

**School Committee Meeting  
March 24, 2016  
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:

Erin P. Vinacco, Chairperson  
Wendy L. Greenstein, Vice Chairperson  
Jane C. Reggio, Treasurer  
Georgette A. Jarret, District Secretary  
Steven J. Tringali, Member  
Tara L. Larkin, Member  
William F. Chaplin, Jr., Member

John M. Wozniak, Member resigned his seat on the School Committee prior to the opening of the meeting, effective immediately.

Also in attendance were Superintendent of Schools, Allen W. Himmelberger and Assistant Superintendent of Schools, David Thomson, Ed.D.

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

Mrs. Jeanne Sheridan was awarded the School Nutrition Association of Massachusetts Director of the Year award. The award is considered the highest honor a school nutrition director can earn. This award is given to the director who successfully demonstrates their skill in coordinating extraordinary program enhancements, management and development of staff, involvement in SNA, school involvement and community outreach.

Mrs. Sheridan will be recognized at the SNA of Massachusetts Fall Conference in Worcester, MA on Tuesday, October 25, 2016.

Superintendent Himmelberger congratulated Mrs. Sheridan on an outstanding job.

There were no items for Public Forum.

Student Representative – Griffin Reilly has news to report on Student Council. The Student Council was awarded the gold council of excellence. This is a major accomplishment. Autism awareness events will be held in April. Spring conference coming up and will be Eric's last event as central MA president. Sports - First games will be coming up for spring baseball, tennis, softball and track. A survey was sent to all students to see if they would be interested in other sports at BMR and to see what students are looking for. Seniors - Mr. BMR March 31<sup>st</sup> , Prom April 21<sup>st</sup> at Pleasant Valley Country Club- Paradise café will host an after prom event breakfast buffet. Bandid was great- 4 bands showed up. Sophomore MCAS right now. Band winter activities are starting to wrap up. MICCA for wind ensemble is coming up. Jazz band won the gold medal at their most recent competition and will advance to state competition. Drama Club Bye Bye Birdie presentation will be held in May. April 28<sup>th</sup> - National Honor society induction- STEM trip taken recently which was held at Framingham State. Arts night held a while back. Brought BMR together to show what they have been doing.

Mr. Chaplin asked Griffin if he wanted to go to the Day on the Hill with them. Get a group of students together to come. It will be held on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mr. Tringali and unanimously voted to approve Consent Agenda A which includes Warrants, Use of Facilities, Field Trip requests and Minutes of Meeting of March 10<sup>th</sup>.

School Committee Regional Agreement update- They are having extra meetings for informational purposes. It is centered around changing one line in the Regional Agreement to allow elementary kids to cross the town lines. Conversation has come up on Facebook. Dates available – Public community places – Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> 4:00 p.m. at the Millville Senior Center. April 21<sup>st</sup> at Blackstone Library – everyone welcome at 6:00 p.m. Work on the Agenda as a committee. On Monday April 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. administrators will give tours of the Complex. This will run until 6:15 p.m. The Regional Agreement meeting will be held on Monday May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at MES. Dr. Haughey will hold a talk and tour setting.

They need time to talk about their upcoming meetings. March 31<sup>st</sup> budget workshop and talk about the Regional Agreement meetings held at 5 p.m.

Mrs. Vinacco is disappointed in the empty room here tonight. You can be opposed to anything you want but it is sad and we are talking about our kids.

She will present a draft on the Regional Agreement timeline.

It was 2012 when Mrs. Greenstein and Mrs. Vinacco were put on the Regional Agreement committee. Sept 2014 - Mrs. Reggio put together a community involvement brochure. This went everywhere and was available to attract people to volunteer for sub-committees. There was a lot of information on a tri-fold sheet and they received a good response on it.

December of 2014 there was a post on our website asking for participation. It stated where they stood with the community and where they needed to go. There was also a district wide e-mail and in the Blackstone Enlightener. This was the 1<sup>st</sup> survey with the answers. How they gathered information from the public on where they should go with the Regional Agreement. It was an 8 question survey that 46 people responded to.

They next sent a letter telling them they wanted survey results. They were looking for the current weaknesses and opportunities that they see. They surveyed middle school teachers and students in the Spring of 2015. 127 kids – 100 percent participation in asking them about their transition.

After March 10, 2015 they moved into where they needed to focus. From the surveys they decided to move forward with the one sentence change in the Regional Agreement.

Another letter went out asking for people to participate in study groups, focus groups for social media, staffing, building transportation and budget. A timeline for everyone to do their work.

Fall of 2015 media study groups would start sharing their findings. 25 community members signed up as well as staff and Selectmen from the Town. The result of the initial meetings to move forward with the idea. They moved forward due to what the discussion groups said.

It is important to add that it was not something the Committee took a stance on it was what the sub-committees and their findings warranted.

They had the maps of the buildings to see how many students would fit in each elementary building and where the students would be. A lot of work went into all of this. Space and headcounts were looked at. What would need to be moved.

We are not closing a building or considering it at all.

