

Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Meeting
February 7, 2013

The Blackstone Millville Regional District School Committee met in the Library/Media Center of the Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Diane C. Robin, Vice Chairperson
Catherine A. Robinson, District Treasurer
Brian T. Faulkner, Assistant District Treasurer
Steven J. Tringali, District Secretary
Michael J. Buckley, Member
Erin P. Vinacco, Member
Wendy L. Greenstein, Member

John J. Eldridge, Chairman was absent from the meeting.

Also in attendance was Kimberly B. Shaver-Hood, Superintendent of Schools.

Student Representatives Anna Franciosa and Zachary St. Amant were absent from the meeting.

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

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Tringali, seconded by Mrs. Robinson and unanimously voted to approve the Consent Agenda which includes Warrants, Use of Facilities, Field Trip Requests and Minutes of Meeting of January 17, 2013.

There were no items for **Public Forum**

Mr. Dan Doyle from the Blackstone Valley Boys and Girls Club gave a solar proposal. He proposes to develop a solar array facility off of Mendon Street in Blackstone. It will be between a one and two mega watt facility. They want to be able to sell the electricity that the unit will generate. It would be at a reduced rate than what the District may currently be using and they want to offer it to the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District. They came with a proposal and a packet of information on the proposed facility. They do not suggest that all of the schools electricity go there but might consider making a commitment to reduce their electricity usage by about 70 to 80 percent.

Mr. Savage spoke on reasons why it would be beneficial. He showed the savings that the school district would realize. The annual demand is almost 2 million kilowatt hours for all 4 schools (92%). They would be giving about a 12 cent benefit per kilowatt hour. They would like to offer help with the curriculum for renewable energy at no charge. Their data acquisition system has live data on the facility and how much energy is being

produced as well as the environmental benefits of buying green energy. There can be a savings of from 8 to 13 percent annually.

The Boys and Girls Club will reap the benefit of the lease. They would like to see the energy stay within the community. They have a copy of a non-binding contract at the end of the packet. They are looking for a year to a year and a half to have a fully commissioned system.

The Town of Blackstone was thinking of placing a solar field on the landfill and they were going to put out a bond which did not materialize.

They are asking for no money commitment up front from the School District. They won't see a bill until after the first month that the system is in use. There is about a 7 million dollar investment that will be put into this. They have done this for a large municipality like this one in West Brookfield. They would have an outline on the curriculum and work with the School District to develop it. The data acquisition system would measure how much energy is being generated.

One third of the electricity is being generated on one of the Boys and Girls Club buildings where they have solar panels placed on top. This is not a unique project and has been done across the state. Green energy is popular in New Jersey and California. It is popular with municipalities buying green energy. It is working and has benefits. The commitment to the School District would be a period of time of 20 years. The letter of intent is non binding but the purchase agreement is binding.

Mrs. Robin told Mr. Doyle that the Committee will take this under advisement and ask the Superintendent to get back to him.

Principal, Michael Dudek spoke on the MCAS results at the BMR High School. He spoke on schooldigger.com. This is a great resource for him when he looks at and analyzes test scores and shows a comparison with the region and other school districts. The High School is now above the state average in results. Mr. Dudek stated that in ELA no one failed or had warning for 2012. This is their strength area and he is quite happy with these results. They are above the state average in most areas.

In Math they are below the state average in the advanced level and he wants to increase those that are proficient to become advanced.

They had a big jump in Science and they are well above the proficiency state average. No student failed the Biology portion of MCAS.

They need to raise rigor and set higher standards.

In the average classroom fewer than half the students are engaged which is less than 82%. Each student is expected to learn at high levels and is supported at these levels.

Mr. Dudek gave the definition of rigor.

1. Raise the level of content.
2. Increase complexity.
3. Give appropriate support and guidance.
4. Open your focus, more open ended questions and tasks.
5. Raise expectations.

He has had discussions with his teachers to come up with a plan to increase rigor.

Students need to see what exemplars look like to work on practice questions and practice writing.

They have identified students who are failing and are helping them with the weak areas of ELA. Parents must sign off on this as it is not mandated.

They need a lot of work in Math. During professional development days teachers will analyze data.

Mrs. Greenstein wants to know if the pull out instruction is happening yet in math.

Mr. Dudek stated that is will start with ELA and then move on to Math and Science.

They are also looking at common assessments and how familiar students are with the MCAS test format.

Sometimes students have to leave a core class to get the tutoring and they don't always want to do this.

Tutoring is now put into the school day instead of after school because much of the grant money was being used to transport the students after school.

In Science open response answers were examined – more clear, concise and to the point. They want to compare assessments and prepare a general rubric.

They are looking for the weaknesses at each level, measuring progress, reflect and analyze student work, and offer MCAS tutoring for students at risk.

They want to recognize rigor and have professional development to raise the level of teaching in classrooms.

They would like to increase exposure to MCAS style questions.

They want to raise the level of content and provide support for students to do more challenging work.

Opportunities to give students open ended tasks and raise expectations.

Mr. Dudek would like to purchase a book called “Rigor Is Not a Four Letter Word” for his teachers.

Mr. Dudek has been discussing vertical alignment between the middle school and high school with Mr. Cameron.

How do grades and achievement relate to rigor- proper assessments that measure what the students should be learning and use it as a high level rubric.

By increasing rigor it will enable the school to set students up for a high bar to achieve.

Sub Committee Reports

Strategic Planning – The working session went well and they have two meetings coming up. All meetings are open to the Committee if anyone would like to attend.

Policy – there were no items for policy.

Regional Agreement – The Superintendent emailed everyone the final draft of the survey. School Committee members met with the parents organizations on Monday night and will send them a summary of what the Regional Agreement is. They did receive some feedback and might be able to go to community leaders with this. They want to see where the parents stand on opening up talks on the Regional Agreement and they are looking forward to everyone's opinions and appreciate the feedback.

Legislative – Chapter 70 numbers are out –

Facilities – nothing at this time

Communications – Mr. Buckley showed the Committee the meeting live. The link for the live meeting is available during and after the meeting. He is happy with what Jessie has done to get this going.

Report of the Superintendent

Superintendent Shaver-Hood requested that the Sick Bank Committee be formed. They need to have two members from the School Committee and two members from Unit A as well as the Superintendent to act on the Committee. Mr. Buckley and Mrs. Vinacco volunteered to serve on the Sick Bank Committee.

A motion is needed to dissolve the Middle School Building Committee. All bills have been paid and all funds dispersed.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Greenstein and unanimously voted to dissolve the Middle School Building Committee.

Mr. Buckley asked that a note of thanks go out to the people who are still involved with the Middle School Building Committee on some level.

Three bids were received for the rubbish removal from Allied Waste, Patriot Disposal and Waste Management of Massachusetts. Allied Waste was the lowest bidder.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mr. Buckley (6 in favor, 1 recused – Mr. Faulkner) to award the rubbish removal to Allied Waste in the amount of \$13,366.80.

It was mentioned that the Allied Waste bid came in lower for FY14 than for FY13.

Mrs. Blomstedt, teacher at the BMR High School is requesting a maternity and FMLA leave beginning at the beginning of the next school year.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Faulkner, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco and unanimously voted to allow Mrs. Blomstedt to take a 40 day maternity leave at the beginning of FY14 and 20 additional unpaid FMLA days.

The Superintendent stated that there is a plan in place if the snow on the roof at the Complex and High School gets too deep. If this happens they will use backpack blowers to remove it.

There were no items for Public Forum.

Committee Forum

Mr. Tringali wanted to congratulate the new librarian at the Blackstone Public Library. There will be a meeting of the trustees on Monday, February 11th @ 7:00 p.m. at the library and he would like to ask them at that time to look into the policy of not allowing Millville residents to borrow books from this facility. They are following the state recommendation that they do not allow any decertified towns to borrow books. He is asking any interested parties to attend the meeting with him.

Mrs. Vinacco wishes everyone well through the upcoming storm.

Mr. Faulkner – spoke on the recent meeting held where it was voted to move the football team from junior varsity to varsity for FY14. He believes it will help to improve the character of students. He was quite pleased when some of the players attending the meeting came up to the Committee members to shake their hands.

Mr. Buckley attended a meeting last Tuesday along with Superintendent Shaver-Hood and attorney Harold Gould for the Blackstone Board of Selectmen and addressed questions they may have on the roof projects. He stated that 70% will be the responsibility of Blackstone and 30% to Millville. The funds will be borrowed or bonded and the District will receive approximately 57% reimbursement from MSBA. He wanted to thank the Superintendent and Harold Gould for their hard work getting them to this point.

Mrs. Robin – stated BMRHS will hold a blood drive on February 15th which will be open to the public. It will be held in the gymnasium from noon to 5 pm.

There will also be a blood drive on February 26th at BVT to benefit Chairman Eldridge.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco and unanimously voted to adjourn the School Committee Meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Steven J. Tringali, District Secretary