

Minutes of School Committee Meeting 01/23/14

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, January 23, 2014 at the Administration Building. Mrs. Brody called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Dr. Shea, Mr. Connor, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon and Mr. Tarro. Mr. Fuller arrived at 8:43 p.m. Absent was Mr. Guida.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Carroll Garland led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Achievement Recognition

Mr. Messore congratulated the Barrington High School students recognized with 2014 Scholastic Art Awards: Claire Adamson, Gold Key in Photography; Gabi Bonniol, Gold Key in Photography; Bea Bramhall, Gold Key in Ceramics; Avery Dodson, Silver Key in Drawing; Laura Edwards, Silver Key in Drawing; Nataliya Karashchuk, Gold Key in Drawing; Sarah Nowak, Gold Key in Sculpture; Megan O’Cain, Silver Key in Ceramics; Andres Prince-Gonzalez, Silver Key in Ceramics; Madeleine Schirber, Gold Key in Painting; and Jack Seber-Merolla, Gold Key in Digital Art Portfolio.

Information and Proposals

Elementary building administrators and enrichment specialists were present to provide an overview of the district’s elementary differentiated instruction and instruction as part of the Spotlight on Teaching and Learning and Information and Proposals portion of the meeting. Mrs. Dillon overviewed classroom instruction with standards-aligned curricula and differentiated instruction across the district. Each elementary principal and specialist presented information on their school’s enrichment and intervention programs and examples of their diagnostic tools. Present were Nayatt School Principal Ms. Tracey Whitehead, Enrichment Specialist Mrs. Claudia Muccino, and Reading Specialist Mrs. Dawn Carusi; Sowams School Principal Mr. Jim Callahan and Enrichment Specialist Mrs. Carroll Garland; Primrose Hill Principal Mrs. Paula Montesi and Enrichment Specialist Mr. Gino Sangiuliano; and from the Hampden Meadows School Principal Mrs. Tracey McGee, Reading Specialist Mr. Brian Fernandes, and Math Specialist Mrs. Patricia Tolento. The PowerPoint presentation will be made available on the district website. Questions from the Committee included looking to other districts on models of best practices, partnerships with local colleges, how technology is used for enrichment, and the frequency with which students are monitored for enrichment needs.

Mr. Tarro recapped the framework used in guiding the proposed fiscal year 2014-2015 budget as presented in detail at the January 16 meeting. All building administrators then provided their budget input for the upcoming school year, which included needs for English Language Arts, Math, and the implementation of new Science curriculum aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards for all schools. The presentation by elementary principals, Mr. Callahan, Mrs. Montesi, and Ms. Whitehead also included their schools’ needs associated with the implementation of an All Day Kindergarten program. Mrs. McGee expects to maintain her current staff level at Hampden Meadows School. Barrington Middle School Principal Dr. Andrew Anderson anticipates the reduction of one Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) in Grade 8 and the addition of a part-time Math Specialist. Barrington High School Principal Mr. Joseph Hurley expects to maintain his current staff level and provided information on the

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impact of virtual learning. The Middle School and High School are also preparing for implementation of new Social Studies curriculum. Questions from the Committee included FTE needs for implementation of All Day Kindergarten, staffing costs associated with online learning, the availability of Advanced Placement online courses, and opportunities through higher education partnerships.

General Public Discussion and Information

Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, asked that future discussions on enrichment and differentiated instruction include what steps are being taken to help students exceed further, and presented three questions for consideration: what is being done to meet standards, how are we enriching education, and is there an opportunity to exceed.

Mrs. Kathy Crain, of 11 Briarfield Road, stressed the need for more enrichment at the elementary level and asked what the per pupil spending is for Grades K-5 students versus older students. A brief discussion ensued. Mrs. Brody noted that the district has invested in professional development through the Lead, Educate and Promote the Profession (LEAPP) initiative, and part of that process is to bring students to the next level.

Old Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Messore provided an update on the district's Strategic Communication Plan and shared examples of current communication plans to the public including the upcoming Common Core State Standards forum and shared results from the recent Barrington High School Class of 2013 survey and forum. Mrs. Brody shared information on Board Briefs used by the Pewaukee School District as a possible communication between the School Committee and public, providing a brief synopsis of each meeting.

Old Business from School Committee

Mr. Messore reported that the All Day Kindergarten Task Force will meet next on January 28 to review facilities and he expects to have actual costs of a full day program by the end of the month. In response to Mrs. Brody's question relative to the membership of the Task Force, Mr. Messore stated that membership is only at the building level at this time and includes Grades K-3 principals and teachers.

Mrs. Brody led the continued discussion on the Committee participation in the Massachusetts District Governance Support Project. Following discussion of the Committee's availability to meet on Saturdays, it was agreed to explore other options for meeting dates on weekdays.

Following a brief discussion, the Committee agreed to the new language to be added to the School Committee page on the district website.

Mrs. Brody asked Mr. Messore and Mrs. Dillon to provide the perspective of the Central Office with regard to the Common Core State Standards. Mr. Messore commended the collaboration in district in incorporating the state mandated standards into the curriculum. Mrs. Dillon commended the teachers for their hard work and knowledge used to enhance the new curriculum allowing for the opportunity for students to soar. Mrs. Brody asked that as the district moves forward with the Strategic Communication Plan to allow for more opportunities for student input. Mr. Connor expressed his full support for the

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Common Core State Standards and the need for change for all American students to stay competitive. Mr. Fuller stressed that the criticism lies with the standards and not with the teachers or administration. Mr. Fuller also shared legislation from Representative Gregg Amore of East Providence, and expressed his desire for the Committee to have continued discussions. Dr. Dominguez and Dr. Shea reaffirmed their support for the Common Core State Standards and for the implementation of the new curriculum. Discussion ensued on the placement of Common Core State Standards discussions on future agendas.

New Business from Superintendent and Staff

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the appointment of Heidi Brousseau, Emotional Regulation Specialist.

Mr. Fuller asked if the position of Emotional Regulation Specialist was a budgeted position. Mr. Messoro noted that it was a reallocation of personnel and could represent potential savings.

The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Fuller and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

New Business from School Committee

No issues were raised at this time.

Decision Items

No consent agenda items were presented for approval.

Discussion Future Agenda Items

Mrs. Brody, on behalf of Mr. Guida, requested that a Building Committee update be placed on the next agenda and include school buildings assessment.

Mr. Messoro reported that a draft calendar for the 2014-2015 school year will be presented to the School Committee at the next meeting for review.

Mrs. Brody followed up on the request from Mr. Fuller for a review of the district field trip policy. Mrs. Dillon stated that the policy is currently under review by the Policy Subcommittee.

General Discussion to Guide Future Recommendations

Mr. Messoro reported that the School Committee will meet next on February 5 for a budget workshop.

Mrs. Brody noted additional meeting dates that include the Town Charter Review Commission meeting on January 27; the Common Core State Standards forum by the Rhode Island Department of Education and sponsored by the Barrington Education Foundation on January 28; the joint meeting with the Town Council previously originally scheduled for January 29 will be rescheduled; and the Rhode Island Board

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of Education is holding its work session on February 6 at Barrington High School followed by a workshop on summer learning.

General Public Discussion and Information

Mrs. Debby Perugini, of 6 Ferncliff Road, stated her concerns regarding the district policy on field trips and limitations on the number of students able to participate and asked that the Committee consider more opportunities for enrichment and field trips for all students.

Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, asked about the format for the next scheduled meeting that is slated to be a budget workshop. Mrs. Brody clarified that the next meeting will be a workshop only, and not a regular Committee meeting.

Mrs. Amy Segal, of 185 New Meadow Road, voiced her opposition to ending discussions on the Common Core State Standards, noting that ending discussions is unfair to parents.

Mrs. Brody stressed the importance of the district's statutory obligation to support Rhode Island's Basic Education Plan.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 11:02 p.m. and go into Executive Session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(1) for personnel; Section 42-46-5(a)(1) for Superintendent evaluation; Section 42-46-5(a)(3) for discussion relative to school buildings security issues; and Section 42-46-5(a)(8) for discussion relative to student disciplinary hearings. The motion passed 3-1 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion. Mr. Fuller opposed.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 11:50 p.m. and to seal the minutes and report that no votes were taken. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded the motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 11:51 p.m. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.