

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
February 28, 2008
FREDERICK W. HARTNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL
MEDIA CENTER
35 FEDERAL STREET
BLACKSTONE, MA 01504**

At 7:00 p.m. the School Committee Meeting was called to order. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

The following members were present as follows:

Toni M. Harvey, Chairperson
Ann M. Lesperance, Vice Chairperson
Mark J. Almquist, District Treasurer
Thomas J. Conlon, Assistant District Treasurer
Joanne R. Forbes, District Secretary
Lynn M. Landry, Member

Catherine A. Robinson left at 7:15 p.m.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Herbert W. Levine, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent Kathleen A. Montagano, Ed.D. and student representative Lindsay Poirier.

A motion was made by Mr. Conlon, seconded by Mrs. Forbes to accept the Consent Agenda which includes minutes of meetings and field trip requests. **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED**

Carol Judd, Cafeteria Manager presented Mr. Roy Olsen from Nutrikids to give a presentation to the Committee on the usefulness of using his point of sale system in our cafeterias which was introduced in the year 2000. The system includes manager software, serving line software, free and reduced lunch module, application scanning. Integrated vending, integrated cash deposit station and a time clock, interactive menu and nutrition, and wellness education will be available in 2008.

Mr. Olsen stated that parents can go to the Nutrikids website and pay ahead by using a debit or credit card. Parents can also review the child's purchase history.

The Nutrikids hardware comes with a one-year warranty and a maintenance contract can be purchased for year 2 and beyond. There is also toll free technical support available from 7 am – 7 pm in which 90% of incoming calls are answered immediately.

The District can choose from 4 different hardware student identification devices as follows:

Pin Pad w/ card reader
Omni card scanner
Handheld scanner
Biometric fingerprint reader

According to Mr. Olsen, the pin pad seems to work the best and is the most popular item for school districts. If students do not remember their pin number the person at the register can search for their account by name.

If the District chooses Nutrikids it would be done in 2 phases. Phase one would include the elementary schools for \$16,000 and phase 2 the MS/HS for an additional \$16,000.

Mr. Porter, HS Principal, Ms. Shaver-Hood, MS Principal, Mr. Ducharme, HS Assistant Principal, and Mrs. Cullen, Curriculum Director gave information on the transition program for students leaving 8th grade and entering 9th grade.

Mr. Porter stated that they will be restructuring this program. There are too many students applying to out of district schools at this level. Currently 78 students have applied to BVT, 14 to Norfolk Agricultural School and 5 to other private schools.

When a survey was completed parents responded by saying that they feel BVT offers more vocational opportunities and they have concerns with the high school and the facilities there. These parents believe that the technology and overall services are just not there for their children.

Mr. Porter stated that he and Ms. Shaver-Hood will improve on the building partnership between the MS and the HS. They will change the step-up day format, have additional visits to the MS by the HS guidance counselors, include a parent 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.

Mr. Porter stated that they are striving for excellence at the high school. 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. Families from the middle school will be invited to attend. If anyone else in the community is interested they 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 4 years and examine the full array of programs, electives and opportunities for all level of students.

Mr. Porter also stated that there is currently a large disparity between the strong BMR SAT scores and the BVT College Board (SAT) scores. This can have a major impact when choosing a college.

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.

Dr. Levine asked Mr. Porter to find out if the number of students applying outside of the District is comparable to other area communities. He also stressed that the high school has added many good things and important electives. The high school certainly does much more than the community realizes.

Mr. Porter mentioned that Mendon, Sutton and Northbridge have had increases in BVT applicants this year.

Some helpful suggestions from the Committee were to contact the parent groups to get the word out, use local cable access to inform community members and have a reporter attend the information night. It is very important to educate the parents but equally important to educate the students and get them excited about the high school.

There seems to be a misconception about the high school and that will be addressed. Staff will address the climate and communication concern, at risk students, safety nets and red flags and overall needs of the students. The administration will also strive to get the 8th and 9th grade teachers together to make transition smoother.

Mrs. Lesperance stated that the schools need to promote themselves on an on-going basis and should do at least 2 newspaper articles per month, per building.

Lindsay Poirier states that the students are the best sellers of the school. It was suggested that booths for the different activities be available at step-up day to get students excited.

Dr. Montagano gave the Report of the Assistant Superintendent.

At the request of Dr. Montagano, a motion was made by Mrs. Lesperance, seconded by Mrs. Landry to advertise for a teacher aide at the Millville Elementary School for the remainder of the school year. The aide will service a three year old student and be paid no more than \$5,000, which is currently funded in a grant. **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED**

Dr. Levine gave the Report of the Superintendent.

At the request of Dr. Levine, a motion was made by Mrs. Landry, seconded by Mrs. Lesperance to change the wording of a school policy to excuse an exchange student from the Netherlands from acquiring a CORI report due to its unavailability in the Netherlands. This will be substituted with a certified letter from the principal of the school the exchange student is attending stating the student does not have a criminal record. **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED**

There were no items for Sub Committee Reports.

Mrs. Lesperance stated that there will be a student council talent show on March 3rd.

Dr. Levine mentioned that there may be two new clubs at the high school soon which include Future Teachers of America and the 504 program.

Lindsay Poirier stated that Mr. BMR will take place on April 10th, The Senior Prom at Christina's in Foxboro on April 18th and the Sophomore Semi-Formal on May 9th. The freshman dodge ball tournament will be held on March 11th and the winter guard on March 1st.

Two senior hockey players have been selected for all stars. These seniors are Justin Hebert and Ben Lepage.

The next CoRE meeting will be held on March 6th at 7:00 p.m. at the JFK/AFM complex.

The School Committee Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Joanne R. Forbes, District Secretary