

**DATE:** January 9, 2025  
**KIND OF MEETING:** **BRS**  
**PLACE:** Board of Education Board Room  
**AGENDA REVIEW:** A Board Review Session was held at 5:30 p.m.  
**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Mr. Petrozzi at 5:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Capizzi, Mrs. Dunn, Mr. McLeod (remote), Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo  
**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Cancemi  
**Other staff in attendance:** Ms. Massaro, Mr. Schwertfager, Ms. Doerr, Mr. Wojton, , Mr. Carella, Mrs. Buchman, Mr. Granieri, Mrs. Glaser.  
**Attorneys** Mr. Massaro and Mr. Roscetti.

Mr. Laurrie congratulated the administrative team and students on a good year at NFHS, which has turned a corner.

NFHS Student Tracker and AP/College Course Offerings  
Ms. Vilardo, Mr. Rotella, and Mr. Ventry presented the following information on a tracking program the school has developed to track student success.

The Student Support Team consists of administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, the Positive Approach to Student Success (PASS) lead, and the Attendance Intervention Team (AIT) lead.

Meetings are held every five weeks.

Driven by Student Tracker data, miscellaneous concerns also are brought to the table

The students' "ABCs" are reviewed - Attendance, Behavior, Coursework Information is reviewed and interventions assigned. Students are categorized by tier:

Tier 1: Check-ins with assigned SST member, Safety Plans, BIP/FBA

Tier 2: PASS, AIT, Admin AIT

Tier 3: Change of Educational Program: Twilight, Remote, Community Site, Big Picture, Home Teaching, CSE Referral

The tracker software captures information on student absences, behavior, and coursework – academic achievement.

For those students placed in Tier Two, four staff members service approximately 20-25 students per caseload, with daily check-ins, academic support, mentoring, parent communication, home visits.

The attendance intervention team (AIT), process to identifies students develops criteria to exit/transition plan (PASS); reviews and adds through SST. Currently, 70 students are on active caseloads.

More than 50 home visits have been conducted since October, 2024.  
 Thirty-five students have been transitioned from AIT; nine have moved to 8300. Two have been referred to a GED program.  
 Twenty-four students have re-engaged in school.  
 NFHS educational programs are outlined on the chart below:

NFHS Educational Programs—Learning for All...Whatever It Takes									
	In-Person	Twilight (in person/ remote)	In-Person with PASS or Attendance Team	Big Picture	Remote with Community Schools/ Twilight	Remote	Home Teaching	District Home Teaching (NFCSD)	Out of District Placement (NFCSD)
<b>Description</b>	"Main building" during the regular school day	"In-person" students assigned for short term suspensions or Tier 2 interventions	"In-person" student with Tier 2 support for attendance, academics, or behavior	Big Picture seeks to engage hard-to-reach students (Tier 2 or 3) via trusting relationships, Project-Based Learning, Leaving To Learn (WBL/ Internships)	Synchronous/ asynchronous remote instruction with in-person supports off-campus (school day) or NFHS (after school)	Synchronous/ asynchronous remote instruction	Small groups of students work with assigned teacher off-campus for three hours per week	Online learning platform APEX used to complete coursework with the assistance of a home teacher for three hours per day	Students attend a school outside of the district, such as Niagara Academy or Stanley Falk.
<b>Attributes of the Learner</b>	Traditional learner who typically has good attendance, grades, and behavior.	May have inconsistent attendance, behavior, and/or academic performance	May have inconsistent attendance, behavior, and/or academic performance	Typically attends school regularly, may have inconsistent grades, avoidance and/or disengaged behaviors such as class truancy, or moderate but manageable behavioral issues including peer/ adult conflicts	Serious behaviors in school or the community, may also exhibit issues with attendance or grades that place them in Tier 2/3 OR  May be placed by student/ parent choice	Significant (Tier 3) or chronic (Tier 2) behaviors in school or community, likely exhibits issues with attendance or grades	Significant (Tier 3) or chronic (Tier 2) behaviors in school or the community, likely exhibits issues with attendance or grades	Classified as having an IEP and recommended by CSE for placement outside of NFHS because of high (Tier 3) needs but is waiting to be accepted by a placement	Classified as having an IEP and recommended by CSE for placement outside of NFHS because of high (Tier 3) needs

Regarding students' ability to earn college credits, the following information was shared:

There are 62 college course offerings totaling 205 possible college credits.  
 Nine courses are on-campus and for college credit only.

Campuses include Niagara University and Niagara Falls Culinary Institute.  
 Currently, staff is finalizing two additional course offerings beginning in the Spring 2025 Semester, and are exploring three additional courses for the 2025-2026 School year.

College Partners include the AP College Board, SUNY Niagara, Niagara University, Buffalo State, Bryant and Stratton, Villa Maria & Stanford University.

Courses are taught by university or college professors, NFHS staff once approved by partnering institution, or co-taught by NFHS staff and partnering college/university.

More than 600 NFHS students are enrolled in courses that offer college credit (First Semester):

- 22% of Grade 10 students
- 47% of Grade 11 students
- 42% of Grade 12 students

Many of these courses are paid for by the District, while others are offered at a significantly reduced cost. The highest cost is \$300 for 3 credits.

Through our Pathway Initiative, most students can select a pathway and take courses that would satisfy a semester of college.

A conversation took place regarding the trades; it was noted that the community is now the classroom for trades students. Mr. Laurrie noted that the NACC has requested these students to do some trades work for them.

Mr. Laurrie also charged Ms. Vilardo with developing a process to select a student Board member, as required by the State in July 2025.

The proposed Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy was presented by Mr. Granieri. Mr. Laurrie commented that he thinks of AI as digital literacy; AI is already prevalent in quotidian tasks.

AI is an emerging technology. In education, AI is or could be used to adapt resources or lessons to individual learning needs, grade student work, analyze student performance, create customized content, offer professional development and so much more.

Because the technology changes continuously, a policy is needed that is responsive to change, supports appropriate use of AI, while restricting inappropriate use.

Staff recommends policy language that outlines responsible AI use for staff and students.

Staff recommends planned use of AI for staff and students, with an emphasis on providing resources and a commitment to training. The adoption of Policy 5840, together with updates to the Acceptable Use Policy and Code of Conduct are recommended.

Training will take place, in part through our BOCES partnership, on Superintendent conference days, at summer and vendor workshops.

Additionally, staff recommends embedded tools for the guarded use of approved resources, and the continued utilization of app blockers and content filtering.

The development of continuous improvement strategies for embracing thoughtful, intentional and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence will be an ongoing need.

Mr. Laurrie recommends tabling the policy on January 23 to allow for comment prior to adopting it next month.

A review of the agenda was held. Mr. Laurrie pointed out that the agenda includes four resolutions to accept a total of \$1,628,799 in grant funding.

The Board will begin studying the budget monthly until adoption. Governor by law has until Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup> to release her executive

budget. She is scheduled to give her State of the State address on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Laurie shared the following information:

Regarding the fires in California: this is a sad situation. Mr. Contento's and Mr. Paretto's sons, both NFHS alumni, were both inducted as firefighters recently. They are to be congratulated for undertaking this dangerous work.

Grade nine student Emma Ponzi, a member of the combined Niagara Wheatfield/NFHS woman's wrestling team, is being recognized by WNY Athletics as the Athlete of the Week. She also ranks 21<sup>st</sup> statewide in her division

The Prep and NFHS Robotics and Bridge Building Teams competed in Tech Wars at SUNY Niagara. The teams won first and second place in many of their competitions. Thank you and congratulations to teachers Max Teller, Ed Wisniewski, Madison Dalporto, Richard Clark, Alan Stockings, Tom Weymouth, Mike McGrath, and Richard Venator. They accompanied 42 students on 15 teams and were in competition against 40 teams.

**DATE:** January 23, 2025  
**KIND OF MEETING:** **ARS**  
**PLACE:** Board of Education Board Room  
**AGENDA REVIEW:** A Board Review Session was held at 5:30 p.m.  
**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Mr. Petrozzi at 5:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Bass (remote), Mr. Bilson (entered 6:53 p.m.), Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi (remote), Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mrs. Dunn (excused)

Mr. Laurie extended sympathy to Mrs. Dunn on the loss of her brother.

The District spends about \$10 million educating under children four years of age. \$7 million is the grant funding dedicated to this program. Soon the programs will be under a federal audit; the District looks forward to it. Head Start is run by the Department of Health and Human Services. The Board of Education is ultimately responsible for the District programs.

Head Start

Dr. Haley-O'Stewart presented information on the governance of Head Start and Early Head Start; it is required that the Board be apprised of this information.

The Policy Council is responsible for the direction of the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Management staff's day-to-day activities and operating reports inform decisions made by the Policy Council and governing body. The Policy Council determines program direction. The governing body or Tribal Council's legal and fiscal oversight builds on the management staff and Policy Council's unique insight and perspectives. The three entities of Head Start leadership—management staff, Policy Council, and governing body—work together to support grantees on their five-year journeys, particularly around program planning. Head Start program leadership is an inclusive process, the ultimate responsibility lies with the governing body. She expounded on the role of each body and governance in general.

Only 14% of Head Start grantees are school districts. New York State has just three. This model makes more sense educationally and financially.

In discussing the Designation Renewal System (DRS), Dr. Haley O'Stewart pointed out that The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) specify seven DRS conditions that trigger competition of grant funding if identified within a five-year project period. As of Oct. 27, 2020, the conditions are:

- Two or more deficiencies, defined as a systemic or substantial material failure of an agency in an area of performance
- Score below a competitive threshold in one or more Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) domains. Additionally, grantees that fall below a quality threshold on any CLASS® domain receive support from the Office of Head Start (OHS) for the program to improve classroom learning environments.
- Two or more audit findings of material weakness or questioned costs associated with Head Start funds, or a going concern finding
- Failure to establish and take steps to achieve school readiness goals
- License revocation
- Suspension by OHS
- Debarment by another federal or state agency or disqualification from the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

During the five-year grant cycle, recipients will receive the following types of reports:

- The monitoring reports will provide grant recipients with information regarding their performance, including areas of compliance, non-compliances, and deficiencies. In fiscal year 2025, reports for FA2 reviews will also include information about any Strong Practices observed.
- Once the review has been closed out and if the grant recipient has received the resulting report with findings, the OHS Regional Office program specialists begin to work with their grant recipients to provide support during the corrective action process. When the correction period comes to an end, the Regional Office will conduct a follow-up

review to determine if findings identified in the monitoring report have been addressed.

Regardless of the findings of the monitoring report and whether any corrective actions must be taken, Regional Offices practice ongoing oversight throughout the five-year grant cycle.

Policy Council is comprised 51% of parents and the remainder of community members.

Dr. O'Stewart meets monthly with the Region 2 Head Start authority overseeing Head Start programs in the region.

The District is in year three of its five-year grant. The District expects to meet all its goals in order to be renewed. Early Head Start is at CEC; Head Start is located at DiFrancesco Center. The District inherited a program that had some serious challenges, but much progress has made.

Mr. Laurie thanked Dr. Haley O'Stewart for her work and report. He reiterated that the program and the District is one entity, educating children from earliest ages to graduation.

Two challenges remaining are staffing and acquiring more first floor rooms to accommodate the youngest learners, aged one and two years. Forty-two children are currently on the waiting list. The District hopes to expand the grant to service these youngest learners. Thanks to Congressional representatives Higgins and Kennedy for their support.

Currently, the programs serve 83 Head Start students and 40 Early Head Start students.

Preliminary 2025-2026 General Fund Budget - Mrs. Holody and Mrs. Jacklin

Mr. Laurie noted that this is the first of seven proposed budget study sessions. The final proposed budget will balance. Priorities include to recommend no tax increase; to roll everything currently in place forward; to have no staff cuts; to have no reduction in program.

At this first look at budget projections, the District is facing a gap of \$ 4,755,191.

Highlights:

Revenues

True Up: money that came to the District after last year's budget was planned.

The Governor's budget calls for the District to receive an increase of 6.05%; this is wonderful news.

Building Aid is the reimbursement on capital projects.  
Numbers reflect additional revenues from the last fiscal year.

Increased Foundation Aid and an adjustment to the poverty rate have been favorable to the District.

Aid – and debt – from building Bond Primary School are falling off.

Projected Revenue Adjustments: \$13,385,202  
Projected revenue: \$198,009,841.

#### Expenses

A projected increase of 13% in property casualty insurance has been factored in; regarding BOCES, a projected 12% increase in SPED tuitions (out of District students), 4.35% estimated in all other services has been factored in; a projected (worst case) increase of nine percent was calculated for increased health insurance costs.

Total Appropriation Adjustments: \$11,772,983.  
Total Projected Expenses: \$202,765,032

Current projected gap: \$4,755,191.

Mr. Laurrie cautions that exact numbers will change as more information becomes available. Ways to bridge the gap include the use of reserves; the District did not use any reserves this fiscal year, despite Board approval to do so. The District has \$7,639,682 in reserves unrestricted or a combination of reserves which would be dedicated to certain costs. Future requests will be added in coming weeks.

Mr. Petrozzi commented that wildfires in California and other calamities will cause an increase in property casualty insurance, therefore it is good that the staff estimated a high increase of nine percent. He cautions that State aid may or may not remain high in future years.

Mr. Laurrie also cautions that many salaries are currently offset by federal money, which is also uncertain going forward.

The budget is planned looking far down the road, not only at the next fiscal year.

Today, \$17 million of American Rescue Funds spending was audited; almost no spending has been questioned. Additionally, the Office of the State Comptroller uses the Fiscal Stress Monitoring System to examine the annual financial information reported by school districts. This analysis provides an objective assessment of the fiscal challenges facing individual local governments and school districts.

The District's fiscal stress scores and designations are summarized below:

	Fiscal Stress		Environmental Stress	
FYE	Score	Designation	Score	Designation
2022	16.7	No Designation	45.0	Moderate Environmental Stress
2023	13.3	No Designation	45.0	Moderate Environmental Stress
2024	20.0	No Designation	31.7	Susceptible Environmental Stress

Mr. Laurrie advised the Board that no changes have been made to the previously distributed resolutions or personnel reports.

## Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Reflection

Roll Call

**Mr. Bass (remote), Mr. Bilson (entered 6:53 p.m.), Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi (remote), Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: Mrs. Dunn (excused)**

## Letters and Communications

Oral Communications - Public Comment on Agenda Items

Deacon Gibbs: representing Men Standing Strong Together (MSST) – Deacon Gibbs addressed the goals of MSST, including fun days and movie nights for students. He would like funding to assist in providing these things for students.



Gloria Dolson – MSST – She commends the accounting staff for their work and Mr. Laurrie, as well as the Board members. Mrs. Dolson appreciates the support of individual Board members for MSST and welcomes more. She added that speakers are also part of movie nights and at the next one, to be held Friday, attendees will be taught CPR. All are welcome to attend these functions.

Written Communications – None.

## **Recommended Actions from the Superintendent of Schools - Routine Matters**

The following were approved on a motion by Mr. Cancemi seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**MINUTES – DECEMBER 2024** [\(SG 4\)](#)

**APPROVAL OF BUDGET TRANSFER - #6** [\(SG 3\)](#)

**The vote was as follows:**

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

Approval of the Bids – [\(SG 3\)](#) None

The following were received and filed:

**TREASURER'S REPORT – DECEMBER 2024** [\(SG 3\)](#)

**BUDGET STATUS REPORT – JANUARY 2025** [\(SG 3\)](#)

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Vilardo seconded by Mr. Bilson.

**PERSONNEL REPORT – CERTIFICATED** [\(SG 2\)](#)

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Bilson seconded by Mr. Paretto.

**PERSONNEL REPORT - CLASSIFIED** [\(SG 2\)](#)

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following were approved on a motion by Mr. Cancemi seconded by Mr. Bilson.

**REPORT FROM COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION** [\(SG 1\)](#)

**RECOMMENDATION:**

A motion is recommended for the approval of the following resolution: Report from the Committee on Special Education

The Committee on Special Education met on October 18, 24, 2024; and November 6, 13, 14, 19, 20, 22, 25, 2024; and December 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 2024; and January 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 2025 to review Annual Reviews, and November 19, 22, 26, 2024; and December 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 2024; and January 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 2025 to review and initiate the placement of students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of the Committee on Special Education to make known its recommendations to the Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is required by law to take action on the recommendations made by the Committee on Special Education; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approve the attached recommendations made by the Committee on Special Education for the 2024-2025 school year.

#### **REPORT FROM COMMITTEE ON PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION (SG 1)**

A motion is recommended for the approval of the following resolution: Report from the Committee on Pre-School Special Education

The Committee on Pre-School Special Education met on December 12, 16, and 19, 2024; and January 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 13, 2025; to review and initiate the placement of preschool students with disabilities, and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of the Committee on Pre-School Special Education to make known its recommendations to the Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is required by law to take action on the recommendations made by the Committee on Pre-School Special Education; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approve the recommendations made by the Committee on Pre-School Special Education for the placement of students in the LOCAL SPECIAL EDUCATION programs listed for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Bilson.

## **SHORT-TERM CONTRACTS (SG 1)**

1. Niagara University Sociology 303-Social Problems \$23,000.00  
F2110.404.098.9325 Spring 2025 20 weeks of Instruction
2. Deborah Hicks Tutoring and Academic Intervention Services \$25,000.00  
F2770.400.098.6225 October 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
3. D&F Travel Washington DC Trip - Prep \$14,600.00 A2280.098.049 April  
9-11, 2025
4. Jenna Hayden Carroll Nurse Practitioner-Assistance \$420.00 per  
diem \$60.00 per hour A2110.400.045 December 10 2024 – NTE June 30, 2025
5. UB Center Assistive Technology Assistive Technology Training for  
Student/Staff \$955.00 A2250.400.007 January 2025
6. Curriculum Associates, LLC Ready Reading Data Analysis and Program  
Implementation \$600.00 F2110.404.098.0125 January 17, 2025
7. Curriculum Associates, LLC Professional Learning for School  
Principals \$9,200.00 F2110.404.098.0125 February 25-26, 2025 March 4-5  
2025
8. Be the Hype Physical Education Professional development \$2,500.00  
F2070.400.045.0125 F2110.404.098.0125 March 27, 2025
9. Pilato Sports Consulting Wrestling – Hydration Testing \$476.00  
A2855.400.025 December 2024
10. Time to Dance Acro Tumbling – Cheerleaders \$1,200.00  
A2855.400.025 January – June 2025
11. Bowl o'Drome NFHS Bowling – NFL and Unified \$8,700.00  
A2855.400.025 November 2024 – February 2025

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

### **HEAD START REPORTS**

Attached.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

### **Unfinished Business**

**None**

### **New Business**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

### **APPROVAL OF ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS FOR THE 2024/2025 ESEA TITLE I BASIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the Acceptance of Funds for the 2024/2025 Title I School Improvement Section 1003(a) Basic School Improvement Grant; and

RESOLVED, that the grant award of \$395,000.00 be credited to revenue account code F4289.030.25 2024/2025 Title I School Improvement Section 1003(a) Basic School Improvement Grant; and  
RESOLVED, that the money be expended from the following codes:

<b>Account</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>
F 2110.132-045-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PER DIEM - NFHS	\$2,300.00
F 2110.132-049-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PER DIEM - GPS	\$5,175.00
F 2110.132-065-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PER DIEM - 79TH	\$8,050.00
F 2110.132-098-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PER DIEM - D/W	\$3,480.00
F 2110.140-045-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SCH B - NFHS	\$27,925.00
F 2110.140-049-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SCH B - GPS	\$30,579.00
F 2110.140-065-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SCH B - 79TH	\$23,231.00
F 2110.140-098-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SCH B - D/W	\$19,235.00
F 2110.149-049-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SUBS - GPS	\$5,250.00
F 2110.149-065-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SUBS - 79TH	\$5,250.00
F 2110.167-065-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - HRLY CLSFD - 79TH	\$1,260.00
F 2110.400-045-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PRCHD SRVCS - NFHS	\$42,480.00
F 2110.400-049-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PRCHD SRVCS - GPS	\$88,600.00
F 2110.400-065-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PRCHD SRVCS - 79TH	\$77,060.00
F 2110.400-098-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - PRCHD SRVCS - D/W	\$27,285.00
F 2110.450-045-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SPLS - NFHS	\$2,295.00
F 2110.450-049-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SPLS - GPS	\$20,396.00
F 2110.450-065-0325	24/25 SCH IMP - SPLS - 79TH	\$5,149.00
		<b>\$395,000.00</b>
<b>Revenue Code: F4289.030.25</b>		

**ABTRACT**

1. School District – Niagara Falls City School District
2. Title of Project – ESEA Title I – Basic School Improvement Grant Section 1003(a)
3. Funding Source – Federal Government
4. Total Budget - \$395,000.00
5. Total Staff – 0.00
6. Number of Clients Served: 3,000
7. Major Objectives / Activities / Evaluation  
Provide support for the implementation of school improvement activities as required  
**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilaro.**  
**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

**APPROVAL OF ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS FOR THE 2024/2025 STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS GRANT**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accepts the funds for the 2024/2025 Student Mental Health Supports Grant; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the grant award of \$500,000.00 be credited to revenue account code F4289.960.25; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the money be expended in the following function/object codes:

Account	Description	Budget
F 2110.140-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - PER DIEM/SCH B	\$49,500.00
F 2110.150-014-9625	24/25 SMHS - GRANT COORD	\$9,000.00
F 2110.164-014-9625	24/25 SMHS - CLERICAL	\$11,250.00
F 2110.167-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - HRLY CLSFD	\$15,000.00
F 2110.400-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - PRCHD SRVCS	\$273,750.00
F 2110.409-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - TRAVEL	\$17,500.00
F 2110.450-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - SPLS	\$42,210.00
F 2110.803-096-9625	24/25 SMHS - FICA	\$11,074.00
F 2110.807-096-9625	24/25 SMHS - HEALTH INS	\$10,716.00
F 2825.160-045-9625	24/25 SMHS - PROJ DIR	\$60,000.00
		\$500,000.00

Revenue Code: F4289.960.25

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

**APPROVAL OF ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS FOR THE 2024/2025 SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS PIPELINE**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accepts the funds for the 2024/2025 Student Mental Health Supports Grant; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the grant award of \$500,000.00 be credited to revenue account code F4289.960.25; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the money be expended in the following function/object codes:

Account	Description	Budget
---------	-------------	--------

F 2110.140-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - PER DIEM/SCH B	\$49,500.00
F 2110.150-014-9625	24/25 SMHS - GRANT COORD	\$9,000.00
F 2110.164-014-9625	24/25 SMHS - CLERICAL	\$11,250.00
F 2110.167-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - HRLY CLSFD	\$15,000.00
F 2110.400-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - PRCHD SRVCS	\$273,750.00
F 2110.409-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - TRAVEL	\$17,500.00
F 2110.450-098-9625	24/25 SMHS - SPLS	\$42,210.00
F 2110.803-096-9625	24/25 SMHS - FICA	\$11,074.00
F 2110.807-096-9625	24/25 SMHS - HEALTH INS	\$10,716.00
F 2825.160-045-9625	24/25 SMHS - PROJ DIR	\$60,000.00
		<b>\$500,000.00</b>
<b>Revenue Code: F4289.960.25</b>		

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

**APPROVAL OF ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS FOR THE 2024/2025 PEDALS GRANT**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accepts the funds for the 2024/2025 PEDALS Grant; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the grant award of \$6,000.00 be credited to revenue account code F2770.PE0.25; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the money be expended in the following function/object codes:

<b>Account</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>
F 2770.450-098-PEDL	24/25 PEDALS MINI-GRANT - SUPPLIES	\$6,000
		<b>\$6,000</b>
<b>Revenue Code: F2770.PE0.25</b>		

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Bilson seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PRINCIPALS TO APPOINT BUILDING-LEVEL SCHOOL SAFETY TEAMS FOR THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF BUILDING-LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS PURSUANT TO NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION LAW 2801-A**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby authorizes each building principal to appoint Building-Level School Safety Teams in accordance with the regulations or guidelines prescribed by this Board of Education or the New York State Commissioner of Education, which Building-Level School Safety Teams shall include, but not be limited to representatives of teachers, administrators and parent organizations, school personnel, community members, local law enforcement officials, local ambulance or other emergency response agencies, and other representatives of the Board of Education or other governing body deemed appropriate.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Bilson seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT PURSUANT TO NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION LAW 2801 SUBDIVISION 3**

RESOLVED, That the appointments of the following persons to the District Code of Conduct Committee for period February 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025 be and they hereby are ratified and confirmed:

Students

Cassidy Card - Niagara Falls High School

Kulraj Lucky - Niagara Falls High School

Innocense Scott - Niagara Falls High School

Cherish Walker – Gaskill Preparatory School

Teachers

Christine Barstys  
Marc Catanzaro  
Michael Corsaro  
Noelle Gaetano  
Steven Kutis  
Dan Weiss  
Sophia Williams  
Lindsay Wrobel

Administrators

Roland Davis  
Valerie Rotella-Zafuto  
Cheryl Vilardo  
Derek Zimmerman

Parent Organizations

Tomasina Cook  
Charlotte Robinson

Community Members

Nicholas Ligamarri - Niagara Falls Police Superintendent  
Gary Pochatko – Niagara Falls Fire Chief

Other School Personnel

Bryan Dalporto – Director of Safety and Security  
Maria Massaro – Administrator for Human Resources

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Bilson seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBERS TO THE DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL SAFETY TEAM FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE DISTRICT-WIDE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN PURSUANT TO NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION LAW 2801-A**

RESOLVED, That the appointments of the following persons to the Niagara Falls City School District District-Wide School Safety Team be for period commencing February 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025, and they hereby are ratified and confirmed:



Students

Cassidy Card - Niagara Falls High School  
Kulraj Lucky - Niagara Falls High School  
Innocense Scott - Niagara Falls High School  
Cherish Walker – Gaskill Preparatory School

Teachers

Christine Barstys  
Marc Catanzaro  
Michael Corsaro  
Noelle Gaetano  
Steven Kutis  
Dan Weiss  
Sophia Williams  
Lindsey Wrobel

Administrators

Roland Davis  
Valerie Rotella-Zafuto  
Cheryl Vilardo  
Derek Zimmerman

Parent Organizations

Tomasina Cook  
Charlotte Robinson

Community Members

Nicholas Ligamarri - Niagara Falls Police Superintendent  
Gary Pochatko – Niagara Falls Fire Chief

Other School Personnel

Bryan Dalporto – Director of Safety and Security  
Maria Massaro – Administrator for Human Resources

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Cancemi seconded by Mr. Paretto.

**APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICES  
BETWEEN THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA**

**FALLS AND HOGHOL (FORMERLY F-BITES) (FEBRUARY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2025)**

RESOLVED, That the Contract between the City School District of the City of Niagara Falls and HOGHOL for professional services at a sum not to exceed \$111,750 for the period February 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025, attached hereto, be hereby approved; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Contract is subject to such modifications as the Superintendent and School District Attorney deem appropriate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the President of the Niagara Falls Board of Education be authorized to execute said Contract; and

RESOLVED, That the District Clerk be directed to obtain the signature of the President of the Board.

**CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES BY INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR  
HOGHOL**

THIS CONTRACT, made this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, by and between the CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS, 630-66<sup>th</sup> Street, Niagara Falls, New York 14304, (hereinafter “District”) and HOGHOL, 1 Symphony Circle, Buffalo, NY, 14213.

WITNESSETH:

IN CONSIDERATION OF the provisions and mutual covenants hereinafter set forth, the parties do hereby MUTUALLY AGREE as follows:

1. Engagement of Independent Contractor. The District hereby engages HOGHOL as an independent contractor to render to the District professional social and emotional student support services and HOGHOL hereby accepts such engagement, upon and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth.
2. Professional services and duties of Independent Contractor: HOGHOL shall provide and render to the District the usual and customary services of a contractor for professional services for February 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025 including:
  - a) Culinary and life skills weekly programming for Prep and High School students including the cost of food and beverage
  - b) Use of a food truck program at Niagara Falls High School
  - c) Weekly classes at the F-Bites training facility for Prep and High School students
  - d) After school events throughout the school year
  - e) Collaboration with school administration as needed

All of these functions shall be performed under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, who shall also maintain oversight of the Second Party’s performance to ensure that it is performing in accordance with the terms, and conditions specified in the contract. Such evaluation will be aligned to the terms of the agreement, and may include, but are not limited to, on-site visits and

observations, participant surveys and/or interviews, and document collection and review.

3. Relationship Between the Parties. HOGHOL shall not be an employee of the District. HOGHOL is engaged by the District only for the purposes and to the extent set forth in this Contract and the relationship to the District during the term of this agreement shall be solely and exclusively that of the professional consultant to perform only the services herein before expressly set forth in the exclusive capacity of an independent contractor only and in no event as servant or employee. HOGHOL is to maintain all records of employment, payroll services, and to address any matters related to performance concerns.

4. Compensation to Independent Contractor. Upon receipt of a payment invoice, the District shall pay to HOGHOL for services hereunder a sum not to exceed \$111,750 to be paid on the last day of each month for five (5) monthly installments (February 2025 – June 2025) of \$22,350. Payment checks payable to the order of HOGHOL shall be deemed full payment to and acquittance by HOGHOL.