Mrs. Reggio – wants to clarify why they chose the dates they chose for the Regional Agreement meetings. Because of our own work schedules the Committee could not meet before 4 o'clock. The Blackstone library had only 2 dates available to them. They want to give the community time to plan for these dates. There are plenty of opportunities for the public to come out and ask questions. They are doing their due diligence. With any transition there would be things to be looked into further. They want the public educated on what and why and how the vote affects our schools. If they keep moving forward they won't have to be attacked on the town floors.

Discussion of the District Three Year Plan- They agreed on everything. They want to present it on March 30<sup>th</sup> to Millville and April 11<sup>th</sup> to Blackstone. Both meetings will be held at 7 o'clock.

Superintendent Himmelbeger spoke – draft of the technology plan that coincides with the three year plan as well- Cost of personnel and managing personnel is outlined and is the largest cost. The longer you can retain staff is the key. Technology moves quickly. We spent serious money a few years ago on technology they now have a lot of clear insight as to what they want to do. Drivers are what students are facing when they leave us and testing requirements that we are saddled with by the State. Curriculum is still being debated around Common Core. Refine the curriculum to make it valid and prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. State is still wrestling with the science standards. How and when we teach has changed around math and science.

Maintenance of the facilities- The Complex and the High School are old by school standards. The equipment is becoming more and more of a challenge to maintain. Towns need to get involved with the improvement and renovation of these schools. How best to address this moving forward.

This plan will be shared on March 30<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup>. It is important to know we are committed to work with all stakeholders to improve our students opportunities. Jobs are being done differently and the way we work is changing rapidly. Students need to be able to adapt to the changes in their world. Kids need direction and guidance in using technology.

FY17 budget – Superintendent Himmelberger thanks the Committee for adopting a 3.6% increase in the budget. Many factors are in play. We don't hear much coming out of the state house in funding opportunities. It has become more of a challenge for us to be creative. Postpone those expenditures that we can. We need to substantiate every penny that we spend. They are going through it line by line and begin to understand the priorities in front of us and how best to meet them. The state and federal levels are not supporting public education.

### **Report of the Assistant Superintendent**

Doctor Thomson sat down with Osiris Gonzalez and they brainstormed. We need to create a learning environment that re-thinks the requirements of this generation. Kids need to use technology in their learning and how they learn. Average student has all the information that can be found in a library right in their own pocket. Analyze the info and use it in their work. It

has to start in our schools. By 2019 all testing will be done online. This comes from the Dept. of Elem. and Secondary Education.

Technology is a moving target.

They are increasing wireless speed inside their buildings. They do have old equipment in computer labs.

A five year pull out will be shared with the Towns.

They are looking at putting together a technology committee.

If students receive chrome books in the schools the parents would need to take out the insurance on them at 25 dollars per year.

An analogy would be the roofs. Mr. Chaplin stated that they patched them all for so many years and then suddenly they had to replace all of them.

Dr. Thomson is amazed at what the students are doing in math class. Kids are having fun and enjoying math. He gives praise to the teachers.

There were no items for Public Forum

Letter from Mr. Wozniak –he gave his immediate resignation this evening. The Committee accepts with regret and move forward as a Committee to appoint someone to that spot. Their quorum is reduced now until the seat gets filled.

They would seek letters of intent from a Blackstone registered voter. They will call the town clerk on Monday.

Mrs. Larkin – states that the Regional Agreement video is on the website under the school committee tab.

Mr. Tringali – asking to eliminate the common core standards and go back to before 2009-

He feels that they should educate the public to prepare for the common core question in November.

Common core state standards state when we teach it and how we teach it.

Superintendent Himmelberger feels we should not go back in time and negate the hard work of the educators.

Superintendent Himmelberger expects the final NEASC report before the end of this school year.

He wants to produce usage and attendance for sports and extra-curricular activities and show the Towns they are getting a lot of bang for their buck. How the money is being used.

Mrs. Jarret – congratulations to Mrs. Sheridan on her award.

Mrs. Reggio – Congratulations to Mathew Paxton for his winning essay. She hopes that people come out to their Regional Agreement sessions.

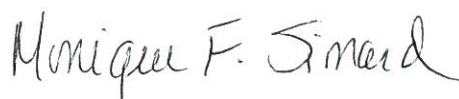
Mr. Chaplin – Day on the Hill will be held on April 26th – he wants High School students to go. There will be so much going on. He feels it should be one of the better ones of the last few years. Asks that people in the towns come in personally and get the correct information in person on the Regional Agreement. See the whole complete picture. We have been studying this for a long time. It needs to be voted on and then we move on.

Mrs. Vinacco stated that the term of the interim school committee member will only be until April and then a 2 year term will be voted on at that time. The members of the School Committee will need to vote.

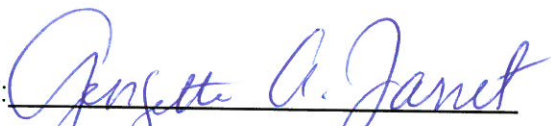
The next public meeting will be held on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Greenstein, seconded by Mrs. Reggio and unanimously voted to adjourn the school committee meeting and enter into Executive Session for Unit B personnel issues and not to return to the regular meeting. This was followed by a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:   
Georgette A. Jarret, District Secretary