

**BARRINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BARRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BARRINGTON, RHODE ISLAND 02806**

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE 06/06/2019

A regular business meeting was held on Thursday, June 6, 2019 at the Barrington High School library. School Committee Chair Dr. Douglas called the session to order at 6:34 pm. Present were Dr. Douglas, Ms. Sevetson, Ms. Clancy, Mr. McCrann, Ms. Bae, Ms. Kuo, Mr. Messore, Dr. Dillon and Mr. Fiore.

Dr. Douglas led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Douglas recognized Josephine (JoJo) Kuo, Student Representative. Barrington is one of the few communities in Rhode Island that has a student representative, however, the value in having the student representative be the liaison between the School Committee and the students is invaluable. JoJo has been a consistently enthusiastic, inclusive and very well-respected member of the School Committee. Dr. Douglas expressed her appreciation for all her hard work and attending all the sometimes very long meetings.

All the other School Committee members expressed their appreciation to JoJo for all her hard work, her help with their tech challenges, her voice as a student and her commitment to representing her fellow students and her ease filling the position.

Mr. Messore also expressed his appreciation to JoJo. He stated that JoJo has been a very good representative for the students in expressing the viewpoints of the students. He described the role of the student rep as one being the students' voice and not to adhere to the adults that are sitting on the Committee and JoJo has done a very good job doing that.

Dr. Douglas presented a little token of appreciation to JoJo to take with her to Tufts.

JoJo thanked the School Committee and the Administration for the position. She felt that throughout the year she has grown into the position and realized how important it is. The Committee has respected everything that she has done and has guided her along. She has grown to appreciate more what the School Committee does.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sam Read - 220 Foote Street expressed that now that the start time initiative will be going through he would like the School Committee to share their statement of commitment, that they will be willing to be a team player and problem-solve through the year. He feels this would comfort those that have concerns with the start time initiative and that the Committee will hold responsibility for the initiative. He would also like to know if the Committee would be starting a transition plan for the seniors to start to wake up earlier in college. He also would like to know how the Committee plans to collect the data on the effectiveness of the new school start time initiative. Mr. Read asked Mr. Messore if he could respond to his concerns.

Mr. Messore stated that he will always be committed to teachers and students of the district, the operations of the district, preserving what we have in place and provide the best services we can to our students. Regarding the situations that happen outside the school district that he does not have control over, Mr. Messore stated that he is committed to provide support to students that seek out advice from the school district.

Mr. Messore stated that he will update the community as we move forward through the summer on the progress the district is making and what has been done to address some of the implementation parts in order to change school schedules.

Bill Barrass - 14 Peck Avenue expressed his concerns that he had earlier with the school start time initiative are still there and have not been answered. Some of his concerns are whether the teachers are going to be able to work with students in the morning and whether the clubs and activities can meet in the mornings. Teachers are uncertain on when faculty meetings will be held. Mr. Barrass expressed his concern regarding the athletics and when the sport teams are going to be able to practice and have their games. He has concern over the amount of time that the indoor track team will be able to have for practice and meets for the outdoor track. Will the early dismissal be allowed for those students that participate in sports.

Mr. Messore asked that Mr. Barrass send him his concerns and Mr. Messore will send out a communication answering some of the concerns. Mr. Messore also stated that some of the answers are on the FAQ page of the Barrington website.

Patrick Scott - English teacher at the High School stated that he did do the research and knows that students need more sleep. Mr. Scott stated he hadn't heard a comprehensive plan on how all the other issues that are related to student achieving more sleep are going to be addressed. He is concerned about just changing the school start time and not addressing the other issues around the student's mental health and he has not heard about any plans regarding this. He feels that the Committee needs to step back and take a more comprehensive look on what is going on around the schools and around the town. He feels that there is a need to look at the amount of AP classes that the students are allowed to take, the lack of attention with regard to the cell phone use and the responsibility use contract (esp. for computers) is largely ineffective.

Greg Beers - 10 Robbins Drive expressed his concern regarding a petition that was signed by the teachers which reflected they were not in support of the new start time initiative. Mr. Beers stated that he has not heard the Committee ever address the petition or the teachers concerns. Mr. Beers asked Mr. Messore if he remembers if the Committee has ever addressed the petition that was signed by the teachers.

Mr. Messore stated that back in 2011 there was an open forum regarding the school start time initiative, 3 years ago there was a guest speaker and then most recently there were table talk discussions.

Mr. Beers asked if the teacher petition could be included in the FAQ.

Mr. Messore stated that he would not include it because it was never sent to him by the teachers.

Mr. Beers asked as a representative for the teachers what it was that Mr. Messore shared with the School Committee.

Mr. Messore stated the spirit of being able to work together and collaboration is a priority of the administration, the School Committee and the teachers. A good educational system is built on everyone working together for our students whether it is educational or their interests activity wise. There was a discussion in Executive Session regarding the collaboration and the School Committee, however, because it was in Executive Session Mr. Messore was unable to discuss it any further.

Mary Roberts - 11 Adams Avenue read a statement that she wrote and shared in 2015. Ms. Roberts felt that nothing has changed since then. She feels that the concerns that she expressed then have not been addressed. Ms. Roberts expressed to the Committee that they have a third chance now not to move forward with the school start time initiative.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Mr. Messore stated that at the last School Committee meeting the district made a recommendation to the School Committee to meet the shortfall that the district had in the budget of \$246,000. With regard to all of the district's initiatives, the district holds equal importance to everything that the district recommends to the School Committee especially in line to academics. However, the recommendation is to defer the coaching position, defer some of the funds for the curriculum roll out for K-1, some savings through a differential replacement personnel in world language, and some reduction to defer some athletic equipment replacement (none of which would have any impact on academic play next year or having the necessary materials next year for the games and practices). Mr. Finn will still have some funds available to make some replacements for athletic equipment and uniforms for next year. Also, the reduction of the district's work with the strategic planning consultant, Studer Education.

Mr. McCrann wanted to acknowledge that through the work with the COA that the district has already cut the original budget by \$500,000. He feels that it might not be apparent to the community members that the money and the resources that we are giving our teachers and what we are asking them to achieve and our students to achieve is consistently pushed off to the next year because of tough fiscal choices that we have to make to do mandates from the State and other funded constraints that we have. Mr. McCrann urges that we find a place where we can publicly document what has been pushed back. (ex. The Wi-Fi replacement program which was a 5 year well-thought-out funded initiative that was cut and which will appear again in a future budget and it will look like a much larger number).

Ms. Kuo wanted to echo what has been said today about answering the questions that the teachers and students have been asking. Ms. Kuo stated that whatever the outcome of the vote she feels that there needs to be some public communication on what the next steps are.

Ms. Sevetson expressed that the last few weeks have been difficult for everyone who care about Barrington schools and students. She feels that everyone is coming from a place of wanting what is best for the students, whether for the new school start time or not. She commended the Administration for their hard work on addressing implementation issues around the change in school start times. Ms. Sevetson spoke to the teachers wanting them to know that their work in the classroom and beyond is valued. She is saddened that the situation has become divisive and is hopeful to move forward and

heal some of these divisions. Ms. Severson feels at the end of the day the strongest argument for her is that the student desire a successful and healthy school experience and it is our mission to empower all students to excel and we owe it to our students to give them all the tools to do so.

Ms. Bae read a statement addressing the parents, teachers, students and members of the community to let them know that she hears them and understands many of the concerns raised by each stakeholder group. She is hopeful in finding a way to engage in open and honest dialogue with teachers and staff, and all other stakeholders to find solutions to their concerns. She spoke of a Transportation Task Force to work on the concerns and to iron out other issues that may arise. The community will have an opportunity to be a member of this task force to be a voice and to actively work on solving these problems. Ms. Bae is also committed to developing a plan to measure the effectiveness of this change.

