

**Minutes of School Committee Meeting 12/03/2015**

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, December 3, 2015 in the Administration Building. School Committee Chair Kate Brody called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, Mr. Guida, Ms. Odjakjian, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon, and Mr. Tarro.

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

Mrs. Kristen Matthes led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Achievement Recognition**

Mr. Messore announced the following achievements across the district:

Barrington High School Girls Volleyball Team won the District II State Championship after a 19-0 season record.

Barrington High School Debate Team members who won at the Rhode Island Forensic League tournament included Isabelle Rea and Lila Medeiros for Top Varsity Pair, and Daniel Sheinberg for Top Novice Speaker.

At the First Lego League qualifying tournament on November 21, 2015, Barrington Middle School Team Goldfish won the Champions second place award and Team System Overload won the Core Values award. Both teams are headed to the state competition.

**BPS Spotlight on Teaching and Learning**

Mr. Messore introduced Ms. Tracey Whitehead, Nayatt School Principal, who provided details on the 2015 National Blue Ribbon School Award received by the Nayatt School during recognition ceremonies held in Washington, D.C. on November 9-10, 2015. Nayatt School, one of three schools in Rhode Island to receive the prestigious Blue Ribbon award, was also recognized as an Exemplary High Performing School. Ms. Whitehead shared highlights from the ceremonies and guest speakers at the event.

**Information and Proposals**

Mrs. Dillon introduced the presentation on Math curriculum for all preK-12 grade levels that included information on practice and content standards, the pilot Common Core program for preschool, the guaranteed and viable curriculum, the comprehensive assessment system, targeted and intensive interventions and extensions, and frequent and meaningful district collaboration, and professional development. Present at the meeting to provide in depth information for each grade level were Mrs. Patricia Tolento, Primrose Hill School Principal, Dr. Andrew Anderson, Barrington Middle School Principal, Mrs. Kristen Matthes, Instructional Coach and representative from the Math Curriculum Team, , and Mr. Robert Marley, Barrington High School Math Teacher and Department Chair. Discussion and questions from the Committee included whether there

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are adequate faculty resources to implement the delivery of instruction for students who may need individual instruction, challenges associated with the new curriculum, the need for different progress indicators for different levels of proficiency, the retake policy at Barrington High School, targeted extensions, and Lead, Educate and Promote the Profession (LEAPP) strategies.

Mrs. Brody welcomed comments and questions from the audience at this time.

Mrs. Kathleen Crain, of 11 Briarfield Road, parent, expressed frustration for the difference between what was presented for Math curriculum and what is happening in the classroom, and the lack of instruction for extensions and the absence of a systemic plan for students who are advanced above grade level.

Ms. Erica Sevetson, of 408 New Meadow Road, as a parent of a gifted student, expressed anger for the lack of differentiation in schools and urged a district wide approach to adapt the curriculum for all students to reach their full potential.

Mrs. Michelle Weber, of 273 Maple Avenue, parent, stated that there is a systemic problem in the district relative to how to educate strong students, echoed the comments by Mrs. Crain and Ms. Sevetson, and offered to help the district with an advisory committee.

Mrs. Brody stated that the Committee recognizes a need relative to instruction at Barrington Middle School and opportunities for improvement to meet the needs of all students. Mr. Guida added that included later in the meeting agenda is discussion of the addition of full time Math instructional support at Barrington Middle School. Mr. Messore, hearing the collective concerns with the Math curriculum, stated that teachers and the Administration work hard to address parent concerns and that with the major shift to a new curriculum there will always be areas for improvement.

Mrs. Kathleen Crain stressed that the job of the school department is to educate all students and that there should be acknowledgement of a gap at Barrington Middle School.

Mr. Messore provided an update on the district's Bullying Policy, as outlined in the state regulations to report on any policy changes and on the number of bullying reports received to date for the academic year. To maintain confidentiality, no specifics regarding the filed reports were shared at the meeting. Mr. Messore reported that a total of seven investigative reports have been submitted to date for the current academic year and that training by an attorney on the bullying policy has been provided to building principals. Mrs. Dillon added that the policy has expanded to include areas of harassment in addition to bullying.

Mr. Messore provided an update on school start time options of 8:15 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. for Barrington High School with estimated additional costs for transportation including additional buses, bus monitors and crossing guards, as well as the estimated comparative costs for outsourcing of bus monitors to Ocean State Transit. Discussion ensued on the additional transportation costs, bus size, reduction in bus run times, ridership, and building the estimated additional costs into the FY2017 draft school budget. Mr. Guida and Dr. Shea favored a school start time at the secondary level no earlier than 8:30 a.m. Mr. Alessandro favored no change or the smallest change with the lowest cost, and would consider the 8:15 a.m. start time. Ms. Odjakjian stated that 8:30 a.m. is too much of a change and urged the Committee to look at districts similar to Barrington because Barrington students are special in the activities that they are involved in after school. Mrs. Brody expressed the need to continue to analyze the data and to give full consideration to all items identified in the overall school budget. The Committee agreed to continue discussion at the next regular School Committee meeting on December 17, 2015 and to vote at its January 7, 2016 meeting with five School

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Committee members post swearing in of the School Committee member elect on January 4, 2016.

**General Public Discussion and Information**

Mr. Joel Hellmann, of 13 Richmond Avenue, parent, announced the termination of his candidacy for School Committee as he is contemplating suing Barrington Public Schools for the behavior by faculty toward his children and concerns for the lack of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Mrs. Pamela Lauria, of 56 Martin Avenue, parent and nurse practitioner, stated the health and wellness benefits of a later school start time for students, adding that the increased cost is a small amount considering the benefit to the vast number of students.

Ms. Kristin Tavares, of 409 New Meadow Road, parent, and Barrington Middle School Art Teacher, asked about the tools to measure the effectiveness of the start time change and if it were not successful would start times revert back.

Mr. Nahum Mitnik, of 187 New Meadow Road, parent, Barrington High School Music Teacher, and also representing the National Education Association Barrington (NEAB), urged the Committee to meet with teachers and students before a decision is made on school start times. Mr. Mitnik added that it is not fiscally responsible to make a change when the district is looking to incur big expenses with building a new Middle School and expressed concern for a schedule where K-3 students start earlier than the present schedule.

Mrs. Cassie DiGiacomo, of 23 Great Road, parent of four children, expressed her opposition to the change in school start time and was surprised to hear that the Committee is willing to spend the money for a change to school start time when most of the school community is not in favor of a change.

Mr. Jason Leigh, of 8 Roberta Drive, parent, stated that it is fiscally irresponsible to ask taxpayers for the additional cost to make a change to start time when there are more important factors to be considered including student stress, encouraged the Committee to make a data driven decision, noted the absence of a baseline metric and noted that he would prefer to see mandatory physical education imposed rather than a change to start times.

Ms. Pamela Lewis, of 3 Ridgewood Road, parent, agreed with previous comments that before an expensive decision is made to change school start times, there needs to be thoughtful consideration and perhaps the implementation of softer measures to decrease student stress.

Mrs. Mary Roberts, of 11 Adams Avenue, Barrington Middle School Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher, and National Education Association Barrington (NEAB) President, asked why the Committee is making a decision in isolation and why the community has yet to be surveyed, and wondered how many instructional coaches could be hired for \$400,000, the proposed increased cost to the school budget for a start time change.

Mr. Anthony Arico, Jr. of 166 Lincoln Avenue, urged the Committee to use caution and consider all factors including arts, music, and athletics in a system that is great before making a change to school start times at the proposed high cost.

Mrs. Heather Crosby, of 293 Rumstick Road, parent and candidate for School Committee, stated that the Committee needs to agree on a decision on school start times that is in the best interest of students' health and

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education, and referred to the success of All Day Kindergarten.

**Old Business from Superintendent and Staff**

Mr. Tarro reported that the Building Committee met on November 30, 2015 and that Kaestle Boos Associates (KBA) continues to hold community presentation meetings, most recently at the Barrington Senior Center on December 3, 2015. Upcoming community meetings include December 7, 2015 with the K-12 PTOs and a follow-up meeting with Barrington Middle School abutters on December 8, 2015. The Building Committee and School Committee are scheduled to meet on December 14, 2015. Discussion ensued on the importance of enrollment projections for funding of the building project and the possible use of a communications consultant for a community engagement process that is consistent with best practice. Updates relative to the Barrington Middle School building project are available on the district website.

Ms. Odjakjian departed the meeting at 10:58 p.m.

Mr. Messore provided an update relative to the District Strategic Communication Plan, including announcement of the Math and Science Night for parents on December 8, 2015 at Barrington High School.

The Committee agreed to hear the Field Trip Approval agenda item out of order. Mrs. Mary Roberts and Mrs. Abigail Williams, Barrington Middle School Grade 7 Aqua Cluster Teachers, requested approval for an overnight field trip on May 13-14, 2016 to New York City for Grade 7 Aqua Cluster students. Mrs. Roberts provided an overview of all trip logistics.

**Mr. Guida moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the field trip on May 13-14, 2016 to New York City for Barrington Middle School Grade 7 Aqua Cluster. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**

**Old Business from School Committee**

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

**New Business from Superintendent and Staff**

Mr. Messore announced the resignations of Ms. Kelsey Greineder, MS, Drama Club Advisor, and Mr. Piers Ross, HS, Varsity Boys Soccer Assistant Coach.

Mr. Messore provided a status report on the Math instructional support position originally budgeted as a 0.5 FTE for Barrington Middle School and the difficulty in filling the position as half time. Mr. Messore proposed changing the job posting to a full time position. Mr. Guida, while in support of a full time position, expressed concern for the way the agenda item is categorized on the agenda, as the additional 0.5 FTE would complement the current 0.5 FTE vacancy. The Committee agreed to place this item on the next meeting agenda for approval.

Mr. Messore requested approval for administration of the 2016 Rhode Island Student Survey (RISS) to students in Grades 6-12 between February and April of 2016 through the partnership of the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare Disabilities and Hospitals and the University of Rhode Island's Cancer Prevention Research Center. Mr. Messore noted that the district has previously participated in the RISS.

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**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to approve the administration of the 2016 Rhode Island Student Survey in Barrington Public Schools. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**

Mr. Messore reported that the posting for the position of Director of Technology will be posted on SchoolSpring.com as well as other media outlets. Mr. Messore will keep the Committee updated on the process and noted that minor changes will be made to the job description.

**New Business from School Committee**

Dr. Shea provided an update on the Health and Wellness Committee meeting held on December 2, 2015 that included ongoing discussions on school start times, nutrition education for athletes, and the implementation of recent School Committee policy revisions on the Health and Wellness Policy and Food Allergies Policy.

Mrs. Brody provided a brief overview of research on the Balanced Governance Model for highly effective school boards, including the practice of informed oversight. Mrs. Brody also proposed a plan to hold a self-facilitated data workshop on the recently released Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) data.

Mrs. Brody requested to table the agenda item on the discussion of a district visit by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education to the next meeting.

**Decision Items**

**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, 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 December 17, 2015 will feature a School Resource Officer Program initiative evaluation, update on educator evaluation, and enrollment data. Mr. Messore requested to add a district performance report on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) assessment to the next meeting agenda and move the topic of blended learning/learning spaces to a future meeting agenda.

**Announcements**

Mr. Messore announced that on December 7, 2015 there will be a joint meeting with the K-12 PTOs where Kaestle Boos Associates will present an update on the Barrington Middle School building project. Mr. Messore also announced that on December 8, 2015 a K-12 Math and Science Night for parents will be held at Barrington High School.

Mrs. Brody announced that on December 10, 2015 the East Bay Collaborative will host a meeting of the Fair Funding Formula Working Group.

**General Public Discussion and Information**

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No issues were raised at this time.

**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 11:20 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); Section 42-46-5(a)(2) pertaining to litigation relative to the Barrington High School Gymnasium; 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 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**

**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 11:35 p.m. and to seal the minutes. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**

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

**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 11:36 p.m. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**