5. Indemnification. To the fullest extent permitted by law, HOGHOL shall indemnify and hold harmless the District, its agents, servants, and/or employees from and against any and all costs, losses, and damages arising out of the performance of its services under this Contract excepting, however, the negligent acts or omissions of the District, its agents, servants and/or employees.

6. Taxes and Insurances. HOGHOL shall maintain general liability insurance in amounts acceptable to the District. All policies shall name the District as additional party insured. HOGHOL is responsible for all withholding taxes, insurance, unemployment, and Worker's Compensation insurance as required by law.

Certificates of Insurance shall be filed with District prior to the commencement of services and after each renewal date of the policies listed on the certificates. The certificates shall contain provision that coverage afforded under the policies will not be canceled until at least thirty days prior written notice is given to the District.

7. Term of Contract. This Contract shall be effective from February 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025, provided however, that either party may, at any given time, terminate this contract in all respects by giving to the other party thirty days advance written notice of its election to terminate the same.

8. Assignment: The services to be rendered by HOGHOL under this Contract are unique and personal. Accordingly, HOGHOL shall not transfer or assign and/or subcontract any of the rights or delegate any of the duties or obligations under this Contract without the prior written consent of the District and any attempted such transfer, assignment delegation and/or subcontracting without such written consent shall be void.

9. Entire Contract. This Contract contains the entire agreement of the parties and may be modified or amended only in writing duly subscribed by the parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement on the date and year first above written.

HOGHOL

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE  
CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS

---

Jamie Anderson  
Coordinator

---

Russell Petrozzi  
President, Board of Education

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Cancemi seconded by Mr. Paretto.

**APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BETWEEN  
THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS AND  
MAKEEDA BROOKS (FEBRUARY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2025)**

RESOLVED, That the Contract between the City School District of the City of Niagara Falls and Makeeda Brooks for youth mentoring services at a sum not to exceed \$15,200 for the period February 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025, attached hereto, be hereby approved; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Contract is subject to such modifications as the Superintendent and School District Attorney deem appropriate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the President of the Niagara Falls Board of Education be authorized to execute said Contract; and

RESOLVED, That the District Clerk be directed to obtain the signature of the President of the Board.

**CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES BY INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR  
MAKEEDA BROOKS**

THIS AGREEMENT, made this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January 2025, by and between the CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS, 630-66<sup>th</sup> Street, Niagara Falls, New York 14304, (hereinafter “District”) and Makeeda Brooks, 2992 Grand Island Boulevard Apt. #6, Grand Island, New York 14072.

WITNESSETH:

IN CONSIDERATION OF the provisions and mutual covenants hereinafter set forth, the parties do hereby MUTUALLY AGREE as follows:

1. Engagement of Independent Contractor. The District hereby engages Makeeda Brooks as an independent contractor to render to the District professional services regarding implementation of the School-Based Mental Health Services Grant objectives and Makeeda Brooks hereby accepts such engagement, upon and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth.

2. Professional services and duties of Independent Contractor: Makeeda Brooks shall provide and render to the District the usual and customary services of a contractor for professional services, regarding the School-Based Mental Health Services Grant for Spring 2025, including:

- Facilitation of “Just BE” (Girls Empowerment Program)
- Implementation of the “Fit for Success” Program
- Student mentoring to improve confidence and social emotional well-being
- Teaching of life lessons such as building self-esteem
- Presenting the programs of “Just BE” and “Fit for Success” for eight weeks at LaSalle Preparatory, Hyde Park Elementary, and Bloneva Bond Primary Schools

All of these functions shall be performed under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, who shall also maintain oversight of the Second Party’s performance to ensure that it is performing in accordance with the terms, and conditions specified in the contract. Such evaluation will be aligned to the terms of the agreement, and may include, but are not limited to, on-site visits and observations, participant surveys and/or interviews, and document collection and review.

3. Relationship Between the Parties. Makeeda Brooks shall not be an employee of the District. Makeeda Brooks is engaged by the District only for the purposes and to the extent set forth in this Agreement and the relationship to the District during the term of this agreement shall be solely and exclusively that of the professional consultant to perform only the services herein before expressly set forth in the exclusive capacity of an independent contractor only and in no event as servant or employee. Makeeda Brooks is to maintain all records of employment, payroll services, and to address any matters related to performance concerns.

4. Compensation to Independent Contractor. Upon receipt of a payment invoice, the District shall pay to Makeeda Brooks for services hereunder a sum not to exceed \$15,200 to be paid in two installments of \$7,600 on April 1, 2025 and June 30, 2025 for implementation of the “Just BE” and “Fit for Success” programs at LaSalle Preparatory, Hyde Park Elementary, and Bloneva Bond Primary. Payment checks payable to the order of Makeeda Brooks

shall be deemed full payment to and acquittance by Makeeda Brooks.

5. Indemnification. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Makeeda Brooks shall indemnify and hold harmless the District, its agents, servants, and/or employees from and against any and all costs, losses, and damages arising out of the performance of its services under this Agreement excepting, however, the negligent acts or omissions of the District, its agents, servants and/or employees.

6. Taxes and Insurances. Makeeda Brooks shall maintain general liability insurance in amounts acceptable to the District. All policies shall name the District as additional party insured. Makeeda Brooks is responsible for all withholding taxes, insurance, unemployment, and Worker's Compensation insurance as required by law.

Certificates of Insurance shall be filed with District prior to the commencement of services and after each renewal date of the policies listed on the certificates. The certificates shall contain provision that coverage afforded under the policies will not be canceled until at least thirty days prior written notice is given to the District.

7. Term of Contract. This Contract shall be effective from February 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025, provided however, that either party may, at any given time, terminate this contract in all respects by giving to the other party thirty days advance written notice of its election to terminate the same.

8. Assignment: The services to be rendered by Makeeda Brooks under this Agreement are unique and personal. Accordingly, Makeeda Brooks shall not transfer or assign and/or subcontract any of the rights or delegate any of the duties or obligations under this Agreement without the prior written consent of the District and any attempted such transfer, assignment delegation and/or subcontracting without such written consent shall be void.

9. Entire Contract. This Contract contains the entire agreement of the parties and may be modified or amended only in writing duly subscribed by the parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Contract on the date and year first above written.

MAKEEDA BROOKS

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
OF THE  
CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS

---

Makeeda Brooks  
Program Founder

---

Russell Petrozzi  
President, Board of  
Education

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**  
**Nays: None.**  
**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Cancemi seconded by Mr. Paretto.

**APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR THE HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM BETWEEN THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS, AND BESTSELF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (HEREINAFTER "BESTSELF"), FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2024 - 2025 SCHOOL YEAR (JANUARY - JUNE 30, 2025)**

RESOLVED, That the Contract for Behavioral/Mental Health Services between the City School District of the City of Niagara Falls, and BestSelf Behavioral Health, Inc. for the Head Start / Early Head Start Program attached hereby approved; and

RESOLVED, That the agreed upon fee of \$14,950.00 for Behavioral/Mental Health Services for the remainder of the 2024 - 2025 School Year, to begin in January, upon approval from the Board and end on June 30, 2025; and

RESOLVED, That the Contract is subject to such modifications as the Superintendent and School District Attorney deem appropriate, and it be further

RESOLVED, that the President of the Board be authorized and directed to

execute such contract; and further

RESOLVED, that the District Clerk be directed to obtain the signature of the President of the Board.

This agreement is hereby established between BestSelf Behavioral Health Inc. hereinafter referred to as "BestSelf" with administrative offices located at 899 Main Street, Buffalo NY 14203 and the Niagara Falls City School District Head Start/Early Head Start, herein referred to as "NFS DHS" and located at DiFrancesco Center (HS) 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Niagara Falls, NY 14301 and Community Education Center (\*EHS) 6040 Lindbergh Avenue, Niagara Falls, NY 140304

**SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT**

WHEREAS, NFS DHS desires to engage mental health professional to conduct educational seminars about mental health issues and treatment; and

WHEREAS, BestSelf, a licensed provider of mental health services has experts who wish to educate the community about mental health issues and treatment;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of mutual promises herein, the parties agrees as follows:

- BestSelf agrees to provide **Mental Health First Aid for Adults Training** – This in-person training will be provided to Early Head Start staff and Head Start staff. This training will take place March 27, 2025. **There will be no charge for this training. In-Kind in the value of 1,200.00 per session.**

- BestSelf agrees to provide: **Child Directive Interaction Seminar to Niagara Falls Head Start Staff– One Session (450.00)** – This seminar will include skills and methods that are helpful to improving the social, emotional and behavioral competence of the children.

- **Child Directive Interaction Seminars to Parents/Caretakers – 3 seminars @ 450.00 (1350.00 Total)** – This seminar will include skills ad methods of communication between parent/caretaker and child that are calming, encouraging and reassuring.

- **Coaching for Niagara Falls Head Start staff – 1X/month @ 3 hours/session: January-June 2025 Total: 3 hours X 6 month @ 400/hour - 7,200.00 Total**

- **Teacher Consultation – February – June 2025 – Virtual 1 hour/month @ 200.00/hour X 5 months – Total: 1,000.00**

- **Mental Health Field Liaison Consultant - 1,500.00**

- **Clinical Consultant - 1,500.00**

- BestSelf agrees to provide a representative(s) to serve on Health Services Advisory Committee

#### **PROJECT DETAILS**

Niagara Falls School District Head Start/Early Head Start will provide an adequate venue for the training/seminars including space and furnishings and technology equipment necessary to provide virtual trainings/seminars.

#### **TIMELINE/TERM**

The term of this agreement will begin on the effective date of January 1, 2025 the agreement will remain in full force and effect until the completion of services at the culmination of the 2024/25 school year on June 30, 2025. This agreement may be terminated by either party at any time, with or without cause, effective upon the notice of the other party, unless terminated earlier by the parties in accordance with the provisions herein.

#### **DEFENSE and INDEMNIFICATION**

BestSelf and Niagara Falls School District Head Start/Early Head Start agree to indemnify, defend and hold each other harmless against any claims for damages, including property damage and physical injury, related to BestSelf's actions in relation to this agreement.

#### **ASSIGNMENT and SUBCONTRACTING**

It is understood and agreed that the work performed pursuant to this agreement shall not be assigned or subcontracted in whole or in part by either party without the prior consent in writing of the other party.

#### **THIRD PARTY BENEFICIARY**



This agreement is for the sole benefit of the Parties and their respective successors and assigns and nothing herein, expressed or implied, is intended to or shall confer on any other person or entity and any legal of equitable right, benefit, or remedy of any nature whatsoever under or by reason of this Agreement.

**NO CONTRACTUAL OR EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP**

This MOU does not establish a contractor or employment relationship between parties or any of its agents.

.BestSelf Behavioral Health  
School District

Niagara Falls

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name and Title  
and Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**  
**Nays: None.**  
**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

**APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF BOARD OF REGISTRATION, DESIGNATION OF DAY, HOURS, AND PLACE OF REGISTRATION, AUTHORIZATION FOR CLERK TO PUBLISH NOTICES OF REGISTRATION FOR THE ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION/BUDGET VOTE FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025**

RESOLVED, That in accordance with Section 2606 of the Education Law, the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of Niagara Falls, New York, appoint the following individuals, not more than half of whom belong to the same political party, as a Board of Registration for a term of one (1) year, beginning February 1, 2025, for the annual school district election to be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025:

Mrs. Betty Larratta (R)  
1018 Angelo Ct., Apt 2 (03)

Mrs. Georgia Robinson (D)  
2220 Weston Ave. (05)

Mr. William S. Carroll (R)

4420 Lewiston Road (04)

Ms. Marla McGahey (sub) (R)  
1361 Caravelle Drive (04)

Mrs. Jean Kennedy (sub) (D)  
1423 Wyoming Ave.

Mr. Saladin Allah (D)  
2013 10<sup>th</sup> Street Apt 1 (05)

Mr. Michael Watson (D)  
1724 Tennessee Ave (05)

Ms. Brenda Hamilton (D)  
1879 Michigan Ave. (05)

The Board of Registration will be present on Registration Day and will be compensated for his/her service on that day at the rate of \$65.00 for Registration Day; and

RESOLVED, That said Board of Registration is appointed for the purpose of preparing a register of voters for the annual school election/budget vote; and

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education designate Monday, April 28, 2025, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., as Registration Day and that said Board of Registration, herein above appointed, shall meet on Registration Day at the Niagara Falls City School District Administration Building, 630 66<sup>th</sup> Street, Niagara Falls, New York, which is hereby designated as the place for registration, for the purpose of preparing a register for each school election district in the City School District of the City of Niagara Falls, New York, for the annual school election/budget vote to be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025; and

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education authorize the District Clerk to publish the following "Notice of Registration" at least once in each of the two (2) weeks preceding Registration Day in the Niagara Gazette:

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**REGISTRATION NOTICE**  
**ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION**

**Office of the Clerk of the Board  
of Education of the City School  
District of the City of Niagara Falls, New York**

**TO THE ELECTORS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY SCHOOL  
DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Board of Registration of the School District of the City of Niagara Falls, New York, will meet at Niagara Falls City School District Administration Building, 630 66<sup>th</sup> Street, Niagara Falls, New York, on Monday, April 28, 2025, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., for the purpose of preparing a register for each school election district for the Annual School Election/Budget Vote to be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, and at said registration the Board of Registration shall add to such registers the names of qualified voters of the School District who shall present themselves personally for registration.

**AND FURTHER NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN**, that military voters who are not currently registered may apply to register as a qualified voter of the District by requesting and returning a military voter registration application to the District Clerk. Completed military voter registration application forms must be received in the office of the District Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 27, 2025. A military voter may indicate his or her preference for receiving the registration application by mail, facsimile transmission or electronic mail.

**PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE** that any person who did not register for the preceding General Election or any intervening school district election or who did register for one of such preceding election but at the time of such registration resided in a school election district other than one in which he presently resides, must, in order to be entitled to vote present himself personally for Registration.

***Judith Glaser***  
Clerk of the Board of Education  
City School District of the City of  
Niagara Falls, New York

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education authorize the District Clerk, upon the filing of the registers prepared on registration day, to publish at least once in each of the two (2) weeks preceding election day in the Niagara Gazette a "Notice of the Filing" of such registers in the following form:

**NOTICE OF THE FILING OF THE REGISTERS OF THE QUALIFIED  
VOTERS OF THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF  
NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK, FOR THE ANNUAL SCHOOL  
ELECTION/BUDGET VOTE ON MAY 20, 2025**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** pursuant to Section 2606 of the Education Law, as amended, that the registers for the school election districts of

the City School District of the City of Niagara Falls, New York, for the annual school election/budget vote to be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, have been prepared and duly filed with the Clerk of the Board of Education located at 630 66<sup>th</sup> Street, Niagara Falls, New York, and said registers shall remain on file at such office and be open for inspection by any qualified voter of said City School District during the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday through Friday until the day of election, May 20, 2025.

***Judith Glaser***

Clerk of the Board of Education of the  
City School District of the City of  
Niagara Falls, New York

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Vilardo seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

**APPROVAL OF CHANGE ORDER NO. SCC-09 FOR THE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby approves Change Order No. SCC-09 for \$4,885.31 to Scrufari Construction Company 3295 Hyde Park Blvd Niagara Falls, NY 14305

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF PAYMENT NO. 10 TO SCRUFARI CONSTRUCTION CO. INC. FOR GENERAL CONTRACTING WORK FOR THE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR (ABOFA) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP)**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approves the payment of \$204,566.19 to Scrufari Construction Company 3925 Hyde Park Blvd Niagara Falls, NY 14305 in accordance with the Application and Certificate for Payment #10; and further

RESOLVED, This appropriation will be expended from the Capital Fund and will be submitted as a claim for State Aid reimbursement according to the State formula for school buildings.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF PAYMENT NO. 10 TO JOHN W. DANFORTH FOR HVAC CONTRACTING WORK FOR THE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR (ABOFA) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP) CONTRACT 123B**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approves the payment of \$14,685.67 to John W. Danforth 300 Colvin Woods Parkway Tonawanda, NY 14150 in accordance with the Application and Certificate for Payment #10; and further

RESOLVED, This appropriation will be expended from the Capital Fund and will be submitted as a claim for State Aid reimbursement according to the State formula for school buildings

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF PAYMENT NO. 10 TO JOHN W. DANFORTH FOR HVAC CONTRACTING WORK FOR THE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR (ABOFA) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP) CONTRACT 123C**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approves the payment of \$38,449.37 to John W. Danforth 300 Colvin Woods Parkway Tonawanda, NY 14150 in accordance with the Application and Certificate for Payment #10; and further

RESOLVED, This appropriation will be expended from the Capital Fund and will be submitted as a claim for State Aid reimbursement according to the State formula for school buildings.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF PAYMENT NO. 10 TO FREY ELECTRIC CONSTRUCTION CO. INC. FOR ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING WORK FOR THE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR (ABOFA) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP)**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approves the payment of \$104,357.50 to Frey Electrical Construction Corp. 100 Pearce Ave

Tonawanda, NY 14150 in accordance with the Application and Certificate for Payment #10; and further

RESOLVED, This appropriation will be expended from the Capital Fund and will be submitted as a claim for State Aid reimbursement according to the State formula for school buildings.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Paretto seconded by Mr. Vilardo.

**APPROVAL OF PAYMENT NO. 10 TO STARK TECH FOR TECHNOLOGY CONTRACTING WORK FOR THE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR (ABOFA) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP)**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approves the payment of \$28,762.20 to U&S Services (Stark Tech) 95 Stark St Tonawanda, NY 14150 in accordance with the Application and Certificate for Payment #10; and further

RESOLVED, This appropriation will be expended from the Capital Fund and will be submitted as a claim for State Aid reimbursement according to the State formula for school buildings.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was approved on a motion by Mr. Vilardo seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

**APPROVAL OF PROPERTY DAMAGE CLAIM – STEFANY CRITELLI**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education approves the claim and authorizes payment of \$500.00 to Stefany Critelli, 2496 Willow Avenue, Niagara Falls, NY 14305, for damage to personal property incurred while on duty.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

The following was tabled on a motion by Mr. Vilardo seconded by Mr. Cancemi.

**Review of the Proposed Policy(ies)**

5840 Artificial Intelligence

## SUBJECT: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) Overview

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, especially generative AI (GenAI), pose unique challenges and opportunities for learning environments. As these technologies integrate deeper into everyday life, the district must proactively address the implications of AI usage to ensure it enhances educational outcomes without compromising academic integrity or equity. This policy outlines the district's commitment to responsible AI integration in educational practices, balancing innovation with the core values of the district's educational mission. Further, it sets forth guidelines designed to evolve as new technologies and methodologies emerge, ensuring the district remains at the forefront of academic excellence and technological responsibility.

### Scope and Application

This policy applies to all District students, personnel, volunteers, and contractors. It integrates with, and complements, existing policies on data privacy, acceptable use, and student conduct. This policy aims to provide clear guidelines on the use of AI within the District's schools, ensuring that its application supports the district's educational goals and adheres to its privacy and security standards.

### Definitions

- a) Generative AI (GenAI) represents a dynamic subset of AI technologies that can create new, human-like content from extensive data training sets. This content spans across text, images, audio, and more, often mimicking human creativity and adaptability.
- b) Traditional AI refers to systems that operate on fixed algorithms and predefined rules without altering their behavior based on new data after their initial deployment.

### Risks and Limitations

The use of GenAI comes with some risks and limitations which include, but are not limited to:

- a) Hallucinations/Confabulations  
GenAI can generate plausible, but false or inaccurate, information, a phenomenon known as a hallucination/confabulation.
- b) Biases

GenAI tools learn from data created by people, which means any biases, prejudices, and stereotypes in that data can be reflected in the outputs produced by GenAI. For example, GenAI has been found to generate images and

text that reinforce existing gender and racial biases. It is essential to recognize that these biases exist and to critically assess the outputs of GenAI tools to prevent the perpetuation of stereotypes and unfair treatment.

The impact of GenAI biases is particularly significant in the context of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives. DEI initiatives aim to create environments where all individuals have equal opportunities and are treated with respect and fairness. Biased AI outputs can undermine these goals by perpetuating inequality and exclusion, which can be detrimental to the educational mission of the district.

GenAI can also suffer from response bias, where the AI generates answers tailored to what it predicts the user wants to hear based on its training data or specific tuning.

c) Copyright

GenAI may pose copyright issues as it may have used copyrighted material within its training data without explicit permission from the copyright holders. As a result, there are unsettled legal questions about the ownership and copyright status of GenAI's outputs, which can closely mimic or incorporate elements of existing copyrighted works.

Data Privacy and Security

Information entered into GenAI may be accessible to others due to data sharing or breaches. All users should exercise caution when utilizing GenAI. Under no circumstances should any sensitive, copyrighted, confidential, or proprietary information be entered into GenAI or any other AI platform, consistent with relevant state and federal laws and District policy. This includes, but is not limited to, data protected by:

- a) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);
- b) Education Law Section 2-d (Unauthorized Release of Personally Identifiable Information);
- c) Labor Law Section 203-d (Employee Personal Identifying Information);
- d) State Technology Law Section 208 (Notification of Security Breach of Private Information).

Further, if the information would not be disclosed in response to a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request, it should not be entered into GenAI.

The district permits teachers to determine whether students in their class may use GenAI for assignments. However, the District recognizes that disparities in



access to GenAI technologies may exist and will work with teachers to ensure that no student is disadvantaged by their inability to use or decision not to use GenAI.

If teachers allow their students to use GenAI, they are expected to communicate their expectations regarding the use of GenAI clearly to their students. Further, the teacher must discuss the appropriate and responsible use of GenAI with the students. This includes talking to students about the risks and limitations of GenAI, emphasizing how students are accountable for the accuracy of their work, and, when relevant, ensuring proper citation of sources.

