

Minutes of School Committee Meeting 02/13/14

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, February 13, 2014, at the Administration Building. Mrs. Brody called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida, Dr. Shea, Mr. Connor, Mr. Messoro and Mr. Tarro. Absent were Mr. Fuller and Mrs. Dillon.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Connor led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Achievement Recognition

Mr. Messoro announced the following achievements across the district:

Hampden Meadows School Grade 4 Student Ava Tine is the Rhode Island winner in the Bonnie Plants' 3rd Grade Cabbage Program for growing a 9-pound cabbage plant and will receive a \$1,000 scholarship as well as statewide recognition. Mr. Messoro thanked Primrose Hill Grade 3 Teacher Ms. Jessica Costa for helping to make the cabbage program a success.

The Primrose Hill School cast of Cinderella recently staged an energetic and entertaining performance of Cinderella. A special thank you was given to Mr. Mark Whittaker, Primrose Hill Grade 2 Teacher, who performed in the play as the teacher representative.

The Nayatt School cast of Pinocchio played three great performances this past weekend. A special thank you was given to Mrs. Cherylann Bertoncini, the school's librarian and teacher representative who performed in the play.

Five Barrington High School seniors were selected as candidates for the United States Presidential Scholars Program: Cassidy Laidlaw, Emma Margulies, Benjamin Rubin, Anna Seto, and Cecilia Yao.

Barrington High School is the recipient of the National Athletic Trainers' Association Safe Sports School award for its outstanding efforts in promoting safe participation in high school activities.

The Barrington High School Math A Team currently ranks ninth in the New England Math League. Team members include: senior Cassidy Laidlaw, juniors Adam Kelly, Teddy Ni, and Matthew Lamontagne; and freshman William Yao.

Several Barrington High School students have been selected to participate in the Rhode Island Music Educators' Association All-State Concert at Veterans Memorial Auditorium on March 23: Junior All-State Concert Band: Kieran Egan; Junior All-State Symphonic Band: Priyanka Bonifaz, Tim Hecker, and Elena Serrano; Junior All-State Orchestra: Jack Armstrong; Junior All-State Mixed Chorus: Abby Voigt; Junior All-State Treble Chorus: Cami Crisco, Zoe Finkelstein, Molly Littman, and Ciara O'Brien; Senior All-State Band: Sam Barmann, Alexander Greenberg, William Klimpert, and Amelia Szosz; Senior All-State Orchestra: Nell Klimpert, Bruce Park, and Ian Sabula; Senior All-State Mixed Chorus: Pilar Geneus, Michael Greene, Ryann Hall, Jusung Han, Cassidy Laidlaw, and Annie Priolo; Senior All-State Women's Chorus: Olivia Cardarelli, Samyukta Mallick, Isabelle Rea, and Lucina

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Schwartz; Junior Jazz Ensemble: Jack Armstrong, Priyanka Bonifaz, Tim Hecker, Elena Serrano, and Stephen Shannon; Senior Jazz Ensemble: William Hemingway, Jared Remson, and Riley Saeger; and Senior Guitar Ensemble: Ethan Wold.

Barrington Middle School Social Studies teacher Mrs. Mary Roberts is the recipient of the 2014 Daughters of the American Revolution Outstanding Teacher of American History Award given by the Bristol Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution.

Barrington Middle School English Teacher Ms. Kristin Meystre received a personal letter from William Thetford, Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army, from the Joint Special Operations Command in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, thanking students for their thoughtful notes sent to military men and women of all services and government civilian employees.

Mr. Messore also added that all achievement recognitions will be featured on the district website.

BPS Spotlight on Teaching and Learning

Mr. Messore reported that the next scheduled BPS Spotlight on Teaching and Learning is scheduled for the School Committee meeting on March 6, 2014.

Information and Proposals

Mr. Tarro presented the comprehensive proposed budget for FY2014-2015. The presentation, to be made available on the district website, included additional information as requested by the Committee at the Budget Workshop held on February 5, 2014 including medical insurance rates. The proposed budget includes new initiatives aligned to the district Strategic Plan such as funding for All Day Kindergarten, implementation of a communication plan and part time Math support at Barrington Middle School. Final numbers for workers compensation rates and property liability and a final contract with BEST are yet to be determined. The total proposed operating budget is \$46.8 million with a net impact to taxpayers of 1.47%. There were several questions from the Committee including comparison to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), timeline of the transportation contract bid, and comparison of this budget increase to the last five years. Following discussion,

Mr. Guida moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to accept the proposed 2014-2015 budget as presented and advance the budget to the Committee on Appropriations with footnotes to include variable information. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

General Public Discussion and Information

Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, stated that he was impressed that an All Day Kindergarten program was added to the school budget with 5.5 FTEs while remaining close to the Consumer Price Index. Dr. Douglas also expressed his concerns regarding transportation and asked if the .5 FTE position for the Central Office was included in the budget to which Mr. Tarro responded that it was.

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Mrs. Susan Giordano, of 47 Washington Road, requested information on how the public can provide input to formulating meeting agendas, specifically adding discussions relating to the Common Core State Standards to address parent concerns. Mrs. Giordano also asked where parents can access a copy of the Rhode Island Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) agreement and if there is an option to opt out of PARCC testing. Mr. Messoro stated that there is an option to opt out of the pilot testing this spring, but there is no option to opt out for the testing to occur in 2015. Additional information can be obtained from the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Old Business from Superintendent and Staff

No issues were raised at this time.

Old Business from School Committee

Mr. Messoro overviewed the potential building reconfigurations to the Nayatt, Primrose Hill, and Sowams Schools if a full day Kindergarten program is implemented. The work of the All Day Kindergarten Task Force continues and will be shared with the community through PTO meetings as planning continues.

Mr. Tarro reported that architect, Mr. Thomas Lonardo, is finalizing plans to address the district's identified immediate health and safety needs and bid specifications are expected to be available in early March.

Mr. Guida reintroduced the 2011-2012 Public Schoolhouse Assessment initially released by the Rhode Island Department of Education in the spring of 2013 for the purposes of better understanding school building conditions as discussions continue, specifically with regard to the Barrington Middle School building project. Mr. Guida also stressed the advantages of the bonded debt reimbursement program.

Mrs. Brody led the discussion on the process for how agenda items are placed on meeting agendas. Currently, the Chair and Superintendent use the agreed upon agenda topics at the beginning of the academic year as a basis to establish each meeting agenda, incorporating additional items as discussed in the future agenda items section of each meeting. The general public is welcome to suggest agenda items during the General Public Discussion and Information meeting portion or through contacting a School Committee member. Following discussion, the Committee agreed to continue the current practice and to continue further discussion during the governance workshop. Mrs. Brody noted that the School Committee is a public body that meets in public, but that their meetings are not public meetings.

New Business from Superintendent and Staff

Dr. Dominguez moved and Mr. Guida seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the appointment of Patricia Tolento, HM, Head Teacher.

Mr. Connor asked for clarification on the role of a Head Teacher. Mr. Messoro explained that the Head Teacher is a classroom teacher who assumes a variety of responsibilities including monitoring the school building in the absence of the building principal.

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

Dr. Dominguez moved and Mr. Guida seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the resignations of Susan Hammang, PH, Art; Jessica McDonnell, SO, Grade 2; and Jodi Meunier, MS, Grade 6 Math. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Guida moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the retirement of Karen Proule, HS, Business.

Mrs. Proule was commended by the Committee and administration for her many years of service and contributions as LifeSmarts program coach at Barrington High School.

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

Dr. Dominguez moved and Mr. Guida seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the request for leave of absence of Glen Simmons, HM, Grade 5. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Messoro introduced the draft 2014-2015 School Calendar. Dr. Dominguez asked a question relative to embedding professional development days during the school year to which Mr. Messoro noted that the professional development days are more productive during the academic year and add value to work in the classroom. Mrs. Brody commended Mrs. Elizabeth Levesque for her work on the calendar format. Approval of the calendar will be included in the next meeting agenda.

New Business from School Committee

Mrs. Brody introduced the letter of engagement from the Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC) who in conjunction with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) will partner with the Barrington School Committee on developing MASC's District Governance Support Project for Barrington Public Schools. As this is a pilot project in Rhode Island, RIASC may assume a portion of the costs for the district. The Committee discussed their preference regarding the fee associated with the project as well as RIASC's role. Following discussion,

Mr. Guida moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to state the School Committee's preference for the Governance Support Project to be accomplished through a set price of \$4,900 with the understanding there may be a portion of the total cost assumed by the Rhode Island Association of School Committees. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

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Mr. Guida referenced the Norms and Standards adopted by the Committee on November 1, 2012 that will remain in effect until the Governance Project is completed.

Decision Items

Mrs. Brody requested that the Budget Workshop minutes of February 5, 2014 be removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

Dr. Shea moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to remove the Budget Workshop minutes of February 5, 2014 from the consent agenda for the purposes of discussion. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Brody read for the record the summary of the School Committee's feedback on the Superintendent evaluation held during executive session following the Budget Workshop:

“The Barrington School Committee congratulates Mr. Messoro on a successful first year as Superintendent and highlights the following accomplishments as evidence of his leadership and positive impact:

- Focused attention to improvements in student learning, combined with efforts to keep all faculty and staff throughout the district centered on this goal;
- Objectivity and principled concentration on doing what is best for Barrington school students;
- A welcomed commitment to strategic planning, goal identification, and program implementation;
- A collaborative working relationship with the School Committee;
- Strong relationships with central office colleagues, faculty, and staff;
- Dedication to building a leadership pipeline for the district; and
- Development of data as a process management tool and as a support for curricular refinement.”

Mrs. Brody also reported that Mr. Messoro requested during the evaluation that a discussion relative to a 2013-2014 salary increase for him be deferred until his next performance review and it was the Committee's consensus to honor the Superintendent's request.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Mr. Guida seconded to approve the amended consent agenda. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Discussion Future Agenda Items

Mr. Messoro recommended changes to the tentative dates and topics calendar for the year. With the proposed changes, the next three meeting dates would include the following topics: February 20 – Virtual Education/Instructional Technology; March 6 – Library Media Program and Work-Study Program; and March 20 – Pupil Personnel Update, Response to Intervention (RTI) Update, and Achievement Data Report/NECAP. Dr. Dominguez suggested that future presentations on achievement

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data from the Grades K-3 building principals be given as a single presentation. Mr. Messore added that the next meeting agenda will include a Strategic Communication Plan update.

General Discussion to Guide Future Recommendations

Mr. Messore reported that the next regular meeting of the School Committee on Thursday, February 20 will feature a presentation on virtual education and instructional technology.

General Public Discussion and Information

Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, encouraged the administration to continue to share draft documents to the public as possible, as they have done with the work of the All Day Kindergarten Task Force. Dr. Douglas also asked if it would be an option to have the professional development day tentatively scheduled for February 9, 2015 be moved to February 13, 2015, and if it could be clarified that day is also Senior Project reading day.

Mrs. Susan Giordano, of 47 Washington Road, requested a podium be made available at meetings for the public. Mrs. Giordano also stressed the importance of continued discussions on the Common Core State Standards and asked the Committee to consider the topic as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Dr. Dominguez highlighted the forum to be held at the Barrington Public Library as a three-part series titled Outside the Box, Public Conversations on Helping Our Children to Thrive. Part One: Play & Relationships will be held on March 3, 2014.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Mr. Guida seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:42 p.m. and go into Executive Session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for collective bargaining and litigation with BEST; and Section 42-46-5(a)(3) for discussion relative to school buildings security issues. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 10:05 p.m. and to seal the minutes and report that no votes were taken. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:06 p.m. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.