

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BARRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BARRINGTON, RHODE ISLAND**

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, March 30, 2017, in the Administration Building. School Committee Chair Kate D. Brody called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Vice Chair Mrs. Clancy, Dr. Douglas, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Pine, Mr. Messore, Dr. Dillon, and, Mr. Tarro.

Mrs. Brody introduced School Committee members present at the meeting: Dr. Megan Douglas, Mrs. Anna Clancy, Mr. John Alessandro, and Mrs. Gina Pine. Mrs. Brody also introduced the Administration and Central Office Staff present: Superintendent Michael Messore, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Paula Dillon, and Director of Administration and Finance Ronald Tarro.

Pledge of Allegiance

Achievement Recognitions

Mr. Messore announced the following achievements throughout the district:

Priyanks Bonifaz placed in the top ten at the Rhode Island Science and Engineering Fair with her project titled “Rising Resistance Rates in Infants with Urinary Tract Infections”. Priyanka also received the Jackson Memorial Fund Award, the Toxics Information Project Award, The Slater Technology Fund Award, and was one of the top two finalists in Rhode Island who will attend the International Science Fair in LA on May 14-19.

Christina Curran and Claire Martel placed in the top ten at the Rhode Island Science and Engineering Fair with their project titled “The Marsh Movement: Analyzing the Importance of Preserving the Salt Water Wetlands.” They also received the Governor’s Award, the Southeastern New England Marine Educators Award, The American Meteorological Society Award, and third place from the Coastal Resources Management Council.

Information and Proposals

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Update

Dr. Dillon gave a presentation on the District’s work to update the K-12 science curriculum to include the NGSS standards. These practices include developing students’ ability to ask questions and define problems using scientific language, to develop and use models, to plan and carry out investigations through the use of expanded opportunity for hands-on exploration, to analyze and interpret data using mathematics and computational thinking, to construct explanations and design solutions, and to obtain, evaluate and communicate information. There are performance expectations for each of these standards at each grade level which guide teachers in their delivery of curriculum. These expectations build as a student progresses through the grades. Students monitor their own progress as they move through the activities, and chart their understanding and assessment performance of each standard area. Dr. Dillon stated that the teachers are enjoying NGSS.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM)

Dr. Dillon explained that the “plan, do, study, act” model is used to monitor how the incorporation of a STEAM focus is impacting student achievement. Dr. Dillion explained that STEAM is an initiative led by the Rhode Island School of Design to incorporate art and design into the national STEM movement. Dr. Dillon explained that the art component connects nicely with the science curriculum as students use an iterative design thinking process to define problems and optimize solutions, with the integration of engineering elements. The District has been working with the Highlander Institute, IDEO, and the

Business Innovation Factory to help teachers understand the design thinking process. There has been a push throughout the District to incorporate more project-based learning in an effort to allow students to apply their learning to real world problems and develop deeper learning competencies. Dr. Dillon shared examples of how art, math and science are being employed in this initiative in alignment with the curriculum. Walkthroughs are occurring in each building, with data collected via Google forms, to inform professional development plans. Dr. Dillon explained that the District will continue to grow partnerships and student opportunities, and to improve K-12 Maker Spaces. Dr. Dillon stated that the District is working on a Research, Development, and Innovation Think Tank which consists of teachers, grade 5-12 students, and administrators. The mission of this group is to “leverage student and teacher voice to elevate Barrington Public Schools to be a leader in design thinking.” The group is working on action plans to solve problems and improve aspects of the District they would like to see improved. Members of the School Committee commended Dr. Dillon on her work, and stated that they would like to see more communication with families regarding all of this exciting work.

Maker Movement: Maker Spaces

Dr. Dillon explained that a maker space is a “place” where students are given the opportunity and encouragement to design, collaborate and imagine solutions to problems through doing, reflecting and re-doing. Maker spaces build excitement, enthusiasm and the tolerance for risk-taking among students, and connect them to the “real world” through real and meaningful project-based learning. Teachers within the District are working with the Fuse Fellowship. The Fuse Fellowship provides embedded professional development to create “lighthouse” classrooms which model the integration of maker spaces into everyday teaching for other classrooms throughout the District. Dr. Dillon thanked Barrington Education Fund (BEF) and the PTOs for their valuable contributions to this initiative. Ms. Crossman, Barrington Middle School math curriculum leader and teacher, shared her experience working with DownCity Design in Providence. Ms. Crossman explained the training she received regarding the design-thinking process, and how makers spaces help to develop students who are problem solvers and critical thinkers. BEF, in conjunction with DownCity Design, has helped to coordinate an initiative in which next year’s 6th-graders will be using the design-thinking process to help plan the maker space that will be part of the new Middle School.

Dr. Dillon explained that the High School has a new space called the iCreate Lab, a place where students can meet, create, invent, and learn. Some of the materials that will be available for use will be 3-D printers, software, and craft and hardware supplies. The BHS Community Board is a website that has been created to connect student interns and student consultants with local businesses and community stakeholders that may have a need for help with projects and tasks. This project-based learning will occur within the iCreate Lab. All students at the High School were encouraged to apply to be part of the iCreate team. The administration is in the process of building this team, to include teachers. Dr. Dillon stated that the District has been very successful in securing grant funding for the space and for training of staff, and that BEF has been instrumental in this effort. Dr. Dillon explained that the East Bay Chamber of Commerce has provided the District with a list of local businesses and organizations, and that a mailer was sent to make the community aware of this opportunity.

Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

Old Business from Superintendent and Staff

Proposed 2017-2018 Operating Budget

Mr. Tarro explained that Administration has carefully reviewed the proposed budget and that approximately 10 to 12 items have been identified as areas where there may be the potential for reductions or deferrals. He would like more time to validate whether these potential reductions are realistic before presenting them to the School Committee. Mr. Tarro stated that a conference call was held to discuss medical insurance rates, and that the projected 8% increase may be reduced to 7.5% to 7%. This equates to a potential \$75,000 to \$80,000 decrease in previously projected costs. Mr. Tarro also confirmed with Kristen Matthes, Director of Student Personnel Services that the projected costs associated with out-of-district placements and special education services are correct. No adjustments are expected in this area. Mr. Tarro also reported that the District anticipates an additional retirement at the end of the year which may result in additional savings of approximately \$9,000. Mr. Tarro clarified that the position will be filled, but at a lower pay grade.

Barrington Middle School Building Project Update

Mrs. Clancy stated that there are numerous Building Committee meetings scheduled in the near future as well as sub-committee meetings. Mrs. Clancy stated that there is continued work to realize cost savings and capitalize on further efficiencies. Mr. Tarro stated that he and Mr. Messor took part in a conference call with various stakeholders including JP Morgan, Rhode Island Health and Education Bond Council, Town Manager Jim Couna, and Town Finance Manager Kathy Raposa. This call went well and the District expects the public offering of the bonds to occur within the next few weeks.

Old Business from School Committee

There was no School Committee Old Business.

New Business

Student Representative to the School Committee Update

There was no Student Representative to the School Committee Update.

Superintendent and Staff

Personnel

Mrs. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded the motion to approve a Leave of Absence for Ms. Stephanie Hines, Reading Specialist, Hampden Meadows School. The motion passed 5-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mrs. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Mrs. Pine voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Messor announced the Retirement of Mrs. Rosemary Williams, General Office Clerk in Technology Department. Mr. Messor thanked Mrs. Williams for her work within the District and wished her the best. Mrs. Brody also wished Mrs. Williams well.

Report on March 29 Meeting with the Committee on Appropriations for FY18 Proposed Operating Budget Review

Mr. Messor announced that the District had its second meeting with the Committee on Appropriations (COA) on March 29th and discussed information the Administration had provided in response to questions

from the COA. Previously identified potential cost savings were reviewed, and an overview of capital project planning that has occurred in past years in an effort to avoid costly repairs was presented. Mr. Messore strongly advocated for the proposed technology budget, as it is connected to both teaching and learning. He stated that any reduction in this line item would significantly impact instruction. Mr. Messore also stated that he emphasized that the focus of the District is on teaching and learning and the preservation of the District's programs. Mr. Tarro explained that they had shared a comparison of costs within our District with some in other districts using the Uniform Chart of Accounts. The next meeting of the COA will be held on April 11th. Mrs. Brody explained that the Committee on Appropriation was not satisfied with the budget as presented by the District, and that the COA has asked the District to review its budget. Mrs. Brody asked the Administration to revisit the budget and to identify further areas for reduction. She noted that this is an "unprecedented year that calls for unprecedented action." She suggested that the Committee should provide the Administration with specific guidance as to the amount by which to reduce the proposed budget, in an effort to reach a compromise with the COA. Mrs. Brody asked the Committee to consider directing Administration to share what a further 0.9% reduction in the proposed budget increase for the coming year would mean in terms of District services. This would reflect a 2.3% increase over the current year's budget. The goal of this exercise is to attempt to develop a budget that represents a compromise, and that both the School Committee and the COA can endorse at the Financial Town Meeting. The School Committee agreed with this approach. Mr. Tarro thanked the Committee for its guidance, and stated that this direction helps immensely in his work.

School Committee

Discussion and Vote: Approval of the Recommendation of the Superintendent for Award of Bid for Professional Services, Development of a District Strategic Plan

Mr. Messore provided a summary of his goals for the upcoming strategic planning process, and emphasized that the overriding consideration of all planning work will be how ideas effect teaching and learning in the District, and the experience of the students. He provided an overview of the work the District has done to solicit and evaluate proposals from firms qualified to assist the in the District's strategic planning process. He recommended that the contract for the first phase of the District's strategic planning work be awarded to the Studer Group of Pensacola, Florida, and that we consider in the future engaging this group for subsequent phases of this work. It was noted that the timeline for development of the strategic plan will be shifted to fall and winter, 2017 with emphasis on leadership development during the summer.

Mrs. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to award the contract in an amount not to exceed \$22,400 to the Studer Group of Pensacola, Florida as the lowest qualified bidder to complete Phase 1 of the District's strategic plan. In addition, consideration will be given to extension of the Studer Group's professional services to phase 2 and 3, following a successful completion of phase 1. The motion passed 5-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mrs. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Mrs. Pine voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Decision Items

Consent Agenda

Mrs. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed 5-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mrs. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Mrs. Pine voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Discussion Items

Discussion of Future Agenda Items

Mr. Messore announced that April 6th will be District Report Night

Mrs. Pine recommended that a second Student Representative to the School Committee be added, or that a single Representative be either a Sophomore or Junior. Mr. Messore explained that guidelines regarding the Student Representative are built into School Committee policy and would need to be reviewed at that level. The process of choosing next year's Representative is already under way.

Mrs. Brody requested a teacher absence data report be provided at the next School Committee meeting on April 6th.

Mrs. Brody explained the function of the District's Major Illness Bank Committee and asked that it's membership be discussed at the April 6th School Committee meeting.

Mrs. Brody announced that the RIASC Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 6th.

Mr. Alessandro requested clear direction be given to the Administration regarding the Committee's expectations for the athletics and student activities review of policies and procedures.

Announcements

Mrs. Pine thanked Dr. Dillon for helping to disseminate information regarding resources for students experiencing stress and other issues to the community via the District website.

Dr. Dillon stated that staff will be receiving training regarding the District's Transgender Protocol.

Public Comment

Mr. Tom Rimoshytus of 1 Howard St. asked if the Strategic Plan would include a facilities update. Mrs. Brody stated that it would. Mr. Rimoshytus also inquired about the special education bus, and asked if money is set aside each year for such purchases. Mr. Tarro stated that it is the goal of the District to save a little each year to minimize the impact of large capital expenses.

Mrs. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:03 p.m. and convene in Executive Session Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws: Section 42-46-5 (a) (2) for work session pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation with Barrington Education Support Team (BEST); and Section 42-46-5 (a) (3) for discussion regarding the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices. The motion passed 5-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mrs. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Mrs. Pine voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 10:20 and to seal the minutes. The motion passed 5-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mrs. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas, and Mrs. Pine voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Brody noted that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Mrs. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:30 p.m. The motion passed 5-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mrs. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas, and Mrs. Pine voting in the affirmative.