

Minutes of School Committee Meeting 01/21/2016

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, January 21, 2016 in the Barrington Middle School Auditorium. School Committee Chair Kate Brody called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, Ms. Odjakjian, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon, and Mr. Tarro. Mr. Guida arrived at 7:35 p.m. Dr. Shea was absent.

Mrs. Brody introduced School Committee members present at the meeting: Mr. John Alessandro and Mrs. Anna Clancy, and Student Representative Katharine Odjakjian. Mr. Patrick Guida was en route to the meeting. Dr. Robert Shea was absent. Mrs. Brody also introduced the Administration and Central Office Staff present: Superintendent Michael Messore, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Paula Dillon, Director of Administration and Finance Ronald Tarro, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent Elizabeth Levesque, and Computer/Network Technician Michael Fallgren.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Alessandro led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Achievement Recognition

Mr. Messore announced the following achievements across the district:

Barrington High School Robotics teams Robo Eagles and Uppercut Bots have qualified for the FIRST Tech Challenge State Championship. At the qualifying tournament, Team Robo Eagles finished with a record of 14-1 and received top honors with the Inspire Award. Team Robo Eagles members are: Andrew Cooke, Theenash Kumar, Eliot Laidlaw, Nicholas Li, Conor Mc Gartoll, Rayna Mishra, Sahil Mishra and Samuel Wohlever. Team Uppercut Bots won the Connect Award. Team members are Aidan Buffum, Nathan Cai, Nicholas Goltsos, Scott Goltsos, and Haoran Wen.

The Nayatt School cast of The Jungle Book Kids held performances on January 15-16, 2016.

Information and Proposals

Mr. Messore introduced the budget presentation from all building administrators that included specific needs in each school targeted to supporting and enriching students. Mr. Tarro added that all decisions must be student centered with the use of zero based budgeting. Building administrators present included Sowams School Principal Mr. James Callahan, Primrose Hill School Principal Mrs. Patricia Tolento, Nayatt School Principal Ms. Tracey Whitehead, Hampden Meadows School (HMS) Principal Mrs. Tracey McGee, Barrington Middle School (BMS) Principal Dr. Andrew Anderson, and Barrington High School (BHS) Principal Mr. Joseph Hurley. Identified needs included requests for an increase of one full time Social Worker for Grades PreK-5, three full time Intervention Specialists, to work directly with all students to achieve academic success including Tier 2 and 3 instruction and enrichment/learning extension, for Grades PreK-3, and one full time Instructional Coach, to model and co teach, conduct instructional rounds and provide job embedded professional development, for HMS. BMS will maintain its current staff and consider the need for a Technology Fellow for implementation of the 1:1 Technology initiative at BMS. BHS will maintain its current staff and School Resource Officer, monitor class sizes for World Languages–Spanish to evaluate the need for staff based on an increase in enrollment, and evaluate the need for continuation of the Technology Fellow initiative. Questions from the Committee included the following: if positions requested could be outsourced, clarification of the differences between the role of a social worker and guidance counselor, and that of an enrichment specialist and interventionist, if there are clerical support needs for a social worker, opportunities

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for online World Languages courses, the position of Student Resource Officer, if the addition of intervention specialists would reduce the need for Individualized Education Program (IEPs), the timeline for a BHS survey relative to the technology fellowship, consideration for consolidation of services, and the World Languages curriculum at BMS. Mrs. Brody welcomed input from the audience on the budget and no input from the Public was provided at this time.

General Public Discussion and Information

Dr. Lisa Daft, of 5 Robbins Drive, parent, requested that the Committee put the topic of school start times back on the agenda for further discussion to provide a plan that all stakeholders could support. Dr. Daft also shared comments from a recent petition with more than 800 signatures opposing the school start time change to 8:30 a.m. and presented a hard copy of the petition to the Committee.

Ms. Clara Kugler, Barrington Middle School 7th Grader, expressed her support for later school start times, noting that students need lots of sleep and it would help maintain Barrington Public Schools as a high performing district.

Mrs. Gina Pine, of 479 New Meadow Road, parent, asked for the topic of school start times to be put back on the agenda for further discussion, noting that the proposed schedule presents a financial strain on many families who rely on help from older children to help with younger siblings. Mrs. Pine also stressed the importance of socialization after school which could be strained with the proposed new schedule.

Mrs. Jane Knight, of 21 Christine Drive, parent, stated that later school start times are beneficial to students for many reasons including weight and stress management.

