

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

January 7, 2010

The Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee met in the library/media center of the Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Michael J. Buckley, Chairman
Ann M. Lesperance, Vice Chairperson
Charles K. Singleton, District Secretary
Catherine A. Robinson, Assistant District Treasurer
Steven J. Tringali, Member
John J. Eldridge, Member
Diane C. Robin, Member

Absent from meeting was Lynn M. Landry, District Treasurer.

Also in attendance at the meeting were Kimberly B. Shaver-Hood, Superintendent of Schools, Luke Perreault and Amanda Chamberlin, student representatives and Attorney Harold Gould.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Buckley presented the Consent Agenda which included Minutes of Meeting of December 10, 2009 and Warrants.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Lesperance, seconded by Mr. Singleton and **unanimously voted** to approve the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Buckley stated that in less than twelve hours of debate the Education Reform Package was approved by the House. Mr. Buckley believes that the state of Massachusetts is not willing to pay for expanding regional school districts. He asked that we take a moment and drop a line to Senator Moore and Representative Callahan to let them know how we feel about this matter.

Mr. Buckley stated that it is the time of year to acquire nomination papers from town clerks. He stated that there are openings for terms that end in 2010 for his position and the position of Mrs. Robinson. Mr. Buckley stated that he will be seeking re-election for another term.

Student Representatives

Amanda Chamberlin mentioned that the seniors won the penny wars. With the funds raised they were able to purchase clothes and gifts for less fortunate families. Decades was the theme for the pep rally which went very well. Seniors won for best banner, concert and lip synch. Last night the High School band and Wind Ensemble gave a concert in the High School auditorium and the Wintergard home show will be held in February.

Luke Perreault stated that they will be collecting jeans in January and collected hats and mittens in December to give to needy families.

Report of Superintendent

Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that they are proposing two certificates for high school graduation this year. One is the standard certificate and the other the certificate of achievement. This is the first year they have not had 100 % of the students pass the MCAS tests. Mr. Buckley feels that if a student has met the schools requirements they should receive the certificate of achievement from the School District.

Motion: It was move by Mr. Eldridge, seconded by Mrs. Robinson and **unanimously voted** to adopt the alternative graduation certificate proposal.

Mr. Buckley believes it is important to have a certificate available to students who have not passed MCAS but deserve to receive credit for their accomplishments from the School District. Mr. Singleton would like to get a number of how many students fall into this category. He feels we should go to our representatives to let them know how many students have been impacted by these state rules that they have implemented. Some students will not do well on MCAS and then elect to quit school altogether. Mr. Eldridge feels this is a sad, serious issue and not fair to the children.

Ms. Shaver-Hood looked at the expenditure ledger for the month comparing where they were last year at this time. She is comfortable with their bank account at this point. She stated that there is still a budget freeze.

Mr. Buckley stated that Governor Patrick has had second thoughts on cutting regional transportation. The State will find the money and \$190,000 will not be cut from the School District.

Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that they currently have four applicants for the Director of Student Services position. She is asking a member of the School Committee to join the panel.

Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that there are thirteen applicants for the principal position at the JFK/AFM Complex. Mr. Tringali will be the School Committee member who will join the search committee.

There will be a Districtwide independent special education audit beginning next week. The audit will begin on January 12th with a walk through of the Special Education classrooms in the District beginning at the Middle School at 8:30 a.m., The Complex at 9:45 a.m., the High School at 11:00 a.m., and the Millville Elementary at 1:00 p.m. On January 15th documentation will be reviewed at the Special Education Office and twenty four staff interviews will be held on January 20th and 22nd. The completed report should become available two to three weeks after the completion of the interviews.

Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that the middle school math coach, Lynn Mercier will be reviewing the 5th grade MCAS scores to see the areas of concern. Ms. Mercier will give input on her findings.

Ms. Shaver-Hood had a discussion with the superintendent of Bellingham recently. Bellingham has a curriculum specialist who is only working part time. This person would be willing to work with us for two days per week. Ms. Shaver-Hood thinks this would be a good match for the District. This person has quite a bit of experience. She was the Ashland Curriculum Director and lost her position due to cuts. Mrs. Lesperance thinks we should look into this. Mr. Buckley would like to discuss salary at a later time.

Ms. Shaver-Hood gave a Technology update. She has had conversations with Brad Monroe, Technology Director. He will bring a curriculum plan to the budget meeting on Saturday, January 23rd. Ms. Shaver-Hood has put together a plan for that date. She asked that the members let her know if this is agreeable with them. This will be the budget review session with principal Abrams, Tetreault, Campbell and Porter as well as Student Services Director, Pat Connolly and Technology Director, Brad Monroe. They will all give departmental budget proposals on January 23rd.

Mr. Eldridge cannot make it to this meeting along with Mrs. Robin. Ms. Shaver-Hood will get materials out to the Committee before the meeting.

Ms. Shaver-Hood discussed Race to the Top. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an agreement between the School District, the Superintendent and the Teachers' Union. This agreement establishes a framework of collaboration, roles and responsibilities in support of Massachusetts in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top grant project. The participation LEA is committing to implementing Massachusetts' plan to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, ensure effective teachers and leaders in every school and classroom, turn around the lowest achieving schools (only for Lea's with level 4 or 5) and use data to improve instruction. At this time the BMR School District is at level 3. The state also strongly encourages the LEA to commit to roll out statewide P-12 teaching and learning systems, and to increase college and career readiness.

The State needs to secure three signatures on the Memorandum of Agreement that says that the three parties will work together in creating a plan if we take the funds from the state. The state will then apply for the national grant which is \$4.35 billion. We as a

School District could get \$27,000 per year for four years. If we choose not to sign for this we may be removing ourselves from benefiting from some state moneys. We will be placed on a list that makes us ineligible for certain money.

In addition to this the MTA (Massachusetts Teachers Association) has asked that another agreement be signed stating that we would work together with them.

Mr. Eldridge wants a safety net and wants Attorney Gould to look at it. He doesn't know what it's about and feels it is vague. Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that the only problem to this is that the State did not give us much time and we have to give an answer by next Wednesday.

Superintendents in other districts are waiting until the last minute to sign. There is some concern but it's not a pleasant topic right now. If you choose not to sign it you could be penalized by the State.

Mr. Buckley stated that any LEA eligible to receive Title I funding can apply for this. If you don't sign you cannot join later but you are also on the black list. If additional money comes through later on you may not be able to get the money. The state wants to get the money and figure the particulars out later. Districts don't want to be committed to put forth a proposal. At any time you don't have to go forward with your proposal if you don't want to pursue it. The state just wants all the signatures from the Districts to get the federal money. Mr. Buckley would like to approve this since they do not have time to have Attorney Gould read it, approve it and have the School Committee approval by the deadline.

Esther Cote, President of the Educators Association in the School District stated that if the Middle School goes from a level 3 to a level 4 this would not be good. One of the aspects listed in the Memorandum of Understanding is firing the principal and firing 50% percent of staff and possibly closing it down and opening as a charter school. The middle school could go to a level 4 if the MCAS math scores continue to decrease. They are looking at the curriculum to see if the problem is starting at the elementary level. Mr. Eldridge will not support signing it. Mr. Singleton stated that page 4 item d. is the only saving grace. It states that we can sign it but can choose not to follow through with it later on. Mrs. Robinson is not comfortable with it. Mr. Gould stated that even if he reads through the proposal he will not be able to make changes to it. Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that if we turn into a level 4 school the state has other sanctions that could happen at the school even without signing this document.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Lesperance, seconded by Mr. Singleton to enter the Memorandum of Understanding to sign and return document no later than January 13, 2010. The vote was **five in favor, two opposed** (Mr. Eldridge and Mrs. Robinson).

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Singleton, seconded by Mrs. Lesperance and **unanimously voted** to sign the MTA memorandum stating that the Blackstone-Millville

Regional School District will work together with the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

Ms. Shaver-Hood, Mr. Buckley and Mrs. Cote proceeded to sign the two documents.

Mr. Eldridge requested that a letter go to those involved with the dispatching of information through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), requesting they be a bit more considerate with timelines in the future.

Committee Forum

Mr. Singleton requested the name of the BMRHS cafeteria. Ms. Chamberlin stated the name is “The Chargeteria”.

Mr. Buckley asked that all members of the Committee take a moment of silence and send their condolences to the employees in the School District whose family members had passed away recently.

Motion: At 8:00 p.m. it was moved by Mrs. Lesperance, seconded by Mr. Singleton to go into executive session with Attorney Harold Gould for the purpose of discussing bargaining teacher negotiations and the Committee would come out of executive session for the purpose of adjourning the meeting. The motion was followed by a roll call vote that resulted in a **unanimous vote**.

Motion: At 9:20 p.m. it was moved by Mrs. Lesperance, seconded by Mr. Singleton and **unanimously voted** to adjourn the School Committee Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Charles K. Singleton, District Secretary