

Minutes of School Committee Meeting 11/05/2015

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, November 5, 2015 in the Barrington Middle School Library. School Committee Chair Kate Brody called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mr. Guida, Ms. Odjakjian, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon, and Mr. Tarro. Dr. Shea was absent.

Mrs. Brody introduced School Committee members present at the meeting: Mr. Patrick Guida, Mr. John Alessandro, and Student Representative Katharine Odjakjian. 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

Ms. Lucina Schwartz led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Achievement Recognition

Mr. Messore announced the following achievements across the district:

The Barrington High School Stagemasters Drama Club attended the New England Theatre Conference on October 23, 2015. Barrington High School Senior Olivia Cardarelli was awarded a theatre scholarship for her performance in Musical Theatre.

The 2015 Barrington Public Schools fall sport champions include Division Champions Girls Field Hockey, Class B Champions Boys Cross Country, Division Champions Girls Volleyball, and State Champions Girls Junior Varsity Volleyball Division 2.

The Barrington High School Debate Team competed in a regional tournament on October 24, 2015 and won numerous awards. Winners included Peyton Buteau for Top Varsity Speaker, Samuel Whitman and Peyton Buteau for Top Varsity Pair Team, Daniel Sheinberg for Top Novice Speaker, and Amelia Pappas-Horii and Daniel Sheinberg for Top Novice Pair Team.

Barrington Public Schools Pupil Personnel Services has again been recognized by the Rhode Island Department of Education's Office of Student Community and Academic Supports. For the 2014-2015 school year, the district's rate of compliance was 100% on Indicator 11 – Timely Initial Evaluations.

Information and Proposals

Mrs. Dillon provided a report on the All Day Kindergarten Program, including results of a survey of all first grade teachers and specialists relative to academic, student readiness, and social emotional data that reflects students in All Day Kindergarten are entering first grade with a stronger skill set. The survey results overall showed a significant rate of growth. Questions from the Committee included the ability to track longer term effects and the benefits extending to second and third grades.

Mr. Messore provided results from the 2014-2015 District Survey. The survey, shared with parents, staff, Barrington High School students and the community, included questions on how well we do as a school district, what programs, traditions or activities are valued, what areas of the schools could be changed or

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improved, as well as a section for comments. Mr. Messoro shared both the positive responses and areas noted as opportunities for improvement, and is working with a consultant to use the data both in the development of strategic objectives and for a future survey.

Mr. Guida reported on the status of the Barrington Middle School building project including a tentative timeline for the process and support for an auditorium to be included in the project. The Building Committee has approved a proposed contract with Kaestle Boos Associates that will be presented for School Committee approval later this evening. Mr. Tarro added that updates relative to the Barrington Middle School building project can be found on the district website including the tentative timeline established for the process.

Mrs. Brody provided an overview of the discussions on School Start Times that began in 2011 and outlined the factors that have been prioritized for current continued discussions including later start times for Barrington High School and Barrington Middle School, no bus pick up before 7:00 a.m., and no bus ride longer than 30 minutes. Mrs. Brody added that the Committee will discuss a timeline for approval at its next meeting. Mr. Messoro provided an overview of the ongoing work of the Administration and presented all three options included in the continued evaluation. Mr. Tarro added information on the related costs with each option including cost for additional buses, bus monitors and crossing guards. Mr. George Finn, Director of Athletics and Student Activities, provided information relative to the impact to athletics and activities with any change to the current start times. When asked by the Committee for his recommendation, Mr. Messoro stated that he could not support a start time after 9:00 a.m. at the secondary level. Mr. Messoro informally suggested a fourth option with an 8:00 a.m. start time at Barrington High School, 8:05 a.m. at Barrington Middle School, 8:20 a.m. for Nayatt School, Primrose Hill School and Sowams School, and 8:55 a.m. for Hampden Meadows School, adding that this option could have minimum impact to schedule and staffing. Questions from the Committee included clarification on the total number of buses needed for each option, what challenges other school districts have faced with a change to start time relative to athletics and activities, bus stop efficiencies, and a request to include all associated costs to each option for continued evaluation. Following the lengthy presentation and discussion, the Committee agreed to continue discussions and welcomed input from members of the audience.

General Public Discussion and Information

Dr. Juan Cuebas, of 14 Short Road, parent and physician certified in sleep medicine and neurology, provided what he described as contrarian information to a later start time being the only way to help with sleep deprivation, and added that current studies may be missing environment impact, media curfews, parental discipline on proper sleep hygiene and taking into account student athletics and activities.

Ms. Lucina Schwartz, Student Representative to the School Committee for the 2014-2015 academic year, stressed that while logistical concerns are important the focus should be on education, student health, and reducing student stress. Ms. Schwartz asked the School Committee to consider a start time between 8-9 a.m.

Mrs. Mary Roberts, of 11 Adams Avenue, Barrington Middle School Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher, and National Education Association Barrington (NEAB) President, read a statement on behalf of the teachers union that included consideration of what is best for students and staff, and an appeal to the School Committee on the importance of including all stakeholders in the decision making process.

Mr. Nahum Mitnik, of 187 New Meadow Road, parent, Barrington High School Music Teacher, and also representing the NEAB, provided results from a survey conducted by the NEAB and Barrington Education Support Team (BEST). From the 238 responses received, 80% called for no change to the current schedule.

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Mr. Alessandro asked if custodians also participated. Mrs. Roberts responded that some custodians expressed an interest in and then participated in the survey.

Ms. Jessica Gagnon and Ms. Julia Soares, Barrington High School Seniors, shared results of a student survey conducted by the Student Council resulting in 67% of the more than 200 responses wanting no change to the current schedule. Ms. Gagnon and Ms. Soares stressed the importance of the student voice and the need for after school time for student participation in extracurricular activities and athletics.

Mr. Thomas Rimoshytus, of 1 Howard Street, parent, stated that the system has worked for 40 plus years and does not need a change, and offered option four to add extra buses and keep the current start/stop times, or option five to not change a thing.

Ms. Olivia Bowen and Ms. Renee Seto, Barrington High School Seniors, stated that there are other factors to student health and wellbeing other than sleep, and stressed the impact of a later start time on the lives beyond the classroom for both students and teachers.

Mr. Stephen Lenz, parent, Barrington High School English Teacher, Girls Basketball Head Coach and Senior Project Co-Coordinator, stressed the importance of all extracurricular activities and the impact that a disruption in those activities would have on students. Mr. Lenz expressed his sense of respect for both sides of the school start times issue and urged the School Committee to consider other areas of focus to curb student stress.

Mr. Robert Marley, parent and Barrington High School Math Teacher and Department Chair, asked for the consideration of adding air conditioning to address the problem of high temperatures on the second floor at Barrington High School rather than a focus on start time.

Mrs. Rebecca Sancomb, parent, expressed concern for bus issues that include students sitting in the aisle of the bus because of current overflow issues at dismissal.

Mrs. Patricia Brady Wilhelm, of 18 Conway Drive, parent, asked for clarification on if changing start times is a separate goal from increasing the number of buses, having students ride the bus for less than 30 minutes, and have a no earlier than 7:00 a.m. pick up. Mrs. Brody replied that as the result of exploring transportation logistics, the Committee learned more data on the current bus schedules and the goal is to have a simultaneous discussion.

Mr. Joel Hellmann, of 13 Richmond Avenue, parent, stated that the big issue remains to be student stress and eliminating 90% of homework and taking time away from standardized testing would help alleviate stress. Mr. Hellmann urged the School Committee to do whatever it takes to make a real auditorium part of the new Barrington Middle School building project; he stated that if there is no auditorium in the new BMS project, then he cannot support it.

Mrs. Patricia Orrall, of 139 Narragansett Avenue, parent of Barrington High School graduates, stated that she learned tonight that the School Committee has not done its due diligence by not listening to students or teachers, and stressed that changing start times could set up students for failure in the future.

Dr. Michael Johnson, of 28 Old Chimney Road, parent of three children in the district, noted that delaying school start time should not be a debate but rather implemented as part of a deliberative process with acceptance of the because of scientific research and evidence relative to the health benefits to students.

