

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
ALBION CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ALBION, NEW YORK

Carl I. Bergerson Middle School Auditorium
Thursday, January 31, 2019

SUMMARY OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE PRESENTATION
BY CORNELL UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Board President, Mrs. Margy Brown, called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

BOARD APPROVED

PUBLIC FORUM

Mrs. Brown indicated she had received Public Forum sheets from a number of individuals. Each individual was asked if they wished to address their concern before or after the speaker. Mrs. Kim Toombs, Mrs. Marcia Brown, Mr. Bruce Dugan and Ms. Angie Wolfe each chose to speak after the presentation. Mrs. Mary Ann Donnelly chose to speak before the presentation.

Mrs. Mary Ann Donnelly expressed concern over the WorkFit Medical letter dated November 27, 2018; specifically quoting "About one in 19 women at the Albion Central School District have been diagnosed with breast cancer (about 5%). The good news is that this is actually lower than the national average." Mrs. Donnelly asked where the statistics came from? Was this information regarding all females or just in the Elementary School? Mrs. Donnelly asserted that WorkFit Medical is not qualified to assess any environmental risk factors which made their conclusion completely invalid.

2. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Cornell University Presentation
Ms. Nellie J. Brown, MS, CIH
Workplace Health and Safety Program

Ms. Nellie Brown introduced herself as a Certified Industrial Hygienist in the health and safety field who has provided her services this evening through a state funded grant. Ms. Brown's program, Breast Cancer and Occupational and Environmental

Exposures, was created in response to citizens' and policy makers' desire to determine whether there was an environmental link to higher than average breast cancer rates in New York State counties. Ms. Brown indicated she had attended the Albion Central School District Board of Education Meeting in January and her presentation was in response to the request of the Board as a result of information shared by the ATA at that meeting.

Ms. Brown presented a Power Point that addressed the question of elevated breast cancer rates in teachers; whether environmental risk factors exist at ACS; and if there are potential breast cancer carcinogens in the Albion Central School District.

Ms. Brown's Power Point provided information from various studies regarding risk factors, including various everyday exposures to chemicals at home and in the workplace.

Ms. Angie Wolfe addressed Ms. Nellie Brown thanking her for the informative presentation. She indicated that the data collected by the ATA appeared to be higher than average for breast cancer. These cancer diagnoses were for women in specific locations in the elementary building. Ms. Wolfe asked if the numbers were higher at ACS than at other districts. Ms. Brown responded to the question by citing breast cancer rates are high among teachers all around the world. Studies could not explain why or identify one specific cause.

Mr. Jim Bowers introduced himself as an Epidemiologist from the NYS Health Department and addressed Ms. Wolfe's question regarding the comparison between ACS and other districts. Mr. Bowers indicated that when a study is made to determine patterns of illness, various factors such as the number of people with the same kind of cancer, unusual age groups, adequate latency (time between exposure and development) and time spent in the specific location, are some of the information used to help identify whether it is unusual.

Mrs. Kim Toombs addressed the Board asking what and when was the Board going to specifically address the ATA questions. Would there be soil and water testing? When would the Board be doing it?

Mr. Jim Bowers responded by indicating that Albion Central School was the 5th school this year raising similar concerns. When the question of testing comes up, what do you test for? He indicated that tens of thousands of dollars could be spent testing and not necessarily find an answer to the cause of breast cancer.

Mr. Chris Keller, ATA President, asked the speakers what the reasonable first step should be. He stated he was looking for reassurance for staff.

Ms. Nellie Brown responded that she could provide an EPA "Tools for Schools" survey and training for identified staff to conduct future surveys using the same tool.

Mrs. Margy Brown addressed those present. Mrs. Brown indicated that she and the Board of Education are concerned. She shared that she is evidence-based; that none of the Board members are experts; that they are trying to navigate through the issues, gathering data and educating themselves as to the next steps to ensure the safety of the students and staff. Mrs. Brown indicated that the Board is looking at this to formulate a plan.

Mr. Jim Bowers indicated that in looking at all types of breast cancer the first step is to collect information. The second step is to go to the cancer registry to confirm each case diagnosed. Mr. Bowers provided information on the criteria for determining cancer clusters when asked.

A local health care nurse in the audience asked how the data is collected and if the information could be pulled up in a database.

Mr. Jim Bowers responded by indicating what is done once information is given to the Health Department for review.

Mrs. Betty Sue Miller addressed Mrs. Margy Brown. Mrs. Miller indicated she taught in the Middle School, went to school at ACS and lived in the community. She noted that she does not believe her cancer came from the school. Mrs. Miller indicated that if there is an increased cancer rate in teachers, the District should present data to new teachers regarding this; look at what you do to prevent it and that the District should do a study that analyzes the air quality and go from there.

Mrs. Kate Knorr introduced herself as Leslie Kish's daughter and stated that her mom had worked in the Middle School, went to the Elementary School, caught cancer and died. Mrs. Knorr asked about the kids, the air and soil. She cited the District Office building, where the Superintendent is, had flooded when she was in school; that there were mold and air concerns in what was supposed to be a temporary building. Mrs. Knorr asked what else would be done?

Mrs. Joyce Monacelli addressed Mrs. Margy Brown indicating the need for the Board of Education and the teachers to work together.

Mr. Jim Bowers addressed the question of conducting air testing. He indicated that it is very important to ask what specific question is to be answered by testing.

A parent in the audience wanted to be informed of cancer cases in the school.

The speakers were thanked for their time and information presented.

(Mrs. Margy Brown was excused from the meeting at 8:02 pm to speak with a community member.)

3. BOARD DATES

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Monday	February 4, 2019	Anticipated Meeting for an Executive Session of the Board of Education regarding the employment of a particular individual	6:00 pm
Monday	February 4, 2019	Regular Board of Education Meeting	7:00 pm
Monday	February 25, 2019	Audit Finance Committee Meeting	7:00 pm
Monday	March 4, 2019	Regular Board of Education Meeting	7:00 pm
Monday	March 11, 2019	Audit Finance Committee Meeting	7:00 pm
Monday	March 18, 2019	Audit Finance Committee Meeting	7:00 pm

BOARD APPROVED

6. ADJOURNMENT

BOARD APPROVED