

MINUTES OF MEETING
COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION
BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
January 13, 2009
FREDERICK W. HARTNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL
MEDIA CENTER
35 FEDERAL STREET
BLACKSTONE, MA 01504

At 7:00 p.m. the Community Resources for Education Meeting was called to order.

Members of the School Committee were present as follows:

Toni M. Harvey, Chairperson
Ann M. Lesperance, Vice Chairperson
Diane C. Robin, Member

Michael J. Buckley, Lynn M. Landry, Catherine A. Robinson, Steven J. Tringali, and Charles K. Singleton were not present.

Also in attendance were Superintendent, Christine D. Tyrie, Ed. D. and Assistant Superintendent, Kimberly B. Shaver-Hood.

Mrs. Harvey welcomed those present for the CoRE meeting and explained that the school committee members and administrators would like to make this an informal meeting, but as informative as possible.

Mrs. Harvey gave an update on the proposed full day kindergarten program. Mrs. Harvey stated that there would be an informational meeting on January 14th at the Millville Elementary School. The Kindergarten Committee will also be featured on the John Eldridge Show on January 26th. So far the school district has received \$105,000 in grant funding. The Full Day Kindergarten Subcommittee has met regularly to review research, new classroom materials as well as developmentally appropriate classroom design/curriculum opportunities, professional development and new screening tools and procedures.

Dr. Tyrie stated that we are eligible for a \$100,000 grant to defer expenses for the full day kindergarten program. We are currently eligible for \$3,293 for ½ day kindergarten students and eligible for \$6,586 for full day kindergarten as part of the foundation budget.

Ms. Shaver-Hood gave an update on the JFK/AFM intercom system and doors. She stated that the sewer conversion will take place this Saturday at the BMR High School. The sewers will be fully functional by 5:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that the Town of Blackstone has agreed to allow Blackstone-Millville to join the Towns Reverse 911 (emergency reverse number) which will go to Blackstone and Millville and allow for unlimited e-mail usage. She stated that we can still use the media but having the ability to use the Reverse 911 is a great option.

Dr. Tyrie stated that JFK and MES did an energy audit a few years ago and were recently informed that they will receive a \$208,000 grant for taking part in this state audit. Frederick

Hartnett completed the required application. Once the application is been submitted we can move forward to get the grant funds.

Dr. Tyrie discussed the FY08-09 budget as well as the FY09-10 budget. She stated that at this point in time, with salaries and expenses such as transportation and utilities encumbered, we have approximately 4% of this year's budget remaining for the next five months. Dr. Tyrie stated that Chapter 70 funding, regional transportation and circuit breaker reimbursement were all cut by 1% this year.

Dr. Tyrie expressed her concerns for FY10. The budget presented to the school committee for FY10 is a level service budget with the addition of full day kindergarten. It is increased by 2.48% over FY09, or \$521,473.

The initial goal is to get as close to level dollars as possible without cutting programs and services.

A level dollar budget assumes the same revenue for FY10 as for FY09. This includes the same level of funding for: Chapter 70, regional transportation, circuit breaker, and additional contributions from the towns over minimum contribution.

Districts have been told to expect as much as a 10% cut in Chapter 70 funding (\$1,133,062). There will most likely be cuts in reimbursement for regional transportation and circuit breaker. With this cut in Chapter 70 funding staff positions would need to be cut.

In FY09, the district spent \$1,387,150 over net school spending (15.3% above NSS). The average district in MA spends approximately 20% above NSS. We will not know the extent of the cuts until the governor's budget goes to the House.

Dr. Tyrie did state that if the President helps out by passing the Economic Stimulus Package, Governor Patrick may reduce this deficit.

Mrs. Harvey is unsure what the towns of Millville and Blackstone will do. She hopes the stimulus package will help. She stated that they will try to keep things as close to level funding as possible.

Mrs. Harvey stated that the school committee is reviewing what can be done with transportation.

Mrs. Daignault (middle school teacher) recommended giving individuals incentives for early retirement.

Dr. Tyrie mentioned that even when an employee retires the district still pays 50% of their healthcare.

Mrs. Harvey stated that they are looking at all areas to make cuts but they are already cut very thin. She does appreciate any suggestions that are given.

Mrs. Harvey stated that following meetings have been scheduled:

Budget presentations with building administrators:

January 8th, January 15th, January 22nd, and January 29th.

Open Hearing:

March 12th @ 7:00 p.m. – BMR High School Auditorium

Certification of Budget:

March 25th – FWH Middle School Media Center

Annual Town Meeting:

Millville – May 11th @ 7:00 p.m. MES auditorium

Blackstone – May 26th @ 7:00 p.m. BMR High School auditorium

Mrs. Harvey urges people to attend these meetings; public support is needed. She also stated that the new administration has worked very hard to de-mystify the budget.

Mrs. Harvey stated that they are looking at the Regional Agreement right now and the ability to move students at the elementary levels back and forth from Blackstone to Millville and vice versa when needed. The school committee needs to delve into the Regional Agreement and then educate the townspeople. Some parents would rather have their children in larger classes than sent to another town.

Mrs. Harvey stated that they will not move forward at this time with the improvement of the athletic fields. A plan was put together so that when they actually have the funds they will be ready to move forward.

Mrs. Harvey stated that she will not be running for re-election in April. She hopes there is interest in the community to fill her seat.

Esther Cote (teacher) thanked Mrs. Harvey for her dedication to the students and the entire school district.

At 8:00 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Michael J. Buckley, District Secretary