

**School Committee Meeting
April 14, 2016
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 Superintendent Himmelberger chairing for the Reorganization and election of officers with the following members present:

Erin P. Vinacco
Wendy L. Greenstein (departed at 7:30 p.m.)
Jane C. Reggio
Georgette A. Jarret
Steven J. Tringali
Tara L. Larkin
William F. Chaplin, Jr.

Also in attendance was Assistant Superintendent of Schools, David Thomson, Ed.D.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Jarret, seconded by Mrs. Greenstein and unanimously voted to nominate Erin Vinacco as Chairperson.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted to nominate Wendy Greenstein as Vice Chairperson.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Jarret, seconded by Mrs. Greenstein and unanimously voted to nominate Tara Larkin as Secretary.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Greenstein, seconded by Mrs. Jarret and unanimously voted to nominate Jane Reggio as Treasurer.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Tringali, seconded by Mrs. Reggio and unanimously voted to nominate Wen Cobb as Assistant District Treasurer.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mr. Tringali and unanimously voted to nominate Long & DiPietro as District Council.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Greenstein, seconded by Mrs. Reggio to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of union and non-union negotiations and to return to the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. This was followed by a roll call vote.

At 7:00 p.m. the regular School Committee meeting resumed.

Winter Sports Update:

The girls basketball team did well and were one win away from districts. They have come a long way and worked a lot harder this year.

Softball is going well. There are twelve girls on varsity softball.

They want gym time for off season work. It is hard to try and schedule this now but they could do it for the summer.

The Stampede was their fan club. They would like to spread the word on it.

The boys basketball team had a bit more success towards the end of the season.

The boys indoor track team went undefeated in dual valley for boys track. They are division five. They qualified for all states. They set school records this year.

Overall girls indoor track have been successful. One of the girls went to all states.

Student council event spirit day of unity and color in memory of the Boston Marathon.

May 31st – senior class trip.

Band news – finals – Winter guard placed 4th at NESBA - drum line received 3rd place.

July 5th - Band will play at a Red Sox game.

Wrapping up classes.

AP meeting for sophomores.

Over 200 tickets were sold for prom.

MIIA representatives gave a presentation. Joe, Chris, Sandra and Ken were present from MIIA. They were here for insurance regarding increases and financial issues.

Mrs. Vinacco listened to the Millville meeting and feels that they had nothing good to say about the school district. She was offended by the comment they made about the Committee and District not caring.

MIIA has put together some thoughtful solutions. They are non-profit. They formed a risk pool which is what we participate in. They also formed a liability pool and now they have a health trust.

They have tools available to them. They will band their renewals. They guarantee what the minimum or the maximum will be. This gives us the ability to budget and not deal with huge changes.

This year the minimum increase was a 4 and the high was a 12.8.

They brought the most updated loss ratio information- they normally do not give this to anyone but they made an exception in this case. They need to keep the trust balanced.

Your renewal is based on your HMO and PPO plan.

PPO is running at a 110 percent loss ratio. HMO is running at 100 percent loss ratio.

Most underwriters consider 88 to 90 percent to be a breakeven point.

About 20 percent of their members are at the 12.8 percent increase point that we are at.

The PPO plan is prone to large swings.

They take this very seriously and any money they have in surplus at the end of the year goes into a reserve. They keep 3 to 4 months in reserves to pay claims.

They have subsidized the school district thinking it would turn around but it has not.

There are many new prescription drugs at unbelievably high costs. The cost in the United States is so much more than they are paying anywhere else in the world.

MIIA uses the schools experience to develop our rate. We do not have a set community rate.

2013 - 2.25% rate increase, 2014 – no rate increase , 2015 5% rate increase – over this time the low estimate for the medical trend was 7% per year for medical inflation and the RX trend has skyrocketed.

Keeping kids on insurance longer really doesn't have an impact because 26 year olds are very small users of the insurance plans.

The proposed increase of \$335,000 is the equivalent of 6 teachers in our district.

The Committee is going to have to explore every option at this point.

Large claims are not driving this. Rates are pretty low. The low increases in the past 4 years are causing problems for us. The plan is underfunded due to our low past increases.

They will give the District options available to get the percent lower.

The District budgeted 6 percent. Going forward they should budget 10 percent.

Their peers are managing it with plan design. They can custom design the current products.

Superintendent Himmelberger wants to sit down and look at the plan design very soon.

They will get together the week of April 25th to talk about plans within the offerings of MIIA.

The purpose of the trust is to have rate stability without huge swings.

Mr. Chaplin said they will explore other options. They are not blaming anyone but they need to do what they need to do to do due diligence and look at GIC as well.

Blue Cross gives them the lowest administrative rate due to having a large population.

They have a customized limited network. It is a very good solution.

Blue Cross currently has 50 percent of the Massachusetts business.

Using multiple carriers isn't always the way to go.

New School Committee Member-

They sent notification to the Board of Selectmen and the position has been posted on our site. Interested parties should submit a letter of interest to the Town Administrator's secretary. Tomorrow is the closing date. The Committee is looking forward to a new member.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Chaplin, seconded by Mrs. Reggio and unanimously voted to approve Consent Agenda A which includes Warrants, Field Trip Requests and Minutes of the March 24th meeting.

Report of the Superintendent

They are currently looking at a facility overview which includes long term planning and maintenance. They have highlighted the areas they feel are very important. The High School and JFK school are the oldest and need updating. He applauded the Towns foresight on the roofs but they still have a lot of work to do to protect these schools in the long term to keep a safe and affective learning environment for the next generation.

Superintendent Himmelberger did a study and it is in the packet. Mass Building Authority would be the first place they go to get the cost defrayed. They will look at this in tandem with the capital costs they are currently paying down.

You are looking at a 2 year time frame conservatively. They need to educate the stakeholders on what the costs will be.

They need to analyze the scope of the project and then get engineering studies to replace windows, hvac systems, science labs, etc.

They need to get the Towns invested in this from the get go. Our time frame needs to be quick. Our first meeting in June needs to be putting the budget to bed and to get going on the facilities plan immediately.

We can't delay another year. The cost of an engineering study would be around \$50,000 for each school.

On June 9th they will talk about forming a building committee to bring this to fruition. By July they need a clear calendar with monthly tasks. They can't wait. Mr. Chaplin would go for Science labs first. Work will need to be done off school hours. Portable classrooms can be used.

Transportation bids opened on April 6th. One bid was received from Tellstone. They had a follow up meeting with them and ways to reduce the price of the contract. The goal is to have the information to the Committee at the April 28th meeting.

Mrs. Cobb gave the 3rd quarter Revenues and Expenditures report.

Mr. Tringali wants to have a seat at the table for her.

Superintendent performance goals – Smart goals- Professional practice goal – Superintendent Himmelberger is not thrilled with where he is and looks forward to an open schedule and the ability to report back that they are making progress.

His twitter account is set up. Twitter is a preference of most educational leaders today. He can spend about 30 minutes a day tweeting. Mr. Chaplin will do a workshop on twitter for the Committee members.

Student learning goal – we are adding additional AP courses and enrolling more students who are willing to challenge themselves. Part of their measurement results will not be available until the end of the school year.

District Improvements – Dr. Thomson has done an outstanding job on Envisions Math and has taught Math in the past. The students are managing well. We are in great shape as we look to increase Envisions in the 6th grade. He applauds Mr. Gonzalez on funding through e-rate. We are one of the first Districts to take advantage of this program.

Increasing Special Ed student scores – a goal to be re-written and PARCC will be difficult to calculate at first. PARCC is still the right way to go.

They will be changing to PARCC and looking at concerns around the co-teaching model.

There is co-teaching in 2 classrooms at each grade level. We need to continue with co-teaching which is a method of doing inclusion. There is not always enough time to plan together and have common prep periods which goes back to staffing and funding.

Co-teaching issue – change the mindset on staffing, funding and scheduling.

Mr. Tringali wants hard evidence and hard numbers with success rate.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Thomson gave information on the goals and objectives of the Technology plan. The goal is to keep BMR on the clear path towards bringing 21st century technology to the classroom. Our students will need to learn in an environment that harnesses technology to facilitate higher order thinking, effective communication and rethinking learning outcomes. They have begun replacing aging computer labs. They are moving forward in bringing faster speeds, bigger connectivity and more powerful computer/devices. Our schools have older servers that were purchased over 7 years ago. They are experiencing hardware failure and need to be replaced.

The middle school math pilot will start after vacation.

Mr. Chaplin feels we need to start using the money that we get from the Town of Blackstone at the Complex on improvements.

There were no items for Public Forum

School Committee Forum

Mr. Chaplin – He follows twitter at BMRgochargers. Great career day at high school today and big AP placement kick off.

Mrs. Reggio- Congratulations to Griffin on Mr. BMR – both Eric and Griffin are a great asset at our round table. Congratulates MES AOK Club on their successful toilet paper drive.

Mrs. Jarret – thank you to student athletes

Mr. Tringali – spoke on the Regional Agreement meeting – turnout not tremendous but we will continue.

Mrs. Larkin – students leaving for D.C. tomorrow. Invite all Middle School kids to see the HS.

They are going to have the April 28th meeting at 6:15 p.m. at the high school so they can all attend the NHS awards at 7:00 pm.

April 26th is the joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:



Tara Larkin, District Secretary