Ms. Kuo asked Mr. Messoro is there something in the teachers' contract if a teacher couldn't rearrange their schedules to accommodate the new times to prevent them from resigning.

Mr. Messoro stated that he would hope the building administrator along with himself would have a conversation with the individual. However contractually there is nothing to stop the teacher from resigning from their position.

Mr. McCrann stated that he has done his best to answer as many emails as possible. He would like everyone to know that their comments and emails have been heard. He understands that there is still a lot of work to be done. He feels that this has been a very challenging time for everyone, however that doesn't take away the importance of this decision. Mr. McCrann stated that he agrees with Sam Read and his comments. There is a lot of work to be done and he is committed to make this work.

Ms. Clancy stated that she shared her thoughts before at a previous meeting. She stated that no matter what the outcome of tonight's vote, she hopes as a community that all can work together no matter what the feelings are about this issue.

Dr. Douglas stated that what she heard tonight from people at the podium was more of let's find a way to address the problems then these are the reasons we shouldn't move forward. She understands that there are still many who are not at that place but the more we can get people to move into that place the more effective it will be. Dr. Douglas stated that Barrington is not the first school district to make this change to later start times. However, all of them have found ways to make it work.

Dr. Douglas hopes that we can move forward from here. She appreciates all the questions that are being asked.

Dr. Douglas has asked for a motion.

Ms. Severson moved to approve the amended Fiscal Year 20 budget that was presented by Superintendent Messoro. Ms. Bae seconded. The motion passed 4-1 with Dr. Douglas, Ms. Severson, Ms. Bae and Mr. McCrann voting in the affirmative and Ms. Clancy voting nay.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Douglas asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda including:

Minutes from the May 9th meeting

Appointments of Laura Donegan, Biology teacher for the High School

Kelly Zimmerman - One year contract as Grade 4 teacher at Hampden Meadows

Resignations of AJ Farina - Assistant Football, Wrestling and Boys Lacrosse coach at the High School,

Marvin Gordon - Boys Tennis Head Coach at the High School, Zachary Quaratella - Head JV Girls Soccer

Coach at the High School and Jason Shivley - Head JV Girls Basketball Coach at the High School.

Ms. Sevetson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Clancy seconded.

Mr. Messore welcomed Laura Donegan as a Biology teacher at the High school. Also, Kelly Zimmerman will be appointed as a one year teacher contract for grade 4 teacher. Due to enrollment changes her position was eliminated but she is able to come back to us as a one year.

Mr. Messore also wanted to thank the four coaches. AJ Farina is going overseas for the military. Marvin Gordon is off to pursue other interests. Mr. Messore thanked Zach Quaratella for his time as a JV Head coach for Girls Soccer. Also, Jason Shivley will be taking a position out of state.

The District will be in the process of posting those positions within the next week or so.

The motion passed 5-0 with Dr. Douglas, Ms. Sevetson, Ms. Clancy, Ms. Bae and Mr. McCrann voting in the affirmative.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Middle School Update 90% completion, cleaning crew are in the building

Advisory Reports

Financial Update

District Bullying Policy Update

Transportation Update

Library Update

Communication - start times, evaluation, measurements

Summer workshops

New Student Representative

Ms. Sevetson moved and Ms. Clancy seconded to adjourn the Business meeting at 7:47 p.m. and to convene in Executive Session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-5 (a) (2) for Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining with National Education Association Barrington (NEAB) and United Steelworkers. The motion passed 5-0 with Dr. Douglas, Ms. Sevetson, Ms. Bae, Ms. Clancy and Mr. McCrann voting in the affirmative.

The executive session was adjourned at 8:50 pm and the minutes were sealed.

Dr. Douglas reported that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Ms. Sevetson moved and Ms. Clancy seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:50 pm.

The motion passed 5-0 with Dr. Douglas, Ms. Sevetson, Ms. Bae, Mr. McCrann and Ms. Clancy voting in the affirmative.