Mrs. Melissa Resendes, of 564 Maple Avenue, parent, asked how the later start times would help prepare students for early classes at college or jobs that start early, and stated that the \$400,000 projected amount to be spent on more buses would be better spent towards more professionals at the schools who can assist with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Dr. Juan Cuebas, of 14 Short Road, parent, stated that there are flaws in the study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and asked why students have not been formally polled on the topic of school start times after students have shared such strong opposition.

Mr. Thomas Rimoshytus, of 1 Howard Street, parent, asked why the topic of school start times has not been a topic on every Health and Wellness Committee meeting agenda for the past five years, if it in fact has been discussed for the past five years, and how the Health and Wellness Committee could have voted unanimously in favor of a change to later school start times if only a handful of members attend each meeting according to the meeting minutes. Mr. Rimoshytus also asked if student tardiness on Common Planning Time (CPT) days at Barrington High School has been considered by the Committee.

Mr. Samuel Read, Barrington High School sophomore, expressed his opposition to a change in school start times noting his regular daily schedule that includes being at school early, sports after school, and his part-time job, none of which he wants to change. Mr. Read asked the Committee to take into consideration the majority opposition by students to changes in school start times.

Mrs. Deborah Caliri, of 11 Stratford Road, parent, implored the Committee to listen to the community and reconsider the decision to change school start times.

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Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, parent, disagreed with Dr. Cuebas' statement, and referred to the recent communication sent to parents by the Superintendent on the timeline for the discussion on school start times and continuation of all programs, and asked those complaining to stop and instead look for solutions.

Ms. Kim Jacobs, of 5 Massachusetts Avenue, parent, stated that teens in general do need more sleep, but argued the basis for the school start time change for the Barrington community and asked why there was not input from parents, students and teachers.

Mr. Paul Spameni, of 467 Maple Avenue, parent, expressed his opposition to a change in school start times and asked for an answer immediately from the Committee on if they would revisit the proposed plan. Mrs. Brody explained that according to the Open Meetings Act, the Committee is not able to respond to a comment or question during the General Public Discussion and Information portion of the meeting if the topic is not on the meeting agenda, but could use the option to discuss future agenda items at the end of the meeting.

Mrs. Julia Teixeira, of 75 Lincoln Avenue, Barrington Middle School Social Studies Teacher and After School Enrichment Coordinator, and parent, expressed concern as a teacher for the change to school start times and the impact to the availability of teacher resources for students after school and the overall effect on the student body.

Mrs. Sara Bonneau, of 5 Evergreen Street, parent, asked the Committee to listen to the district's amazing students and teachers, adding that the recent child lost has shown where the proposed funds should be used for, toward the needs proposed by school principals.

Mrs. Katharine Killilea, of 19 Martin Avenue, parent, was grateful to the Committee for the decision to change school start times, noting that the change will be a hassle but in the face of overwhelming scientific data the change is needed to address a public health issue.

Mrs. Mary Roberts, of 11 Adams Avenue, Barrington Middle School Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher, and National Education Association Barrington (NEAB) President, echoed Mrs. Teixeira's concerns, adding that teachers are not being paid attention to on the topic of school start times.

Mr. Andrew Tolley, of 17 Robbins Drive, parent, disputed the research that points to students going to school later will get more sleep, spoke of the issues he expects to face as a local employer, asked if the Committee could undertake an assessment of the true actual cost to the community for the school start times proposal, estimating that the economic cost over the next ten years would be approximately \$25million, and if the Committee could consider optional early classes where parents could bear the costs.

Ms. Ann Adler, of 14 Laurel Lane, parent, encouraged the Committee to stay the course as it has made the best decision for students despite the many challenges a change to school start times may create.

Mr. Robert Marley, of 3 Vialls Drive, Barrington High School Mathematics Teacher and Department Chair, and parent, stated his concern for the financial burden his family and other two working parent households will incur with the change to school start times that may warrant the need for child care before and after school, and asked the Committee to reconsider their decision to change school start times.

Mrs. Michelle Aguiar, of 4 Tiffany Circle, parent, urged the Committee to consider the younger children who with the change to school start times would get on the bus at 7:15 a.m., a time that is too early for little ones.

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Mrs. Jamie Triebwasser, of 139 Nayatt Road, parent, does not support a change in school start times, noting that her children went through the Barrington school system and did very well and that funds should be spent instead on extra support for students in the schools.

Mr. Stuart Moran, Barrington Middle School Physical Education/Health Teacher, provided an example of his school schedule growing up in Ireland and hoped that Barrington is not headed in that direction with school starting at 9:00 a.m. and students never going to bed before midnight, and hoped instead the focus could be on student stress and dealing with suicide.

Mr. William Barrass, of 14 Peck Avenue, Barrington High School Social Studies Teacher, long time coach, and parent, urged the Committee to reconsider its decision on school start times because of its impact on student athletes and the community.

Mrs. Katherine Kloc, of 40 Salisbury Road, parent, apologized for not being part of the school start times discussion earlier and asked if the topic can be revisited by the Committee as there is not a clear consensus in the community, but more importantly that the proposed funds would be better spent on more social emotional resources for students in schools.

Mrs. Sarah O'Brien, of 88 Boyce Avenue, parent, stated as a mental health provider that sleep is key to recovery for mental health issues in children, and that as a community working together solutions can be found for the challenges of the change in school start times through opportunities for earlier drop offs or later buses at schools.

Mrs. Anne Merlino, of 15 Mallard Cove Way, parent, expressed strong opposition to the school start time changes and asked why opposing research had not been studied.

Ms. Kim Jacobs provided a follow up comment to point to the Health and Wellness Committee minutes of February 4, 2015 that states a parent present at the meeting asked why the district would survey the community as it could sabotage the proposed plan.

Mrs. Adi Goldstein, of 3 Devonshire Drive, parent, expressed concern for the lack of buy in from teachers and students for the school start time changes and for the athletic programs that may be impacted.

Mr. Thomas Rimoshytus provided a follow up comment to request that the School Committee reconsider its vote on the change in school start times and noted that he will not vote again for Mrs. Brody, Mr. Guida or Dr. Shea.

Old Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Guida provided an update on the Barrington Middle School (BMS) Building Committee including a report on the joint meeting held with the School Committee on January 20, 2016 and on the proposed site plan added to the district website main page. The Building Committee will hold its next joint meeting with the School Committee on January 25, 2016 for School Committee approval of the bid for Owner Project Management Services per the Building Committee recommendation and approval of the Building Committee recommendation for the State II Application to include two building options, renovation with an addition or a new building.

Mr. Messore provided an update relative to the District Strategic Communication Plan, including recent communications to parents about Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on school start times and notification

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of open meetings regarding the Barrington Middle School building project. A Suicide Prevention Forum is currently scheduled for February 3, 2016 at Barrington High School and will be open to the community.

Old Business from School Committee

No old business from the School Committee was presented at this time.

The Committee agreed to hear the School Committee New Business Field Trip Approval agenda item out of order. BHS Principal Mr. Hurley and BMS Principal Dr. Anderson requested pre-approval for the BHS and BMS Science Olympiad teams to attend the National Science Olympiad competition on May 19-22, 2016 at the University of Wisconsin. Mr. Hurley and Dr. Anderson explained the importance of pre-approval for the trip as the national competition is shortly after the qualifying competition and it allows for fundraising efforts to occur as soon as possible as the cost for each student may be up to \$1,000.

Mrs. Clancy moved and Mr. Guida seconded to approve in advance the field trip opportunities for Barrington High School and Barrington Middle School students to attend the National Science Olympiad competition on May 19-22, 2016 at the University of Wisconsin. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

New Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Guida moved and Mrs. Clancy seconded to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the appointment of Mr. Justin Burde, Primrose Hill School Music Teacher. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Guida moved and Mrs. Clancy seconded to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the appointment of Ms. Jean Rattle, Barrington High School Science Teacher. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Messore announced the leave of absence for Mrs. Kelly Anne Ruda, Sowams School, Teacher Assistant.

Mr. Messore announced the resignations of Mr. Jay Schryver, Barrington High School Sailing Club Advisor, Mrs. Linda Vollaro, Accounts Payable Clerk, and Mr. Matthew Vonderheide, Barrington High School Business Teacher.

Mr. Guida moved and Mrs. Clancy seconded to approve the monthly expenditures for December in the amount of \$5,477,182.43.

Mr. Tarro reported the overall budget looks favorable and the net will be in the black. The out of district tuition costs will be over budget but will be offset by savings realized in other line items.

The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Messore provided information on the proposed agenda for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness

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for College and Careers (PARCC) School Committee Workshop scheduled for January 27, 2016. The open meeting will feature results from the PARCC assessment, comparisons to state data, future budget needs, and how data is analyzed for instructional needs. Mr. Messore and Mrs. Dillon will also be presenting PARCC data at upcoming PTO meetings.

Mr. Messore presented the initial framework for the school start time implementation plan, including plans to meet with the bus transportation company to review potential bus schedules, and with Mr. George Finn, Director of Athletics, regarding athletic schedules. Mr. Messore also discussed the possibility of a survey to measure results mid-year after implementation. Questions and discussion by the Committee included measurement tools to establish a baseline, schedules to accommodate students on buses for 30 minutes or less, if looking at student stress will be part of the implementation plan, and expanding the established Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to include questions from the audience this evening.

New Business from School Committee

Mrs. Brody led the Health and Wellness Committee report and membership discussion in Dr. Shea's absence. Dr. Shea, the Health and Wellness Committee Chair, had asked Mr. Messore at a December School Committee meeting for data relative to teacher inquiries to participate in Health and Wellness Committee meetings. Mr. Messore explained the charge of the Committee and that membership is fluid. No recent requests have been made by teachers to participate in Committee meetings, but noted that there is always the opportunity for approval by principals for coverage to ensure that there is no impact on student instruction time. The Committee's February meeting will feature BMS Principal Dr. Anderson on the topic of mindfulness and in March BHS Principal Mr. Hurley on the topic of student stress. The School Committee agreed it would be beneficial to better inform the community on the role of the Health and Wellness Committee.

Mrs. Brody provided a brief synopsis of the recent Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC) Chairs meeting that was held with Dr. Ken Wagner, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and Mr. John Simmons, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council. Dr. Wagner introduced a school empowerment proposal that includes the following four "gives": extreme regulatory flexibility by the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE), principal leadership and autonomy with building based management by local School Committees, contract revisions to include only salary/wages and benefits by unions and open enrollment with non-discriminatory parameters, after first serving community residents, by schools.. The implementation goal is to have five participating districts in two years; affirmative votes by the local School Committee and two thirds (2/3) of district teachers are required for empowerment status.

Decision Items

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Clancy was not present for the meetings placed on the consent agenda.

Discussion Future Agenda Items

Mr. Messore reported that the next School Committee meeting scheduled for February 4, 2016 will be the annual Budget Workshop. The next regular meeting will be held on February 11, 2016 and will include a

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budget update, a mid-year progress report on student achievement data, and an update on the school start time implementation plan.

Mrs. Brody requested that Committee members forward input on topics to Mr. Messore for a potential upcoming visit from Commissioner Wagner.

Mrs. Brody requested that the next regular meeting agenda include the adoption of the School Committee/Superintendent Operating Protocols, when all five Committee members are present at the meeting.

Mrs. Clancy requested that the Committee take a holistic view at the issue of student stress and to consider creating a group with broad participation beyond the Health and Wellness Committee.

Mr. Alessandro asked that full costs be included in the school start time implementation plan and that the FAQs continue to be updated to address community concerns.

Announcements

Mr. Messore announced several upcoming events including the School Committee Building Committee joint meeting on January 25 at Barrington Middle School, the School Committee Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) workshop on January 27, a Suicide Prevention Forum at Barrington High School on February 3, a meeting of the Rhode Island Science teacher leaders group in district on February 11, and an upcoming Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) regional conference where Barrington High School will have the opportunity to collaborate with other regional high schools who participated on OECD to share best practices.

Mrs. Brody announced that the Primrose Hill School production of 101 Dalmations will be held this weekend.

General Public Discussion and Information

Mr. Thomas Rimoshytus provided a follow up comment to ask the average number of attendees at Health and Wellness Committee meetings and how one can become a member. Mr. Messore responded that the number of attendees at each meeting fluctuates and that the meetings are open meetings and any member of the community can attend and express their interest in becoming a member. Mr. Rimoshytus also suggested that the Committee form an ad hoc committee on sleep time and depression.

Mrs. Mary Roberts provided a follow up comment to state that it is no surprise that teachers are not requesting to attend Health and Wellness Committee meetings as teachers feel there is a lack of substitute teachers in the district. Mrs. Roberts requested equal representation on the Health and Wellness Committee which currently has no classroom teachers as members and to reconsider its current 8:30 a.m. meeting time. Mrs. Brody welcomed the topics of membership and meeting times for discussion by the Health and Wellness Committee.

Mrs. Sarah O'Brien provided a follow up comment on the topic of World Languages discussed at the last School Committee meeting to encourage non-Advanced Placement course opportunities for students who are excited about foreign language, and to express concern for homework deadlines with late evening/midnight deadlines for electronic submission that contribute to student stress. Mr. Messore asked for email communication expressing those concerns on homework and stated that a policy on homework is being addressed at the district level.

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Mr. Guida moved and Mrs. Clancy seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:42 p.m. and go into Executive Session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation with National Education Association Barrington (NEAB) and United Steelworkers. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Guida moved and Mrs. Clancy seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 11:15 p.m. and to seal the minutes. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Brody noted that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Mr. Guida moved and Mrs. Clancy seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 11:16 p.m. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.