Student use of GenAI that conflicts with teacher instruction, District policy, regulation, procedure, or other document, such as the District's Code of Conduct, may result in investigation and/or disciplinary action.

The precursor to any AI use in-district is accomplished, vetted training.

This training can be acquired from higher education institution course work or other accreditations.

The District and the Teacher Resource Center is developing and scheduling AI specific coursework to ensure that AI is employed in the most efficient, guarded manner.

AI use will be fully integrated into the Instructional and District Technology plans.

#### District Personnel Use

District personnel may utilize GenAI in accordance with this policy. However, regardless of the tools used to enhance their work, personnel are ultimately responsible for the accuracy and integrity of all work they produce. AI is intended to support, not replace, an employee's responsibility for their own work.

#### Training, Awareness, and Support

The district will provide training, awareness, and support to teachers in navigating the evolving use of GenAI in the classroom. This may include professional learning opportunities, workshops, and resources to enhance teachers' proficiency and confidence in using GenAI to enrich student learning. The goal is to equip teachers with the knowledge to critically assess GenAI technologies and guide students in understanding the complexities associated with these tools. Additionally, the District may extend training, awareness, and support regarding GenAI to other District personnel who may benefit from understanding and utilizing GenAI in their roles.

## Compliance with Other Documents

When using GenAI, all personnel and students must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and District documents. This includes Education Law Section 2-d, which requires the District to ensure that whenever it enters into a contract or other written agreement with a third-party contractor under which the third-party contractor will receive student data or teacher or principal data from the District, the contract or written agreement will include provisions requiring that confidentiality of shared student data or teacher or principal data be maintained in accordance with law, regulation, and District policy.

Applicable District documents may include the district's policies on data security and acceptable use, as well as the District's Code of Conduct.

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #3310 -- Public Access to Records  
#3320 -- Confidentiality of Computerized Information  
#5672 -- Information Security Breach and Notification  
#5673 -- Employee Personnel Identifying Information  
#5674 -- Data Networks and Security Access  
#5676 -- Privacy and Security for Student Data and Teacher and Principal Data  
#6410 -- Staff Acceptable Use Policy  
#7240 -- Student Records: Access and Challenge  
#7315 -- Student Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)  
#7316 -- Student Use of Personal Technology  
#8271 -- Internet Safety/Internet Content Filtering  
#8350 -- Use of Copyrighted Materials District Code of Conduct

### Adoption Date

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilardo.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**

## Information and Reports

Oral Communications - Public Comment on non-Agenda Items

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Laurie:

Thanked Men Standing Strong Together community resource to our youth.

There is plenty for youth to do for entertainment in the community.

Next month, there will be two early (January) graduates, who are accelerated graduates, who have completed high school and are starting college early.

Thanks to Mr. Granieri, Ms. Massaro, and Mrs. Holody, leads on the breach of data affecting Powerschool. Approximately 18,000 districts and six million students were affected nationwide. No significant parent data was affected. No Social Security numbers are housed in the Powerschool system. Mr.

Laurrie assured the public and staff that 12 years of data accessible through Powerschool is largely safe. The breach occurred December 22, 2024, the District was only notified January 7, 2025. This is a BOCES product but our staff is addressing it.

Regarding air conditioning at prep schools: Danforth has done a great job. The hope is to have air conditioning operational in spring. National Grid (NG) has requested already supplied easement data; the hope is that NG will address the issues over spring break. The cost is still unknown. The District must grant an easement for them to install a transformers. It has been a struggle, according to Mr. Smeal. We will call daily to push the issue. This is key for comfort as well as the funding mechanism. This was first submitted to National Grid in February 2023.

Congratulations and thank you to the first 50 NFT members who have signed up for the Science of Reading conference, a 45-hour course. The Governor proposes free breakfast and lunch for all students and a “bell to bell” cell phone ban; this includes athletic fields. The details will be complex. Numerous parents express various opinions on this. Mr. Laurrie is in favor; it will take a lot of work.

Saturday NFHS is hosting 60 board members at the Legislative Breakfast. Regarding the closing of the of the Sumitomo Rubber USA plant in Tonawanda: the District was able to hire an information specialist to work for the District. Deep sympathies to all who lost their jobs. After a change due to weather, NFHS will be administering Regents Exams from January 24 and 25, 2025.

The NFHS PAC the Proscenium Players will perform the “Odd Couple,” which also was rescheduled to February 6 and 8, 2025.

Concerns remain regarding the Goodyear Plant on 56<sup>th</sup> Street. The District is concerned for residents and has spoken to people involved. Mr. Laurrie encourages Goodyear to take care of it. Schools are not impacted, but the situation must be rectified quickly.

Brittany Costa, at Abate School, applied for and received funding for a grassroots garden, which will be planted on the school property.

On February 10, 2025, activities will resume among students from North Tonawanda, Niagara Wheatfield, and Niagara Falls. A roving Holocaust Museum will visit at Niagara Wheatfield, which students will attend. These activities continue after three years.

On February 6, 2025, GJ Mann School will dedicated Luke’s Lounge in memory of Luke Nichols, a former Mann and the time current NFHS student.

Board Members Report and Comments

Mr. Cancemi questioned that attendance rate at NFHS today; Mr. Laurrie responded that approximately 60% of students attended, but Seniors came to take Regents.

Mr. Bass: condolences to Dunn family. Thank you for budget information. Nice to see the funding is looking better than in years past, even with uncertainty at federal and state level. Go Bills!

Mr. Bilson sends condolences to Mrs. Dunn; thanks the Board for its letter acknowledging his uncle's passing. Go Bills!

Mr. Cancemi thanked Dr. Haley O'Stewart for the information presented this evening. Condolences to Mrs. Dunn.

Mr. Paretto: The financial staff is doing a great job. Condolences to the Dunn family. Go Bills!

Mr. Petrozzi: If the Buffalo Bills compete in and win Superbowl LIX, will there be no school next the next day? *Mr. Laurrie will deal with this consideration should it arise.* Condolences to the Dunn family; Mr. Burnet was a wonderful man.

## Advanced Planning

### Future Agenda Items

<b>BRS Thursday, Feb 13, 2025</b>	<b>ARS/Regular Mtg. Thursday, Feb 27, 2025</b>
1 Pre-K – 2 Apple Product Presentation	1.Head Start
2. 2025-2026 General Fund Budget – <i>Mr. Laurrie/Mrs. Holody/Mrs. Jacklin</i>	2. 2025-2026 General Fund Budget – <i>Mr. Laurrie/Mrs. Holody/Mrs. Jacklin</i>
3. Review of Board Meeting Agenda Items – February 27 <sup>th</sup> Regular Board Meeting – <i>Mr. Laurrie, Mrs. Glaser, Ms. Massaro</i>	3. Review of Board Meeting Agenda Items – February 27 <sup>th</sup> Regular Board Meeting – <i>Mr. Laurrie, Mrs. Glaser, Ms. Massaro</i>

### Future Meeting Dates

**Adjournment** on a motion by Mr. Vilardo, seconded by Mr. Paretto.  
Meeting Adjourned in memory of:

Robert Coletti, father of retiree Sharon Coletti.

Kathleen Fadel, retired Pupil Service Assistant.

Joseph F. Hilty, Jr., retired teacher.

Cindy Soos, sister of Hyde Park teacher Melissa Doescher.

**Ayes: Mr. Bass, Mr. Bilson, Mr. Cancemi, Mr. Capizzi, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Paretto, Mr. Petrozzi, Mr. Vilaro.**

**Nays: None.**

**Carried.**