

**School Committee Meeting**  
**June 26, 2018**  
**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  
Caryn D. Vernon, District Treasurer  
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary  
Tammy A. Lemieux, Member  
Jack R. Keefe, Member  
Bethany B. Dunton, Member  
Sarah E. Williams, Member

Also in attendance was Allen W. Himmelberger, Superintendent of Schools.

**YMCA Family Partnerships**

Beth Gailor from the YMCA spoke about the programs offered for the JFK school in the fall. Mrs. Gailor has worked in the program since 2000. It is open to Blackstone and the surrounding towns. The children will come to the school for 60 to 90 minutes one day per week along with their parents. They will be involved in STEM and other activities. This is grant funded by Early Education and Care. They want to accommodate more of the younger children who have no early childhood experience.

They are looking to start the program at 9:30 or 10:00 in the morning and accommodate about 12 students.

Mr. Tringali is looking at a vacant classroom at the end of the B wing. Parents and children could come in by the back entrance with only minimal interruption.

The program would take care of materials, tables, chairs and cleaning of the area.

They cannot serve families from RI since it is a MA grant.  
They have an online registration policy by lottery.

Adults need CORI's and would have someone at the door to greet them. The CORI will be provided by the School District.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Dunton and unanimously voted to allow the YMCA grant funded family partnership program on a trial 6 week basis pending all adults receiving a CORI.

There were no items for Public Forum.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to approve Consent Agenda A which includes warrants and field trip requests.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mr. Keefe, 7 in favor, 1 abstain Mrs. Williams to approve the minutes of the June 14th meeting.

### **Discussion of the Roof Projects Completion and Closeout**

The JFK Roof project was completed under budget by \$104,299. The MSBA reimbursement to support the project totaled \$1,268,503. The net borrowing for the Town of Blackstone on this project was \$1,602,533. The net total variance on the project amounted to \$190,602 which will need to be returned to the Town with a School Committee Vote.

The BMRSD roof was overspent by \$164,166. The MSBA reimbursement to support the project was \$1,356,228. Over the course of the project the District assessed the Town \$1,634,111. The final net result of the project resulted in an unfavorable variance of \$1,452 which will need to be reimbursed by the Towns in a future capital assessment in the respective proportional share, with a school committee vote.

The Millville Roof project was completed under budget by \$155,499 as shown by comparison to budget. The MSBA reimbursement to support this project totaled \$685,157. Total borrowings for this project totaled \$646,814. The final net result of the project resulted in a net unfavorable variance of \$9,494 which will need to be paid to the District with a school committee vote.

The JFK project is well on its way at the point where Blackstone Town meeting approved 4.6 million dollars for the project.

**Blackstone-Millville Regional School District School Committee**  
**Motion to authorize the borrowing for JFK Accelerated Repair Project**  
**On Thursday June 28, 2018**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted that the Blackstone Millville Regional School District hereby authorize the borrowing of the amount of \$4,611,588 for the purpose of paying costs of windows, doors and boiler replacement project at John F. Kennedy Elementary School located at 200 Lincoln Street Blackstone, MA, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the "Project"), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended at the direction of the Blackstone Millville Regional School District School Committee. To meet this appropriation the District is authorized to borrow said amount, under and pursuant to Chapter 71, Section 16(d), of the General Laws and the District Agreement, as amended, or pursuant to any other enabling authority; and that any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount. The District acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District; provided further that any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA shall not exceed the lesser of (1) Fifty seven and 74/100 percent (57.74%) of eligible, approved Project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA, and that the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to this vote shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA.

They are currently waiting on word from MSBA for the requested High School project.  
The AFM project request was not approved by MSBA.  
The windows and doors were not approved for MES by MSBA.

**FY19 budget discussion**

Superintendent Himmelberger stated that it was an extremely challenging budget. The School Committee could recertify at the lower number or hold a Districtwide Super Town meeting. This meeting would be held at the end of July and would require a simple majority vote to pass or not pass.

With the assistance of Business Manager, Wen Cobb the Superintendent stated that they feel they can take \$68,000 from our E & D account and use the increase in Chapter 70 funds to

offset the negative balance. This is an alternative plan as well as a financial burden on the School District. The towns of Millville and Blackstone would then have lower supplemental responsibilities. The offset is \$138,000. This would mean a new motion.

They just received their total reimbursement from the State for FY18 and received more than expected.

Our E & D would be left at about \$220,000 left over before we put the funds in.

Our E & D would be at 2.5%.

**There are 3 options on the table as follows:**

1. recertify and adopt budget based on lower amounts.
2. ask for a distribwide meeting to let both towns set a budget for next year which the School Committee could then certify or not certify. The District would go into a 1/12 budget process.
3. recertify at the same number as we have but do the above by taking \$68,000 from our E & D account and use the increase in Chapter 70 funds to offset the negative balance. This is an alternative plan as well as a financial burden on the School District. The towns of Millville and Blackstone would then have lower supplemental responsibilities. The offset is \$138,000.

Wendy Greenstein - Blackstone-She asked if we recertify at a lower number is the class size going to remain at 28.

The Superintendent feels it will be in this range.

Mrs. Reggio stated that any additional money above and beyond would first go to the reduction in class sizes.

Mrs. Vinnacco asked why are we just now talking about using E & D funds?

Superintendent Himmelberger stated that E & D fluctuates. We just found out this past Monday that we will have additional funds.

Mrs. Vinnacco wants to be sure that the additional funds go towards teachers and she does not want to use our E & D.

**Mary Boisseau of Blackstone** - please use the additional funds in the debt we already have and bring teachers back into the classroom.

Resident -If option 2 means go to a super town meeting. She would prefer to go with the super town meeting and not certify at a lower number.

**Paul Ouellette** - Millville soon to be ex Chairman of the Finance Committee - he likes option 3. It kind of makes everybody happy and satisfies the needs before us.

**Jennifer Gill** - Millville -does not want a super town meeting - since the number can be amended on the floor the super town meeting could mean that the number could go higher. She agrees with Mr. Ouellette.

**Cecilia Doyle** - JFK teacher - wonders if she can get an exact number of positions at JFK. Mrs. Reggio said they still do not know. They have not certified the budget and have no bottom line yet. The only commitment made is that class sizes are their first priority.

They will discuss each option from a standpoint of our mission, to educate the children in our District.

They received numerous emails to go to super town meeting.

In an email sent to Mrs. Reggio, Dr. Defalco stated he feels they should do what Mrs. Cobb wants them to do. He feels this is the best option. He wants to stop a deeper battle.

If there is a Super Town meeting the Boards of Selectmen from both towns come together to decide on a date and get a mutual moderator and check with town clerks so they can be present. The cost of the meeting is paid by the School Committee. Whatever the motion on the floor is it still comes back to the school committee for a vote on that budget. We will need to go to the state to ask for monthly payouts of 1/12 of the budget.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vernon, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco and unanimously voted to eliminate Option #1.

Mrs. Vinacco asked what type of strain would it put on the District if we go to super town meeting. We don't have any large purchases in this budget so why such a strain.

Mr. Keefe feels it is irresponsible if we do not consider the Towns financial situations. It is not our intention to hurt Millville's budget. We need to spend our E & D money and go with Option #3 and not Option #2.

Mrs. Lemieux feels that the notion is that this money we just found out about is additional money, but it is not. She feels they dramatically cut our original budget so this is not extra money. We need every penny we can get. We have tried to play nice in the sandbox but at some point something has to give. She appreciates the difficulty of the 1/12 budget. The challenges of 25 kids in a classroom is very difficult. Do not use E & D to offset someone else's issue. There were 72 citizens who reached out to her and 66 of them urged for a town meeting.

Mr. Keefe feels your name is on the ballot for both Towns. If the problem persists nothing will change in Millville. Their issue is our issue.

Mrs. Vinacco feels that Millville had the opportunity to increase their revenue and they chose not to. Millville needed an override in 2011 but they chose not to. It does affect each kid in our District.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco to readopt our budget as it stood on May 30th and go with Option #2 and go to a super town meeting. The assessment is \$897,311 to Blackstone and \$337,804 to Millville. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Williams.

The cost for the meeting would be between 3,000 to 5,000 paid for by the School Committee.

Mrs. Reggio will not entertain the motion at this time. She wants all to be careful when looking at numbers. Percentages are difficult. She agrees with Mrs. Vinacco that communities had the opportunity to right size their budget and cannot blame it on the school district.

Mrs. Dunton is very torn on this decision. She wants the extra money to reduce class sizes but wants a fresh start for Dr. DeFalco.

Mrs. Williams does not want to take from E & D to balance the budget.

Mrs. Reggio stated the Superintendent Himmelberger has the best interest of our District at heart and Dr. DeFalco is in agreement with him. She is torn. She is leaning toward not going to a super town meeting.

Mr. Keefe feels we are all in the same boat together.

#### **Public Forum -**

**Mr. Tringali - JFK Principal** - he is not sure where to go with it. It is tempting to grab the E & D money but all it takes is one issue to need the E & D money. How will they get through this winter with the boiler they have. We need to have a decision made and a budget soon.

**Superintendent Himmelberger** - we are asking for \$68,000 to make this budget work and move forward. He urges all to come together and start off on the right foot.

**Dan Keefe - Blackstone** - he believes Option 3 is a very good compromise. In the current situation your May 30th budget will be met by Option 3. With a superintendent leaving and one coming in he does not want a super town meeting or district wide community meeting. The super town meeting could potentially reduce the number and he doesn't feel it is worth it.

**Wendy Greenstein - Blackstone** - the overall goal is to do what is right and in the best interest of children, not the compromise of one town against another town.

Mrs. Lemieux said that the District is always two out of district placements away from using all of our E & D funds. We need that money in case that student moves in. It is not additional money since we already cut what we thought we needed to run the district property.

We have refunded ourselves with that money over the last five years. She is disappointed that the E & D money was not brought up until now. We did not know this was coming tonight. We are here to be sure that the students get what they need. Any additional funds are to be used for teaching staff.

The motion on the floor is currently to adopt the May 30th budget and move forward to a District Wide Community meeting. The vote is 6 in favor, 2 opposed, Mrs. Reggio and Mr. Keefe.

Allen Himmelberger asked the Committee to move roof project closeout and the surplus to the next meeting.

### **School Committee Forum**

**Mrs. Williams** - thank you for all who reached out for or against the super town meeting. We need to come together. It's a difficult process and try to work for the betterment of the district and the two communities.

**Mrs. Dunton** - it is difficult and she takes this very seriously.

**Mrs. Lemieux** - education is important and she wants to have the resources to build the love of learning. She wants to do what is best for kids.

**Mrs. Larkin** - lives in Millville and feels it is not easy to watch the strains being put on or kids. We need to try to help all of them.

**Mrs. Vinacco** -inquired about the special education director position which has been posted internally.

**Mr. Keefe** -when it is all said and done he hopes Millville will not have to reduce fire and police.

**Mrs. Reggio** - hopes that all registered voters will show up at the Districtwide Community Town meeting. Thank you to Superintendent Himmelberger. We are a better district for having him here.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Larkin, seconded by Mrs. Dunton and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Monique F. Simard*

Monique F. Simard, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:   
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary