

Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee

Minutes of Meeting October 9, 2013

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

Also in attendance was Perry P. Davis, Ed.D, Interim Superintendent of Schools.

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

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Robin and unanimously voted to accept Consent Agenda A, omitting the Minutes of Meeting of 9/26/2013.

Mr. Cameron spoke regarding the recent family informational night on the Washington, DC trip. The Committee members were interested in hearing how the trip went last year.

There are only a few changes to be implemented this year. They do not want to travel in the deep of night even though it will increase the cost a bit. Mr. Cameron stated that there were times when the drivers would switch at the rest stops. The students wanted to use the facilities and it was not a good time to be at these stops at 2:00 a.m. They will hold firm deadlines this year. Last year the cost was \$560 and this year it will be \$636. They will hold a monthly raffle to benefit all the students who attend.

Mr. Chaplin thought the parent meeting was very thorough. A few parents mentioned the cost as a factor in the reason their children may not attend. The school will grant scholarships for those who need it. Mr. Cameron wants to bring the cost down by 50 percent for those families in need.

Coach Chris McNamara was asked questions on the changes and improvements to the baseball field. Mr. Ducharme, Vice Principal spoke on the fact that the games were cancelled last week due to soaked fields. They want to donate items to repair the soccer/baseball field. They are looking to get the

funds that were collected for the use of the fields for the baseball town program this summer. They are looking for about \$4500 from the District. They are trying to set up projects for this year's team. They will replace the infield dirt and address a safety issue. Baseball and softball play back to back. People get hit with the balls and someone will eventually get hurt. They want to put in a 60 foot pole and place a net there. Mike DiCecco will donate the poles, put a pulley system up and take care of the netting. He is looking for the cost of the netting only from the School District.

Dr. Davis stated that the funds collected last season have already been rolled back into the budget and are not available for the netting.

Mr. Faulkner wants to put a bit of money into the softball field.

Mr. McNamara feels that they need to take one item at a time.

It would cost about \$6,000 for the infield mix on the softball field. It is hard to ask the volunteers to do it all.

They will go to Bob Morse to ask when they will plant the seed on the field.

Mr. Chaplin feels they need to get ahead of the problem.

Mr. Buckley asked Dr. Davis if the District has any money for the repairs. Dr. Davis stated they do not have the funds for repairs.

Mrs. Robin recommended using the funds from the two upcoming recitals toward the repairs.

The poles could be put in now and the cost of the netting could be delayed until the spring.

Dr. Davis doesn't feel they can give up the funds now. Not sure what kind of winter they will have.

They will get the seeding done and the poles. Mr. McNamara will talk to the Committee in the first part of March and hopefully they can purchase the netting then.

Dr. Davis recommends they take the risk and pay \$1500 for the seeding. The window of opportunity is now, not in the Spring.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Robin (7 in favor, 1 opposed – Mr. Chaplin) to pay for the seeding of the fields now and allow Dr. Davis to work out the finances.

Mrs. Vinacco is making the point that they cannot afford postage to send the MCAS scores home so maybe it is not such a good idea to use the funds to seed the fields.

Mr. Faulkner feels we should catch these things ahead of time.

Mr. McNamara feels they need to realize what the needs are ahead of time.

Mr. Ducharme stated that families can make payments on a payment plan for the sports and music fees.

Dr. Davis is very happy with the payment plan to accommodate families trying to pay the student user fees.

Tomorrow night is the bonfire at the High School. There will be booths selling food and a play area for kids.

Dr. Davis has signed all documents with Greenwood industries for the roof at JFK/AFM. They need to choose the color. They are going with the grey color. Things will start to appear by the end of next week. They will have a fairly large crew.

Dr. Davis was notified by MIAA that the retiree medex health insurance rate has gone down.

The Excess and Deficiency account has been certified at \$529,044. They cannot afford to have it any lower than this.

Dr. Davis gave student enrollment figures. Brad Monroe will move forward to obtain a growth projection model with NESDEC.

The District will hold a Professional Development day on Friday. Dr. Davis will hold two workshops during the day. The High School is now working on NEASC accreditation items.

Dr. Davis asked that the Committee make a motion to update teacher contract language for retirement incentives. They would allow the teachers until this Friday to turn in their retirement letter and be eligible for certain benefits.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Robinson, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco (6 in favor – 2 abstained – Mr. Faulkner and Mrs. Greenstein) allowing the change in contract language so that teachers will have until Friday, October 11th to hand in retirement letters.

Dr. Davis will present a projection of expenses and revenues each quarter. He is trying to encumber all the money they will spend and refine the budget as they move into the fiscal year.

Dr. Davis spoke with Dr. Haughey to review Special Education projections, expenses and IEP's to see what they are looking at in the future.

A new aide was added in the Student Services area which will increase expenses by \$16,000.

Circuit breaker will be audited this year in early November. They think they may get an additional \$75,000 in circuit breaker funds this year.

Dr. Davis compared regular education and special education. There is some money in the snow removal budget but it is not viable to ask the men to take comp time for plowing. We are responsible for the Middle and High Schools. Many times it requires putting additional men on the equipment. Dr. Davis feels the current trucks may not be safe for the men and they did not budget enough overtime to cover all snow removal. Dr. Davis did a check on our equipment and clearly the plow truck body is starting to show rust and corrosion.

Mr. Buckley asks about the town of Blackstone providing some snow removal in the regional properties. He wonders if they could help us out this year. We buy our sand and salt from Blackstone. Could they help us out if we have too much snow. Dr. Davis will explore this possibility with the Town Administrator.

Currently the regular education budget has a surplus but this is mainly due to the fact that they did not hire an assistant superintendent and the lower cost for Dr. Davis as Interim Superintendent.

Dr. Davis has serious concerns about the underfunding of the Special Education budget. There wasn't enough money in the budget to run the summer program. The tuition account was way underfunded and not due to new students coming into the District. These were current students so there was no reason for the budget to be off by such a large amount.

They have a negative \$400,000 overall for the budget.

Budget must be watched very closely for any changes or they will be in a deeper hole going toward next year.

We don't have funds to take on any surprises. They are just maintaining the known deficits.

Chapter 70 funding is coming in monthly now.

The Before and After School program is not running in the black yet.

There were no items for Public Forum.

Student Representatives –

Morgan McCarthy – Students played successful night games on Tuesday. The 1st football game was last Saturday. They lost but it was a hard fought game. The band performed at half time. The bonfire is tomorrow night and they are hoping it will not rain.

The Homecoming dance is 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. on Friday.

Thomas Gallagher- The band has performed three shows so far and they are doing fairly well considering the problem with mosquitos and not being able to practice as often as usual. The home show went well and finals are on October 26th in Maryland.

Dr. Davis has not been successful in finding an Assistant Superintendent for this school year.

Dr. Davis will ask Brad Monroe to take on additional projects.

Dr. Davis commends Tina Poirier for her hard work on grants and tremendous support she has given him.

Dr. Davis also commends Donna Scungio for her work on the budget.

Dr. Davis is working five days per week to stay on top of things.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Robin and unanimously voted to appoint NESDEC as the Superintendent's search consultants.

Dr. Davis is asking for two members of the School Committee to be on the Superintendents search committee.

Sub-Committee Reports-

Strategic planning – no items to report

Regional Agreement – they are currently waiting for NESDEC numbers to come in-

Public Relations – no items to report

Mr. Faulkner finds it very valuable when the kids come to meetings to make presentations.

Budget – generate members for ad hoc meeting to give feedback and presenting initial data –

Anyone interested please contact the Superintendent’s office or School Committee Chairperson.

There were no items for the 2nd Public Forum.

Mr. Tringali – spoke on the Millville Centennial Program.

Mr. Buckley – did not have anything to report on.

Mr. Faulkner- Spoke on the Common Core.

As a state Massachusetts is way up there – we hear the bad news but we are doing quite well – Massachusetts is leading the country in many areas.

Mrs. Robinson – spoke on the Millville Centennial Program.

Mrs. Robin – Congratulations to the recipients of the Abigail Adams Scholarship.

Mrs. Greenstein- did not have anything to report.

Mrs. Vinacco- Would like to see the students come to meetings and give presentations.

Mr. Chaplin – good opening - lot of work to do-celebrate successes.

The next meeting will be held on October 24th. This meeting will be with the Boards of Selectman and Finance Committees.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Robin and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Erin P. Vinacco, District Secretary