

**BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL
DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING**

***Open Hearing
FY09 Proposed Budget***

March 13, 2008

The Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee met in the Auditorium of the Blackstone-Millville Regional High School on Thursday, March 13, 2007. The following school committee members were in attendance:

Toni M. Harvey, Chairperson
Ann M. Lesperance, Vice Chairperson
Mark J. Almquist
Thomas J. Conlon
Lynn M. Landry
Catherine A. Robinson

Joanne R. Forbes was not present.

Also in attendance were:

Superintendent Herbert W. Levine, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent Kathleen A. Montagano, Ed. D., and other interested parties.

At 7:00 p.m., Chairperson Harvey welcomed the public to the open hearing and explained the budget process that takes place in the district.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States followed.

Dr. Levine presented a video that was produced by students in Mr. Carroll's video class. The video is being used to help send out a positive message about attending the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District.

Dr. Levine showed the PowerPoint presentation regarding the budget. The FY09 budget is \$21,040,287, a 4.05% increase from FY08. Dr. Levine reviewed the proposed budget including the anticipated shortfall, comparisons from FY08 to FY09, increases and reductions in staff and the school committee's priorities such as a new literacy program at the elementary level. *(Please see attached)*

Following the presentation, a question and answer session followed.

John Eldridge of Blackstone thanked Dr. Levine for the presentation. Mr. Eldridge is concerned with the spending and feels Blackstone is only a few years away from a proposition 2½ over ride. Mr. Eldridge recommended that during contract negotiations that raises be frozen. He also recommended that the school district project the budget for the next five years.

Michael Buckley of Blackstone asked what salary step was being used for new teachers in the budget. Dr. Levine explained that we use M3 and M5 because it is an average. Mr. Buckley recommended bringing in new teachers at B1.

Lisa Oliveira of Blackstone stated that we have to be cautious during the hiring process because our district could be used as a training ground and the professional development should be considered for new hires.

Joe Marchand of Blackstone asked why the "per pupil expenditures" do not reflect FY08. It was explained that the figures come from the Department of Education and they are not available at this time.

Norman Bergeron of Blackstone asked if any out-of-district students come to our district to help offset the costs of the special needs programs at the high school and Millville Elementary School. Dr. Levine stated that we do have some students that go out for a very short time and return and some that are with us for a couple of years. We do bring them back to the district when possible.

Jackie Miner of Blackstone asked if the student produced video will be on cable in both towns. Dr. Levine responded that the video will be shown on both cable channels. She likes the idea of the new reading program but asked if it would be possible to purchase half this year and half next year. Dr. Levine recommends purchasing it in one year because of the price they have been offered. The cost is about two-thirds of what they projected.

It was stated that the district is looking into having more hand sanitizers throughout the schools; they will have companies make proposals to the school committee.

It was also stated that the swipe card program for the cafeteria will be purchased, if not this year then next year.

The open hearing meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

At 8:35 p.m., a quorum being present, Chairperson Harvey called the school committee meeting to order.

A moment of silence was held for Rachel Martineau, mother-in-law of elementary school teacher Estelle Martineau.

Dr. Levine received a request from Mr. and Mrs. Moranci to pay tuition for their son to attend first grade at JFK in September. Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Conlon and seconded by Mrs. Lesperance to allow this item to be added to the Consent Agenda. **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED**

The Consent Agenda was presented by Dr. Levine which included minutes of the school committee meeting of February 28th, minutes of the CoRE meeting of February 27th, several field trip requests, a waiver request and a request for a foreign exchange student. A motion was made by Mr. Conlon and seconded by Mrs. Lesperance to

approve the Consent Agenda but to hold Item D, a waiver request from Cub Scout Pack 21, until the next meeting. **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED**

Chairperson Harvey asked if there were any issues for the Public Forum. There was no response.

At 8:45 p.m., Dr. Herbert W. Levine, Superintendent of Schools, gave his report.

- Dr. Levine stated that food service continues to be in deficit. Chairperson Harvey suggested putting expenses in the account where they belong. By not placing the expenses in the correct account, the deficit will continue to be taken from E & D. Dr. Levine suggested doing half this year and half next year. He suggested placing the cost for the cafeteria aides in the operating budget. A motion was made by Mrs. Robinson and seconded by Mr. Conlon to instruct the superintendent to move the cost of the cafeteria aides from the cafeteria budget to the operational budget. **UNANIMOUS VOTE**
- Dr. Levine reviewed the school calendar for the 2008-2009 school year. Following a discussion regarding the day before Christmas, it was agreed that the calendar would be changed to a half day on December 23rd and no school on December 24th. A vote to adopt the calendar will be taken at the next meeting.

At 9:00 p.m., Dr. Kathleen A. Montagano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, gave her report.

- Dr. Montagano received a letter from the state that the District received an additional \$362 in the special education entitlement grant.
- The job of head cook at the Millville Elementary School was posted due to an anticipated retirement.
- The expenditure ledger was reviewed as well as the budget balance sheet.
- Dr. Montagano stated that she would like to purchase the copy paper. She received quotes for the paper and would like to have the committee's approval to purchase the paper from W. B. Mason. A motion was made by Mr. Almquist and seconded by Mrs. Landry to purchase the copy paper at a cost of \$24,015. **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED**

At 9:00 p.m., Chairperson Harvey asked if there were any subcommittee reports to be made at this time.

Mr. Almquist recommended working on the school dance policy during the summer.

Mrs. Lesperance stated that another update will be sent to schools for their newsletters following the next school committee meeting.

At 9:10. Chairperson Harvey asked if there were any issues for the Committee Forum.

Upcoming meetings include the following:

- Monday, March 17th - superintendent interviews
- Tuesday, March 18th – superintendent interviews
- Wednesday, March 19th - certification of budget
- Wednesday, April 2nd – Millville Finance Committee Meeting

At 9:15 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Almquist and seconded by Mrs. Landry that the Regional District School Committee **adjourn the meeting. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED**

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Robinson
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Joanne R. Forbes, District Secretary