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Mrs. Jennifer Baker, of 6 Candleberry Road, parent of four students, asked if a study has ever been done on how well students do on testing on Common Planning Time (CPT) days when their school day starts later at Barrington High School.

Mrs. Anne Merlino, of 15 Mallard Cove Way, parent, noted the importance of good sleep habits stressed by parents, and that it is possible to change circadian rhythms.

Ms. Brienne Brown, of 11 Jennys Lane, parent, noted that Barrington is exceptional but that students are no exception to biology, and feels strongly that extracurricular activities should be scheduled around academics and that science supports the benefits to students of a change in start time.

Mrs. Anna Clancy, of 22 Fairway Drive, parent of two K-12 Barrington Public Schools graduates and of a current student at BHS, expressed appreciation for the science for later school start times, but that given the disruption to other parts of students' lives, the focus needs to be on better scheduling of student workload to reduce stress.

Mrs. Cassie DiGiacomo, of 23 Great Road, parent of four children, noted that the district survey on later start times conducted in 2011 resulted in a majority of parents and students with opposition to later start times, and again with a current majority not in favor, urged the School Committee to listen to parents and students.

Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, parent, expressed his appreciation for the process and spread of opinion and asked if there could be consideration for an additional option for 8:30 a.m. based on research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Douglas suggested the use of a sports consultant to provide additional information to shifting of athletic activity.

Mrs. Sarah O'Brien, of 88 Boyce Avenue, parent, asked if time scheduled with teachers after school could be shifted to before school, and noted that because sports do not span the entire school year if they could also be shifted to before school if schedules allow. Mrs. O'Brien added that delaying start times would benefit students at all levels.

Mrs. Cherylann Bertoncini, of 18 Pine Avenue, parent and Nayatt School Library Media Specialist, urged parents and the community to not divide academics and athletics and to trust the School Committee and Administration to do what is best for students. Mrs. Bertoncini was thankful for the meeting to begin with district achievement recognition, which at this meeting included her niece's theatre scholarship award.

Mr. Anthony Arico, Jr. of 166 Lincoln Avenue, urged the School Committee to keep schedules as close as possible to where they are now.

Mr. Edward Roskiewicz, of 2 Boxwood Court, parent, asked as to compelling reason for the Barrington High School and Barrington Middle School schedules to be coupled. Mr. Messoro responded that it is due to student age groups for ridership on buses, and to the shared schedule for certified staff who work in both buildings.

Ms. Odjakjian departed meeting at 10:20 p.m.

The Committee agreed to hear the Field Trip Approvals agenda item out of order. Barrington High School Music Department Co-Chair Mrs. Barbara Hughes requested approval for a day trip on January 30, 2016 for Music Department students to visit New York City. Mrs. Hughes also requested approval for an overnight trip on February 28-March 1, 2016 for the Barrington High School Jazz Ensemble to travel to New York City

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and Philadelphia. Mrs. Hughes provided an overview of all trip logistics.

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the field trips for the Barrington High School Music Department to New York City on January 30, 2016 and for the Barrington High School Jazz Ensemble to New York City and Philadelphia on February 28-March 1, 2016. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Old Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Messore provided an update relative to the District Strategic Communication Plan, including plans for prioritized Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Barrington Middle School building project including one for an owner project manager and another for a commissioning agent, and the status of an RFP for review and redesign of the district website. Mr. Messore reported on the community forum on cyberbullying and Internet safety for students held on October 27, 2015, presentations held the following day at Hampden Meadows School and Barrington Middle School, and the upcoming Barrington Education Foundation's (BEF) STEAM Connections 2015 event on November 14, 2015. Mrs. Brody thanked Mr. Messore for the district's efforts to be proactive in its public support of the productive partnership for education with BEF.

Old Business from School Committee

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

New Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the appointments of:

**Louann Diehl, HS, Teacher Assistant
Anita DiMatteo, Volunteer Coordinator
Nicholas Guadagno, HS, Girls Basketball Assistant Coach
Timothy Hall, HS, Boys Ice Hockey Head Coach
Steven Shuman, HS, Theatre Technical Director
Kelly Smith, HS, Latin
Lindsey Stebenne, HS, Girls Ice Hockey Assistant Coach
Joseph Sturm, HS, Boys Ice Hockey Assistant Coach**

The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Messore announced the retirement of Sharon Seibel, PH, Nurse.

