

MINUTES OF MEETING
COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION
BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BMR Parents Organization
February 27, 2008 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
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
Mark J. Almquist, District Treasurer
Joanne R. Forbes, District Secretary
Lynn M. Landry, Member (arrived at 8:00 p.m.)

Absent from the meeting were Thomas J. Conlon, Ann M. Lesperance and Catherine A. Robinson.

Also in attendance were Superintendent, Dr. Herbert Levine and Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Kathleen Montagano.

School bus driver and parent Mrs. Caroline Coleman mentioned that she was not informed as a bus driver of the recent case of MRSA at the high school. She feels that the owner of Tellstone Bus Company should have been notified so that he could have notified his employees.

Parent, Mrs. Maureen Vasquez, mentioned that they could possibly send out an e-mail to the CoRE group and they could get the word out.

Mrs. Harvey stated that she will take Mrs. Coleman's suggestion under advisement and take the proper steps now and in the future. Mrs. Harvey does not feel the District did the least that they could do to inform the public, but they did not do as much as they could have. She thanked Mrs. Coleman for bringing this forward. However, she does not recommend using an e-mail tree for MRSA outbreak information.

Dr. Levine stated that there are guidelines set by the Department of Health which the District follows when there is a case of MRSA. He stated that the District can consider using the reverse 911 next year. Dr. Levine is now working on setting this up with Town Administrator, Kenneth Bianchi and hopes that the reverse 911 will be up and running by next year.

Mrs. Harvey stated that the School Committee is still working on a tentative budget. They will adopt the FY09 budget on March 12th and present it at the Open Hearing on March 13th.

The following is the FY09 Budget Process from this day forward:

Feb. 1 – 28 FY09 budget considered and revised if necessary

March 12 – School Committee Meeting @ 6:30 p.m.

March 13 – Open Hearing on the FY09 Budget, 6:30 – 7:30 pm followed by School Committee meeting at 7:30 p.m.

March 19 – School Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m. – certification of the FY09 budget

May 12 – Millville’s Annual town meeting

May 27 – Blackstone’s Annual town meeting

Parents stated they are currently uncomfortable with the class size for 5th graders in both schools. It was stated that having 27 and 28 students in a classroom is too large. The class size is very important to parents. However, the bigger picture is student achievement.

Dr. Levine wondered if it is worth exploring the possibility of mixing Millville students with Blackstone students. He also stated that the greatest impact for lowering class sizes was for K, 1 and 2. Targeting early childhood is the key.

Mrs. Harvey wonders if it would be economical to have a feasibility study done. She stated that in the end it will be up to the town voters to make the decision.

Mrs. Harvey stated that the District currently has a grant to move forward with the investigation of moving to a full day kindergarten in the District. The Committee will hold informational meetings to discuss this. If they apply for the second grant, it will be for \$105,000. If the Committee decides to go with full day kindergarten they will adopt it in the budget. If they make the decision not to go forward with it, the budget will be decreased. Once the budget is adopted it can never be raised higher.

Mrs. Harvey raised the question on how to reduce vocational student applicants.

A discussion began on communication and how parents would like to see this improve at the high school.

A parent provided information on her child’s recent experience at the high school. She felt there was a lack of communication between school and home regarding progress reports.

Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that the schools need to work at making sure they are doing a better job at transitioning the students from the middle school to the high school. She stated that the school needs to hear about issues so they can address them.

Dr. Levine stated that if parents have a concern and they have gone through the chain of command and did not receive satisfaction, they can contact the Superintendent’s Office.

Dr. Levine feels we need to help kids who have difficulty advocating for themselves. He feels we may need to add a school adjustment counselor and he promises to have a conversation with Mr. Porter to have an Open Forum.

The BMR student video was viewed by all. Comments by those in attendance stated it was well done, informative and gave a wonderful picture of what the students are doing on a day-to-day basis.

The next CoRE meeting will be held on March 6th at 7:00 p.m. at the JFK/AFM Complex.
At 9:00 p.m. the CoRE Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Joanne R. Forbes, District Secretary