

School Committee Meeting
February 13, 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
Erin P. Vinacco, Vice Chairperson
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary
Tammy A. Lemieux, Member
Jack R. Keefe, Member
Sarah E. Williams, Member

Caryn D. Vernon was absent from the meeting.

Also in attendance was Dr. Jason DeFalco, Superintendent of Schools and Matthew E. Ehrenworth, Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

There was no one present for **Public Forum**.

Report of Student Representatives

Danielle Catalano and Jenna Castelluccio gave information on the first jazz band competition to be held on March 6th. Student Council will go to the Cape Cod Conference from March 6 - 8th. The home game for girls basketball will be held on February 15th. Mr. BMR will be held on March 13th.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to approve Consent Agenda A which includes Field Trips and Minutes of the January 9th meeting.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to approve the use of the High School auditorium for the Dance Company benefit performance on May 17 and May 18, 2019. The request to waive the school rental fees is approved. The Dance Company is responsible for any custodial fees.

School Committee - at the last workshop the School Committee accepted the resignation of Bethany Dunton. They are looking to find a Blackstone resident to serve in the role until April 2020.

They will send a letter to the Blackstone Board of Selectmen.

They are creating a Regional Agreement Amendment Committee. They are looking for a Board of Selectmen member, Finance Committee member, parent and community member from each Town. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent will sit on this committee. It may be feasible to use a consultant from the Mass Association of Regional Schools. If interested please send an email to Mrs. Reggio.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco and unanimously voted to approve the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee and have Mrs. Williams as the Chairperson.

Report of the Superintendent

BMR Athletic Hall of Fame

The inductees into the 2019 BMR Athletic Hall of Fame are as follows:

Tony Killian - Community Member
Brett Buskey - Class of 2011 Track and Field
Kevin Powers - Class of 2006 Basketball
Michael Trudel - Class of 1992 Basketball
Leslie Kelly - Class of 1985 FH, Basketball, Track and Field

Superintendent's Entry Plan: Report of Findings

It includes the Why, The How and the What.
An Introduction to the Findings
General District Background and Overview
School District Mission, Vision and Core Values
Community, Achievement, Respect and Civility
School Committee, District Leadership Team, Student Enrollment and Demographics
Student Discipline and Attendance Summary
Facilities
Student Performance Data - MCAS 2.0 comparison data
Drop out rates
Advanced Placement Results
Summary of Conversations with Students, teacher and parents
Parent Feedback
Emerging themes - Curriculum and Instruction
Addressing the Needs of the Whole Child
Bringing the Community Together
What is Next?

General Patterns and trends. Enhancing existing curriculum, develop missing curriculum and secure the appropriate resources for both. Building on core teaching and learning practices, and focus on tiered intervention.

Create a Theory of Action and develop a blueprint for District Improvement in partnership with our Districts Leadership Team.

Establish a community promise.

Build School Improvement and Professional Development Plans with school based leadership teams.

There are 1750 kids, of that we only disciplined 70 and of that 54 were boys.

We are not getting under the surface of the issues. We do a good job at managing the issues. How do we be proactive and address the issues ahead of time. Not just the reactive stuff.

Mrs. Reggio - we have more students leaving than coming. Do we do any surveys of this?

We do not do any surveys at this time. Other schools are offering something different. We need our piece that makes us stand out from the pack. What is the speciality that we can bring to the table. What can we do to try and keep our kids here. It is hard to get them back once they leave.

In 2018 there were 27 male A.P. participants and 69 female participants.

Mrs. Reggio stated we also need to have a deep guide into the facilities as well. She wonders if they are school choicing elsewhere because they are better looking facilities.

Mrs. Reggio feels the document is pointed, she appreciates the push toward success.

