

MINUTES OF MEETING
COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION
BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
March 6, 2008 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
JFK/AFM Complex
200 Lincoln Street
Blackstone, MA

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
Mark J. Almquist, District Treasurer
Thomas J. Conlon, Asst. District Treasurer
Lynn M. Landry, Member
Catherine Robinson, Member

Absent from the meeting was Joanne R. Forbes.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Dr. Herbert Levine, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Montagano, Principal Everett B. Campbell and Principal Kimberly Shaver-Hood.

At 7:05 p.m. Mr. Campbell gave everyone a tour of the complex. The tour included the AFM auditorium, classrooms and gymnasium, and the classrooms at JFK.

Mr. Campbell stated that the town of Blackstone owns the complex. The JFK side of the building was opened in Sept. 1965 and the AFM side opened in Sept. 1988. The JFK portion of the building is the oldest school in the District.

There are several areas which need attention and the estimated repairs are below:

- New intercom systems are need at both schools for an estimated cost of \$51,000.
- Three doors in the complex used for recess need security systems in place for an estimated cost of \$12,061.
- Double exterior doors (JFK Gymnasium), two double exterior doors (AFM) and a two single external door @ JFK have deteriorated and are the originals from 1965. These need to be replaced for an estimated cost of \$23,805.
- The reset controller (outside) which controls the need for hot water in the heating system and can save substantial dollars in fuel expenditures needs to be replaced for an estimated cost of \$9,975.
- Cafeteria tables @ JFK are the originals which makes them more than forty years old. They are both obsolete and dangerous to move. They need to be replaced for an estimated cost of \$21,600.

- The walk in refrigerator @ JFK is 1965 vintage. Mr. Campbell would like to replace this with a modular walk-in for an estimated cost of \$15,086.
- The gym floor at AFM is a composition floor which is failing and will eventually need replacement for an estimated cost of \$224,000.
- The driveway parking lot areas need re-paving, crack filling and sealing in certain areas for an estimated cost of \$200,000.
- The plumbing in the JFK bathrooms is more than 40 years old and needs replacing for an estimated cost of \$144,184.
- The tile floors at JFK are asbestos based. Some rooms have already been encapsulated and others still need this repair at an estimated cost of \$20,000.
- Roof repair is needed at AFM for an estimated cost of \$3,300.
- Stage curtains at the JFK were removed due to the material not being fire retardant and need replacement at an estimated cost of \$6,000.
- An automatic extinguishing system is needed at JFK.
- Automatic or machine driven bleachers are needed at AFM.

Mrs. Harvey spoke on reducing the vocational student applicants. She stated that they will be restructuring the transition program to the high school. Currently 78 students have applied to BVT, 14 to Norfolk Agricultural School and five to other private schools.

A survey completed by parents indicated that they feel BVT offers more vocational opportunities and they have concerns with the high school and the facility.

Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that she and Mr. Porter will improve on the building partnership between the middle and high schools. They will change the step-up day format, have additional visits to the middle school by the high school guidance counselors, include a parent's night which will include both 7th and 8th grade parents, articulate expectations between staff at both schools and have parent and community forums to help boost the perception of the school.

The District is striving for excellence at the high school and they will continue to upgrade and improve the facility, increase technology, improve the athletic fields, maintain professional development, strive to attract and keep good teachers and improve communication among all of the stakeholders.

On March 26th there will be a parent informational meeting at the high school. Families from the middle school will be invited to attend. Community members are welcome to attend as well. At this meeting, staff will remind parents that BMR High School is the highest performing school in the District. They will also address concerns, misinformation, and misperceptions about the high school, include a power point presentation that will illustrate the additions/changes that

have taken place at the high school over the last four years and examine the full array of programs, electives and opportunities for all levels of students. They will also point out student performance on BMR SAT scores.

Overall, the BMR High School will strive to enhance classroom instruction and increase student learning, empower students in becoming more responsible for their own learning and encourage critical thinking and problem solving. Staff will encourage students to develop new ideas, make responsible decisions and recognize themselves as productive members of society. Teachers are encouraged to develop and use best practices of instruction and assessments from the professional learning community.

Mrs. Harvey stated that the District is committed to building bridges in the communities and the school committee members will assist in this. She will determine what their role should be through CoRE and other avenues.

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, 7:00 – 8:00 pm followed by School Committee meeting at 8:00 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

Mrs. Harvey stated that a decision was made not to move forward with full day kindergarten for September 2008. The school committee is proposing that it will be further examined for September 2009. She stated that there is just too much work that needs to be done and something as important as this should not be rushed into.

Dr. Levine issued a letter to parents/citizens which stated that “he believes the switch from the present half day to the full day format will have great benefits for the district’s children and the district school committee has authorized a full investigation of this concept including the fiscal impact on the district’s budget. In order to be well informed and for our district to be prepared to embrace this change, it will be recommended to take time to investigate the concept. Therefore, the program will not be implemented in the fall of 2008.”

Mrs. Harvey stated information and updates on the full day kindergarten plan are on the BMR website.

Mrs. Harvey stated that the school committee has accepted 22 applications for the position of superintendent of schools. The search committee met to review all applicants and has developed a list of candidates to interview. These interviews have been scheduled. The search committee’s recommendations will be presented to the school committee and the school committee will make the final decision.

Mrs. Lesperance discussed the CoRE round table which will be taped and aired on Channel 8. They are asking for questions by March 27th to discuss on the video. They will be taping on April 10th @ 4:00 p.m. The School Committee is looking for input and suggestions from all

community members so that they could direct the conversation. They will be promoting and advocating for the entire school system.

Mr. Conlon mentioned that it would be a very good idea for concerned citizens to attend the Finance Committee Meetings in both the town of Millville and Blackstone before the public hearings. He stated if citizens would like to suggest changes it is important that they attend the meetings and speak up prior to public hearings.

It was stated by Mr. Almquist that the Regional Agreement is dependent on both towns to come together and work together. It was mentioned that it may be a good idea to integrate classes at the different elementary buildings which would include Blackstone and Millville to come to optimum class sizes. Mrs. Harvey stated that the School Committee has approached this in the past and it was met with opposition.

Dr. Levine mentioned that no parent wants their child to be moved from a school they are comfortable with to another building. However, parents may be more receptive to the idea if there is a plan for implementation.

It was mentioned that the open hearing meeting should be started with the BMR Student Video.

Mrs. Harvey is encouraging all citizens of both communities to attend the Open Hearing on March 13th at 7:00 p.m.

The CoRE meeting was adjourned by Mrs. Harvey at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Joanne R. Forbes, District Secretary