

School Committee Meeting
May 8, 2019
6:00 p.m.
Frederick Hartnett Middle School

The Blackstone Millville Regional District School Committee met in the library of the Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Jane C. Reggio, Chairperson
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary
Tammy A. Lemieux, Member
Sarah E. Williams, Member
Caryn D. Vernon, Member
Jack R. Keefe, Member
Wendy L. Greenstein, Member

Mrs. Vinacco was absent this evening.

Also in attendance was Dr. Jason DeFalco, EdD. and Matthew J. Ehrenworth, Assistant Superintendent.

Mrs. Reggio said thank you to the teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week. Our goal as a District of One cannot be met without our teachers.

Mrs. Reggio stated this is potentially the last meeting for the Student Representatives. Thank you for the effort you put into reporting on student activities this year.

Report of Student Representatives

It is a busy month with A.P. exams beginning. All kids taking them are working really hard. The senior's year is beginning to come to an end. May 23rd is the last day for seniors. Graduation is on June 7th.

On May 4th the Wind Ensemble played at Symphony Hall. The Middle School concert will be held on May 21st.

Our tennis, softball and track teams are all doing well this season.

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. DeFalco introduced our new Food Service Director, Maureen Gonsalves.

Maureen stated she has been in food service her entire life. She currently teaches food safety courses at Framingham State College and has consulted for different school districts around the state.

Dr. DeFalco introduced Dr. Jenny Remka our new JFK/AFM Elementary School Principal beginning on July 1st.

Dr. Remka stated she will embark on improvement work at the Complex. She is so grateful for the opportunity to go back into the school setting to be with the students. She thinks outside the box and will work hard to bring the Complex to the next level.

There were no items for **Public Forum**

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Greenstein and unanimously voted to approve the Warrants.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Larkin, seconded by Mrs. Williams and voted 6 in favor, 1 abstain - Mrs. Greenstein to approve the Minutes of April 10, 2019.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Greenstein, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of April 24, 2019.

Regional Agreement update - Mrs. Williams stated the Request for Proposals for the agreement was posted. Once they collect all proposals they will hold a meeting of the Regional Committee.

Career Pathways presentation

Dr. DeFalco gave the BMR High School forecast and the direction they are taking. The work goal is to have students career ready. Students need both career and college opportunities.

The goal is to develop a collaborative model for Blackstone Valley School Districts to provide non-traditional course offerings that will expose students to career options, build industry skills and provide workforce opportunities that would be difficult in isolation.

Goal One

They will develop and implement a Manufacturing Class to be offered to Blackstone Valley students in FY20. This will be implemented and launched in the fall and located at Ed Hub in

Northbridge. The facility is quite remarkable. They have exposure to 3D printing, engineering and design. This will give students really transferable skills. They will be partnering with Uxbridge.

- Meet with teacher who will run the course
- Create the blended learning platform
- Collaborate with Uxbridge manufacturing hub
- Collaborate on transportation
- Recruit students for the pilot course
- Identify district liaisons to oversee our students

Idea is to start this one pathway and continue to replicate the model of Advanced Manufacturing I and II. They will end up with a certificate.

Goal Two

- Create an ongoing dialogue between local industry leaders and school and district leadership
- Establish industry and leadership relationship
- Leverage existing structures with Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Sub group establish professional connections with local industry leaders
- Leverage industry connections for hands on components
- What are the mechanisms to back up the internships.

Goal Three

- Expand course offerings as an ongoing process driven by local industry needs
- Catalogue of Blackstone Valley district's existing teaching talent/courses
- Identify and develop one course for FY21
- Place students in hands on training and internships
- Want kids to opt into other blended learning opportunities

Goal Four

- Identify and activate funding to support our college and career initiatives
- Working with political leaders in the blackstone valley. Districts earmark money in individual budgets.
- Meet with American Students Assistance
- Activate local private industry

They want fiscal support behind them by political leaders. Asked for \$100,000. Hoping to at least get a piece of this.

In future fiscal years there will be a request for additional funds. Possibly in FY21 and further.

American Student Assistance Group - mission to work with college graduates to get their financial house in order. Found large number of graduates had six figure debt and a degree they didn't want to work in. Back up the train way before college. Outreaching to find out what this career exploration looks like in middle school. Some career exposure in middle school. Don't expect kids to know just what they want to be. Goal is simply exposure and opportunity.

Goal Five

Communicate college and career opportunities to our communities. Develop and run an opportunity fair.

Connect with Masshire group - creates and sustains powerful connections between businesses and job seekers through a statewide network of employment professionals. Creates trust and reliability by connecting job seekers across the Commonwealth to quality education, skills training and employment opportunities.

Job Corp - Twenty five students did not have a plan for after high school so they took students to Job Corp where they look to qualify for certification program in different career development opportunities. Dr. DeFalco and Mr. Dudek visited the North Grafton site today. This is the post grad program. You can live there but you don't have to. They toured the cafeteria and the dorms and recreation areas. It is set up like a small college. If you qualify for free and reduced lunch it is at no cost to you. Each site offers different certification programs. One of the offerings is cyber security.

- Expand the colleges that attend by college fairs.
- Continue to develop private industry relationships.
- 5 actions steps or sub goals.
- Team working around this and very specific goals.

Dr. DeFalco is really excited with what this will look like over the next few years. Important to our district.

Home Health Care Aide Program

Early this week a timeline will be set to do prep work with students over the next couple of weeks and launch curriculum in June. They are scheduled to graduate in July.

They have identified 3 students in the senior class and are looking for juniors also. Seniors will graduate from High School in June and then start this program right after school graduation. There should be a small cost. Kids need to put something into it. It may be possible to reimburse them at the end when they successfully complete the class.

Principal Dudek and his guidance department are narrowing down kids that don't have after graduation plans. It was a targeted focus piece at first.

Progress made with leadership team on the blueprint development update. Objectives in all areas, strengthening curriculum, improve and build upon teaching and learning. What does this look like and what does it mean to do this. Set up a plan that means something to our families. Teaching in a manner so that kids will learn. Community can get their arms around it. Address bringing the communities back together and being a District of One. Four sub-committees have been set up. Everyone should have a voice in developing our blueprint of development. Concrete strategy.

In June they will have the actual document for the Committee to review and respond to.

Technology Reorganization

The District has eliminated the Director of Technology position. Mr. Ehrenworth put together request for proposals not to exceed \$40,000 for a contracted person to be in the District with the term agreement being July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020. The deadline is May 24th for applications. Services shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Development of a 3 or 5 year technology plan.
- Develop and/or refinement of various technology related policies.
- Oversight/Maintenance of internal servers, wireless networking, student information management systems, and other educational platforms that span five buildings within the District.
- Oversight/Management of a 1-1 chromebook initiative at the middle and high school levels.
- Direct oversight of four district employees

Sealed proposals are due in the Assistant Superintendent's office no later than 1:00 p.m. on May 24, 2019.

Unit C Evaluation Tool

This is an attempt to strengthen the Unit C evaluation tool. An MOA would go into specifics with the changes made to the evaluation tool. The performance rating would change. The current rating only has 3 indicators. They found the indicator language outdated. They added a column for development. Also changed the word unacceptable to not meeting expectations. If an employee is found to be less than proficient a reason why must be given.

Developing:

The employee meets the expectations of the essential job duties or performance characteristics in a manner that is not fully consistent with the school's mission and goals.

Note: If the evaluator identifies that the employee is less than Proficient in any of the outlined performance categories the evaluator is required to write a comment in the proper area.

All School Committee members were asked to sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District School Committee and the Support Personnel Association.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Greenstein and unanimously voted to amend the Unit C evaluation tool and remove the word unacceptable and replace it with not meeting expectations.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Larkin, seconded by Mr. Keefe and 6 in favor, 1 abstain - Mrs. Greenstein to enter into an MOA with Unit C to make changes to the current Unit C evaluation tool.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to allow Dr. DeFalco to sign off on the MOA with Unit C on behalf of the School Committee.

Public Forum

Joe Petrella - He is trying to understand the impact that the charter schools have on the school budget. He would like to see impact analysis on how it is affecting the budget and teachers.

Business Office Report

Mr. Ehrenworth reviewed the FY20 Preliminary Cherry Sheet estimates with the School Committee members. He discussed Chapter 70, Charter Tuition Reimbursement and Regional Transportation Reimbursement with them. He discussed the Cherry Sheet estimates, the Governor’s budget proposal and HWM budget proposal.

Blackstone-Millville Regional Budget update as of 5/8/19:

Initial Certified Budget	\$24,771,259
Pending Reductions to Budget	
Increased Charter School Assessment	\$252,405
Proposed Reduction to Blackstone Assessment	\$295,000
Resulting Reduction to Millville Assessment	\$112,008
Total Reduction to budget	<u>\$659,413</u>

School choice - Funds coming in \$234,721.
Funds going out \$603,000.

We are losing more students to charter schools - sending tuition is now \$452,000. Some of this is offset by charter school reimbursements.
We will lose \$250,000 in state aide from this charter school choice.

We are in conversation with our State Representatives. Dr. DeFalco stated that Representative Soter calls to let him know how things are going in regard to reimbursements.

Dr. DeFalco stated that we lost another 29 families due to the expansion of the Benjamin Franklin Charter School. A survey of the families stated that we are losing these students due to class size and curriculum resources and opportunities in our classroom.

We still have major challenges in front of us.

The Blackstone Board of Selectmen reduced our assessment by \$295,000. This reduction still needs to pass through the Blackstone Finance Committee.

We are facing a \$695,000 charter school budget that we need to address.

Millville Elementary is at half capacity and Hartnett Middle School has an entire floor they are not using.

Mr. Petrella feels these students should be here at BMR. He feels we have as much to offer as the Charter Schools. How did it get like this?

Dr. DeFalco stated that if this moves forward we will be facing major challenges if Blackstone does in fact reduce our assessment by \$295,000.

The Millville Annual Town Meeting and the Blackstone Finance Committee meetings will both be held on Monday, May 13th at 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Reggio stated that Blackstone Town Meeting will be held at the end of May. If they reduce their assessment amount we need to decide if we want to keep our certification the same if Millville votes to accept the amount we are asking for. We could also decide to reduce our certified amount and then it goes back to Millville and is reduced by \$112,000 there.

Dr. DeFalco will post an electronic pdf copy of the budget book.

Mrs. Greenstein said thank you to the Millville Finance Committee for meeting with us.

Mrs. Lemieux stated we were clear and transparent and certified our budget early and now literally five days before the Millville meeting this is the conversation that comes up about a reduction by Blackstone Board of Selectmen.

Mrs. Lemieux also stated we have no power over the charter school issues. The public wants us to change things so they don't go to charter school. Any plan you have won't look remotely the same now that you may have to cut \$659,000 and we would need to redo and rethink everything that we have already done. We have a great plan and it has been presented.

We are still negotiating with teachers and there is an impact there as well.

The Committee members would like to have babysitting available for the parents who would like to attend either of the meetings on Monday night.

Mr. Ehrenworth will check with the National Honor Society to see if they can provide the service to the parents.

Mr. Petrella stated that at the end of the day the District is meeting that requirement and we need to keep the dollars here instead of at the Benjamin Franklin Charter School.

The Governor is very strong on expanding charter schools and technical education.

Mr. Ehrenworth reviewed the handout given to the School Committee Members on the District personnel changes.

Mr. Ehrenworth also gave a revenue review and expenditure review for the end of the FY19 school year. He gave a comparison of what they anticipate collecting to what they anticipate spending for the remainder of the year.

Mr. Ehrenworth noted that due to custodial overtime we are negative \$53,000 in the custodial line.

He also stated that this budget review does not include offsets.

Mrs. Lemieux wants an offset line on the budget. Here is the money that we used to pay for something. She also asked to have the two sheets be put together instead of having them on separate sheets one for expenditures and one for revenues.

Mrs. Lemieux wants the clarification of athletics and of band. She wants the number that is in the FY19 budget column. She is asking if that truly is the athletic budget or is it that plus the unknown user fees. If there is an increase in fees does that mean that is the amount that they are allowed to spend by the increase.

Mr. Ehrenworth said no the increase in money from user fees would not increase what they are spending for the year unless there is a discussion on it.

Every expenditure is shown. They do not have a negative for offsets so far. If the total of athletics cost minus the gate fees takes them in the red then the general fund will pick up the negative.

Facility Report

They are currently working with the insurance company on the JFK/AFM roof. Information needs to be given to the insurance company but the building is insured by the Town. There is a crossover in who the company is dealing with. They should have a determination of coverage by the end of this week or beginning of next week. They may be saying there was faulty work on the repair of the roof.

MES Boiler - Mr. Ehrenworth presented to the Board of Selectmen in Millville and they did move to approve the project and move it forward to MSBA with the propane option.

There was a discussion that as long as we know which system we are going to use we could still send it forward with alternative options. It is easier to reduce the funding. The Town of Millville can make the decision to move forward with having the tanks closer to the building if they choose to. If they did this it may be because there would be an added cost of \$100,000 to have them further away from the school.

The footprint of propane is three times the size of the oil tanks that are down there. Wiring cable and excavation could increase the cost significantly. The Town did not want us in the woods because of the communication tower that Chief Landry wants to put in that area. They will try to make it all fit.

MSBA also has their say in which option they would like to see brought forward. It is ultimately Millville's decision. The tanks near the school meet the specs for safety. Underground water table levels in that area are high.

An option that is not viable is with using a pellet stove. We would need a supplemental unit for the shoulder months since it would not heat evenly throughout the year.

School Committee Forum

Mrs. Lemieux - congrats to students being inducted into the National Honor Society. All had a great time at prom and looking forward to graduation.

Mrs. Larkin - thank you to teachers.

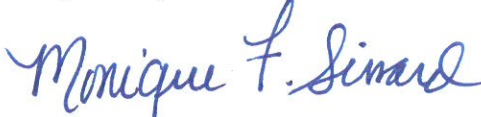
Mrs. Reggio - thank you Jenna and Danielle our student representatives.

The next meeting will be held on May 22nd at 6:00 p.m. and is a regular meeting.

The June 12th meeting will need to be changed. All members are available on June 13th.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: 
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary