Avenue PTA President and sat on the committee. There are so many uncertainties in the world right now and so much information that needs to be worked out before the change. There are questions about the modulars, questions about the investigate program and COVID. She wants this to work but doesn't know how it can work in this short amount of time.

Michael Taub

Stated that the plan feels rushed and asked why this can't be put to a vote. There are many unanswered questions and stated that with this plan kids are going to be victimized.

Laura O'Donohoe

Asked how the Board could possibly think of closing two schools during a pandemic and stated that Northport Middle School should be closed.

Tammie Topel

Stated that Northport Middle School should be closed as that would have the least disruption to students. Close Northport Middle School and return the bus depot to that school. Asked how much money was saved because of the hybrid model and stated that now is not the time for a tax hike.

Brian McGunnigle

Stated that he is concerned about the change and concerned about the safety of putting 5<sup>th</sup> grades in the middle school. Stated he doesn't think the options presented are the best that can be done. If any school should close it should be Northport Middle School. Maybe bring 6<sup>th</sup> grade back to elementary school and have one school for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

Amarilda Fligstein

Stated she is concerned about the closure of two schools especially during a pandemic. Close Northport Middle School, put 6<sup>th</sup> grade back in elementary schools, and put 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades at East Northport Middle School. Asked the Board to consider this as an alternative

Chris Angelo

Asked the Board to pause the decision and re-evaluate the future study and school closures.

Denise Zagari

Stated that she was a member of both committees. She was extremely concerned when she first heard about adapted scenario A but having listened to the plan for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders her feelings quickly changed. The change will benefit all students. She is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and sees how students adapt and adopt. In day to day interactions the middle schools are a safe place. As a parent and educator in the district she asked the Board to adopt adapted scenario A.

Lise DeNisco

Stated as a member of both committees she is well versed in the process and applauded the process. There are far too few students with continuing enrollment decline to justify operating nine buildings. Adapted scenario A allows for educational enhancement for students, enhancements while absorbing the LIPA hit. She fully respects those who want to pause but asked why wait. She fully supports a yes vote and looks forward to unifying the district.

Kendra Monahan

Stated that she is angry that she has to ask for a pause. She has seen all presentations, understands the lower enrollment and LIPA but feels the kids are getting screwed. The community is asking the Board to pause.

Michelle Coggins

Stated that her children will be negatively impacted by the closing of Dickinson Avenue and asked if the savings of \$336 annually is so detrimental to close two schools. The proposal breaks the security and social emotional stability of the children. She has many concerns about the proposal and asked the Board to pause.

Robert Berger

Stated that he has three children in the district and was a member of the task force. He does not believe anything in the plan has been done hastily and has not been done without thinking of the students, teachers, staff as well as the taxpayers. His concern is if this doesn't get approved he is afraid what they will be looking at.

Dianne Popa

Stated that she is co-president of the Bellerose PTA. She is concerned about where the teachers from the two schools will be placed. She is in full support of a pause so the changes can be done without restrictions and students can be given proper tours of the schools.

Ms. Irene McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, reviewed the provisions in the teachers' contract for voluntary and involuntary transfers.

Rob Dennis Stated that he is a current middle school principal and worked at Plainview-

Old Bethpage who has the 5-8 model in middle school. There is a lot of trepidation about change but the 5-8 model can work every well. The biggest focus should be on what is best for kids and asking kids positive questions.

He asked the Board to vote yes.

Moriah Heuer Stated that she is outraged that there is still talk that Northport Middle School

should be closed. She stated at first she was not excited about adapted scenario A but the more it was talked about she realized the opportunities for the children at any age. She stated she is concerned about the future financial aspect of the district if the EIS does not pass and the budget is voted down.

Denise Schwartz Asked about the transportation hub and the monthly lease, the demographic

study and looking at closing Northport Middle School and the portables at

Northport Middle School.

Cristin Mathiez Stated she has a private practice as a trauma psychotherapist and she has

repeated heard that kids are resilient but they are also traumatized. There are a lot of questions that we don't have the answers to including placement of students, lunch for 5<sup>th</sup> graders, SEL and safety on buses, orientation, and

mental health.

Nancy Walsh Asked the Board to pause. Instead of working on transitioning the students in

the next four months, we should be looking at what has been learned from this past year. She would like a pause so teachers can work with other schools to

pen-pal students, have PTAs work together to bring students together.

Chris Smith Stated that he has worked with kids in the 9-13 age group and that bullying in

groups will always be there. He was concerned about the 5<sup>th</sup> graders being

with the 8<sup>th</sup> graders. He asked the Board to pause for a year.

**8. ADJOURNMENT** - Board policy requires adjournment by 10:30 pm, unless meeting is extended by

vote.

Information: 8.01 Upcoming Meetings

# SPECIAL MEETING TO RENDER A DETERMINATION ON PROPOSED SCHOOL BUILDING CLOSINGS

Thursday, April 29, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Northport High School Auditorium

#### PUBLIC HEARING ON FINALIZED BUDGET

Thursday, May 6, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Northport High School Auditorium

#### BUDGET VOTE AND ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

#### SPECIAL MEETING TO ACCEPT VOTING RETURNS

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Approximately 9:30 p.m. William J. Brosnan School Cafeteria

Action: 8.02 Adjournment

Recommendation to adjourn the meeting

Motion by David Badanes, second by Allison C Noonan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: David Badanes, Victoria Buscareno, Larry Licopoli, Thomas Loughran, Donna McNaughton, Allison

C Noonan, David Stein

At 10:27 p.m., the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth M. Nystrom District Clerk