

**Minutes of School Committee Meeting 12/17/2015**

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, December 17, 2015 in the Administration Building. School Committee Chair Kate Brody called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Guida, Ms. Odjakjian, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon, and Mr. Tarro. Mr. Alessandro arrived at 7:35 p.m.

Mrs. Brody introduced School Committee members present at the meeting: Mr. Patrick Guida, Dr. Robert Shea, and Student Representative Katharine Odjakjian. Mr. John Alessandro was en route to the meeting. 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, and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent Elizabeth Levesque.

Ms. Odjakjian announced that she has been accepted early decision at Tufts University. The Administration and School Committee extended congratulations to Ms. Odjakjian.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Ms. Odjakjian led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Brody noted for the record that the meeting would not be available on video due to technical issues.

**Achievement Recognition**

Mr. Messore congratulated Barrington High School for the third place win at the High School Programming Contest held earlier this month at Fitchburg State University. A total of 35 teams from 20 high schools competed in the contest.

**Information and Proposals**

Mr. Messore reported on the School Resource Officer (SRO) program initiative evaluation and shared the positive results of a recent survey with Barrington High School (BHS) staff and students as well as feedback from all school building administrators. Mr. Messore introduced Barrington Police Chief John LaCross, Barrington Police Officer and SRO Josh Melo, and BHS Principal Joseph Hurley who provided additional feedback on the initiative to date and plans for continued school community relationship building. Ms. Odjakjian added that the welcoming and approachable manner of Officer Melo has made a positive impact at BHS. Discussion ensued on potential plans for the SRO position in next year's budget.

Mr. Tarro introduced Jerome McKibben, Ph.D. of McKibben Demographic Research in Rock Hill, South Carolina who provided a report on population and enrollment forecasts for 2016-2017 through 2025-2026 for the Barrington Public Schools. Dr. McKibben noted that district enrollment is dependent upon the in migration of young families, as in migration will be reflected in a larger cohort of student enrollment over time and is separate from the birth rate cohort. Dr. McKibben stated that historical data reflects a 10% increase in enrollment with a new high school and a 5% increase in enrollment with a new middle school; he would expect/add 35 students to the cohort in Barrington. Discussion and questions from the Committee included historic enrollment information including trends in other Rhode Island districts who have built a new Middle School and the importance of valid enrollment data for the Barrington Middle School Building project.

Mrs. Dillon provided a report on the Educator Evaluation process that included an overview of the 2014-2015

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evaluation data, changes to the process for the 2015-2016 Rhode Island Department of Education Evaluation Model, and connections to the District Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plans. Questions from the Committee included changes to action steps at the individual level, use of rubrics for the variety of areas included in the evaluation process, whether parents or students have input on evaluations, and how district evaluation data relates with trends in educator evaluation data in other districts in Rhode Island.

Mrs. Dillon and Mr. Hurley reported on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) district performance data and recent conference held in Washington, D.C. The presentation featured Barrington High School's (BHS) scores in Reading, Mathematics, and Science in comparison to national and international scores, and action steps at BHS and throughout the district as a result of the performance data. Mrs. Dillon and Mr. Hurley were invited to attend the OECD conference as presenters because of BHS' recognition as an aspirational district for its high performance in Reading. The Committee congratulated BHS for the recognition from the OECD and asked about plans for communication relative to this significant achievement news with the community.

Mr. Messore reviewed the two school start times options of 8:15 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. for Barrington High School with cost estimates as presented at the December 3, 2015 School Committee meeting for continued Committee discussion. Questions from the Committee included clarification on bus run times. The Committee is scheduled to vote on school start times at its January 7, 2016 meeting.

**General Public Discussion and Information**

Eight Hampden Meadows faculty members were present to share a letter with the School Committee on their preference to keep the school schedules the same or to start the school day at Hampden Meadows School earlier. Mrs. Terri Couto, Hampden Meadows Grade 5 Teacher, spokesperson for the faculty members present, read aloud a letter also shared with the Committee and Mr. Messore in an email on December 17, 2015.

Mr. Thomas Rimoshytus, of 1 Howard Street, parent, applauded teachers on their wonderful job with students as evident with the recent OECD international recognition, and asked the Committee to consider no change to the current school start time schedule.

Mrs. Anne Merlino, of 15 Mallard Cove Way, parent, noted the need to look at all research and not just one report before making a decision on changing school start times, and asked if the possibility of adverse effects to a later start time had been studied. Mrs. Merlino added that the district may be looking to solve a problem that does not exist and the increased funds for the change could be used for other needs in the district.

Dr. Scott Douglas of 25 Rumstick Road, parent, spoke as a professor of strategy and policy at the U.S. Naval War College to the reasons for keeping organization and the ability to continually adapt as important factors for the district to remain an exceptional school system.

Mr. Anthony Arico Jr., of 166 Lincoln Avenue, urged the Committee to consider all activities that could be potentially impacted by a change in start times and to look at the tardiness of students on Common Planning Time (CPT) days at Barrington High School, when the school day begins at a later time for students.

Mrs. Mary Roberts, of 11 Adams Avenue, Barrington Middle School Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher, and National Education Association Barrington (NEAB) President, agreed to the point that there is a need to constantly change to remain exceptional and our teachers are at their best because of professional

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development in district, but that teachers disagree with changing school start times as the only way to improve sleep. Mrs. Roberts pointed to the fact that, according to a Barrington Times online survey, 60% of the community surveyed does not want a change.

Mr. Nahum Mitnik, of 187 New Meadow Road, parent, Barrington High School Music Teacher, and also representing the NEAB, stressed that there are stronger places to pursue to reduce student stress that are far more beneficial than changing school start times and pointed to the unfairness to move start time for elementary students to an earlier timeframe.

Ms. Odjakjian departed the meeting at 10:05 p.m.

**Old Business from Superintendent and Staff**

Mr. Tarro provided an update on the Barrington Middle School (BMS) Building Committee including information on the bid opening for the Owner Project Manager (OPM), a follow up meeting held with the BMS property abutters, and the December 14, 2015 joint meeting with the School Committee with Kaestle Boos Associates to review two options for the BMS building project. Upcoming meetings in January include that of the Subcommittee to review the OPM bids and multiple joint meetings with the School Committee. Mr. Guida stressed the importance of valid enrollment projections for the planning of common spaces with the building project.

Mr. Messore provided an update relative to the District Strategic Communication Plan, including a press release on the OECD district performance data and plans for the Administration to meet in January, 2016 with a communications specialist with expertise in education.

Mr. Messore requested approval for a full time Mathematics Intervention Specialist position at Barrington Middle School; this position will incorporate the 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE) position that was approved in the current operating budget yet has remained vacant due to the lack of applicants for the position and will accommodate the unanticipated need for an additional 0.5 FTE in order to meet teaching and learning needs relative to enrichment and instructional coaching.

**Mr. Guida moved and Dr. Shea seconded to approve the request for a Mathematics Intervention Specialist position (1 FTE) at Barrington Middle School. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**

Mrs. Dillon provided an update on the Barrington Middle School Mathematics curriculum that included information on plans to revise placement practices and extend differentiation of instruction opportunities to meet the needs of all students for the remainder of the 2015-2016 academic year. The Committee requested an update at the next School Committee meeting and asked about the communication process with families.

**Old Business from School Committee**

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

**New Business from Superintendent and Staff**

**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the appointment of Dawn Carusi, Nayatt, RTI Co-Chairperson. The motion**

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**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 accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the appointment of Kristen Fuller, School Psychologist. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**

Mr. Tarro provided the Committee with information on the capital budget to be submitted to the Town of Barrington Planning Board. The budget documents included information on the technology 1:1 initiative, PreK school playground, and replacement of a district mini bus. The budget documents do not include the Barrington Middle School building project; the project will be eligible for housing aid from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and will be funded pending approval of a bond.

**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to approve the recommendation of the Administration on the submission of the capital budget to the Town of Barrington Planning Board. 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 approve the monthly expenditures for November in the amount of \$3,678,848.24. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**

The Committee and Administration agreed to schedule a workshop on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) data in late January, 2016.

**New Business from School Committee**

The Committee discussed the scheduling of a district visit with the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. Mr. Guida noted the importance of weighing in on the process as decisions are made and recommended input from the Administration and building principals as well. Mrs. Brody asked that Committee members submit their input on topics for discussion to Mr. Messoro.

Mrs. Brody led the discussion on the letter that she received from the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation on the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program, an initiative introduced for consideration in Rhode Island. The Committee agreed to hear a report from the Administration at a future meeting on the district's possible capacity for participation in the program.

**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. Messoro reported that the next regular School Committee meeting scheduled for January 7, 2016 will be the Committee's annual organizational meeting. Also scheduled for that meeting agenda will be the framework for the 2016-2017 proposed budget and a curriculum update on Guidance and World Languages.

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Mrs. Brody added that an update on the Barrington Middle School Mathematics curriculum will also be included in the next meeting agenda.

**Announcements**

Mrs. Brody announced that the swearing in of Barrington School Committee member-elect Mrs. Anna Clancy is scheduled for January 6, 2016.

Mr. Messore announced that a farewell celebration for Mrs. Katie Miller, Director of Technology will be held on January 6, 2016 at Barrington High School from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

**General Public Discussion and Information**

Mrs. Patricia Adams, of 17 Wildflower Road, parent, voiced concern for the social emotional impact of Barrington Middle School students who skip ahead to higher level Mathematics classes and asked that the waiver process be better publicized to parents. Mr. Guida suggested the possibility of talking with parents about opportunities within Mathematics beginning in Grade 4.

Mrs. Kathleen Crain, of 11 Briarfield Road, parent, appreciated the Administrative response to parent concerns for Mathematics at Barrington Middle School and agreed with Mrs. Adams on the social emotional impact on students when skipping a grade.

Dr. Scott Douglas provided a follow up comment to urge more discussion with regard to the cadre versus cohort with regard to Mathematics at Barrington Middle School. Dr. Douglas also expressed frustration with the Barrington Times piece from the NEAB on school start time and plans to write a letter to the School Committee, but did agree with the need to reduce the workload at the secondary level to reduce stress.

Mr. Nahum Mitnik provided a follow up comment to reiterate that there are other strategies besides changing school start times to alleviate student stress and that teachers in the district, as highly trained individuals who look at student needs, do not feel changing start times would be most beneficial to students. Mr. Mitnik also expressed the desire to attend Health and Wellness Committee meeting, but due to the fact that those meetings are held during the school day he is not able to attend the meetings. Dr. Shea reinforced the fact that there is teacher participation on the Health and Wellness Committee and asked Mr. Messore to provide information on how many teachers have requested coverage to participate in Health and Wellness Committee meetings.

Mr. Alessandro thanked Senator Cynthia Armour Coyne (D-32) for introducing Sowams School students and Music faculty member Mr. Mark Vadnais at the Rhode Island State House during their performance in the annual Holiday Concert; the performance will be rebroadcast on Rhode Island public television.

**Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Guida seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 11:02 p.m. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Shea, Mr. Alessandro, and Mr. Guida voting in the affirmative for the motion.**