Emerging Themes:

As presented by Dr. DeFalco

Curriculum and Instruction

The student performance data highlights both district strengths and opportunities for improvement. One of the main drivers behind the varied student performance levels is the district's wide array of curriculum development and the lack of a consistent curriculum creation process, and review and renewal cycle. A need for intentional and focused work in this area, and the fiscal resources prioritized to secure the necessary materials is critical. Additional time and space is needed for planning and working.

Addressing the needs of the whole child

The focus on addressing the needs of the entire child has continued to evolve as we define how to better help students achieve academic success. The old adage of “you can’t teach a child until you can reach a child has never rung more true. We are seeing across all our schools the need to address the non academic needs of students more directly. The idea of students simply being proficient alone is not enough. We must do our part as schools and the district to create happy and healthy students. Research is showing directly the impact social media has on the development of mental health issues in our youth, more specifically preteens and teens. The impact social media has on their self esteem and self confidence is significant while driving an increase in both depression and anxiety. With the use of social media and mobile technology our students can never truly unplug. And of course, there are other stressors in addition to this.

The impact our school ecosystem can have on the development of a child is tremendous and it is time we start taking a more proactive and strategic approach in BMRSD to assisting in the development of happy and healthy children.

It is often said in our schools systems that we cannot do this work alone. The schools in any community should be looked at as the life blood of the community. While there are many demands on municipalities and funding, the local school system absorbs the largest portion of the community’s budget in every municipal budget, the requirement and ask on the educators and leaders is no small task.

When the adults come together around a small set of goals for the youth it serves better things, good things, happen to kids. In BMRSD we must move past finger pointing and blaming one another. We must get to a place as adults where we live our district core values of community, achievement, respect and civility and come together around what we want our schools and district to be for the children and communities we serve.

From here, A Theory of Action will be created which will then push forward a Blueprint for Improvement developed by our District’s Leadership Team and educators for across the District which is outlined in Dr. Defalco’s Entry Plan presented in August 2018, and will be drafted over the winter and spring months to be presented to the School Committee in the Spring of 2019..

Mid Year Superintendent Evaluation

The data will be compiled and at the next meeting they will present an overall school committee evaluation of Dr. DeFalco’s performance at this point in the year.

Student Learning Goal

Dr. DeFalco gave a STAR testing result presentation.

Professional Practice Goal -

Focused Schools Framework, In District leadership team focus, Leadership weekly update and charger weekly instructional newsletter, leadership team currently participating in the survey, entry plan findings report, samples of regular communication with the school committee.

District Improvement Goal -

Star Beginning of Year Protocol, standing school visits, focused school packets, PD focus Areas, Writing Survey Teacher feedback, Johns Hopkins University Curriculum Survey, Overview of Science Curriculum development timeline update during March School Committee meeting.

Fiscal Management Monthly Fiscal reports and personnel reports, Complex and Central office reorganization timeline and FY20 new material and staff outline, December 2018 budget priority forecast, joint town meeting presentation, additional fiscal resources through grants.

Community Outreach - monthly community updates, family caregiver meetings, District of One events.

Special Education Reorganization -

The Superintendent is proposing a:

Director of Learner Support Services
Assistant Administrator of Special Education
Team Chairperson for Grades Pre K -2, Grades 3-6 and grades 7-12.

A total budget of \$407,518 - \$417,581 for an increase of \$7,517 - \$17,517.

Dr. DeFalco stated that the new alignment hires will be added to the roster of the Leadership Team.

He also stated that central office administrators do not only sit in Central office meeting with people. They are in the work. They are not sitting up in the balcony telling everyone what to do but actively participating.

There are 6 competing searches around us for Director of Learner Support Services. We need to start our search now.

Mrs. Vinacco feels that realigning is a step in the right direction. She also would like to see a better job description for our team chairs.

Mrs. Lemieux may not agree with all the components of the realignment but she does agree with the team chair reorganization piece.

School Committee Motion on Administrative Reorganization

MOTION 1:

It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Williams, six in favor, one nay Mrs. Lemieux that the committee hereby approves the job description for the Director of Learner Support Services (Special Education Director) recommended by the Superintendent.

MOTION 2:

It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco, six in favor, one nay Mrs. Lemieux that the committee hereby approves the restructuring of administrative services provided at the Special Education office by eliminating one team chair and realigning those dollars by adding an Assistant Administrator for Special Education Services in which will report to the Director of Learner Support Services (Special Education Director.) The plan of administrative reorganization recommended by the Superintendent, to be effective July 1, 2019, subject to impact bargaining obligations with affected employees bargaining representatives and, further, approval of the creation of new positions consolidating duties and responsibilities, all as recommended by the Superintendent. Each new position to be posted as required by applicable contracts or Committee policy.

MOTION 3:

It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted that the committee hereby approves the job description for the Assistant Administrator of Special Education recommended by the Superintendent.

Business Office Report

Mr. Ehrenworth stated that the State Budget is a long and strange budget process. The Governor's budget is his best estimate of where we should put our starting figures. There is a Regional District alliance whose goal is pushing for full funding of circuit breaker. Gain some traction in the offices. Appeal of full regional transportation- no one thinks this will go forward. There is a movement toward the Senate House budget using a different formula that may shift more responsibility on Chapter 70 and away from the local communities.

Report of Assistant Superintendent

Finance overview - spending extra in the custodial line. A few variances but we are in a healthy position right now.

Cost Center review - all is going according to plan.

Mr. Ehrenworth will do further digging to break out every cost in the transportation line as asked by Mrs. Vinacco.

Revenue Report - separated the debt services information. They have received approximately 50% of the anticipated revenues.

Personnel Update - The Food Service Director, Lynnea Gleason has given her resignation. Mrs. Gleason has told Dr. DeFalco that she feels her position should have been a full time one and she recommends this for the future. Dr. DeFalco feels that Mrs. Gleason was trying to get a healthier menu and she had many responsibilities.

Mrs. Reggio would like to investigate this request further.

Mrs. Lemieux believes that it may have been problematic because she was new and she had an increase in her duties over those of the previous Food Service Director. She may not have been delegating as much at this point.

Mr. Ehrenworth did state that the cost of snacks seems to be low and he received a request to increase the cost of our snacks.

Mrs. Vinacco feels that the last food service director was part time for the last 10 years. She doesn't understand why it now needs to be full time.

Facilities - schematic design is going well. It is very preliminary.

The JFK project is moving along. The sub bids will be due soon. The hope is to have the bulk of project done through the summer. There is a backorder on windows. We may need to figure out a schedule during the work year.

High School fire alarm - They were supposed to have completed the design by the end of this week.

Mrs. Vinacco asked how often are the smoke alarms checked at this point. It has been here a year now. He believes the system started working again. He will check with the chief. It was back online but they were worried about it and need to replace it.

Mrs. Vinacco believes that if a fire happens in the night there is no call to the fire department.

School Committee Forum

Mrs. Reggio received a request for the scholarships from the Committee. If so how much are they for and will they choose the recipient. They decided to let the scholarship committee choose and keep it the same.

Mrs. Lemieux said congratulations to winter athletes.

Mrs. Williams - summit learning tour - she encourages parents and teachers to go and check it out. A teacher showed her the screen to see how the platform looks. It shows you where a student is struggling to meet a standard.

She feels it is a good tool for differentiated instruction and we need more tools for personalized learning.

Next meeting is on February 21st for a budget workshop.

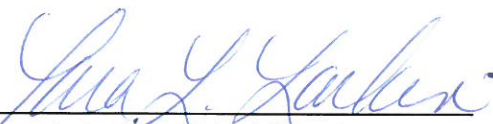
The next regular meeting will be held on March 13th at 6:00 p.m.

Motion: At 8:45 p.m. it was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Williams to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of conducting strategy with respect to collective bargaining and not to return to the regular meeting. This was followed by a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard, Recording Secretary

ATTEST: 
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary