

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2010**

The bi-monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, January 11, 2010, in the Cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street in Bristol, RI. The Chairperson, Paul Silva, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:07 PM.

Present: Paul Silva, Chair, Paul E. Brule, Vice-Chair, William M. O'Dell, Treasurer, Marjorie J. McBride, Secretary, Denise R. Arsenault, Diana B. Campbell, Karen A. Lynch and John P. Saviano; Melinda L. Thies, Superintendent; Mario Andrade, Assistant Superintendent; Pauline A. Silva, Director of Administration and Finance; and Mary N. Almeida, Director of Literacy and Title I

Absent: John C. Bento

OPENING BUSINESS

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

Accolades

Mt. Hope High School Fall Sports 2009 All State

Cross Country (Boys)

Ben Hamel	Academic All-State
Andrew Reis	3rd Team All Class B

Cross Country (Girls)

Meghan McMullen	3rd Team All Metropolitan Division
Brooke Cotta	Academic All-State
Shealyn Davey	Academic All-State

Football 2009 DIVISION II-A Co-Champions

Ron Silva	Coach of the Year Division II
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James Olson	1st Team All-Division & Providence Gridiron
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Club MVP-Offense

Karsten Moritz	1st Team All-Division & All-Academic &
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Providence Gridiron Club MVP -Defense

Nilton Alves	1st Team All-Division
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Benjamin Choquette	1st Team All-Division
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Chris Raiola	1st Team All-Division & All-Academic
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Aaron Booth	1st Team All-Division
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Alan Williams	2nd Team All-Division
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Ryan Medeiros	2nd Team All-Division
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Benjamin Mosher	2nd Team All-Division & All-Academic
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Christopher Ferreira	2nd Team All-Division & All-Academic
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Robert Pompey	2nd Team All-Division
Joseph San Martin	2nd Team All-Division
Ryan Kuehl	3rd Team All-Division
Ian Almeida	3rd Team All-Division
Zeke Felag	All-Academic
Theo Moskala	All-Academic

Soccer (Boys)

Andrew Karnehm	All Academic & 2nd Team All-Division I East
Kevin Oliveira	1st Team All-Division I East
Anthony Hill	1st Team All-Division I East
Ben Abendroth	2nd Team All-Division I East
Steve Parrillo	3rd Team All-Division I East

Soccer (Grils)

Lauren Maisano	2nd Team All-Division
Meghan Rainville	2nd Team All-Division
Victoria Jamiel	Sportsmanship Award

Tennis (Girls)

Corianna Mascena	1st Team All-Division IV East (Singles)
Courtney Ferreira	1st Team All-Division IV East
(Doubles)	
Jessica DeLemos	1st Team All-Division IV East
(Doubles)	

Kathleen Coccio	2nd Team All-Division IV East
(Singles)	
Abigail Mlynek	2nd Team All-Division IV East
(Singles)	
Taylor Clark	2nd Team All-Division IV East
(Doubles)	
Carolyn St.Vincent	2nd Team All-Division IV East
(Doubles)	
Heather Morreo	2nd Team All-Division IV East
(Doubles)	
Holly Whipp	2nd Team All-Division IV East
(Doubles)	
Katie Amaral	Sportsmanship Award

Volleyball

Chelsea McWilliams	3rd Team All-Division Class II South
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Ms. Thies gave special congratulations to Coach Silva, saying he is a wonderful role model.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBLIC FORUM

None

MT. HOPE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES 2010-2011

Assistant Principal, Mr. Jaime Crowley, said there are not many changes from last year's program and made it clear there is plenty of time to polish it up if need be. The same cost-saving format was used. There is a new seal on the cover with the Latin words "E Duobus Unum" meaning "From Two, One" signifying regionalization; this was the idea of Shant Enjeti, the husband of Mt. Hope Art Teacher, Lauren Enjeti.

Mr. Crowley further explained that the word "foundations" was removed from the book and from transcripts because it can be perceived as demeaning in many ways; however, there are still levels, including honors and college prep. Mrs. McBride was pleased with the inclusion of pathways to guide students and parents. Mr. Crowley said four new courses will be offered next year, but only those sufficiently enrolled will run.

„American Studies is a two-credit course requiring two periods; it will be taught by an English teacher and a Social Studies teacher, each of whom are very excited about the course. Mrs. McBride would like to be informed if this class runs next year and if so, for it to be expanded in the future to be available to more students.

„Biotechnology III is the next phase of the Biotechnology program that is being offered in only five schools across the state. The first

half of the year will focus on biomanufacturing and the second half of the year will incorporate some CSI type elements like fingerprinting, DNA sampling and chemical analysis.

„Í Video Production is a one-semester course that will train students to write video/television scripts, conduct interviews and learn proper video formatting techniques and will require no additional funding. Mr. Rebello stated they are reaching out to COX cable for collaboration and additional resources. Mrs. Campbell mentioned that we also have a connection to Full Channel with Mr. Antonio Teixeira, who has a show on this network.

„Í World Drumming was introduced at another high school in Rhode Island and of note, was the inclusion of many special needs students; although it is for all students, it was particularly successful with SPED students.

No new AP courses were added. Mr. Crowley explained that four years ago there were only four AP courses taken by 57 students; last year they had 11, taken by 126 students, so having made tremendous gains in the recent past, they now have to work on performance. Mrs. Thies added that we are looking for a sense of quality control; AP courses involve the training of teachers over the summer out of state; we need to pace ourselves to assure quality of instruction and student performance. Mr. Crowley said the next step is to offer AP courses in 9th and 10th grades to prepare students for 11th and 12th

grade AP courses. Mr. Rebello said these, however, would not be prep courses and nothing precludes underclassmen from taking AP courses; the pre-requisites must be considered; there will be students ready for these courses and they will succeed; if a 10th grade student takes an AP course, the test is offered right after the course is completed.

Mrs. McBride mentioned that a former student of hers suggested offering regular courses within virtual high school, as a tool for school-to-career students to graduate. Mr. Crowley said two virtual AP courses are currently offered. Mrs. Thies explained that with our current VHS contract we cannot offer a regular course; but there are other opportunities for these students such as Mt. Hope Plus. In response to Mrs. Campbell, Mr. Crowley said the VHS courses are fully loaded with 25 students, who work independently during the day; they have been much more successful this year since Sharon Eberlein has been monitoring them consistently; this schedule is similar to that of college. Mr. Silva stated those deadlines precede building deadlines. Mrs. Arsenault asked why not put 9th and 10th grade students in with upper classmen. Mr. Rebello explained the upper classmen fill the courses and the underclassmen would not get to take the class with their peers; it could be offered as an elective to all four grades. Mrs. Arsenault said that would be the most economical way to get it out there.

Mr. Silva thanked Mr. Crowley and Mr. Rebello for the presentation

and commented it is nice to see the program cleaned up and things added to raise the bar.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Silva said state regulations require the District to have a Building Committee, even though there are no current building projects; he would like for everyone to know the purpose of this Committee. Mrs. Thies contacted our liaison at the Department of Education, Mr. Joseph daSilva, for an overview. Mr. daSilva explained to her that anything on the 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan, as well as anything reimbursable by housing aid must be approved by the Board of Regents. Dr. Mara was instrumental in moving this piece forward; we had received preliminary approval of our 5 Year Plan at level I and level II is the formation of the building committee; we have projects on our 5 Year Plan that are eligible for reimbursement. Any projects, such as window replacement, that would be eligible for housing aid would have to go through not only our Budget/Facilities Subcommittee but also this Building Committee, which must include community members who may or may not have building expertise and knowledge of the District, and ultimately be approved by the Board of Regents; it is another level of oversight. Mr. Simmons stated the State wants to have a little more control over the reimbursement they send us; in his opinion, it is unnecessary; also the three biggest things the State looks for is green, sustainability and job creation.

Mr. O'Dell asked if this Building Committee would have veto power over the Budget/ Facilities Subcommittee. Mrs. Thies does not believe so; there is a checklist to determine compliance. We have a year to complete the process; we have approval at Level I; the next step is to meet with Mr. daSilva to have him explain what Level II is. The determination of our plans and the needs of the District are the purview of the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee and the administrative team.

Mr. O'Dell asked how this will affect the projects that are time-sensitive. Mr. Simmons said it will only add to the current frustration and further slow down the process. Mrs. Campbell suggested that once the make up of the committee is determined, they meet with the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee to work out how the processes will flow; she also suggested that the building committee attend the first 30 minutes of the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee meetings. Also, our Budget/Facilities Subcommittee has only Mr. Simmons and Mr. Brule with maintenance and construction expertise; she does not believe the Building Committee will intentionally drag the process down; hopefully we can make use of the value of their input rather than view them as an albatross. Mr. O'Dell's concern is "good people, bad process." Mrs. McBride believes it is not the role of the Building Committee to tell the District what should or should not be done; the decision on how to spend our money is that of the School Committee; although she does understand that unlike us, there are districts that spend money then

look for ways to get it and put themselves and their towns under financial hardship.

Mr. Silva said this committee does not have the authority to tell us not to spend money, but they have the ability to interfere with us getting reimbursement. Mrs. Thies stated this committee and the application to the State for approval of the 5 Year Plan is different from what we do internally to develop the 5 Year Plan; they do not intervene in determining our needs or how we choose to direct our funding, their purview is to review the plan to assure alignment with the guidance of the state; they want to assure districts have done their due diligence. This district has done a fine job being responsible with spending and planning projects; we have a focused 5 Year Plan; our groundwork has been done by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, the Director of Facilities and his staff.

Mrs. McBride asked if we have approval of our 5 Year Plan from the state or does this Building Committee have to approve it. Mrs. Thies said the state has done a preliminary approval of the plan, the second part is these other pieces. Mrs. Lynch asked if the Building Committee can remove an item from the 5 Year Plan that the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee does not want to move forward. Mrs. McBride said the purpose of the Committee is to inform the community what is being done; she had asked Dr. Mara how many times the Committee would meet and he responded four. Mr. Saviano's understanding is the project specifications and cost of

items must meet the guidelines of AIA and engineering standards to be reimbursed by housing aid; the higher the project costs, the more reimbursement, so they want to keep it reasonable. Mr. Silva said this is supposed to be a standing committee for any project for which we apply for housing aid, no matter when the project takes place; he suggested we ask Mr. daSilva to come and explain the purpose of this committee. Mrs. Campbell suggested the new Building Committee members be included so everyone hears the same thing.

Mr. Brule commented that this School Committee is one of the few committees in the state that are frugal; we do things to the letter and only if we can afford it; we do our homework very well; he would like Mr. daSilva to come and meet with all the committees. He said there were hard feelings over the selection of members for the Building Committee; we must now work together and come to agreement; the next step is to invite the liaison from the state; we are fortunate we can stay in the black this year. Mr. O'Dell agrees to have someone from the state come, he is even more concerned now than before. Mr. Silva will put this on another workshop agenda when Mr. daSilva is available; as many people involved in the process as possible should attend. Regarding Building Committee membership Mrs. Thies said an invited member of the community had to decline so we are looking for a replacement. Mr. Saviano pointed out that Building Committee appointments were to be made by the head of the School Committee and the Superintendent. Mrs. Campbell said our policy requires discussion with the Chair and Vice-Chair because the District

represents two towns; there is no guidance on how the people are selected, but both the Superintendent and Chair must sign the document.

BUDGET FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. O'Dell said their next meeting is tomorrow night, 6:30 PM; they will discuss the budget request for next fiscal year in draft form and a few facilities issues.

POLICY/ COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. Campbell reported a lively discussion on the science curriculum at their last meeting; some good ideas were brought up in terms of public relations to boost our image; the substance abuse policy is still being worked on and it may be tabled for one more month.

Wellness Committee

Mrs. Campbell said their next meeting is this Wednesday, at Mt. Hope in Room E102; she is very excited about the things going on; the Committee realized the Wellness Policy is difficult to consistently enforce and they are working on a brochure to simplify the policy for parents and would like to know if there are funds available to print it. Mr. O'Dell said it could be placed as a line item in next year's budget.

PERSONNEL/ CONTRACT NEGOTIATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Saviano had nothing remarkable to report.

FUTURE ENROLLMENT AND FACILITIES TASK FORCE

Mrs. Lynch made the following statement:

“In December of 2009, the School Committee voted 7-2 to ask the Bristol and Warren Town Councils to forward a request to our state legislature, asking that a referendum question be placed on the November 2010 ballot. The question to be put to the voters would request the following: that the enabling legislation which governs the Regional District be amended to allow elementary school children to cross town lines.

As the question is a serious one, and we respect the will of our constituents, it is only logical to “let the voters decide”.

At the Town Council meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2010, Councilman Barboza asked that the request not be voted on by the Bristol Town council until such time as the Joint Finance Committee and remaining members of the Warren Council are able to meet and discuss the merits of our request.

The enabling legislation clearly states the roles and responsibilities of the School Committee and the Joint Finance Committees. We have

contacted the district's attorney to confirm that the Joint Finance Committee is not the appropriate forum for this discussion. The Future Enrollment and Facilities Task Force, in conjunction with the Chair of the School Committee and the Superintendent, have decided that the Task Force is the appropriate forum, should the members of the two Town Councils have questions which need answering. Therefore I have amended our agenda on January 19th to include a discussion with the Warren Town Council, the Bristol Town Council and their respective Town Administrators. The meeting of the Task force is scheduled for January 19th at 6:00 pm in the second floor conference room in the Oliver School Administration building.

We welcome you to join us, that we may clarify the reason for our request and we look forward to the conversation on behalf of all our constituents.

We further encourage you to consider the request at hand as a procedural task, which has been delineated by the enabling legislation, in seeking to legally address the needs of the Regional School District.

Thank you."

Their agenda will be amended to include discussion with the Warren and Bristol Town Councils and town administrators. Mrs. Campbell commented she was glad to hear this as she was taken aback at the Town Council meeting and felt bad; this is a good first step for Mrs.

Lynch's committee; the School Committee needs to support it. Mrs. Campbell suggested rewording to make it more palatable for the Town Councils. Mr. Silva clarified that the Town Council meeting Mrs. Campbell referred to is the Bristol Town Council; Warren was to address the issue at their January 12 meeting but Mrs. Thies requested it be removed. Mrs. Lynch said the Task Force will look at the wording as well as the big sticking points. Mr. Silva stressed that we are not asking to transport elementary students across town lines, we are asking for permission to ask the voters what they want. Mr. Brule said several Council members are out the week of January 19 and a better approach would be to ask them when they are available rather than telling them when the meeting is. Mr. Silva stated we had asked the Councils to let us know when it would be on their agenda and only one town sent it to us; the best place to get answers is at the Task Force meetings.

As a member of the Task Force Mrs. Arsenault reiterated we are just asking permission to put it on the ballot; putting it on the ballot is not giving an opinion; the Task Force is doing their due diligence and owe it to the people of both communities to give them a voice.

Mr. O'Dell publicly stated his full support of Mrs. Lynch's statement, as did Mr. Saviano. Mrs. Campbell said she would have liked to have known about the meeting regarding unused buildings before hand; Mrs. Lynch explained it was just one of the Course of Action groups having an informal meeting, it was not intentional and she

apologized.

ADJOURNMENT iV 8:37 PM

MOTION: There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Saviano, seconded by Mrs. Campbell, motioned to adjourn at 8:37 PM. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie J. McBride, Secretary

/c