

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Monday, April 25, 2016**

**The bi-monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, April 25, 2016, in the cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street, Bristol, RI. Chairman Bento called the meeting to order at approximately 7:09 PM.**

**Present: John Bento, Chairman; Paul Silva, Vice-Chairman; Karen Lynch, Secretary; Marjorie McBride, Treasurer; William O'Dell, John Saviano, Erin Schofield and Lynn Wainwright; Mario J. Andrade, Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Almeida, Director of Literacy & Title 1; Pauline Silva, Director of Administration and Finance, and Andrew Henneous, Esq., District Solicitor**

**Absent: Diana Campbell**

**OPENING BUSINESS**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Chairman Bento stated that the public comments submitted this evening are pursuant to an agenda item scheduled later in the**

meeting and will be heard at that time.

## **ACCOLADES**

**Mt. Hope High School students received many outstanding accolades at the 2016 Rhode Island Science and Engineering Fair, including one of Best in Fair Ribbon. Congratulations to the following students for their remarkable achievements:**

**Margaret O'Brien Best in Fair Ribbon**

**First Grant Senior Division**

**URI Renewable Scholarship**

**RI Atmospheric Environmental Award**

**RI Coastal Management Council – Honorable  
Mention**

**Morgan Kane First Grant Senior Division**

**Naval Undersea Warfare Center/Innovative  
Science Award**

**Bristol County Water Authority – Second Place  
Award**

**Narragansett Water Pollution Control Organization  
Award**

**Stockholm Water Prize**

**RIC Renewable Scholarship**

**RI Coastal Management Council – First Place  
Award**

**Narragansett Bay Commission Award**

**Samantha Eddy First Grant Senior Division**

**Slater Technology Fund Award**

**Mu Alpha Theta Award**

**National High School Mathematics Society**

**Summer Research Grant**

**Alexander Temple Second Grant Senior Division**

**Cris Lam Second Grant Senior Division**

**Jonathan Rodrigues Second Grant Senior Division**

**Marcus Rodrigues Second Grant Senior Division**

**Bristol County Water Authority – Third**

**Place Award**

**Annika Creton Third Grant Senior Division**

**Marysa Fikiet Third Grant Senior Division**

**Alana Faria Third Grant Senior Division**

**RI Water Works Association – Third Place Award**

**Bristol County Water Authority – First Place**

**Award**

**Samantha Mendonca Third Grant Senior Division**

**RI Water Works Association – Third Place Award**

**Bristol County Water Authority – First Place**

**Award**

## **MT. HOPE HIGH SCHOOL WINTER SPORTS 2015-2016**

**Congratulations to Alyssa Raposo for receiving the 2016 Rhode Island Interscholastic League Spirit of Sport Award.**

**Congratulations to the Mt. Hope High School Gymnastic Team and Head Coach Nicole Daniello for winning the Division II State Championship.**

### **GYMNASTICS**

**Emilie Donato**

**Katie Donato**

**Kelsey Gonzalez**

**Skylar Kallman**

**Kaira Lawrence**

**Jordan Masaitis**

**The following Gymnastics Team members also received individual accolades:**

**Victoria Gendreau All State and All Division 1st Team**

**Meghan Oliver All State and All Division 1st Team**

**Kaitlin Quinn All Division 1st Team**

**Jayne Foreman All Division 1st Team**

**Ashley Heald All Division 3rd Team**

**Brianna Gendreau All Division 3rd Team**

**WRESTLING - Head Coach, James McKenna – Asst. Coach Keith Medeiros & Volunteer Coach, Steve Martel**

**Fredrick Belham All Division 1st Team**

**Nathaniel Braga All Division 1st Team**

**Devon Lancaster All Division 1st Team**

**Noah Mallon All Division 2nd Team**

**Neil Thibaudeau All Division 2nd Team**

**Bailey Taft All Division 2nd Team**

**BOYS BASKETBALL – Head Coach, Jerry Darius & Asst. Coaches, James Bracket & Giovanni Sobowale**

**Deven Lavallee All League 1st Team – Division II East**

**COMPETITION CHEERLEADING – Head Coach Debby Marshall & Asst.**

**Coach Kristin Carbone**

**Kyle Dumkuski All State 1st Team**

**Sophia Desmarais Honorable Mention**

**Alexandrea Grenier Honorable Mention**

**HOCKEY – Head Coach, Steven Ouelette**

**Nathan Cordeiro All Division 1st Team & Hobie Baker**

**Award Recipient**

**Austin Hogan All Division 3rd Team**

**Ryan Cordeiro All Division 3rd Team**

**HOCKEY EAST BAY CO-OP TEAM – Coach, Allison Faria & Asst.**

**Coach Lindsey Stebenne**

**Carissa Rego Divison I State Championship**

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Chairman Bento stated that there was no need for an executive session regarding the Consent Agenda.**

## **SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES**

### **RECOMMENDATION #S2016-19**

**All items listed with an asterisk on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the School Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a committee member requests, in which event the items will be withdrawn from the general order of business and considered in the normal sequence of the agenda. Hearing none, Chairman Bento requested a motion.**

**Mrs. McBride made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Mr. Saviano. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Mrs. McBride made a motion to seal the minutes of the March 28, 2016 meeting; seconded by Mr. Silva. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **S2016-19 A-E: CONSENT AGENDA - PERSONNEL**

**A. BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicant to the School of the 21st Century, Before and After School Program, as listed below (pending sufficient enrollment to warrant running this program and DCYF CANTS clearance):**

**1. Sally C. Deal Child Opportunity Zone (COZ)  
Program - Bookkeeper (Part Time)**

**Effective: Immediately, for the remainder of the 2015-16 school year, pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements**

**Reason: To fill a vacancy  
(Resignation – A. LaRue)**

**Funding: Parent Fees/Self-Sufficient**

**B. 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 2015-16 school year only (pending certification, funding and sufficient sign-ups to warrant running these programs):

**SPRING COACHES – MT. HOPE HIGH**

**Sport Position Coach**

- 1. Baseball (Boys) Asst. Coach Bruce Marshall**
- 2. Baseball (Boys) Volunteer Coach Aires Medeiros Jr. \***
- 3. Softball (Girls) Volunteer Coach Katherine Ditler \***

**INTRAMURAL COACHES – KICKEMUIT MIDDLE**

**Sport Position Coach**

- 4. Tennis Coach Geoffrey Keegan**

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

**C. CERTIFIED SUBSTITUTES:** That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to place on file in the office of the Superintendent the following application for a certified substitute pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements:

## **CERTIFIED**

### **Name Area/Level**

- 1. Grace L. Vinbury Elementary/Sp.Ed.**

**D. 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:

## **SECRETARIAL**

- 1. Michele J. Anton**

## **TEACHER ASSISTANTS**

- 2. Kerry L. Santerre**

**E. RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS:** That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to accept the resignations of Kathleen A. Podraza from the position of Middle School Science Teacher, Christine A. Mullen from the position of Secondary Art Teacher, Jennifer L. Carota from the position of Elementary Speech Pathologist and Lisa F. Medeiros from the position of Secretary as listed below:

- 1. Kathleen A. Podraza Science Teacher – Kickemuit Middle**

**Effective: June 30, 2016**

**Reason: Retirement**

**2. Christine A. Mullen Art Teacher – Mt. Hope High**

**Effective: End of 2015-16 School**

**Year**

**Reason: Retirement**

**3. Jennifer L. Carota Speech Pathologist – Hugh Cole**

**Effective: June 30, 2016**

**Reason: Personal**

**4. Lisa F. Medeiros Secretary – Mt. Hope High**

**Effective: May 3, 2016**

**Reason: Personal**

**RECOMMENDATION #S2016-20**

**That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan.**

**MOTION:** Mrs. McBride made a motion to approve the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan; seconded by Mr. Saviano.

**DISCUSSION:** Mrs. Wainwright asked Dr. Andrade what steps will be taken to implement the Strategic Plan once it is approved.

Dr. Andrade responded that implementation of the Strategic Plan will begin at the Subcommittee level. The 2016-2021 Strategic Plan was designed to be flexible in order to accommodate the changing learning environments.

The motion passed unanimously.

**RECOMMENDATION #S2016-21**

That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, approve the Small SUV Bid.

**MOTION:** Mr. Saviano made a motion to approve the Small SUV Bid; seconded by Mr. Silva.

**DISCUSSION:** Mrs. Wainwright asked which bidder would receive the award for the Small SUV bid. Mrs. McBride responded that the Small SUV Bid would be awarded to Central Auto for \$24,768. She added that the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee is only recommending the

**base bid, not the add-on.**

**Mrs. Saviano expressed a concern that the specifics of the bid should be part of the motion.**

**A discussion ensued.**

**Mrs. McBride shared the history leading up to the recommendation of the Small SUV Bid. She also shared the bid specs as provided on the District website.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **RECOMMENDATION #S2016-22**

**That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, approve the disposal of a portable classroom.**

**MOTION: Mr. Saviano made a motion to approve the disposal of a portable classroom; seconded by Mrs. McBride.**

**DISCUSSION: Mrs. McBride explained that the portable classroom is not being used as a classroom, but is currently used as a storage space. Once approved, the portable classroom will be put out to bid**

**for sale which bid will include removal of the portable classroom.**

**Mr. O'Dell stated that the motion needs to be amended to include the disclaimer that the disposal of the portable classroom will be conducted "in accordance with current School Committee policy" which policy lists directives on disposal of surplus.**

**MOTION: Mr. O'Dell made a motion to amend the current motion to read, "to approve the disposal of the portable classroom in accordance with current policy"; seconded by Mrs. McBride.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**The motion to approve the disposal of the portable classroom in accordance with current policy passed unanimously.**

#### **RECOMMENDATION #S2016-23**

**That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and supported by Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee, approve the second reading of the Interlibrary Loan Policy.**

**MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to approve the second reading of the Interlibrary Loan Policy; seconded by Mr. Silva.**

**DISCUSSION: There was no discussion**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**RECOMMENDATION #S2016-24**

**That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the 2016-2017 School Calendar.**

**MOTION: Mr. O'Dell made a motion to approve the 2016-2017 School Calendar; seconded by Mrs. McBride.**

**DISCUSSION: Chairman Bento asked the individuals who submitted Public Comment requests on the 2016-2017 School Calendar to come forward.**

**Ms. Joan Swift, BWRSD Teacher, read the following letter:**

**“April 25, 2016**

**Dear Superintendent Andrade and the Bristol Warren School Committee Members:**

**The tentative calendar for the school year 2016-2017 has again omitted the traditional February vacation. It is our opinion that the week off in February is necessary for both students and teachers. The reason most often cited for omitting the February vacation is that it is a disruption to the learning environment. However, the question is**

raised as to the quality of the learning during a school year with increasingly heavy workloads for both students and teachers, and decreased recess and vacation time.

Teaching during these times of high-stakes testing, subjective teacher evaluations, and increasingly difficult students, has taken a toll on teachers of all grade levels. As a result, the teacher shortage in the US is growing. Teachers in our district report that they suffer from a plethora of stress related ailments, leading to chiropractor and doctor visits as well as medication. Many teachers admit to not being able to make it through a five day week, which leads to the high level of teacher absences. The lack of substitutes causes teachers to feel unsupported and highly stressed when they are called to cover a fellow teacher's class. This situation does nothing to support the learning environment.

From the students point of view school is not a "piece of cake." A growing number of students are feeling the effects of the fast paced, rigorous education system. There are actually conferences focusing on stressed out students, where educators and parents can learn the signs of anxiety ridden students and how to help them. Students have to face difficult situations daily: keeping up with homework, school work, testing, and sports. Add in the new social media outlets that are available to them, and this can lead to a host of new problems that seem overwhelming to them. More than ever, students need a break.

**“Chronic stress takes its toll in part on our body's ability to resist infection, maintain vital functions, and even ability to avoid injury. When you're stressed out and tired, you are more likely to become ill, your arteries take a beating, and you're more likely to have an accident. Your sleep will suffer, you won't digest your food as well, and even the genetic material in the cells of your body may start to become altered in a bad way. Mentally, not only do you become more irritable, depressed, and anxious, but your memory will become worse and you'll make poorer decisions. You'll also be less fun to be with, causing you to become more isolated, lonely, and depressed.”**  
**(Psychology Today)**

**Why, during these challenging times, would vacations be omitted? At first we were told that every district in the state would be eliminating February vacation by the 2016-17 school year, but that isn't the case. Based on district calendars that are posted for next year, 24 districts, out of 36 that were surveyed, will have the traditional February break from the 20th to the 24th. Some people feel that the elimination of February vacation will allow school to end sooner in June. Is that conducive to the learning environment? A longer summer break actually will create an increase in summer slide, a loss of academic knowledge.**

**There is a reciprocal relationship between teachers and students: happy teachers= happy students and vice versa. Let's do what is right for the students by giving them a week off in the middle of**

winter to recharge and come back ready to learn. Happy, healthy teachers and a less stressful environment will create schools in which students can grow and thrive. Isn't that what it is all about?

Sincerely,

Jane Swift KMS Jen Harrington KMS  
Colleen O'Connell HC Pat Wells KMS  
Denise Quinlan KMS Maria Camara KMS  
Bonnie Pansa KMS Pat Fillipino KMS  
Susan Cardente KMS Spencer White KMS  
Kristin Sousa KMS Martha Tisdell KMS  
Laurie Cadman KMS Kristina Pereira KMS  
Dayna Achilli KMS Lisa Scagos KMS  
Marianne McGonagle KMS Jen Crandall KMS  
Steve Buonfiglio KMS Nicole Daniello KMS  
Jen McDonald HC

<http://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/stressed-out-kids/>  
[http://www.summerlearning.org/?page=know\\_the\\_facts](http://www.summerlearning.org/?page=know_the_facts)  
<http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/05/22/how-schools-can-help-nurture-students-mental-health/>  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/fulfillment-any-age/201006/the-importance-vacations-our-physical-and-mental-health>  
<http://wpri.com/2015/08/18/cranston-schools-decide-to-keep-february-vacation/>  
[http://www.independenri.com/independents/ind/narragansett/article\\_cc1b1e7c-dee9-5b7a-a9cd-e12c4f9a7f5c.html](http://www.independenri.com/independents/ind/narragansett/article_cc1b1e7c-dee9-5b7a-a9cd-e12c4f9a7f5c.html)  
<http://www.thewesterlysun.com/news/latestnews/8322470-129/charihos-february-vacation-is-kept-intact.html>  
[http://eastbayri.com/stories/barrington-finalizes-calendar-school-vacations-unchanged,14261?"](http://eastbayri.com/stories/barrington-finalizes-calendar-school-vacations-unchanged,14261?)

**Brian Chidester, Warren, Rhode Island, stated that he has been a teacher in the District for 15 years. He is also a district parent.**

**He posed the following questions to the School Committee:**

**“When it came to the elimination of the February school break, where did it come from? Who formulated it? What was the rationale?”**

**Mr. Chidester stated that he had posed those questions to the School Committee because he had raised the same questions to the high school administrators who were unable to answer the questions as**

**they did not know the origin for the change.**

**Mr. Chidester expressed concern about the negative effects to younger students in having straight education for 15 weeks before having a school break. He cited that college students have shorter sessions between school breaks. He shared several anecdotal stories of students “checking out” at least two weeks prior to the April vacation. Mr. Chidester asked why consideration wasn’t made to even out the instructional times with shorter stints between school breaks. Mr. Chidester requested that the February school break be reinstated.**

**Mr. Victor Cabral, Bristol, Rhode Island, stated that he doesn’t understand why the February break was eliminated when the District is already providing two days off for the students during a week in February. Mr. Cabral questioned why adding three more days to make it a full February vacation week would make that much of a difference. He expressed disagreement with the rationale of snow days. Mr. Cabral believes that money savings would be realized through reduced heating during a February vacation week.**

**Mrs. McBride stated that she believes a majority of the School Committee members would prefer a March vacation instead of the currently scheduled April vacation, but because of shared services with other towns, this is currently not possible. Mrs. McBride acknowledged that all the points presented during public comment**

were valid. Mrs. McBride believes that the District should work toward a March vacation.

Dr. Andrade stated that the calendar currently being recommended tonight is almost identical to what the Superintendent Association supports. The individual School Committee's make the final decision on what calendar schedule they will adopt.

School Committee members weighed in on the discussion with similar points of view.

Mrs. Schofield raised a concern about the timing of PARCC testing and its proximity to coming off of April vacation. Dr. Andrade responded that the testing schedule would be an issue even if there was a March vacation.

Mr. Saviano asked about the effect upon the East Bay Collaborative were some districts to have a February vacation and some to have a March vacation. Dr. Andrade responded that the East Bay Collaborative follows the Bristol Warren Regional School District schedule, whatever that may be.

Dr. Andrade closed by stating that he has put a survey out to the Superintendent's Association for input on moving toward a March vacation. He added that a March vacation has not been vetted to the teachers or parents as of yet. Dr. Andrade stated that data will be

**collected from the two years that February vacation was eliminated to determine the impact. Dr. Andrade commented that he would propose starting to research a March school break for the 2017-2018 school year, and to garner input from the public.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **RECOMMENDATION #S2016-25**

**That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, reaffirm the School Committee Resolution on Gun Free Schools.**

**Chairman Bento stated that the Resolution for Gun Free Schools was approved last year. The School Committee will be reaffirming that resolution this evening. Chairman Bento stated that the State Legislature has not voted on the Gun Free Schools Resolution yet, but that a total of 19 districts in the State have approved the resolution including six townships and cities. Chairman Bento thanked Mr. Jerry Belair, President of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Gun Violence, for being present to answer any questions.**

**MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to reaffirm the Resolution on Gun Free Schools; seconded by Mr. Silva.**

**DISCUSSION: There was no discussion.**

**The motion passed with a 6-1 vote; Mr. Saviano dissenting.**

## **Subcommittee/School Committee Reports & Initiatives**

### **Budget/Facilities Subcommittee**

**Mrs. McBride stated that she had nothing new to report.**

### **Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee**

**Mrs. Schofield stated that the next Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee meeting would be held on Monday, May 2nd at 6 p.m. in the Oliver Administration Building. The focus will be a preliminary discussion on the 1:1 Device Initiative. There will also be a preliminary discussion on School Bus Transportation.**

### **Personnel/Contract Negotiations Subcommittee**

**Mr. Silva stated that there was nothing remarkable to report.**

### **Wellness Subcommittee**

**Mrs. Wainwright stated that the Wellness Committee will be meeting tomorrow at 4 p.m. in the conference room of the Oliver Administration Building.**

**Mrs. Wainwright shared about the activities that will be taking place during the upcoming Wellness Week which will be held May 2nd to May 6th.**

**Mrs. Wainwright showed a video by the author of a book called Lunch**

**Ladies where he shares the impact that a lunch lady had on his life which inspired him to create a School Lunch Hero Day.**

**Mrs. Wainwright stated that the Wellness Committee is planning an event on May 6th in honor of School Lunch Hero Day.**

**Mrs. Wainwright stated that the Wellness Committee has six copies of Lunch Ladies, and will ask the lunch staff to sign the books which will either be framed or put in each of the school's libraries.**

**Mrs. Wainwright reported that the New England Dairy and Food Counsel will be speaking with the Wellness Committee at tomorrow's meeting to discuss opportunities.**

### **Chairperson's Initiatives**

#### **Superintendent's Evaluation**

**Chairman Bento reported that the discussion regarding the Superintendent's Evaluation will be held during the Executive Session.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION – 8:24 PM**

**Pursuant to Open Meetings Laws 42-46-5 (a)(1)(2) an Executive Session will be held to discuss the following:**

- 1. Legal Advice re: Town of Warren Litigation**
- 2. Superintendent's Evaluation**

**Chairman Bento stated, for the record, that no action will be taken**

**during the executive session. The Open Session will reconvene only to adjourn.**

**MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:24 p.m.; seconded by Mr. O'Dell. The motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session at 8:34 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Saviano. The motion passed unanimously.**

**ADJOURNMENT – 8:35 PM**

**MOTION: There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Lynch motioned to adjourn the Open Session at 8:35 PM; seconded by Mrs. Schofield. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Karen A. Lynch, Secretary**

**/kd**