

**School Committee Workshop Meeting  
February 12, 2015  
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:

William F. Chaplin Jr., Chairman  
Steven J. Tringali, Vice Chairman  
Wendy L. Greenstein, Treasurer  
Erin P. Vinacco, District Secretary  
Georgette A. Jarret, Member  
Jane C. Reggio, Member  
Brian T. Faulkner, Member  
Diane C. Robin, Member

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

Mrs. Carson's 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom sang "God Bless America."

Project 351 celebrates the power of young people as a force for positive change in their communities and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Through service, leadership development, enrichment and friendship with a statewide community of peers, Ambassadors build skills and confidence, explore issues, embrace leadership and motivate a lifetime of service.

Student, Meagan Brodeur who is a part of Project 351 spoke on getting people to accept the challenge of helping and servicing others. She recently met Governor Baker while he spoke at the State House.

Student, Cameron Cerundolo worked at the Greater Boston Food Bank. He and others packaged over 20,000 meals for those in need. Doing this kind of work makes you realize how lucky you are. He made new friends and saw Governor Baker speak at the State House. He found it very inspiring to do things for those who cannot do it for themselves.

These students were chosen by Mr. Cameron to represent our District. One or two students were chosen from all communities in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Cameron wanted to mention Sarah Douglas who has been involved in Project 351 and continues to do good work including a recent holiday food drive for the Blackstone Food Pantry which was matched by Walmart.

There were no items for Public Forum.

## **Report of Student Representatives**

Griffin Reilly spoke on the student council conference held in Hyannis, MA. There were 8 girls and 4 boys chosen for Student Council. It is a huge bonding experience where you meet new people from all across the state. The drama club is holding auditions for their spring production. The principals council met and discussed the Band Aid production to be held on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Eric Eisner spoke on the National Honor Society Empty Bowl event held last night. The money collected went to the Blackstone Food Pantry. The Chorus and Jazz Band entertained the guests last night. There is a dues drive going on now. The class of 2016 are selling charger charm bracelets. Winter sports are wrapping up. Sophomores will hold a Winter Ball on February 27<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Cameron was glad that since Google Chrome was introduced at the Middle School 327 student logged on to complete posted homework assignments during snow days.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Tringali, seconded by Mrs. Jarrett and unanimously voted to accept Consent Agenda A which includes Warrants and Minutes of Meetings of January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and February 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **Report of the School Committee Chairman**

Mr. Chaplin stated that e-mails have been received with budget questions regarding the process. He stated that the public has been able to access the School Committee packet documents since October of this past year and since the School Committee has been going through the budget sessions the past several weeks - all documents continue to be placed online via School Committee page on the BMR website under School Committee agenda. Any current FY15 YTD expense reports can get be obtained via hardcopy by contacting the Superintendent's office - no YTD Expenses will be e-mailed to anyone. The School Committee is trying hard to be transparent.

Due to the increase in transportation funding the last 3 assessment payments will be reduced for Blackstone and Millville.

## **Report of the Superintendent**

Budget requests by Mr. Cameron and Dr. Laporte for the Hartnett Middle School – Mr. Cameron stated that curriculum initiatives in the state are a moving target. We are unsure how to invest for curriculum supplies and needs. We are in a confused era not knowing where the State is going. Through proper staffing they are looking at supporting the team concept at the Middle School and the team philosophy. They are looking only at adding an additional custodian. They would like to have the floating custodial position work solely at the Hartnett Middle School. They have one

custodian during the day and 2.5 at night. He does not want anyone to be alone in the building at night.

Instructional needs – adoption of New Generation science standards – \$5,000-  
The science teachers are ahead of the game and looking at current materials and how they can be used. Next year they will assess what they need in the future.

Project Adventure – \$20,000 for a rock climbing wall. There will also be professional development for the Health and Wellness and Physical Education instructors. They see at risk students going toward Physical Education offerings. If they are at risk they may find ways to really be engaged.

Rosetta Stone - \$8,000 – they want to offer students who want high achieving opportunities to be offered this. The hybrid model they did have was very successful. They want to look at different vendors that could offer more seats at a smaller price. They have 50 combined at the Middle and High School. They have one trained instructor.

They would like to have the A.P. courses trickle down into the Middle School. Part of the math and science grant that they have applied for is how to prepare students for rigor and align the curriculum vertically so kids are challenged through Middle School and to get them excited over the offerings at the high school. They would love to have the Middle School students take a risk and try a class that challenges them.

Mrs. Laporte feels that Rosetta Stone helps in the community. They feel that Rosetta Stone is a creative way to support students and their families and help them to move forward at the high school level.

High School budget information was given by Principal, Mr. Dudek, Vice Principal, Mr. Ducharme, Athletic Director, Jill Tosti, and Music Director, Mr. Shafer.

They will let us know the needs of their departments and schools. If they have any left-over funds they will buy items that they will need for next year.

Mr. Dudek stated that this is a realistic needs based budget for the High School. Over the past month the administrative team has had candid discussions about what the needs are in the specific departments. Rigor, realization, relationships and relevance are stressed.

Library Media Specialist – he would like this person at the High School to help with the technology and data.

Science Department teacher addition – Due to the A.P. Mimsy Grant they have applied for they will need to add more sections of A.P. Chemistry and Physics and a new Statistics class. The A.P. level class is equivalent to a college level class.

Questions are raised if our students are prepared when they reach a university? Mr. Dudek wants to encourage students to challenge themselves and take the more difficult class and try not to always look only for Honors and High Honors. They are looking at changing their science sequence. They want to have 75% of freshman take biology so when they get into their sophomore year they are prepared to take chemistry. To do this they will need a fifth science teacher in their building. They are looking for a chemistry, physics or general science teacher. Colleges look for the A.P. classes when looking at a student's application.

It is difficult where many of the sections are single classes such as French, Music, etc. They currently are looking at chrome books.

The Library has been a challenge. They need to have it covered at all times. The vision is to have it focused around computers. Books are secondary to the media part of the library. Students go there to collaborate and collect information. The librarian would also go around to classrooms to help out. They need a media hub. They need someone who knows all about the technology aspect and has the ability to help out with Smart Boards and technology which would make the learning that much richer. This is critical in High School's across our country. They will be looking for an informational specialist. Students need to be taught how to sift through information. This person could be housed at the High School but used throughout the District if needed.

They have a continuous effort to add more electives. They have an English 9 textbook that is 12 years old. They need ELA textbooks.

NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) is coming in next year. They will access areas of academics and administrative operations.

They will be able to use some of this year's money to purchase textbooks for next year.

Jill Tosti – current Athletic Director spoke on the athletic budget which is fundamental for the BMR student. She feels there will be money left over from this year. She has been paying officials as they go. The supplies budget has quite a bit left over. She would like to get a few things fixed and purchased. There are different conferences that the students get to go to.

Uniforms are a topic of discussion. The school has a lot of old uniforms. Every few years they need to be replaced.

The Committee would like a grid with each sport and the cost of the sport.

They have a payment plan for sports and it works well.

Because students are so structured they do better academically when they are in sports.

They would like to hear about the Athletic Boosters in the future.

They cannot get over the athletic room at the High School. It needs major repair.

Mr. Shafer – Music – \$17,000 increase - they need to update some of the instruments in the music department. They cannot be repaired any longer. They need 2 tenor saxophones and a baritone saxophone which is currently being held together with duct tape.

Music transportation increase of \$5,000- He would like to give the kids chances to show off their talent and this is why they need to increase transportation to bus the students to additional shows.

Superintendent Himmelberger spoke about the school calendar. The events of the last week have triggered many discussions. They will want to discuss with Unit A about not starting school before Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>. It doesn't do our students any good to be teaching students in June when they take MCAS tests in March and May.

They are looking at the February school vacation and an option for doing away with it. Right now they are ending school on June 26<sup>th</sup>. If they have 3 more snow day they will need to figure out where to make up the 3<sup>rd</sup> day.

Mr. Chaplin would like to propose removing the February vacation next year.

Mrs. Greenstein mentioned that you could add minutes to the school day. The Superintendent added that you must go to school for 180 days.

They will make a decision at the next meeting on whether to remove the February break next year or have a long weekend in February and gain 3 school days.

9C cuts discussion- In November Governor Patrick announced a \$300 million dollar shortfall. When Governor Baker took over the gap was bigger – a 1 billion dollar shortfall currently in Massachusetts.

They will cut certain line items in the state budget – educational lines in the kindergarten grant that is at \$65,000 which will be cut by 22%. This will mean a net shortage of \$12,000. They will need to spend less to cover that increased amount.

632 grant for MCAS translates to a \$1600 shortage which covers Tutors for this program.

We have not heard on Circuit Breaker yet.

Regional Transportation – the additional we are losing we have not counted for this year.

Food service report is very positive with a net profit of \$16,122.

## Report of the Assistant Superintendent

Students at the High School and Middle School were given Google passwords at the end of last week. It is going very smoothly due to the efforts of Mr. Gonzalez on this. The Elementary Schools will be added in early March.

## School Committee Forum

Mr. Tringali – Millville residents can now go to the Blackstone Public Library to take out materials. The Home Show will be held on February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00 p.m. This is a great impressive competition.

Mr. Faulkner – thanks for the kids being here tonight. He is also impressed with the events that the kids have done outside of BMR. He finds it encouraging to see our kids are not just insulated in their community and getting out to other places.

Mrs. Greenstein- There will be a March meeting to review regional agreements surveys and sub- committees formed.

Mrs. Vinacco – congratulations to Christopher Tringali, son of member Steven Tringali who won The Amica annual 5K race over 1300 runners overall.

Time and effort has gone into snow removal and we can't thank our highway and custodians enough. Thank you for the patience of the parents in the Towns and for understanding that it is a lot of work.

Mr. Chaplin – commends everyone and the Superintendent for wearing all the different hats as Facilities manager. Enjoy the vacation week. There will be a few more meetings to wrap up budget. Public Hearing will be held here at the Middle School on Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Budget Workshops are not televised but all are welcome to attend.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Greenstein, seconded by Mrs. Jarrett and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard  
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

  
Erin P. Vinacco, District Secretary