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the monthly expenditures for September in the amount of \$3,690,714.71.

Mr. Guida inquired about the projections for maintaining the budget for the year. Mr. Tarro responded that the line item for out of district tuition continues to be monitored as it is over budget by approximately \$100,000. The budget is on target otherwise, with salaries and benefits in line.

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The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Tarro provided information on approved district funding of \$65,000 from the School Building Authority for Immediate Health and Safety needs. Approved projects include the oil tank removal at Nayatt School, the oil tank removal at Hampden Meadows School, and the water main replacement at Primrose Hill School, all of which are eligible for 35% reimbursement through the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). Mr. Tarro requested approval from the Committee as well as signatures on the Memorandum of Agreement. The executed document will be included in the RIDE Stage II Housing Aid construction application.

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the School Building Authority Funding for Immediate Health and Safety Needs. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

New Business from School Committee

Mr. Guida recommended that the Committee approve the contract with Kaestle Boos Associates for the Barrington Middle School building project. The Building Committee and Subcommittee have both given their unanimous approval for the negotiated contract.

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the Kaestle Boos Associates contract for the Barrington Middle School building project. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Brody reported that she and Mr. Alessandro attended the Budget Forecasting Committee meeting on October 26, 2015. The Budget Forecasting Committee will revise the previous budget forecast in anticipation of the introduction of a current accurate budget projection for the future. Mr. Alessandro has been charged with the task to find the market rate for issuing a bond for the Barrington Middle School building project. The Budget Forecasting Committee includes representation from the School Committee, Town Council, Committee on Appropriations, Mr. Tarro, and Town Finance Director Kathy Raposa. The Budget Forecasting Committee plans to reconvene in January.

Mrs. Brody led the discussion on the agenda topics for the joint legislative breakfast scheduled for November 16, 2015 with the School Committee, Town Council, Representative Joy Hearn, District 66, Representative Jan Malik, District 67, Senator Cynthia Armour Coyne, District 32, Mr. Messore, Mr. Tarro, Town Manager Peter DeAngelis, and Town Finance Director Kathy Raposa.

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.

Discussion Future Agenda Items

Mr. Messore reported that the next regular School Committee meeting scheduled for November 19, 2015 will feature a Student Achievement Data report and an update on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Also, options regarding school start time and costs associated will be included in Old Business.

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Mrs. Brody inquired on the timing for a presentation on Math curriculum and deeper learning. Mr. Messore replied that December 3, 2015 might be best as a Math and Science Night for parents is planned for December 8, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at Barrington Middle School (BMS). Mr. Messore reported on the difficulty experienced in the search for a part-time math specialist for BMS as approved for the current operating budget. The Committee, at the next meeting, will discuss the possibility of the allocation of funds in the budget to support a full-time position in order to meet student needs.

Announcements

Mr. Messore announced that Mrs. Dillon, along with Barrington High School Principal Joseph Hurley and Barrington High School English Teacher and Department Chair Kevin Blanchard, will represent the district as invitees to present at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Global Learning Network's 2nd Annual National Conference in Washington, D.C. on November 12-13, 2015.

General Public Discussion and Information

Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, suggested the possible topic of math enrichment for the strategic plan, with the potential of incorporating that component with the consideration of the full time math specialist at Barrington Middle School, and the creation of a short narrative on the logic behind every School Start Times option to assist in the debate.

Mrs. Brody asked the Committee for their thoughts on exploring the 8:30 a.m. start time option included in research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Mr. Guida and Mr. Alessandro expressed support for exploring an 8:30 a.m. start time as an additional option for consideration. Mr. Messore will include that option with relevant data for discussion at the next meeting.

Dr. Megan Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, stressed the importance of the continued discussion on school start times and suggested the addition of this topic again in the next strategic plan regardless of the outcome for the next academic year.

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:56 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 Section 42-46-5(a)(3) for discussion regarding the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 11:15 p.m. and to seal the minutes. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, 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 Mr. Alessandro seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 11:16 p.m. The motion passed 3-0 with Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.