

**Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee**  
**Minutes of Virtual Meeting**  
**May 13, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Introduction of Members:**

Jane C Reggio, Chairperson  
Erin P. Vinacco, Vice Chairperson  
Keri L. Gaudette, District Treasurer  
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary  
Sarah E. Williams, Member  
Tammy A. Lemieux, Member  
Tim Howell, Member  
Amanda D. Guilmain, Member

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited and a moment of silence and recognition of Mrs. Susan Bourassa, a lifelong resident of Millville and employee in the school district. Mrs. Bourassa fought her battle bravely.

Also in attendance were Jason DeFalco, EdD, Superintendent of Schools, Matthew J. Ehrenworth, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Jill Pilla-Gallerani, Christina Shafer, Jenny Chan-Remka, Michael Dudek, Keith Ducharme, Janis Laporte and Karen Young.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Gaudette, seconded by Mrs. Guilmain and voted 7 in favor 1 abstain - Mrs. Lemieux to approve the Warrants and Minutes of March 25 and April 8, 2021.

Mrs. Reggio shared a letter received from John Staples, past music teacher, guidance counselor and assistant principal in our school district. A member of his very large family was a student in the BMR School District from 1952 - 2019. He wanted to give a gift to the District. He and his family gave the gift of 2 new flags for the BMR Auditorium. The American Flag and the Flag of MA.

Mrs. Chan-Remka - Spoke about 2 special girls who did a great thing for the community and their names are Ada Lafond, Grade 1 and Ellie McKinley, Grade 3.

Ada raised money for Layla's Dream Foundation, Sepsis Research and for a Toy Drive to deliver toys to children at Hasbro Children's Hospital and care packages for parents who are staying in the hospital with their child. She made bracelets and sold them earning \$100. Mrs. Reggio will match the \$100.

Ellie raised \$1000 selling bracelets. It was posted on Facebook. She started selling them outside of her house. She gave her money to the Blackstone Animal Shelter. Mrs. Reggio will make a donation to the Animal Shelter in her name.

Kerry Purcell will also match the donations.

There were no items for Public Forum.

### **School Choice- Dr. DeFalco**

Dr. DeFalco is asking the School Committee to vote on allowing the District to participate in School Choice for the FY22 school year which includes private and charter schools as well.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Larkin, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to approve School Choice in the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District for the FY22 School year.

### **Bi-County Collaborative Representative**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to appoint Dr. DeFalco as the District's Bi-County Collaborative Representative for FY22.

### **School Committee Calendar**

Mrs. Lemieux asked if only one meeting in May is enough. Mrs. Reggio said they are counting on the workshop. Mrs. Lemieux feels that when there is only one meeting it turns into a very long meeting.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Gaudette, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to approve the school committee calendar for FY22.

### **Unit A re-opening plan.**

Dr. DeFalco would like to add a ½ sick day for those who are vaccinated, keeping desks 6 feet apart and keeping the last day of school as June 18th by converting a day in May that was P.D. Day to an actual school day. The agreement is null and void on June 30, 2021.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Guilmain, seconded by Mr. Howell and unanimously voted to approve the changes to the Unit A MOA as follows: add a ½ sick day for those who are vaccinated. Keeping desks 6 feet apart and keeping the last day of school as June 18th by converting a day in May (May 28th) that was P.D. Day to an actual school day. The agreement is null and void on June 30, 2021.

### **Early Retirement - Unit A**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Howell, seconded by Mrs. Lakin and unanimously voted that the committee hereby approves the early retirement incentive to Unit A members if they retire effective June 30, 2021.

1. The District will pay \$7,500 to employees who submit their intention to retire by May 28, 2021.
2. The \$7,500 will be taxed and is not pensionable and will be paid by July 31, 2021
3. Members would not be eligible for the sick leave incentive.
4. Members who declared future retirement are eligible.
5. Employees must be eligible to retire from MTRS.

### **Early Retirement - Unit C**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted that the School Committee hereby approves the early retirement incentive to Unit C members if they retire effective June 30, 2021.

The District will pay:

\$3500 for a full 7.5 hour custodian

\$3000 for a 6.5 hour para-professional

\$2500 for a 12 month administrative assistant

\$2000 for a 6 hour per day cafeteria worker

These amounts are to be pro-rated based on hours worked and length of time.

### **Kerry Purcell - Focused Schools**

Dr. DeFalco - reintroduce Kerry Purcell - Focused Schools - Lead Consultant on Instructional Leadership and development. She is in year 3 with the School District.

Ms. Purcell walked us through a slide show presentation.

We have gone through an unimaginable time and on behalf of Dr. DeFalco they say thank you for all you do.



The Promise - deepen the work to ensure impact every day for every student.

Implementation:

ILT, Principal Coaching, Coaching Support, Data Cycle, LASW protocols, School Improvement Plans, Feedback, Feedback Collaboration, Observations.

They use the plans as a guiding document.

Data informed conversions

Marriage of Focus Frameworks 1

Students will use evidence based strategies to increase comprehension in their content areas.

Essential Question: How can quality questioning enhance teacher and student thinking and learning? Use this to make adjustments to their teaching.

Coaches facilitating PLC's and use of data - protocol that is used to analyze student work in an effort to plan next steps of areas of opportunity for growth in critical thinking/rigor. We will collectively work to develop teacher capacity looking at students' work during ILT.

Staff defining what good work looks like - Ms. Purcell gave an example of a small set of math teachers who defined what good work would look like. Consistency across classrooms is key.

Capturing Progress as Leaders of Learning - Use data during collaboration time to make decisions.

Impact: Connections Across Districts - Partnered with Hudson Public Schools sharing what works on our end and learning what works on their end. This is an important part of the work.

Ms. Purcell still wants to work herself out of a job.

Implementing learning walks where leaders and teachers are leading each other.

Work for Next year -Building Capacity, Learning Walks, Job embedded PD, new leaders support.

### **Senior Class**

**Gabby- Senior Class Officer** - Officers are satisfied with what they are doing. All are excited about the Banquet on the 27th. Rehearsal will be held on June 3rd and June 4th will be the breakfast and graduation. The senior send off will be the Tuesday of the following week.

Gabby was accepted at many colleges and she has decided on UMASS Amherst. She will study Public Health Sciences.

They will have graduation outside and awards night outside and want this to be a new tradition.

They have 35 tickets sold for the banquet. Most students wait until the last moment to buy tickets. They need to sell 60 or more tickets to hold the banquet. Only BMR seniors can attend the banquet.

Mrs. Vinacco asked if there is anything the class needs? If so, please reach out to the School Committee members.

She would like to consider giving an incentive to those who pay their dues on time each year.

### **Amendment to School Handbook:**

A copy of the current handbook and recommended changes were given to the School Committee Members.

The changes were highlighted for them.

The 2 main changes were in dress code and chromebooks.

**Mrs. Remka and Mrs. Shafer Elementary Handbook** - Replaced parent/guardian with parent/caregiver and Covid changes, update to school calendar and bullying intervention policy, reorganization between MES and Complex. They cleaned up the program of studies. Two policies worked on are 1:1 Chromebooks and making sure all levels have the policy in place. How to care for the Chromebook and the Chromebook policy. They all have the same consistent dress code policy with all schools having the same language.

**BMEPTO** - The parent organizations of MES and the Complex are joining forces.

The building principals met and used the High School dress code policy and tweaked it a bit.

**Mrs. Curt and Mrs. Laporte - Middle School** - Updated some of the device language. BMRSD core values - Inserted the ones from the district blueprints, dress code, Chromebooks only some parts are new here. Bullying prevention policy from December was added.

**Mr. Dudek and Mr. Ducharme - HS** - Mr. Ducharme and the Student Council were very helpful with working on the handbook. Need to be more flexible and not limited growth for students. Credit recovery is to allow all students to gain credit back. This is the language change for summer school around credit recovery. Semester assessments were counted as 20% of semester grade and now they are more of a fluid assessment and are now worth 10% of quarter grade. Summer school regulations - allowing students to gain credit in flexible ways during the summer.



**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mr. Howell and unanimously voted to approve the changes to all student handbooks as highlighted above.

### **Mrs. Young - Lead Nurse**

New language around close contact. Language highlighted in red. Moving from 6 ft. to 3 ft. on close contact. We are seeing benefits from this. We haven't had any close contacts in our classrooms. There is new language around quarantining as well. There should not be any spread through the classroom.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Howell, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to approve the new language around close contacts and quarantining as presented by lead nurse, Mrs. Young.

### **Reassignment - Dr. DeFalco**

We have one instructional coach at the elementary and one at the secondary level. We have one coach in Special Education. We eliminated the Assistant Principal Position at the Elementary Level. We would like to move the Special Education planning and teaching coach just to the Middle School. They will now have a coach in each building. They will train 4 coaches on everything and expand the support.

Preparing end of year survey. It will be a longer google survey and they will get information back from students, families and staff. They will add something different this year. They will try to get phone feedback with the families. Next year is our last year with our current strategy and blueprint. Getting feedback is very important right now.

### **BMRHS Department Heads**

Department Heads position at High School. Dr. DeFalco wants to have a conversation with the Union. The money for the stipends is already in the budget. They need to have conversations on this. Looking at the Department Heads as content specialists. Dr. DeFalco needs approval for this. Since Dr. DEFalco has been in the school district, they have not had the positions.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Howell, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to allow Dr. DeFalco to have a conversation with Unit A Union regarding the possible return of Department Heads at the BMR High School.

### **Mr. Ehrenworth- review Business Office Report**

There are no issues with Revenues - The color of the report has changed. He received Blackstone's final assessment.

Expenditures are on target. The current expenditures will change. We are in a good spot.

We are not in a place to worry at all.

Between now and the June 1st report he will work closely with the Accounts Payable Specialist.

A personnel changes report was given to the Committee.

They do not have a Facilities Report this evening.

There were no items for the **2nd Public Forum**.

### **School Committee Forum -**

**Mrs. Reggio** - she is more than happy to hear from people and they in turn need to be willing to have conversations.

**Mrs. Lemieux** - came across information on alumni. Spoke about Tammy, a Zion race runner. She did this in a little over 19 hours.

Mrs. Lemieux is frustrated that our softball and baseball teams cannot use their fields. The football fields practiced on them and now they are unplayable. They need to grow grass there. Whoever let this happen impacted so many other teams.

Mr. Ehrenworth - number of factors. They did not use the fields during Covid and they were not tended to properly. They are looking to get the fields completely redone. It may be contributed to football but there were other things that went wrong as well.

Tim Howell - Can we involve the students' parents to help spruce up the fields without spending capital dollars?

Mrs. Reggio - we have relied on volunteers for quite sometime and what we do have was due to volunteers. We do not have a groundskeeper right now. We need to look at what is our priority for athletics. They will probably need capital investments.

Mrs. Lemieux -she thought we worked on the soccer field fairly recently and would like to know what was done and the cost of it?

In the 3 years that Mr. Ehrenworth has been here they have not worked on the soccer field.

Mrs. Vinacco agrees with Mrs. Lemieux.

Coach McNamara did considerable work on the baseball fields and helped out a lot.

The next School Committee meeting is on Wednesday, May 26th at 6:00 p.m.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard  
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:



Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary