

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 14, 2008**

The monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, July 14, 2008, in the cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street in Bristol, RI. The Chairperson, William A. Estrella, Jr, called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 PM.

Present: William A. Estrella, Jr., Chair, Marjorie J. McBride, Vice-Chair, William M. O'Dell, Treasurer, Paul E. Brule, Diana B. Campbell, David L. Dugan, Karen A. Lynch and John P. Saviano; Edward P. Mara, Superintendent; Melinda L. Thies, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction; Mary Cerullo, Executive Director of Literacy K-12, Elementary Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Jane F. Correia, Director of Administration and Finance; Leslie J. Anderson, Interim Director of Pupil Personnel Services; and Andrew D. Henneous, Esq., District Solicitor

Absent: Paul Silva, Secretary

EXECUTIVE SESSION - 6:30 PM

In accordance with Open Meeting Laws 42-46-5(a)(1)-(9), 2(b), Mrs McBride motioned to go into Executive Session at 6:30 PM for legal advice and a pre-suspension hearing. Mr. Saviano seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

RESUMPTION OF MEETING – 6:46 PM

The Committee discussed a recommendation made by the Superintendent in regards to an employment contract; action was taken which will be reported out at a future meeting.

OPENING BUSINESS

All present were invited to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Accolades

We congratulate the Mt. Hope Huskies, Special Olympic Athletes on their wonderful achievements at the 2008 Rhode Island Special Olympic Games:

Allison Mosher Bronze Medal – Softball Throw; Silver Medal – 50M Dash

Lowell Cabral 4th Place – Softball Throw; 5th Place – 50M Dash

Thomas Lake 5th Place – 50M Dash; Bronze Medal – Softball Throw

Harry Emery 4th Place – Softball Throw; Bronze Medal – 4 x 200M Relay; Gold Medal – 50M Dash

Connor Devin Bronze Medal – 4 x 200M Relay; Silver Medal – 50M Dash; Gold Medal – 100M Dash

Taikwan Francis Bronze Medal – 4 x 200M Relay; Silver Medal – 100M Dash; Gold Medal – 50M Dash

Dr. Mara mentioned that through the efforts of Football Coach Ron Silva, a conditioning program was started this summer on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at Mt. Hope High School and is open to everyone; participation has been phenomenal.

Mr. Estrella commented that we should support all school activities; Boosters will become active again; people can call the District to get information on how to participate.

Also, lockers have been cleaned out and there are piles of unclaimed clothing, books and notebooks ready to be claimed or eventually donated. Mrs. McBride reminded the public that clothing donations to the Kiducation box in Stop & Shop provide contributions back to the District.

School begins on August 27; we are closing in on the completion of the Colt Andrews Project which is on time and on budget because of the due diligence of a great number of people.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Brule motioned to approve the consent agenda; Mrs. McBride seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 8 to 0.

Mr. Brule motioned to seal the minutes to the June 23, 2008 Executive Session; Mrs. McBride seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Chair recognized the retirement of Mr. Nicholas Hunt and Mr. Joseph Kutcher and thanked them for their many years of service to the students of Bristol and Warren.

BUDGET/ FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. O'Dell has nothing new to report; the next meeting is Monday, July 21 at 6:00 PM; the agenda will be posted by the end of the day on Wednesday; any agenda requests should be made to Mr. O'Dell. Mr. Estrella commented that this School Committee has made sure a balanced budget has been adopted by June 30, which is the law; this has not always happened in the past.

POLICY/ COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. McBride reported the Committee met last Monday and worked on the procurement and biddings policies which will be reviewed again in August; they have changed several areas of the student handbooks; the notion of adding technology to the charge of this subcommittee is under discussion.

PERSONNEL/ CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Silva is out of town and will bring the Committee up to date when he returns.

COLT ANDREWS CONSTRUCTION SUBCOMMITTEE

Updates were given in the Bond Project Building Committee Meeting held just prior to this meeting.

TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE

Mr. Estrella said technology will become part of the Policy Subcommittee.

CHAIRPERSON'S INITIATIVES

Ratification of Vote Taken in Executive Session on June 23, 2008

[MOTION: Marjorie McBride motioned to increase the Superintendent's salary per the recommendation of the Chair by \$5,000. Paul Silva seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7 to 1 with John Saviano voting no.]

[MOTION: Marjorie McBride motioned to extend Dr. Mara's contract

to June 30, 2009. Paul Silva seconded. The motion passed unanimously.]

Mrs. McBride motioned to ratify; Mr. Brule seconded. Mrs. Lynch recused herself from this vote, as she was not present. The motion to ratify passed by a vote of 7 to 0.

Mr. Estrella commented that Dr. Mara makes less as a Superintendent than he would have if he remained our Assistant Superintendent with degree lanes and standard increases. He thanked Dr. Mara for his efforts.

Future Agenda Items

- Update on curriculum
- Mt. Hope Guidance Department report on graduation rate

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES

S2008-47 A-G: CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL

A. APPOINTMENTS: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicants to the positions listed below:

1. Paula Faria Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements

Coordinator – Mt. Hope High

Effective: For the 2008-09 School Year

Reason: To fill a new position

Funding: Operational Budget

2. Anne Marie Fayan Mathematics Teacher – Mt. Hope High

Effective: For the 2008-09 School Year

Reason: To fill a vacancy (NonRenewal – J. Achadinha)

Funding: Operational Budget (10th Step/Masters)

3. Erin M. Welchman School Nurse/Teacher

Effective: For the 2008-09 School Year

Reason: To fill a vacancy (Retirement – P. Glavin)

Funding: Operational Budget (7th step)

B. SUMMER SCHOOL: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following individual for the Summer 2008 session only of the Bristol Warren Regional Summer School contingent upon sufficient enrollment:

Name Course

1. Nicole Guercia * M.S. Substitute

*** Pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements**

C. EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR (ESY) SERVICES PROGRAM AND SUMMER SCHOOL RESOURCE SUPPORT: That the School

Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following individuals for the Summer 2008 session only of the Bristol Warren Regional Extended School Year (ESY) Services Program/Summer School Resource Support contingent upon sufficient enrollment:

Name Position

- 1. Karen McCanna Coordinator**
- 2. Debra Lopes Teacher Assistant**

D. NON-CERTIFIED SUPPORT STAFF: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to re-appoint the following individual to the non-certified staff position listed below for the 2008-09 school year only (pending adequate Federal, State and local funding and contingent upon adequate enrollment and program renewal):

Name Program Assignment

- 1. Diane Verdolotti-Lowe School-to-Work School Based Coordinator**

E. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicants to the extracurricular positions listed below for the 2008-09 school year only (pending certification, funding and sufficient sign-ups to warrant running these programs):

ADVISORS

- 1. Choral Director Virginia Boyle**
- 2. Class of 2011 (Co-Advisor) Adrienne Burke**
- 3. Class of 2011 (Co-Advisor) Elizabeth Saviano**
- 4. Class of 2009 (Co-Advisor) Raquel Goulart**
- 5. Class of 2009 (Co-Advisor) Joseph Koger**
- 6. Drama Club Carol Schlink**
- 7. Gardner/Burke Carol Schlink**
- 8. Jazz Band Robert Arsenault**
- 9. Marching Band Director Christopher Lambert ****
- 10. Marching Band Asst. Director Melissa Labonte ****
- 11. Marching Band - Drill Instructor Melissa Labonte**
- 12. Marching Band – Color Guard Instructor Laurie Metthe ***
- 13. Mathematics Club Jean Mollicone**
- 14. National Honor Society Gerard Spence**
- 15. Student Council Rebecca Moore**

*** Pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements**

**** Pending execution of Terms of Employment**

F. CERTIFIED SUBSTITUTES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to place on file in the office of the Superintendent the following applications for certified substitutes pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements:

CERTIFIED

Name Area/Level

1. Margaret Lutz Elementary

G. RESIGNATIONS: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to accept the resignations listed below:

1. Nicholas Hunt Science Teacher – Mt. Hope High

Effective: June 27, 2008

Reason: Retirement

2. Joseph D. Kutcher Science Teacher – Mt. Hope High

Effective: Immediately

Reason: Personal

Recommendation #S 2008-37: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and supported by the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee, approve the revised School Committee Policy GBA Equal Opportunity Employment (Second Reading)

Mr. O'Dell motioned to approve; Mrs. McBride seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 8 to 0.

Recommendation #S 2008-48: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and supported by the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee, approve the revised School Committee Policy JFCA Student Dress Code (First Reading)

Mr. O'Dell motioned to approve; Mrs. McBride seconded. Mr. Estrella commented that in a student government survey a question was asked of students if they agree the existing rule must be followed if not changed; 572 answered yes and 270 answered no. We have to impress that anarchy is not tolerated in our schools—you don't wear hats and you don't show your underwear. Mrs. Lynch added that dress code specifics are detailed in student handbooks. The motion passed by a vote of 8 to 0.

Interim Director of Pupil Personnel Services Appointment

Dr. Mara reported being notified that Mrs. Neubauer is not ready to return to work at this time and he would like to continue Mrs. Anderson as the Interim Director.

Kindergarten

Dr. Mara reported 248 new kindergarten students have registered so far for 08-09; last year we ended with 247. There are typically quite a few new registrations in August. In an effort to keep the kindergarten class numbers to 21 or 22, the possibility of opening an addition

kindergarten classroom is being considered; the largest growth area is in the Rockwell district; Guiteras is swelling as well. 58 kindergarteners are registered for Colt Andrews at this time; the capacity is 72. The K capacity at Rockwell is 48, at Guiteras it is 48 and 96 at Hugh Cole. All kindergarten siblings of current Rockwell students will go to Rockwell. Last year the decision was made to move the Rockwell pre-school program to Hugh School in order to consolidate services; we have a before and after school program with COZ; we are an attractive school district for many reasons. This increased enrollment may be a one-year bump.

Mr. Estrella said that 25% of the students in Bristol and Warren went to private schools; we anticipate more of them returning to public; we have been cognizant of this and the fact that we must provide a quality education for all our children. He asked all parents who are planning on registering their children in Bristol Warren and have not yet, to please do so as soon as possible.

Mrs. McBride stated that our data indicated we shouldn't be here, but we are; with the numbers such as they are, we can accommodate all Bristol students in Bristol but not necessarily in their neighborhood schools; one option is to open another kindergarten class for one year. She wants to be pro-active rather than reactive. All siblings will remain together, but the school a child attends this year may not be the same next year. Dr. Mara stated this problem is happening all over Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The extra kindergarten

classroom at Rockwell can become a first grade next year, a second grade the next, etc.

Mr. O'Dell believes one reason for the crunch with kindergarteners is because we moved to all-day kindergarten, which requires more classrooms. If the increased enrollment problem continues next year, we may have to make some economic decisions and re-evaluate the program. Dr. Mara stated that all-day kindergarten is very successful.

Mr. Estrella asked Mr. O'Dell and Mrs. McBride (Budget and Policy Subcommittee Chairs) to join with administration to create a task force to study the handling of the enrollment increase.

Mrs. Lynch commented the reason we are maxed out is because of the closing of buildings; a third kindergarten classroom at Rockwell relieves the pressure this year, but what is the selection process; students who do not fit into Rockwell should go to the next closest school, which is Guiteras; she believes this is going to be the norm. Mrs. Lynch pointed out for the record that per enabling legislation, elementary students cannot be transported across town lines without the permission of the parents. We need to look at the issue long term and be proactive; she does not want to see music and art classes from a cart.

Dr. Mara agreed this is not a one-year bump; there is the potential to

recoup up to 700 students from private schools; there is a little space at Colt Andrews, but on the second floor, not permissible for kindergarten or first grade students.

Mr. Dugan respects Mr. O'Dell's budget concerns but would never support anything but a full-day kindergarten. He is not fond of a third kindergarten class at Rockwell, which could put us in a bind in the future and could be detrimental to the current Rockwell families; he would like time to digest the numbers without rushing and needs to settle some rumors in the community.

Ms. Roberta Jarvis, a Rockwell parent, said the pre-k classroom had 10 students, not 15 to 20; she shares Mrs. Lynch's concerns about what happens next year and the year after; she also would not want to see music and art classes from a cart. Dr. Mara said the art and music room holds 23 to 24 students each day and is identical to the pre-k room. Another parent said there were actually 9 students in there last year. Mr. Estrella said 900 square feet is adequate for a classroom. Ms. Jarvis feels August is too late and asked if the decision could be moved up. Mr. Estrella reminded everyone that 10 years ago, there were children in the district who changed schools 5 times before reaching the middle school; the Committee shares the angst of the parents; the Committee is forward thinking and working hard for a resolution; he encouraged parents to stay involved.

Ms. Karen Sekorski, a Rockwell parent, asked for a Warren / Bristol

breakdown of the numbers. Dr. Mara responded there are 81 Warren elementary students and 167 in Bristol; there will be no Warren kindergarteners at Colt Andrews; Warren's numbers are up as well.

Ms. Tammy Moore, a potential Rockwell parent, asked if Bristol parents had been given an option to go to Hugh Cole; since she lives near the Warren border, she would prefer her children go to Hugh Cole if it guaranteed consistency from K to 5 grade. Mr. Estrella felt it was a great idea.

Mrs. Campbell commented that the District must think out of the box next year; the bubble kindergarten class could remain at Rockwell if that room changed a grade each year.

Mr. Saviano said we had the space to provide for expansion at Hugh Cole; the Bristol schools had to retain the same footprint so expansion was limited. Dr. Mara said the 6 extra classrooms at Hugh Cole are able to accommodate a full track of students and are currently being creatively utilized.

Ms. Anita Randall, a Rockwell parent, asked about the kindergarten enrollment at the other Bristol schools; she feels the increases in population in the Rockwell area are going to continue and Rockwell parents want to make sure Rockwell remains great and does not get overcrowded. Dr. Mara said the other kindergarten classrooms in Bristol are near capacity; we were aware of this trend five years ago

and we will look at the situation very carefully.

Ms. Carol Anguilla, a Rockwell parent, believes we are in a crisis mode, issues need to be fleshed out as soon as possible; if the decision is made to put an extra kindergarten classroom at Rockwell, those students need to be accommodated there through the whole K to 5 process. Ms. Anguilla encouraged the School Committee to look at the Rockwell facilities before they place 25 students in those rooms; she asked the Committee to think long term and think quickly, there is a great deal of new housing in the Rockwell area.

Mrs. McBride shares these concerns about the future, however, there are many ideas to consider and it will take more than a few weeks to solve the problem. Five years from now, a street that is currently in the Rockwell district may not be; no matter the decision, people will be impacted. The problem for this year must be solved now, but decisions for the future will take longer.

Ms. Heather Swift, a potential Rockwell parent from the private school sector, had made the decision to switch to public schools because she had gained a lot of faith in the system, but is now shaky; any school for her daughter is fine, as long as it is consistent from kindergarten to grade 5; she does not believe this is a one-year bubble.

Mr. Saviano commented that all our schools are great; test scores

prove we are on level playing ground across the district; we must face facts and because the bond to build another school was voted down, the Committee will do their best.

Ms. Susan Rancourt criticized the Committee for not listening to the parents and not keeping Reynolds open for one year to plan; she said there have been a lot of politics but not a lot of solutions.

Mrs. Lynch voiced frustration with the fact that the Committee voted to close two buildings and we are faced with a great deal of new construction in the Rockwell area; the only options for the future are redistricting or build a new school. She will continue to work for a solution as soon as possible. Mr. Estrella assigned Mrs. Lynch to the task force for enrollment.

Mr. Estrella said there was no need for Executive Session. Mr. O'Dell disagreed and said that as a matter of public record, the BWEA contract expires in seven weeks and the Committee is not scheduled to meet again until one week before it expires; he would like some discussion on the matter. Attorney Henneous, as requested, reported no meetings with the BWEA since the last report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - 8:46 PM

In accordance with Open Meeting Laws 42-46-5(a)(1)-(9), 2(b), Mr. O'Dell motioned to go into Executive Session at 8:46 PM for contract

negotiation discussion. Mr. Saviano seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Estrella recused himself from BWEA contract negotiation discussion and announced that the meeting will be adjourned immediately after the executive session and he dismissed the camera.

RESUMPTION OF MEETING – 9:08 PM

In Executive Session, the Committee discussed the status of the BWEA contract negotiations.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:10 PM

There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. McBride, seconded by Mr. Brule, motioned to adjourn at 9:10 PM. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

William M. O'Dell, Treasurer, in the absence of Paul Silva, Secretary

/c