

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2012**

The bi-monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, April 23, 2012, in the cafeteria of Kickemuit Middle School, 525 Child Street, Warren, RI. Chairman Bento called the meeting to order at approximately 7:06 PM.

Present: John C. Bento, Chair, Paul Silva, Vice-Chair, William M. O'Dell, Treasurer, Karen A. Lynch, Secretary, Denise R. Arsenault, Diane B. Campbell, Marjorie J. McBride, Susan Rancourt (7:22) and John P. Saviano; Melinda L. Thies, Superintendent; Mario J. Andrade, Assistant Superintendent; Pauline A. Silva, Director of Administration and Finance; Mary N. Almeida, Director of Literacy and Title I; Leslie J. Anderson, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; and Andrew D. Henneous, Esq., District Solicitor

Absent: none

OPENING BUSINESS

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

ACCOLADES

Congratulations to the Mt Hope HS Competition Cheer Team

2011-2012 and Coaches Debra Marshall and Amanda DaCosta. They have earned the 2011-2012 RIIL Large Team Sportsmanship Award. This achievement tops their Finalist finish at the State Cheer Tournament. Team members include:

**Alexandra Absi Rebecca Millard Amanda Bernard Samantha
Palumbo Caitlin Bisbano Jenna Rider
Carly Ferias Rachael Rimoshytus Abbie Harris
Morgan Chaves Hailey O'Dell Nicole Cloutier
Kaitlin Abate Gabrielle Donecker Rebecca Cordeiro
Hayley Goss Marisa Rainey Kimberly Mendes
Lauren Simons Jordan Perroni Caitlyn Benevides**

Congratulations to the Mt Hope Hockey team along with Coach Matt Grieve and Coach Chris Dugan for being named RI Hockey Officials Association Sportsmanship Team of the Year 2011-2012. This added to the Finalist Performance at the RIIL State Championship is a tribute to the dedication and respect that the team has for sports. Team members include:

**Aaron Booth Zachary Minior Austin Daniels
Alex Copeland Trevor Sousa Tyler Daniels
Gian DiMezza Jacob Abenante Jake Francis
William Egge Nicholas Anania Zach Goldman
Scott MacGovern Ross Hogan Nicholas Kachapis
Nicholas Salzano Matthew Wilson Austin O'Brien
Steven Vaccaro Stephen Bragantin Stephen Riendeau
Justin Correia Ryan Coccio Matthew Toms**

Sean Killeavy

PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC FORUM

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION – 7:15 PM

MOTION: In accordance with open meetings law 42-26-5(a)(2), at 7:15 PM Mrs. Campbell motioned to go into Executive Session for a discussion of the arbitration award related to the BWEA contract; Mr. Saviano seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Arsenault had consulted with Attorney Henneous prior to the meeting; it is legally permissible for her to attend this session.

RESUMPTION OF MEETING – 7:47 PM

Mr. Bento reported that no action was taken in Executive Session.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Mr. Silva motioned to approve the consent agenda. Mrs. McBride seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 9 to 0.

Mrs. Campbell congratulated and commended Dr. Andrade for securing a virtual math grant for the high school.

MOTION: Mr. Silva motioned to seal the minutes to the April 9, 2012 Executive Session; Mr. Saviano seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 9 to 0.

As a point of order, Superintendent Thies withdrew item A.1. from recommendation #S2012-13 Personnel pending a discussion in Executive Session.

BUDGET FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. O'Dell said the Subcommittee met last week; an additional \$60,000 in cuts will have to be made to meet the budget; the final budget must be accepted in June; it will be reported out via the Director of Administration's May report to the School Committee.

POLICY/ COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. Arsenault reported their next meeting is Monday, May 7, tentatively at 6:00 PM at Oliver; discussed will be the superintendent's evaluation, educators evaluation system and the tobacco, alcohol and other drugs policy.

PERSONNEL/ CONTRACT NEGOTIATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Saviano said Council 94 contract negotiations have begun. As a result of agreements reached through negotiations, mediation and

arbitration, a contract with the BWEA is now complete that is beneficial to taxpayers, teachers and students.

Mr. Saviano wished to personally thank the administrators and School Committee members who worked with him during the twenty-two months of negotiating the BWEA contract. He also applauded the teachers for their professionalism during negotiations by providing an uninterrupted flow of education to the students.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Campbell said Wellness Week, scheduled for next week, is a time to celebrate wellness; at the schools, three Project ACES events will take place, as well as food tastings, awarding of stickers for eating beans and veggies, and many other activities. Mrs. Campbell commended and thanked administrators and teachers for all their work planning for the celebration. In response to Mrs. McBride, Mrs. Campbell said the event coordinated by Susan Donovan is at 10:00 AM.

