

**School Committee Meeting
February 11, 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:

Wendy L. Greenstein, Vice Chairperson (as acting Chairperson)
Jane C. Reggio, Treasurer
Steven J. Tringali, Member
Tara L. Larkin, Member
William F. Chaplin, Jr., Member
John M. Wozniak, Member

Mrs. Vinacco, Chairperson and Mrs. Jarret, Secretary were absent from the meeting. The student representatives were not in attendance.

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. Warren's 4th grade science students gave very informative and well detailed presentations on Endangered Species.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Chaplin, seconded by Mr. Tringali and unanimously voted to approve Consent Agenda A which include Warrants, Use of School Facilities, Field Trip Request and Minutes of Meeting of January 28th.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Chaplin, seconded by Mrs. Reggio and unanimously voted to approve in accordance with MGL Ch71 S47, reimbursement to be issued from the Student Activity Agency Account to the Student Activities Checking Account in the amount of \$24,039.77.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Wozniak, seconded by Mr. Tringali and unanimously voted to issue a note in the amount of \$946,857 payable on April 15, 2016 with interest at the rate of .70 percent per annum. This is to roll over our current state house note in the same amount for another 60 days to allow for the MES and HS roof projects to closeout with Mass School Building Authority.

Both projects are done. They are closing out so they can take it to Mass School Building Authority.

Mrs. Sheridan, Cafeteria Manager is asking to surplus some old equipment in the buildings.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and voted 5 in favor, 1 opposed – Mr. Wozniak to approve the surplus of old cafeteria equipment.

The first step is to vote it as surplus and then then make the decision as to what to do with it.

Mr. Wozniak asked that the Committee get a list in the future of where the surplus items will go.

FY17 Preliminary Budget – Superintendent Himmelberger

Overview

Mr. Himmelberger stated that there are more unknowns at this point.

They are in Unit A teacher negotiations at this time and they do not know what the health insurance increase will be.

Currently the federal share of the budget is only 3.1% and that seems to be decreasing.

There is more pressure put on the local budgets.

It is a significant accomplishment that our high school is a Level One.

They are trying to give the least restrictive environment for needier students.

Mr. Himmelberger thanked the Board of Selectmen who gave funding to put a TV studio at the High School.

Textbooks are important to bridge the gap between the schools.

Anxiety between age levels is very high. They are trying to provide additional support to them.

We are in need of another science teacher in order to allow additional students to take an AP class.

Adding 3 teachers at the elementary schools would give the teachers time for collaboration during the day.

The cost of Special Education continues to rise and is not addressed by federal government.

They are looking to add additional Chrome book carts. They need the books at MES because they now have the wireless capability.

PARCC testing will be online in 2019. You will see better results on these tests when students are accustomed to using technology on a daily basis.

Mr. Himmelberger hopes to have offsets that will lower the needs number.

If they could rely on a 1.75 percent increase per year this would help them to have steady improvement.

Student enrollment has declined by 15 percent due to students going elsewhere.

When we cut and reduce our services more kids leave and go elsewhere.

We need to put forward a realistic budget.

Any capital cost under \$20,000 is paid for by the District and anything over \$20,000 is paid by the Towns.

Mr. Wozniak is asking if the 20,000 is the deductible. Do we always need to pay the first 20,000?

Mr. Chaplin stated that if it is an expense that is over \$20,000 it is totally the cost of the Town. When the new kitchen floor was put in at Millville it was over \$20,000 so the Town paid for the entire floor.

Mr. Wozniak is looking for a plan to market our music program to keep kids in our schools. Does anyone in the District have public relations in their job title? The answer to these questions was no but they will look into it.

Mr. Tringali stated that at one time former School Committee member, Ann Lesperance made sure that principals took care of Public Relations for their buildings.

Mr. Wozniak wants the Superintendent to correlate the loss of students and the dollar cost of it to the District.

When we lose the head count in our District this means money. The Town has to pay for them to go to BVT or Norfolk Agricultural and the school district gets less federal funding.

