

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014**

The bi-monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, January 13, 2014, 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 7:14 PM.

Present: Paul Silva, Chair; Karen Lynch, Secretary; Susan Rancourt, Treasurer; Diana Campbell, Marjorie McBride, William O'Dell, John Saviano and Lynn Wainwright; Melinda Thies, Superintendent; Mario Andrade, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Almeida, Director of Literacy and Title 1, Leslie Anderson, Director of Pupil Personnel; and Pauline Silva, Director of Finance and Administration

Deployed: John Bento, Vice-Chairman

OPENING BUSINESS

All present were invited to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Silva stated, for the record, that the presentation for Graduation Requirements will be considered training for the School Department fulfilling the School Committee goal requiring quarterly

professional development sessions.

PUBLIC COMMENT/PUBLIC FORUM

Eileen and Steve Patistea came forward for the purpose of educating themselves on policy procedure. Specifically, Student/Teacher Conflicts, Student Retaliation, Extended Day Check-in Times, Regional Forms Approval and Student-Parent Contact from School.

The Superintendent and the Chairman both responded that situations related to dissatisfaction with policy procedure must proceed through a hierarchical chain beginning with the parent contacting the teacher at the school level. If a resolution is not reached at that level, the parent would then move on to the Principal/Administrator. If at that point a resolution is still not met, the parent would then contact the Superintendent. Mrs. Thies stated it is very important to take every step in the hierarchical chain with the hope that a resolution will be reached within that process.

Mr. Patistea asked if the regional form packet is updated on the Rhode Island Department of Education website. Chairman Silva responded that the forms are maintained by the Administrators. He did not have information on whether or not the forms on the RIDE website were up to date. Mrs. Thies added that internal forms, specific to the District, must be in compliance with certain policies.

Mrs. Thies asked the Patistea's to leave their contact information with the secretary of the School Committee. Mrs. Thies stated she would be happy to meet with the Patistea's.

Heidi Monroe came forward to express her concerns about the latest amendment to the Academic Eligibility Policy. She stated that she has already shared her concerns with Mr. Murgo.

Ms. Monroe is concerned with the current Academic Eligibility Policy as it relates to failing grades and extracurricular activities. Specifically, a student who is failing one class and forbidden to compete until the next report card is issued. She is concerned for students, especially high risk students, who fall through the cracks as a result of not participating in an extra-curricular activity. Ms. Monroe believes it is important for students to participate in extra-curricular activities as it provides stability and purpose for the child. Ms. Monroe also expressed that she would like assurance that the Extended Day Program is staffed by qualified professionals. Ms. Monroe closed by stating she understands the need for standards and policies.

Chairman Silva responded saying the issues Ms. Monroe raised concerning Academic Eligibility are not new to the School Committee.

He assured Ms. Monroe that the Academic Eligibility Policy is currently being addressed. Chairman Silva stated that a finalized amendment is forthcoming. The amended policy will contain more

appropriate language to include procedures and methods for providing academic assistance for students to help them strive academically resulting in continued participation in after school activities.

Chairman Silva urged Ms. Monroe to check upcoming School Committee agendas in the near future for the topic of Academic Eligibility. Chairman Silva asked Ms. Monroe to come back and share her thoughts then.

MT. HOPE HIGH SCHOOL – PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Ms. Copeland presented changes to the Program of Studies for the 2014-2015 year. She said the changes align more to the Common Core Standards providing increased opportunities for students.

Chairman Silva questioned why Italian 4 and Accounting 2 were not being offered in 2014-2015 due to “lack of enrollment” since enrollment hasn’t been determined. Ms. Copeland responded that Italian 4 and Accounting 2 could be left on the Program of Studies until actual enrollment numbers are realized.

Chairman Silva would like to see the AP and EEP classes delineated in the Program of Studies. Ms. Copeland will verify that this has been done.

MT. HOPE HIGH SCHOOL – GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Ms. Copeland presented the Graduation Requirements for Mt. Hope High School students. In particular, she discussed the NECAP Interventions for those students who are at risk outlining a three-pronged program that was designed to give skills and reinforcement to students in order for them to achieve proficiency. The following three interventions were instituted: After School Intervention, Summer School Intervention and Fall 2013 additional math support.

Ms. Copeland went through the following timeline of events related to NECAP:

- Family Intervention Night conducted at MHHS.**
- October 2013 - students took the NECAP tests and are currently awaiting results. Ms. Copeland said that RIDE has informed her that those results will be received on January 27th.**
- January 3, 2014 – Waiver Policy and informational letters mailed to families.**
- January 7, 2014 – ASVAB test administered. (Students awaiting scores were encouraged to take the ASVAB.) – 80 students participated**
- January 8, 2014 – Administration attended RIDE meeting**
- January 14, 2014 – Information update to families concerning release date and personalized guidance appointments scheduled.**
- January 29-31 – guidance counselors meet with students and families to review test results and possible next steps.**

Ms. Copeland stated that RIDE is requiring all students sit for the NECAPs twice in order to apply for a waiver.

Ms. Copeland stated that the Guidance Department has been hypervigilant in contacting parents/students in their junior year to help alleviate anxiety for families.

Mrs. Campbell said it was nice to see Mr. Murgo and Ms. Hayes in the audience supporting Ms. Copeland. Mrs. Campbell stated it is good to see teamwork between the Junior High School and High School Administration.

WIRELESS CLASSROOM INITIATIVE GRANT –

Mr. Morris gave a presentation on the Wireless Classroom Initiative Grant to the School Committee. He stated that the grant award totals \$394,810.60 and is being run on a school by school basis within the District.

In 2012, RIDE conducted a statewide technology infrastructure survey which revealed that only 23% of classrooms in the State of Rhode Island are covered by a wireless footprint. A \$20 million Technology Infrastructure Capital Bond was established to provide wireless capabilities to every classroom in the State. The bond will cover site surveys, hardware, labor and a three year warranty. The WCI Grant Award will provide Bristol Warren Regional Schools with a strong wireless infrastructure increasing the network size from 1 G to 10 G.

The new infrastructure is beyond industry standards and will support the District's 1-1 laptop initiative.

In May 2013, RIDE released a list of approved WCI vendors. Paul M. and his staff met with three of those vendors; each company completed a site survey as well. In July 2013, initial sealed bids were submitted to RIDE.

Paul M. met with RIDE and the Wireless Committee. It was determined that Carousel Industries would be the best choice to complete the wireless project for Bristol Warren Regional Schools. Paul M. stated that Carousel Industries initial bid of \$399,091.80 included extra equipment that would not be necessary for the District. Carousel Industries scaled back the items in question from their bid and presented a new bid amount of \$311,000. The new amount of \$311,000 falls within the parameters of the Grant Award amount of \$394,810. Carousel Industries will work within RIDE guidelines. Paul M. stated he has worked with Carousel in the past and has confidence in their ability to complete the task.

Mr. Saviano is concerned about the legality of Carousel Industries changing their bid amount in the middle of the process. Although Mr. Saviano has been assured that all legal questions have been answered, he said he wanted to go on record saying he still has concerns about the selection process.

Paul M. closed his presentation by discussing the WCI Implementation Plan. There are four milestones established for reimbursement as follows:

- Milestone 1 – Cabling Complete – 25%**
- Milestone 2 – Equipment Received – 25%**
- Milestone 3 – Implementation – 25%**
- Milestone 4 – Final Acceptance – 25%**

Milestone reimbursements will be made on a school by school basis.

Mr. O'Dell asked Mr. Morris to contact legal counsel to review the final contract presentation.

Mr. Morris closed by saying the bottom line cost to the District upon completion of the Wireless Classroom Initiative Project will be \$0. RIDE will be paying for the entire project.

SUPERINTENDENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES:

RECOMMENDATION #S2014-01

That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, approve the Wireless Classroom Initiative Grant Award and vendor selection of Carousel Industries.

MOTION: Mr. O'Dell made a motion to approve the Wireless Classroom Initiative Grant Award and selection of Carousel Industries; seconded by Mrs. Lynch.

DISCUSSION: Mr. O'Dell would like to amend the motion as follows: "contingent upon legal counsel review of Carousel's mid-process bid amount adjustment, and language modification to Article 9 of the RIDE Grant Agreement to protect Bristol Warren Regional School District." Mr. O'Dell said he is concerned that RIDE could cancel the WCI contract with the District at any time which is unacceptable. Mr. O'Dell stated he would not authorize signing the WCI contract as written until Article 9 is fixed.

AMENDED MOTION: Mr. O'Dell made a motion that the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, approve the Wireless Classroom Initiative Grant Award and selection of vendor, Carousel Industries, contingent upon legal counsel review of Carousel's mid-process bid amount adjustment, and language modification to Article 9 of the RIDE Grant Agreement to protect Bristol Warren Regional School District; seconded by Mr. Saviano. The motion passed unanimously.

The original motion as amended passed unanimously.

Mrs. Thies said she has been in contact with Mr. Henneous, District

Legal Counsel, who has been working with RIDE on changes to Article 9 of the WCI Grant Agreement. Mrs. Thies will follow-up with Mr. Henneous regarding progress with RIDE on changes to Article 9 of the WCI Grant Agreement. Mrs. Thies added that the District is protected by the milestones of the WCI Implementation Plan.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mrs. Campbell asked for confirmation of the next JFC Meeting. Chairman Silva responded he has not received word concerning a definite JFC meeting date. There is a tentative date scheduled for Wednesday, January 22nd.

Mrs. Almeida informed the School Committee that Louis Rego from the Warren/Barrington Rotary asked her to share information with the School Committee concerning a Second Story Theater fundraiser. The play is called Seven Keys to Bald Pate, by James M. Cohan. The fundraiser production will be held on Thursday, January 23rd at 8 p.m. The proceeds from the event will fund the Chris Herren drug abuse presentation at Kickemuit Middle School and Barrington Middle School. The School Committee can contact Louis Rego for ticket information.

Mrs. Wainwright asked the School Committee and Administration if they would be attending the Bodacious Spelling Bee. Chairman Silva

suggested an email be sent to the School Committee by the secretary to the School Committee to garner interest.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:28 p.m.

MOTION: At 9:28 PM Mrs. Campbell made a motion to adjourn; Mrs. McBride seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Lynch, Secretary

/kd