Mr. O'Dell asked about Operation Fresh Fruit. Mrs. Silva explained our two Title I schools (Hugh Cole and Colt Andrews) will participate in the USDA's Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program which will provide fresh fruits and vegetables from the farm to the classroom daily, packaged in trays with no preservatives, at no charge to the students or the District.

CHAIRPERSON'S INITIATIVES

BWEA Contract and Arbitration Award

Attorney Henneous said with the rendering of the award by the arbitrator, the BWEA contract is now complete; final review will take place over the next few weeks and the District will print the contract; a Financial Impact Statement has been prepared and will be available at the end of this meeting.

Superintendent Thies wished to lift up the professional educators in this community; during this long and thoughtful process which started in December of 2010, our educators displayed every ounce of professionalism and never for one moment lost sight of what their charge is—service to students in this district. The quality of education was never compromised. Mrs. Thies said this is a concessionary contract and BWEA was very realistic in regard to the dire financial straits the District will be in for the next ten years. The savings to the District is \$1.7M over three years, which came through sacrifice, innovation and collaboration. She will be meeting with union leadership on Thursday; together they craft a statement for the public.

Mr. Silva thanked the Superintendent for her presentation. Mr. Silva has been involved in the negotiation of every contract for the past eighteen years and for a contract that took twenty-two months of negotiations, the teachers and administrators deserve kudos for

conducting themselves in such a professional manner.

Mrs. Lynch, a member of the Negotiation Team, also wished to thank everyone involved; this being her first teachers contract negotiation, she learned a great deal; it was a group effort on everyone's part and after this long, painstaking process, the final contract will help the District into the future without being detrimental to the students.

Reminders from the Chair

Chairman Bento reminded School Committee members of the need to move forward with the development of School Committee goals; also, of the requirement for school board members to engage in six hours of professional development each year. School Liaison reports will be due in less than two months; in preparation, members should make contact with PTOs and principals and identify what is great and what could be improved upon; findings should be reviewed with the Superintendent first.

Mr. Saviano reported that at the four-day NSBA conference in Boston recently, he made a connection with a national robotics company; a collaborative meeting is planned for all the robotics teams and their families and board members to review and validate the students' classroom work and competitions; a robot demonstration will show students what could be in their future. Mr. Saviano will meet with the Superintendent to discuss opportunities for students in other classrooms as well.

Mr. Silva reminded everyone the robotics team leaves tomorrow for the world competition in St. Louis; he said they have been working very hard and he wishes them well; Mr. Silva will attend three of the four days of the competition.

Mrs. Lynch wished the DECA students good luck at their upcoming competition in Utah.

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES

Recommendation # S2012-13 A-E: CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL

A. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicant to the extracurricular position listed below for the 2011-12 school year only (pending certification, funding and sufficient sign-ups to warrant running this program):

WELLNESS CENTER SUPERVISOR – KICKEMUIT MIDDLE

1. Supervisor (Spring) Laurie Cadman

B. 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. Amanda C. Berard Elementary/Sp.Ed.**
- 2. Stephen M. Buonfiglio Elementary/M.S. Science/M.S. Social Studies**
- 3. Sarah A. Covino General Subject Matter**
- 4. Jacqueline A. Croft Elementary/Sp.Ed.**
- 5. Susan Foley-Slusarski Registered Nurse**
- 6. Melina M. Gadless-Sheedy General Subject Matter**
- 7. Patrick J. MacGovern General Subject Matter**
- 8. Alka Naithani General Subject Matter**
- 9. Benjamin A. Tucker General Subject Matter**

C. CLASSIFIED 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 classified substitutes pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements:

TEACHER ASSISTANTS

- 1. Kelly A. Kenny**

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE

- 2. Debra A. Andrade**

D. LEAVES OF ABSENCE: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to grant leaves of absence for a Mathematics Specialist and an Elementary Special Educator as

follows:

1. Sara Bogdon Mathematics Specialist - Oliver

**Effective: Upon completion of Maternity Leave
through June 1, 2012**

**Reason: Parental leave in accordance with
Article 21, Section L2 of the Master
Agreement**

2. Rebecca Peluso Special Educator – Hugh Cole

Effective: 2012-13 School Year

**Reason: Parental leave in accordance with
Article 21, Section L2 of the Master
Agreement**

E. RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to accept the resignations of Ellen Jennings from the position of Secretary and Jose G. Machado from the position of Custodian as listed below:

1. Ellen Jennings Secretary – Kickemuit Middle

Effective: June 29, 2012

Reason: Retirement

2. Jose G. Machado Custodian – Guiteras

Effective: June 29, 2012

Reason: Retirement

Recommendation #S 2012-14: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of a Warren family to home school their ninth grader for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year, adhering to all requirements as set forth by the Bristol Warren Regional School District

MOTION: Mr. Silva motioned to approve; Mr. Saviano seconded. Mr. O'Dell generically commented that when a parent requests home schooling they want the best for their child; such a request at this time of the year is strange and he questions what is best for the student; Mr. O'Dell is baffled by this request. Mrs. Arsenault stated it is the right of parents to home school their children in this country and it is the Committee's obligation to approve their plan; timing has to do with what the families think is best and Committees should keep an open mind. The motion to approve passed by a vote of 8 to 1 with Mrs. McBride opposed.

Recommendation #S 2012-11: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and supported by the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee, approve the new School Committee Policy GBCD Policy Related to Educator Code of Professional Responsibility (Second Reading)

MOTION: Mr. O'Dell motioned to approve; Mr. Silva seconded. Mrs. Arsenault thanked Superintendent Thies and Dr. Andrade for their

work on this policy; it is aligned with BEP requirements; she asked for the Committee's approval based on the administrators' work and expertise. The motion to approve passed by a vote of 9 to 0.

Recommendation #S 2012-15: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the 2012-2013 School Calendar

MOTION: Mr. O'Dell motioned to approve. Mr. Saviano seconded. In response to Mr. O'Dell, Mrs. Thies explained all the Rhode Island superintendents discussed the possibility of eliminating the February and April vacations for one March vacation; there was not a clear consensus and since a number of things are shared across the state, deviation by us alone poses problems. This calendar conforms with the RISSA calendar.

Mrs. Lynch asked if another body besides RIDE could have an impact on school districts' calendars. Mrs. Thies said she would like to maintain autonomy and not be dictated; discussion continues among districts so it may come up again but Mrs. Thies believes the state is not quite ready for it. Mrs. Lynch said the third week in June can be brutally hot.

Mrs. Arsenault asked about conflicts with using the schools for professional development on election days; also, if Martin Luther King Day was considered for professional development. Mrs. Thies

said the Towns were contacted about election days and we may have to reserve handicapped parking; we do not use all schools for professional development. Regarding MLK Day, being a national holiday we should avoid using that day.

For clarification, Mr. O'Dell stated he has expressed through the years he believes the school calendar revolves around vacation habits rather than educational need; he asked the Committee to consider keeping the conversation alive, there would have to be substantial change to reflect what is good from an educational standpoint. Mrs. Campbell said she knows of a district that tried to reduce the February and April vacations to one in March and they ended up cancelling school for three days because of the a large number of cases of the flu.

The motion to approve passed by a vote of 9 to 0.

Recommendation #S2012-16: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, adopt a resolution in opposition to Senate Bill S-2239

MOTION: Mrs. McBride motioned to adopt, Mr. Silva seconded. Mr. O'Dell reiterated his total support of the resolution; a battle for autonomy has been waged against our own state and federal governments and Department of Education; this bill allows us to make decisions the Department of Education takes away from us.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Superintendent believes it is important to leave decision-making to educators, who are the professionals and experts, and not to our civic leaders; it is important to retain control over our own budget. Mrs. Thies thanked the Committee for their approval.

At this time, Mrs. McBride suggested, and all agreed, the reporter present should be given the “Final Impact Statement.”

EXECUTIVE SESSION – 8:25 PM

MOTION: In accordance with open meetings law 42-26-5(a)(2), at 8:25 PM Mr. O’Dell motioned to go into Executive Session for a discussion of the Warren Town Council, personnel recommendations, and Council 94 contract negotiations; Mrs. Arsenault seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Silva announced that he will recuse himself from the Council 94 contract discussion. Mr. Bento stated no vote will be taken during Executive Session or when open session resumes except to adjourn.

RESUMPTION OF MEETING – 10:15 PM

Mr. Bento reported that no action was taken in Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT – 10:15 PM

MOTION: There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Campbell,

seconded by Mrs. McBride, motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 PM. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Lynch, Secretary

/c