The State doesn't have the ability to take up the deficit in public education funding.

If you continue to fund based upon metrics from 1993 it is not going to work.

The MA Foundation Review Commission wants the state to address this. There is a lot of work to be done. The Commission's purpose is to review the way Foundation budgets are calculated and to make recommendations for potential changes in those calculations as the commission deems appropriate. They define the minimum level of school spending necessary to provide an adequate education to students. The commission has scheduled public hearings for the purpose of soliciting testimony from members of the public on important issues.

Curriculum Update – Dr. Thomson

They are piloting the Stars 360 assessment in the buildings. This provides the right tools and insight for teachers and administrators to meet the rigor required by PARCC exams.

Mrs. Greenstein asked the difference between Read 180 and Stars 360 Assessments. She does not want to duplicate this.

Dr. Thomson stated that Read 180 is a curriculum tool and is more like a Wilson Reading which is a therapeutic and systematic approach to reading. Stars will assess the student.

60 students for 60 days in each building will be assessed in the Stars 360 assessment.

Mrs. Reggio wants feedback at a later date on how Stars assessment is doing.

There were no items for **Public Forum**

School Committee Forum

Mr. Chaplin – thank you for the soup event tonight – Legislative update – He feels the Governor should not mess with regional transportation by adding wording. After the last meeting he emailed our Representatives and they responded. Representative Fattman called our Superintendent. He stated that it was from the Governor and he did not know anything about it. Mr. Chaplin wants to add legislative update on our agenda from now to May. He feels Governor Baker falls short on the funding of public education. We are in dire straits. He wants to inform the Committee around the legislative information and hold our local government accountable. He encourages everyone at home to pay attention and hold them accountable.

Mr. Reggio – we as the School Committee have to do our due diligence also. We need to look at needs and prioritize them – she thanks the 4th graders from AFM for their homework and will be prepared at the next meeting.

Mr. Wozniak – All meetings are open to the public and they need to get involved to know where the dollars are going. He doesn't want to short change the students in Millville and Blackstone

and wants a strong increase in technology. We have fallen way behind. He encourages everyone to get involved and don't sit back.

He feels that it is time to stop taking a hit. Use of tax dollars needs to be more efficient. We need to market ourselves correctly. Show them what they lose in student numbers when they don't invest.

Mr. Tringali – thanks to administrators for hard work on the budget. Governor Baker promised to increase Chapter 70 and did not come through. He feels that Rep. Fattman and Kuros don't even know about Blackstone.

The Home show for Winter percussion and guard will be held on February 27th at the BMR High School-

Mrs. Larkin – there is a dress rehearsal for the Home show as well – asked about the status of elementary Regionalization.

Mrs. Greenstein stated that they need to put the article up and to change one line of the Regional Agreement to give them more flexibility. Bringing the 2 Towns together means opening up the Regional Agreement. We need to have a conversation. We need to put it on the Warrant.

The Finance Committee Chairman said that they had until today at 4:30 p.m. for the article to appear on the Warrant.

Mr. Himmelberger will check on this with Dan Keyes, Blackstone Town Administrator. The Committee wants it on the Warrant.

Middle school has a large fundraiser tomorrow. They have \$13,000 in pledges.

Mr. Greenstein - appreciates the Blackstone Finance Committee members for being here.

She also stated that the School Committee voted on a 3% increase in Superintendent Himmelberger's salary retroactive to July 1, 2015.

Regional Agreement update will be placed on the next agenda.

Mr. Wozniak asked if they could please get a press release out on the home show coming up.

Upcoming meetings – February 25th - regular meeting and March 10th - budget adoption

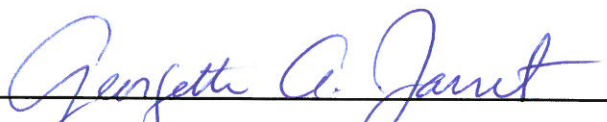
Motion: It was moved by Mr. Wozniak, seconded by Mr. Chaplin and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:


Georgette A. Jarret, District Secretary