

School Committee Meeting
April 24, 2019
7:00 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 7:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Jane C. Reggio, Chairperson
Erin P. Vinacco, Vice 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

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

There were no items for **Public Forum**.

Consent Agenda A

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Larkin, seconded by Mrs. Vernon and unanimously voted to approve Consent Agenda A which includes Warrants.

Presentation from Mass. Association of Regional Schools

Mrs. Williams led a discussion on seeking a consultant group to possibly amend the Regional Agreement.

A special guest and former executive director of the (M.A.R.S.) Mass Association of Regional Schools spoke. He is one of a 15 person consulting group.

M.A.R.S. would take the current regional agreement and review it. You do not open the agreement you amend the agreement and review state laws concerning regions. All parts of the regional agreement must be in compliance with state laws and regulations. An amendment is produced and they seek preliminary approval from the Commissioner of Education. The amended agreement is voted in each Town. Final approval by the Commissioner of Education is received.

The Current Regional Agreement was formed K-12 Regional in 1982.

The last time the agreement was amended was in 1998.

They are questioning what is on file with DESE.

Has the agreement been updated with amendments that have been approved by the Towns?

Does DESE have all the amendments?

This is an opportunity to update the agreement with all the amendments into one document.

The process to amend the Regional Agreement is to form a committee and elect a chairman and vice chairman and hire M.A.R.S. to work with them. A quorum of the school committee cannot be on the committee.

The Process entails:

Review of the current Regional Agreement for issues to amend.

Incorporate State Laws, DESE regulations and current practice.

Review and suggest amendments to the current Regional Agreement.

Produce an amended agreement which is presented to the School Committee.

School Committee votes to approve, not approve or change the amendment and updates to Regional Agreement.

Seek preliminary approval from Commissioner of Education.

Send agreement to Selectmen in each Town.

The Selectmen will place the article on the warrant at annual or special town meeting.

Voters approve or disapprove amended agreement.

If approved, signed agreement and certified votes are sent to DESE.

Commissioner approves amended agreement provided it is in compliance.

Regional Agreement must address all sections as outlined in MGL, Chapter 71 Section 14B.

All required sections must be up to date and corrected where necessary.

You cannot make any amendments that absolve any member town from past, present or future financial obligations.

Procedure: Initiated by RSC or 10% of voters, BOS put on warrant, and required majority vote of all member towns.

Why is this update important and needed?

Education Reform Act of 1993

New Laws and DESE regulations

Opportunity to update agreement to meet the current interests of the school district and the communities.

The entire document must be voted on, not portions of the document.

Why Amendment Process Facilitation?

Consultants familiar with amendment process.

Familiarity with multiple laws and regulations that need to be addressed.
Liaison between District and DESE.
Help with developing final product.
Work with District to re-order the agreement.
An Amendment Process requires careful thought.
Need to develop a significant community relations program.
Length of time to complete amended regional agreement depends on the significance of the issues.

Recommendation is to have DESE and legal assistance throughout the process.

M.A.R.S. have worked on 12 regional agreements in the past. They put powerpoint presentations together and will make sure the agreement is up to date.

Mrs. Reggio - would like to know the process for requesting his services and cost of that.

Put out a request for proposal. They charge \$90 per hour, per consultant, plus transportation. They would need someone to take minutes. It can be anywhere from \$10,000 - \$15,000. He will give them references to call.

Mrs. Vinacco - is there any guarantee to hiring him?

They worked on 12 agreements with 8 or 9 being successful. They have no control over the political aspects associated with this.

Mrs. Reggio - when we tried to do this in our communities they ran into more management issues.

Our communities will still have these questions. It's a governing document.

If they were hired they would get a copy of our agreement and call D.E.S.E. to see what they have on file. They would go through it step by step.

The group of stakeholders would review and come up with an amended agreement.

M.A.R.S. would go out and do the presentations. Sometimes they do the agendas as an outside party and an experienced group and they can calm down the meetings. They are a mutual party trying to help out as best they can.

The amendment process requires careful thought.

Need to develop a significant community relations program.

Length of time to complete amended regional agreement depends on the significance of the issues.

Recommendation is to have D.E.S.E. and legal assistance throughout the process.

We all have to come together for the best of the students.
They will give them a timeline to get the end result when they want it.

The first step is to see D.E.S.E. agreement and look over theirs and ours.
It was stated that D.E.S.E. has pulled what they have which does not match what we have.
They have amendments we have sent in that are not approved by the Commissioner. They are cooperative at D.E.S.E. and want you to go forward and not backwards. Our amendments were sent in but they just sat there and were not processed. They will create a clean copy and a starting point. The end result is what they will finally agree with.

When you review it with the people of the Town M.A.R.S. does a powerpoint presentation and explains what has changed so they can actually see it.

They could clean up the entire document and then the Towns vote no to moving students between the elementary schools. If they vote no on one item the entire document will not go through or forward. You try to go through the non-controversial issues and get through those first and after this is approved go back and go for the more controversial issues next.

Mrs. Reggio stated this is the great debate. The three lines essentially dictate the administration of students in the District. To change or amend them is a process of amending the agreement.

The Superintendent, School Committee chair and Assistant Superintendent go to the meetings with the M.A.R.S. group. Be careful what kind of situation you put your superintendent in between the two Towns. You cannot anticipate everything that will happen.

Mrs. Vinacco wasn't being funny when she asked about the guarantee.
M.A.R.S. seem to be the only group that do this.

They would like the all or nothing and fix everything all at once.

Our goal is to be sure we are legally in compliance with this.

Mrs. Lemieux - if one town does not approve the three lines we can go back and re-adjust and we are better off having some approved than nothing at all.

Dr. DeFalco - we are cleaning up everything and that is a very important process to follow.

The question was asked where would we get the money for this? Dr. DeFalco stated that we would be able to locate the resources for this.

Mrs. Reggio stated it is worthwhile to pay for this. The M.A.R.S. group have the experience.

Dr. DeFalco stated we could entertain a capped amount. We can come back to the Committee to get more funds later on.

Mr. Ehrenworth feels we should put it out to bid with a cap to see if anyone else has these skills. It may be possible to take the funds from E & D.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Greenstein, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted to put out an R.F.P. for the Regional Agreement not to exceed \$15,000.

Report of the Superintendent

Reorganization of the Technology Department

Current Model

1 Network and Integration Administrator - \$100,000
Computer/Network Technician - \$65,575
1 Computer/Network Technician - \$40,800
Total cost - **\$200,375**

Proposed New Model

Contract with outside technology provider - \$40,000
Computer Network Technician - \$65,575
District help desk technician - 2 at 40,800
Total cost - **\$196,375**
(savings of \$10,000)

Mrs. Lemieux asked do we go out for bid for the outside technology provider?

Mr. Ehrenworth stated we have used a company for some consultant work and they are fairly specific to the work they do and they would be able to give on-sight support at least one day a week. Request for proposals looks at qualifications versus going out to bid which looks solely at cost.

Mrs. Reggio is concerned to open up our system and let them in your system.

Mr. Ehrenworth stated that right now we have one individual and the security is maintained internally.

Mrs. Greenstein asked if you go with an outside provider do we have better access to improved security?

Mr. Ehrenworth stated that the goal would be to increase security.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mr. Keefe and unanimously voted to move forward with the proposed reorganization of the Technology Department.

Unit C Discussion

Dr. DeFalco stated they need to better align the Unit C evaluation tool with the Unit A tool. Unit C and administration would like to sit at the table and look at what the tool should look like. They would like to enter into conversations for an MOA. Once Dr. DeFalco gets the MOA it will then return to the School Committee for a vote.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Larkin - 7 in favor, 1 abstain Mrs. Greenstein to approve Dr. DeFalco and Unit C entering into discussions regarding an MOA for better alignment of the Unit C evaluation tool.

School Calendar Change

Mrs. Reggio stated that the Committee took a vote at our last meeting and it was signed by Unit A and Unit B that the last day of school will be Friday, June 14th as a full day of school and May 24th will be a half day for students and a full day for staff who will use the second half for professional development. A One Call Now will be going out tomorrow at 5:30 p.m.

Committee Forum

Mrs. Greenstein - Would like to remind everyone to go to the state house to support public education on May 16th.


Mrs. Lemieux - new cherry sheet list with new charter school number - put it on the agenda at the next meeting to see how it impacts our school.

BMR prom Friday night - hopes all have a good time and make it home safely.

The next meeting will be held on May 8, 2019.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:



Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary