

**BARRINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BARRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BARRINGTON, RHODE ISLAND 02806**

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING - May 28, 2020

Present at the meeting were Gina Bae, Megan Douglas, Erika Sevetson, Anna Clancy, Patrick McCrann, Michael Messori, Paula Dillon, and Douglas Fiore.

At 6:00 pm, Ms. Bae called the meeting to order.

At 6:00 pm, Ms. Bae asked for a motion to adjourn to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws §42-46-5(a)(2) for sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation with Barrington Education Support Team (BEST) and in accordance with RI General Laws §42-46-5-(a)(2) for sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation. Dr. Douglas moved and Ms. Sevetson seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0 with Ms. Bae, Dr. Douglas, Ms. Sevetson, Ms. Clancy, and Mr. McCrann voting in the affirmative.

At 7:05 pm, Anna Clancy motioned and Patrick McCrann seconded adjournment of the executive session. The motion passed 5-0 with Gina Bae, Megan Douglas, Anna Clancy, Patrick McCrann, and Erika Sevetson voting in the affirmative.

Ms. Bae called the business meeting to order at 7:11 pm.

Ms. Bae informed the community that during the public comment the attendees will raise their hands via Zoom, at which time, Ms. Bae will unmute and also turn on the video. Those attendees on the phone will be unmuted.

The votes tonight will be done in a rolling call format to make it clear who is voting and the resulting vote count.

Ms. Bae announced that the Executive Session minutes are sealed and no votes were taken.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John McCarthy of 69 Governor Bradford read a statement regarding the removal of level 3 classes at the High School.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Special Education Presentation

Mr. Messore shared that the District has received communication from parents regarding the special education program and the program of studies. Mr. Messore met with Dr. Dillon, Ms. Matthes, Ms. Markowski and Mr. Hurley to look at how to better communicate to parents regarding transitions and programs of studies and how to improve in areas of special education.

Ms. Matthes, Director of Pupil Personnel, presented the plan developed by the special education department. Ms. Matthes received input and feedback from the stakeholders which include District Vertical PLCs, SEAC, and the Administration Teams.

The presentation lasted about an hour, and included the following points:

1. A manual was developed describing the District's special education programming which will be finalized and published by the end of June, pending availability of those involved.
2. The teacher assistants have received training which will enhance programming to support the students.
3. In addition to other changes, the District has implemented ASD coaching at all levels and the speech/language department has developed enter/exit criteria.
4. The ALP program has been reviewed with refinements as well as the addition of services to the K-3 level.
5. This year the District hired an Assistant Special Education Director with expertise in Social Emotional Learning.
6. De-leveling of classes at the high school is proceeding, with elimination all levels (excluding AP, Life Skills and some honors designation). Social Studies and most electives have already been de-leveled. Social Studies is finishing their fourth year with de-leveling Science and Math will expand their de-leveling and ELA will begin in the next school year. The District has seen absences, disruptive behavior and referrals for disruptive behavior go down in Social Studies with de-leveling.
7. Teachers will continue to receive UDL (Universal Design for Learning) coaching.
8. The High School is starting a Best Buddies club and the District has talked to the coordinator of Best Buddies to start a program at the Middle School.

Dr. Dillon shared that the redesign of the resource program will be a key component of this program. The District will be able to offer more special education support inside the classroom and reach more classrooms than we were under the old model.

A discussion among the Committee members ensued regarding how the new program has been developed, how it will be implemented and related communication.

The District has also developed partnerships with the community for life skills opportunities outside the high school building and a new kitchen has been installed as well. The District is focused on career opportunities for the students outside of the high school

The next COA meeting is currently scheduled for June 9, 2020. There is still uncertainty regarding education aid for next year.

The District is continuing to access the FEMA funds through the Town for any expense that occurred during the pandemic.

The District also has approximately \$75,000 through the ESER funding which is being facilitated through the state. These funds will be used to purchase PPE equipment, cleaning supplies, and technology devices. A good amount is being set aside for materials that may need to be purchased at the start of school.

The District has learned a lot through distance learning this year but is also aware that, going forward, there will be gaps that need to be addressed. There will also be a need to have additional support for Social Emotional Learning needs.

The District is working with the Town and the Town Manager to make sure there will be a budget in place for the start of school.

Dr. Dillon received for the District a grant for the ELA curriculum in the amount of \$400,000 for the grades PK-5. This will offset the need for materials and one instructional coach for two years.

Dr. Dillon also shared that we received a preschool grant for \$40,000 as well. This grant will be in place to support our preschool program for the next five years. The District also received a \$20,000 grant that will go toward the freshman redesign for the high school.

Mr. Fiore stated that the District is not looking to reduce staff in any way. All the staff has been working during the distance learning helping with the support of the students, and we continue to have more students registering for the next school year. The preschool program alone has increased significantly in enrollment.

Transportation Update

Administration met with Ocean State Transit to discuss the proposal and what we have been facing this year and potentially in the next year. The Administration has not come to a decision regarding the bid. Mr. Messore stated that the duty of the District is to make sure our students are transported safely and in a timely way to school. The contract language is one of the concerns and guides the discussions.

RIDE has issued guidance that they are not interested in any transportation compensation for this year. However, there is more general discussion about what compensation should be represented in the contract if a pandemic or similar disaster should happen again.

The Administration will be meeting with the transportation company again in the next two weeks to discuss the contract further, and the District's transportation consultant will be in attendance.

A discussion ensued with the Committee members and the administration regarding some of the different scenarios affecting transportation and how it might look in the near future, including waivers of state requirements and potential changes in policies.

Distance Learning

Transition programs have started. The High School is moving forward with the virtual graduation. Tonight is Award Night at the High School.

Banners have been hung along County Road through a partnership with the Barrington Business Association and the Town. BEF has organized a parade on Monday, June 1st honoring the seniors in partnership with the schools and the police department.

The District is organizing time for the teachers to come in and clean out their rooms. Communications will go out to the parents for students to pick up their materials that were left in the schools in the near future.

Mr. Messoro would like to remind the community that the District was told on March 13th that we would be going into distance learning. The District came up with a template and then worked with the teachers tirelessly to make sure it could be implemented. The teachers and students have done well. Through the summer the District will be working to improve how we provide instruction and how we engage students through distance learning.

Dr. Dillon shared that the District has created an assessment template that pulls in all the curriculum based measurements that the students have been working on from the beginning of the year to now, as well as their end of year Fastbridge assessment. This will help the District to identify students who made need extended help over the summer as well as needed adjustments to the curriculum in September. The District has sent out communication to parents about the importance of the assessments being taken independently so that the District can gauge the students' skills as appropriately and as closely as possible. The Assessment period will go from now to the end of school on June 18th.

The ESL program will continue through summer. The District has provided the State our plan for summer which will be a continuation of distance learning. The District felt that in order to minimize covid exposure for the students and teachers, remaining with distance learning was best for the District.

The summer learning framework is based on national data that show students involved in distance learning are more likely to need math help than reading help. The District is anticipating more math support for this summer rather than reading.

This year the summer program that Barrington has been utilizing will incorporate the elementary level for the first time. There will also be summer credit recovery for students at the high school. Additionally, a summer bridge program for the middle school and high school students will be in place.

The District will also send out some enrichment ideas for families to access during the summer.

Discuss Plans for Fall

Mr. Messore shared that the Superintendents throughout the State are looking to build consistency with all the Districts. The District has been waiting for guidance from RIDE on a re-entry plan. Late this afternoon the District received the guidelines from RIDE on how to create their re-entry plan. The District has begun forming a committee with the stakeholders that will meet once a week to develop a re-entry plan. They will look at 3-4 levels: Return to school like previous years, continue distance learning, or a hybrid model with staggering students. The committee will be looking at all aspects of re-entry such as the facilities for the buildings, transportation, interscholastic league and sports, the social and emotional needs and the health and safety of the staff and students.

The District will also form focus groups consisting of parents, staff and students. Mr. Messore knows that communication and stakeholder input will be very important.

Mr. Fiore shared that through the funding it will be very important to be flexible. There will be some need to purchase items immediately due to shortages. Mr. Learned is also being very proactive and staying in touch with vendors to make sure that we can purchase items in a timely manner.

RIDE has also proposed a state-wide calendar for all districts but the details are not yet available.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS

RIASC Meeting Update

Mr. McCrann gave the Committee an update on the RIASC chair meeting. At this meeting, the discussion was mostly about the state budget. Mr. McCrann shared that all districts need to be as flexible as possible and the district needs to identify local sustainable solutions. There was also a discussion about the effect of distance learning on social emotional learning.

Second Read: Superintendent Powers and Duties Policy

Dr. Douglas read the policy. Some discussion ensued.

Ms. Bae asked for a motion to approve the Public Comment Policy. Dr. Douglas moved and Mr. McCrann seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Bae, Dr. Douglas, Ms. Severson, Ms. Clancy and Mr. McCrann voting in the affirmative.

Second Read: Fund Balance/Spending Policy

Mr. McCrann read the policy.

Ms. Bae asked for a motion to approve the Public Comment Policy. Dr. Douglas moved and Mr. McCrann seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Bae, Dr. Douglas, Ms. Severson, Ms. Clancy and Mr. McCrann voting in the affirmative.

Public Comment

Ritzy McCarthy of 69 Governor Bradford - spoke regarding her concerns with the Universal Design for Learning.

Rose Murrin of 198 Waseca Avenue - had questions regarding Universal Design for Learning. She asked for data regarding long term outcomes for the students currently in the life skills program and those students in the conceptual learning program. Ms. Murrin would also like to know the mental health aspects for students moving into the classrooms where they are below level.

Lisa Ottone Silva of 3 Cherry Lane - spoke about her concerns regarding the special education program and her concerns about the new UDL program. Ms. Silva had asked for clarification on the resource service and the freshman academy. Ms. Matthes stated that the resource model will be present in every building. She also expressed her frustration with delays in Best Buddies at the High School and the completion of the kitchen for life skills at the High School.

Scott Pickering of 5 Bittersweet Court - spoke about his concerns regarding the School Committee agenda and when the Public Comment is placed on the agenda, stating that he feels it limits meaningful dialogue and interaction.

Anthony Arico of 166 Lincoln Avenue - expressed his gratitude for the Administration and the Barrington School Department. Mr. Arico also reminded the District that there will be a HEW hearing on Wednesday.

Ellen Masterson of 99 Highland Avenue - expressed her concerns over the new special education programs and elimination of level 3 classes.

Margaret Reid of 1 Abbey Road - stated that she along with 24 other special education parents had written a letter to the Superintendent and asked if the presentation that was given at tonight's meeting was representing the answers that the parents were questioning. Mr. Messoro stated that he will be sending a communication to all the special education parents with clarification.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Bae asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda which contained the minutes from the May 14, 2020 School Committee meeting and the Executive Session minutes from May 14, 2020. Dr. Douglas moved and Ms. Sevetson seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Bae, Dr. Douglas, Ms. Clancy, Ms. Sevetson and Mr. McCrann voting in the affirmative.

Discussion items

June 11, 2020 is the next School Committee meeting.

Superintendent Evaluation

Discuss format for School Committee meeting

Follow up with Special Education

Distance Learning Update

Transportation Update

Charters Revisions

Building Committee Update

May Expenditures

Recognition for Kelly Kaon

Announcement

Mr. Messore announced three new positions which all originated out of contract negotiations. The positions are critical to supporting the theater arts program.

Barbara Hughes - Band Director/Theater

Celeste Labonte - Choral Director/Theater

Nahum Mitnik - Music Technical Director

Mr. Messore also announced the resignation of Christine Waring, Hampden Meadows Grade 4 teacher. Mr. Messore wished her the best of luck in the future and thanked her for her service with the Barrington Public Schools.

Mr. Messore also announced the volunteer librarian for Primrose Hill, Ms. Michelle Lefort, was awarded the Meritorious Friend of the Library award at the RI Library Association's virtual conference today. Mr. Messore thanked Ms. Lefort for her work with the librarians for the Barrington Public Schools.

At 10:48 pm, Megan Douglas motioned and Erica Sevetson seconded adjournment of the business meeting. The motion passed 5/5 with Gina Bae, Megan Douglas, Anna Clancy, Patrick McCrann, and Erika Sevetson voting in the affirmative.