

School Committee Meeting
September 19, 2018
7:30 p.m.
BMR High School Media Center

The Blackstone Millville Regional District School Committee met in the media center of the BMR High School at 7:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Jane C. Reggio, Chairperson
Erin P. Vinacco, Vice Chairperson
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary
Caryn D. Vernon, District Treasurer
Tammy A. Lemieux, Member
Jack R. Keefe, Member
Sarah E. Williams, Member

Bethany Dunton was absent from the meeting.

Superintendent, Dr. Jason DeFalco and Assistant Superintendent, Matthew Ehrenworth were also present at the meeting.

Public Forum - Patty Rodriguez wanted to invite all to the upcoming Home Show with complimentary passes. The name of the show is Young and Beautiful. It will be held at the Medway High School beginning at 6:00 p.m. Blackstone-Millville will perform at 9:00 p.m.

Report of the Student Representatives

Danielle Catalano - They had a great start to community reading day last Friday. The elementary meet the teacher nights were last night. The high school meet the teacher night was this evening.

Jenna Castelluccio- The marching band took 1st place this past Saturday. The Homecoming will be held on the 29th with a bonfire at night. The Homecoming dance will be held on the 28th.

Consent Agenda A - It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Vernon and unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of August 16th and September 5th as well as the warrants.

School Committee Report

The School Committee meeting structure has changed. Small group committee work is important to the functioning of the school committee. There will still be 2 meetings per month. One meeting will be held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. The second meeting will be held

on the 4th Wednesday of the month which will be a non-televised workshop. They will try this format until January and re-evaluate at that time. All meetings will be live and all held at the middle school.

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. DeFalco - over the past few months he spoke about Focus Schools and the need for us to bring into BMR this structure around teaching and leadership from the ground up. She joined us for our leadership retreat. She has been in the District for the past few days.

Focused Schools

She held the first instructional leadership training today with the principals. They will eventually invite teacher leaders.

She was an educator in Illinois for 21 years. She works across the country to make a difference in the lives of kids.

Focused framework - 7 principles and 7 beliefs. Move closer to a results based system.

A video was shown.

Teachers empowerment, collaboration, focus and alignment. These are power words that show us how to work smarter.

Theory of Action, Leadership, Literacy, Rigor and Innovation is an example of a school districts theory of action.

Framework 1 - identify and implement a school wide instructional focus.

Framework 2 - professional collaboration teams improve teaching and learning for all students.

Framework 3 - identify, learn and use 3-5 evidence based instructional practices.

Framework 4 - create a targeted professional development plan building expertise in selected evidence based practices. Makes it consistent.

Framework 5 - realign resources, people, time, talent and money to support instructional focus.

This says that the principals need to be in the classroom at least 50% of the day. They will be out giving feedback to the teachers.

Framework 6 - engage families and the community in supporting the instructional focus.

Framework 7 - create an internal accountability system to inspect what we expect.

Mrs. Vinacco. - Is there a good time to schedule this in when they are building the school calendar and p.d. days? Are the days better at the beginning or the end?

Kerry feels it is beneficial to disperse them throughout the calendar. Teach a little and do a little.

Mrs. Reggio - words to use to get teachers to be sold on this. The single most important person is the teacher in the building. They need the professional space to talk about teaching and learning. Give them the tools as best to utilize their time.

Mrs. Lemieux would like the powerpoint link.

Dr. DeFalco - work around developing the teaching and learning.

New Superintendent Presentation

Dr. John Brackett is Dr. DeFalco's coach. He attends monthly new superintendent induction days.

It is an honor for him to work with Dr. DeFalco over the next three years. This is the largest group of new Superintendents in the program. He has been working with him since July. This is his first year in this particular program. It has structure to it. There is a curriculum that they follow and expectations are set. Dr. DeFalco completed an entry plan and this is part of his work on gathering information and turning it into something that looks like a strategy. They think that the most important interaction for kids is the teacher and second important influence is the principal and they feel that the superintendent is a leader of learners. It is hard to get their head around this because there are so many other things to do. They try to keep them super grounded and focused on learning.

Help the superintendent to develop a deep understanding around the skills of thinking and using strategy. How you think, plan and make decisions. Help the superintendent keep the focus on teaching and learning. He hopes each superintendent will develop a tightly focused high impact focus school in a 3 to 5 year improvement strategy. Develop the leadership capacity in the schools by developing strong working relationships with staff, unions, administration, school committee and community.

He will meet 8 days over the course of the year with the superintendent to develop his leadership skills. He never tells him what to do. He is available to help him talk things out and think things through and to provide a little feedback along the way. All superintendents who are a part of it become successful superintendents. They will modify the curriculum so that he can move at the pace that makes the most sense for BMR.

Over the 8 days 41 new superintendents will get together and work on curriculum over time. He will spend 6 hours a month with Dr. DeFalco.

Mrs. Reggio thanks him for what he is doing. She learned of this program a year ago and that she wanted the new superintendent to participate. To have that mentor and coach is an important job. He found a mentor that he has really connected with.

MA Next-generation accountability system

New statewide accountability system. A new system is in place to provide information about school performance and student opportunities beyond test scores. To give accountability percentiles and progress toward targets. Focus on raising the performance of each school's lowest performing students in addition to the performance of the school as a whole. Replace the accountability and assistance levels 1-5 with accountability categories that define the progress that schools are making and the type of support they may receive from the Department.

There are 2 components to the process. They are how we do against everyone else and how we do against ourselves.

Focus on raising the performance of each schools lowest performing students.

MA is doing incredibly well with our top performers but have the biggest gap with the schools lowest performing students. We have got to lift the floor of achievement.

The leveling system is gone. There is a new way of measuring this.

We are seeing a change in certain areas.

ESSA requires states to include the following indicators in an accountability system:

- Academic achievement based on annual assessments in ELA, Math and Science.
- A measure of student growth or progress for elementary and middle schools.
- Progress in achieving english proficiency for english learners.
- At least one measure of school quality of student success.

Accountability Indicators - non high school and high school will measure achievement, student growth, high school completion, english language proficiency and chronic absenteeism.

Sophomores will take a much more challenging MCAS this coming Spring.

Normative Component - actual percentile - with the new 2.0 mcas exam, grades 3 - 8 are all in the same bucket. They are all recalibrated using the same type of scoring system. Across the Commonwealth there tends to be a dip in achievement in middle school.

Elementary percentiles are increasing because they are in with the middle school and the middle schools percentiles are dipping because they are in with the elementary schools.

Criterion referenced component - our data will be released publicly soon. How are we doing at growing our own achievement against ourselves? Looking at 2 groups of students. Measured as all students and measured by our lowest bottom 25% of students.

The low performing students have the furthest to grow and can be awarded quite a few points for showing growth. Sometimes they are carrying the progress of the District.

MCAS 2.0 is a very PARCC like test.

If they are at the top they can still grow.

Mrs. Lemieux feels the middle kids get lost. The app is there for the top achievers and intervention is there for the bottom achievers. We need to keep the average students in our thoughts.

Growth is not counted as much as achievement is. It is a 3:1 ratio.

Schools will be placed into categories. No longer have levels in schools. They will be categorizing as meeting targets, partial meeting targets, focused targeted supports and broad/comprehensive support. Schools of Recognition will be those that are demonstrating high achievement, significant improvement or high growth.

BMR was a level 2 district. We were given the categorization based on our lowest performing school.

The district data will be run like a large school which makes a lot of sense.

Mrs. Vinacco - what is being mailed to parents to explain what is being presented to them?

Dr. DeFalco will have the student reports on Friday for us to prepare and send out to schools and mailed home. There will be an informational on how to read the results. They will do two across the towns. It will be a state of the schools night. They have an all out strategy on how to get the information out.

The principals have come up with plans on how they are sharing their data with their teachers.

The lowest performing group has already been identified.

Report of the Assistant Superintendent

Template for how they will present the budget and keep the school district updated. They will bring salaries at the next meeting. He met with Jill Tosti to talk about what the expenditures are for the athletics program.

He and Dr. DeFalco will meet on this periodically to see where they are spending.

Mrs. Vinacco asked if revenue will be on a separate page.

Mr. Ehrenworth will try to put in a section on revenues.

Cost center report, salary spend down and revenues.

Facilities report - major facilities issues. Unexpected occurrences. Thanks to the custodial staff, the communities and families. They tried to make sure that the challenge was not faced by the students.

The HS sewer drainage problems and leaching into the fields. DPW worked with us and a specialist came in. We have a dual pumping system. Both pumps failed.

AFM/JFK - septic system issues - initial pumping required on both sides as well as clogging and plumbing issues. It is not 100% taken care of at this time. They are trying to identify where the issue is. This is a separate issue from the spring. These are August bills.

They need a long term facilities plan.

AFM mold issue - remediation - The cost is \$73,000 after they went back and forth with the company about the initial estimate that was in the \$50,000 range. They did reduce the bill by \$10,000.

A large chunk of this should be covered by the Town of Blackstone's insurance.

AFM burner issue. Possible leaks and repairs were done.

MES water - they believe it may have been a water gauge or a crack in the tank. The last they checked the water level hadn't gone down. They did replace the meter on it. All expenses have been incurred by the Town.

They put facilities on the agenda for the meeting of Sept. 26th.

School Committee Forum

Mr. Keefe - he stated that the selectmen are aware of the joint meeting.

Mrs. Lemieux - They should know in December if they are selected for the High School core renovation project.

Mrs. Vinacco - invite to visit her at the candy gram booth at the music homecoming. Have a safe night and great homecoming dance.

Mrs. Reggio -thanks Kerry Purcell and John Brackett who spoke tonight.

The next meeting will be held on September 26th - It will be a joint meeting of the selectmen, finance committee and school committee.

Wednesday, October 10th will be the next regular meeting.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard, Recording Secretary

ATTEST: 
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary