

Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Frederick Hartnett Middle School
September 16, 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
Tammy A. Lemieux, Member
Tim Howell, Member
Amanda D. Guilmain, Member
Sarah E. Williams, Member

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited.

Also in attendance were Jason DeFalco, EdD, Superintendent of Schools and Matthew J. Ehrenworth, Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

The new Student Representatives were also in attendance this evening. Their names are Madison Marchand and Kyleigh Sacco.

- Student Council planning Homecoming on October 1st from 7-10 p.m.
- Hosted first red, white and blue spirit day to remember 911.
- Marching Band show on Saturday received 1st place.
- Sports update was given.
- 1st day of school update given.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Howell, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to approve the Warrants and the Minutes of August 19, 2021.

There were no items for **Public Forum**

Retiree health insurance -

Representative from MIIA- (Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association)

Medicare Information - Chris Bailey -

Post 65 Retirement Program - The school district is looking into the possibility of purchasing Medicare Part A & Part B for those retirees who did not have enough quarters paid into Medicare to qualify for it. These individuals can also be put on the Supplemental Medex plan.

Right now they are forced to continue with the regular insurance plan which gives them higher deductibles.

They tend to drive more cost to the regular plan and they should be shifted over to Medicare.

The District absorbs the cost of this but it is far less than the claims costs for these individuals to be on a regular plan and it drives up the cost of the Districts insurance plans overall.

The annual cost to the District would be \$57,000 overall. On average each retiree drives about \$20,000 in medical care. That is \$260,000 in medical claims costs that could be pulled out and sent over to medicare.

Doing this allows you much more stable and lower increases in your health insurance.

Whatever the renewal comes out to we will take 3% off of this right off the top with a \$90,000 reduction in the first year. This will go into effect on July 1, 2022.

The claim savings will go through each additional renewal on its own which should be about 8 or 9% savings in claims each year. You will not be paying claims for the individuals who shift over to Medicare.

There are 13 individuals affected by this. It is based on those hired before March of 1986. There could be more coming in.

It is a great benefit for them and they get a better plan on the Medex plan. There are no deductibles and copays other than medication.

They would hold retiree meetings so they can call a phone number and listen to the presentation and they will send them the paperwork to their homes. They will do all of the outreach. We will send out letters on our letterhead and MIIA will give us the information to do this.

Mr. Ehrenworth stated that our percent increase has been less than 3% for the past few years. We could possibly go into the negative for an increase.

Mrs. Vinacco feels it is good to have the information in front of us. If the 13 individuals do not come off until next year they will still affect our increase.

They would like to send communication out to the retirees the second week in October.

After 1986 everyone has paid into Medicare.

There may be a few individuals who did not take the BMR insurance upon retirement who could be eligible for this plan.

Mrs. Lemieux asked if someone is still working for us and they opted out of paying into Medicare can they opt back in now?

Mr. Bailey doesn't believe this would be beneficial to them. It may take 10 years to recoup.

Summer Program Review - 2021

Principal Dr. Remka spoke about the summer programs.

21st CCLC program - Take everyday lessons and make it fun for kids. They put a lot of learning into games and chose activities that incorporate objectives and standards to promote critical thinking and build confidence.

- Stem activities
- Music and Art
- Ukuleles for Music
- Water balloon relay
- Math and ELA Jenga
- Comic Strip dialogue
- Summer book covers and summer book giveaway

Summer Social Emotional Supports at Boys and Girls Club goals:

- Maintain contact with Tier 3 students
- Support students making transition from remote learning to a highly interactive environment
- Establish relationships with students having various challenging behaviors

Two students, Aiden Millette & Brooklyn Walsh, spoke on the summer program. They talked about the fun they had and if they would participate again. They told the Committee why they liked the program.

A video of the kids in action was played for the Committee.

21st Century Learning Community -

- They played the ukulele and xylophone
- Opening their eyes to different color schemes, landscape drawing and describing the elements
- They learned about science and math in a fun way

Mr. Jeff Curran - summer programs between the MS and HS

- Credit Recovery Summer School program
- Ramp up project based learning and learn in a different way. It was based off of what was needed. Went over 3 essential skills that they needed to focus on.
- Math Academy was based on Stars skills needed.

One student said that it wasn't that bad. Mr. Curran feels that it translates to he liked the program.

- They built their own bottle rockets for launching rockets and gauge height, distance and angles. It was very hands-on learning.
- They also had a project where they went through the american dream from the 50's through the 90's and came up with conclusions on how the american dream has changed over time and how it has stayed the same. It went from the 50's of having a family and living in the suburbs to the 90's where it was about money, power and status. The only thing they wanted in the 50's was a family and enough money to support that family. Now it's only about how much money you have and how many followers you have on social media.
- Middle School Math academy looked at angles and graphs. They built the problems and solved them on the walls in the hallway.
- Mr. Ethan Roe's group looked at acceleration on dropping an object and seeing the acceleration over time.
- They rode scooters around the school and worked on a project that way as well.
- They had remote controlled cars and did speed and distance.

Corporate Sponsorships

Mrs. Lemieux - In other districts there are corporate sponsorships and they are looking at doing it here. Enclosed is the BMR policy around corporate sponsorships:

POLICY RELATING TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS

SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING

Context and Purpose: The Blackstone-Millville Regional School District (BMRSD) historically has benefited from income generated when outside entities, including businesses and individuals, provide funding in the form of sponsorships of programming or advertising displayed in school, district publications, on school district grounds, event programs, the high

school yearbook, etc. The Blackstone-Millville Regional School District Committee (BMRDSC) encourages the use of sponsorships and advertising to provide an alternative source of revenue to fund educational programming and/or to provide supplementary resources. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the Superintendent of Schools, school administrators, and other personnel regarding what forms of sponsorships and advertising are acceptable to the BMRSD and to provide a framework for arranging such transactions.

Definitions: For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall be used:

Sponsorships are defined as agreements between the school district, a school, or a department where an outside organization provides funding or resources in exchange for recognition. Such recognition may include written notification through press releases, newsletters, email, and the school district website. In certain circumstances, the BMRSD may agree to use a sponsor's name in connection with a particular program or physical space supported through the sponsor's support (e.g., a laboratory, an athletic field or facility, etc.). Sponsorship involves funds provided for an activity that the BMRSD has determined is desirable for the system to undertake.

Advertising is defined as written, graphic, or oral representations made by or on behalf of another entity which are designed to make others aware of the entity's product, service, etc. Advertising involves funds provided for recognition not directly connected to funding an activity.

Guidelines: The BMRDSC requires that sponsorships and advertising agreements be made with the best interests of the BMRSD in mind, relative to the District's mission and core values. As a public entity with the central purpose of educating, the BMRSD must be judicious in determining the identity, scope, and content of sponsorships and advertising to avoid over-commercialization of the educational process. The following guidelines are to be followed by BMRSD administration:

1. BMRSD property and BMRSD communications are non-public forums. The intent of sponsorships and advertising is to provide funding revenues, not to promote public discourse, or a point of view. There is no obligation on the part of the BMRSD to provide equal access to advertising for competitors.
2. Since policy evolves, approval of a sponsorship or ad does not constitute a precedent and does not necessarily lead to approval of similar requests in the future.

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POLICY RELATING TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS

SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING (continued)

3. Approval of sponsorships or advertising does not constitute endorsement by the BMRDSC or the BMRSD of a sponsor's or advertiser's products, programs, or services.

4. All new sponsorships or advertising shall be reviewed and approved by the Policy Subcommittee of the BMRDSC and the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee. The Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee shall be authorized to review and approve any recurring sponsorships or advertising (less than \$5,000), including content, communication, display, and distribution of such, as well as to negotiate sponsorship amounts and advertising rates. Agreements of significant value (defined as \$5,000 or more annually) or to utilize a sponsor's name in relation to a specific program or physical space shall require a recommendation from the Superintendent and a majority vote of the BMRDSC.
5. All sponsorships and advertisements must align with the BMRSD's mission, values, and policies, as well as with state and federal laws, including those related to non discrimination practices, including Massachusetts General Law Chapter 272, Section 92A and any other applicable statute or regulation.
6. There shall be no *quid pro quo* arrangements between sponsors/advertisers and the BMRSD relative to educational practices in the District. That is, educational decisions regarding the use of curriculum materials, instructional equipment, and other resources related to school programming shall be made regarding what is in the best interests of students and shall not be influenced by outside entities due to the provision of materials, services, or funding.
7. The Policy Subcommittee of the BMRDSC and the Superintendent or his/her designee shall consider the impact of sponsorships and advertisements on students, relative to students' age and impressionability, about content, intended audience, form, and the closeness of the connection to the educational process. The Policy Subcommittee of the BMRDSC and the Superintendent or his/her designee have full editorial control regarding placement, content, size, wording, appearance, etc. of advertising, and have the right to reject sponsorships or advertising that is, in their judgment, inappropriate or inconsistent with the mission and values of the BMRSD and the best interests of its students (e.g., advertising for tobacco, alcohol, etc.).
8. Outside entities who rent BMRSD facilities must receive approval from the Policy Subcommittee and the Superintendent or his/her designee if they wish to post temporary advertising in the space rented (e.g., signs along athletic field fencing, banners in an auditorium, etc.).
9. Sponsorships or advertisements from elected officials and political candidates or groups will not be accepted.

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POLICY RELATING TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS

SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING (continued)

Types of Sponsorships and Advertising: The Policy Subcommittee and the Superintendent or his/her designee shall follow the guidelines below, and shall consult with the BMRDSC in situations that do not fit clearly within these guidelines.

1. Writing and images in physical form (e.g., advertisements in event programs or newsletters; posters; signage; banners, etc.).
2. Writing and images in electronic form.
3. The use of logos or other similar images other than what would be used normally in identifying the brand of equipment, instructional materials, etc. (e.g., a manufacturer's logo on an athletic uniform is not sponsorship/advertising, but a banner with such a logo in the gymnasium placed there for a fee would be). The use of logos or images of outside entities is permissible in programs, yearbooks, newsletters, web sites etc., per the judgment of the Policy Subcommittee and the Superintendent or his/her designee.
4. Distribution of Information through the Schools - The BMRSD will not provide the free distribution of materials, including advertising, on behalf of for-profit organizations, whether brought home physically by students, or through electronic means. This differs from sponsorship or advertising arrangements made between the BMRSD and an outside entity, which are subject solely to the discretion of the BMRSD. However, the communication of sponsorships or activities where for-profit organizations partner with the BMRSD or non-profit organizations such as Parent Teacher Organizations may be included in messages that originate from the non-profit organization (e.g., a PTO/PTA may distribute information regarding a fundraiser with a local restaurant and utilize the restaurant's logo in its communication, but the message must come from the PTO/PTA, not the restaurant).
5. Advertising local educational access channels shall be subject to laws and policies governing this medium. This medium may be used to communicate regarding sponsorships.

Administration of Policy: The Policy Subcommittee and the Superintendent or his/her designee shall adhere to the guidelines listed above and shall use sound business practices with regard to entering into written contractual agreements with sponsors and advertisers.

Faculty Handbook

It is here for review and discussion. This would go out to all staff and have a page to sign off on stating that you have read it. It is great for new employees and to show the everyday operations.

Mrs. Lemieux wonders if for areas that they know are in the Collective Bargaining agreement that they put, see the Contract. Her issue is that we as a district are not always good at

updating things so why not try to condense how many places you have to fix things when something changes.

Mrs. Reggio does not want to attach all of the contracts here. You have to be careful about referencing a policy if there is not a policy attached to it. If there is not a policy you must call it guidelines or protocols.

Issues were discussed and Mrs. Lemieux would like to have the different unions take a look at it and see if they would like to suggest changes to it.

Covid 19 Review - Informational Only

The mask policy as they have adopted it will remain in effect and will be reviewed again in October (as the state mandate is in place through October 1st). No discussion was had.

Karen Young Lead Nurse

Gave the Covid -19 breakdown in positive cases and close contacts.

Vaccinated:

Blackstone

12-15 - 43%

16-19 - 52%

Town total is 52%

Millville

12-15 35%

16-19 57%

Town total is 43%

Dr. DeFalco stated that because of masks and 3 foot distancing we have significantly lowered the quarantine levels.

Mrs. Young does the majority of the testing. They try to grab them off the bus and test them. They wait 15 minutes and then see the results.

Parents are receptive to the test and stay policy. They understand we are doing what we have to do to keep the schools open.

There have been two cases of fully vaccinated individuals contracting Covid.

This information will be placed on the Covid dashboard.

For parents who need to look for a PCR test, Mrs. Young includes a link to the state site where you can look for places to go for a test. There is no specific school site to look at.

They are looking to approve one more full time LPN in the school district.

Mrs. Young needs assistance with coverage and testing.

The cost to the district would be just over \$30,000.

They would look at those who worked in the district as LPN's first before posting.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mr. Howell and unanimously voted to hire a full time LPN for the FY22 school year for testing (test and stay) and overall coverage.

It can be overwhelming for the building nurses who are trying to do the regular nursing needs and also testing the group of students.

Mrs. Reggio wants the child that you are testing to be separated until their test comes back. This is why you need two nurses to take care of all of the needs of the students.

Dr. DeFalco stated:

- all programs and sports are running efficiently
- MCAS data is coming back publicly next Tuesday
- Our interventionists are working in small groups
- Our social worker is very involved in all buildings
- things are coming together well

Mr. Ehrenworth said that the traffic patterns are running very smoothly.

It appears that the Complex is experiencing delays with parent pick ups. They are trying to work on this. The Complex system is very efficient and well run as well as safe. The backup occurs from people getting there too early.

Business Office Report - Mr. Ehrenworth

Revenue Report - all are coming in as expected. Have not started drawing down on the grant funds. He anticipates medicaid revenues may be higher than anticipated.

Expenses Report - there are encumbrances but they haven't spent much yet.

Non-public programs stand out. The 9300 funds are offset by Circuit Breaker (Fund 28).

Personnel Report - updated with the changes occurring since 7/1/21.

Two full time positions needed Spanish at the High School just hired this week and Reading Specialist at the Middle School. They hired a Reading Specialist in May but she resigned.

Facilities Report

- Baseball/Softball field work- going smoothly
- Track area was repaired
- On schedule for the tennis courts
- Vestibules have been completed
- Received quotes for safety laminate for the new vestibules

Mrs. Lemieux - clarification needed - Field where the soccer teams played. Is this piece of land not the outfield of the baseball field? We didn't let soccer play there but football is there?

Mr. Ehrenworth said that part of it is the outfield. Mr. Ehrenworth said they moved soccer because it didn't work well there and is at the Complex now.

Mrs. Guilmain said that they didn't use it for soccer because kids could get hurt but why is it okay to use it for football before the renovations?

Mr. Ehrenworth is going to check with the Athletic Director, Mr. McAnulty on this.

Mrs. Reggio feels we need a designated spot for football. It's not simple enough to say well they can't practice there. We need to come up with a space for them to practice.

Mrs. Lemisux said what about the land to the left of the softball field and behind the big rock. Is this space that can be used? Why can't football go there?

Mold at BMRHS -

Mr. Ehrenworth stated we have confirmation that air testing was done in 7 rooms and 5 were identified as having concerns. They will be professionally cleaning those areas. They are working with a testing lab to have samples taken over the weekend. The students have been relocated until they know that everything is stable. It appears that it is the humidity that is causing the problem. This season has been terrible with humidity.

Facilities Use forms for approval

BMVBL - Blackstone-Millville Youth Basketball League

Information was given on the use of facilities forms.

Discussion around the usage of the schools took place by the Committee members.

BMYBL wants the 3 schools every evening and Saturday and Sunday from October - March 4th. They cannot have HMS until 6:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday they need a custodian.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux to approve the use of facilities request by the BMYBL.

Discussion:

Mrs. Lemieux stated that if there is a school event it comes first and the BMYBL will need to work around this. The individual school will make BMYBL aware of changes.

Mrs. Williams said the scheduling piece should go to the school first and then the Committee. We do this every year and we should not be doing this.

Dr DeFalco said if the Committee goes through with the motion then the district will work with BMYBL to work out the particulars. Administration will work with BMYBL on a calendar that works.

Motion on the floor: It was approved unanimously to accept the Use of Facilities Request presented by the BMYBL with the addition that they must work around the school events happening at each individual school.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Howell, seconded by Mrs. Larkin to approve the remaining use of Facilities requests including the use of the cafeteria for girls scout meetings and the use of the fields.

School Committee Forum:

Mrs. Reggio said thank you to the new Student Representatives.

Mrs. Reggio wanted to make an apology - in the past when they talk about BVT she made assumptions. She feels the opportunities provided are wonderful. She feels there are students who need BVT that don't get to go there. She never intended her comments to take away from the good work the school does or the good students who go there. She does believe there are holes in the educational opportunities and students who would excel in those tasks and are never given the opportunity. If she mentioned anyone's name she apologies.

Mrs. Guilmain - Is there a way to streamline all of the forms that parents need to fill out at the beginning of the school year and have it done online. This way when you re-register each year your information is already there for you and if it doesn't change you can do it much more quickly.

Mrs. Lemieux - Service hours plug - Parks and Recreation looks for volunteers and Friends of the Library - 5 or 6 different initiatives. She volunteers on Sundays in the a.m. for MAE organization for the homeless of RI by feeding them a cold and hot lunch and also handout clothes and hygiene products.

Next workshop meeting will be held on Sept. 30th - Kerry Purcell will join in on this meeting.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:



Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary