



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
February 11, 2014**

LOCATION: Swift River Elementary School Library

TIME: 7:00 pm

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Dr. Linda Tsoumas, Chair (present); Ms. Clare Popowich, Vice-Chair (present); Mr. Richard Fritsch, Secretary (not present); Ms. Myndi Bogdanovich, Member (not present); Dr. Michael Knapp, Member (present)

ADMINISTRATION: Dr. Judith Houle, Superintendent of Schools (present); Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning (not present); Mr. Edward Dunn, Contracted School Business Manager (present); Ms. Paula Fitzgerald, CHCS Principal (present)

BHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: (not present)

VISITORS: Ms. Suzanne Dudley, CHCS Teacher (*See attached sign-in sheet for additional visitors.*)

MINUTES

- I. Call to order
Dr. Tsoumas called the Regular School Committee meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
- II. Special awards and presentations
CHCS Summer 2013 Poetic Achievement Honor Schools: Ms. Suzanne Dudley and published writers
Dr. Tsoumas was pleased to recognize several CHCS students who have had their poetry published in *A Celebration of Poets: Summer 2013*, a hardbound anthology. The award is given to schools (grades K-6) that have a large number of entries, and of which over 50% are accepted for publication. Dr. Houle first presented Ms. Dudley with a certificate of recognition for spearheading this venture at CHCS, and then certificates of achievement were presented to 16 students, four of whom were present with proud family members.
- III. Update from BHS Student Advisory Council representatives
None
- IV. Public comment regarding items on the agenda
None
- V. Approval of minutes
 - A. January 14, 2014
MOTION: Ms. Popowich moved to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2014 Regular School Committee meeting, as presented. Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.
VOTE: 3-0-0, approved unanimously

VI. Reports and recommendations of the Superintendent

A. Graduation date, Class of 2014

Dr. Houle stated that she and Ms. Christine Vigneux, BHS Principal (who could not be present at this evening's meeting), had consulted regarding the graduation date for the Class of 2014. In a memorandum to Dr. Houle following that meeting, Ms. Vigneux requested that the School Committee consider approval of the date of Sunday, June 8th at 2:00 p.m. for Commencement Exercises. If this date is approved, the Senior Awards Night would be held on Thursday, June 5th at 6:00 p.m. in the BHS Auditorium.

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the date of June 8, 2014 for the Class of 2014 Commencement Exercises, as recommended. Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0-0, approved unanimously

COMMENT: Dr. Knapp asked what the last day of school would be for the district, and Dr. Houle replied that it had been originally set for June 13th, but with four snow days already being used, the date is now June 19th, with the potential for that changing yet again if more snow days are needed. Dr. Knapp also asked if this was the usual timeframe between seniors graduating and underclassmen finishing the school year, and Dr. Houle indicated that this was typical of past practice.

B. Update on Community Partners meeting, January 28, 2014

Dr. Houle reported on the meeting of the Community Partners Network which had been held on January 28, 2014. This was a follow-up meeting which included school administrators, town officials, and other interested service providers, to further brainstorm the needs of children and their families in Belchertown, and how they can be best addressed. Dr. Houle noted that there had been a good exchange of ideas at this meeting, and she was pleased to add that Valley Human Services and the Behavioral Health Network have shown a great interest in staying involved and informed. As a result of this meeting, the group crafted a directory which was categorized in three major areas: financial need, family-parent/guardian support, and mental health. The Belchertown Public Schools Community Partners Network Directory of Services and Supports represents a living document that is planned to be updated on a regular basis. The group also agreed by consensus to meet twice per year to continue these connections in order to reach students in need.

VII. Reports of subcommittees/representative to Collaborative for Educational Services

A. Collaborative for Educational Services (Ms. Bogdanovich)

1. Report from January 22, 2014 meeting

Dr. Houle reported that Mr. William Diehl had been appointed as Executive Director of the CES by a vote of the Board of Governors. As a member of the screening committee for this search, Dr. Houle feels that Mr. Diehl was a wise choice for Executive Director and noted that he is already off to a good start in this position.

B. Curriculum & Instruction (Dr. Tsoumas/Dr. Knapp)

1. Report from February 11, 2014 meeting

Dr. Tsoumas stated that this subcommittee had met earlier this evening, and no action items were being brought forward to the School Committee. She stated that Mr. Cameron had provided an overview of three topics: the District-Determined Measures Pilot, the pilot of the Edwin Teaching and Learning System, and an update on the Honors Mathematics plan for grades 6-11. No future meeting of this subcommittee has been scheduled.

C. Healthy & Safer Schools Advisory Committee (Ms. Popowich)

1. Report from December 11, 2013 meeting: recommendation regarding the revised Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Plan

Ms. Popowich reported that this subcommittee met in December and January to complete the revisions on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Plan. She said that an update was also provided from the Wellness Committee with regard to Zumba and yoga classes which began at the end of January, and are being funded by a grant.

Dr. Houle noted that the revised Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and Policy now includes provisions in statutes, wherein bullying by a staff member will also be addressed. She stated that the district is ready for full-on implementation of this plan, and recommends that this revised document be approved by the School Committee.

MOTION: Ms. Popowich moved to approve the Belchertown Public Schools District Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Plan, as revised. Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0-0, approved unanimously

COMMENT: Dr. Knapp asked how this document had changed since its presentation at the last School Committee meeting, and Dr. Houle explained that all strikethroughs and bolded items had been taken out for the final draft.

D. Jessica's Boundless Playground Committee (Dr. Tsoumas)

1. Report from January 22, 2014 meeting and meeting with the Community Preservation Committee on February 4, 2014

Dr. Tsoumas stated that the last two scheduled meetings of the Playground Committee had been cancelled due to inclement weather. Representatives from this subcommittee had met with the CPA regarding questions about the latest grant proposal, and Dr. Tsoumas has not yet received word of the outcome of that meeting or any decision. The Playground Committee will meet tomorrow evening at CHCS and the construction company consultant, Mr. Andrew Berger, as well as Mr. Steve Williams, DPW Director, will be present to discuss the planning and design of this project and an actual construction timeline. There will also be updates with regard to fundraising. It is anticipated that the playground will open prior to the start of the next school year.

E. Personnel & Policy (Ms. Popowich/Ms. Bogdanovich)

1. Need to meet regarding preschool policies and library procedures

Dr. Houle stated that this subcommittee needs to meet regarding preschool policies and library procedures, and Dr. Tsoumas requested that a third topic be added to the agenda regarding reducing the number of School Committee members sitting on subcommittees.

A meeting of the Personnel & Policy Subcommittee was scheduled for March 18, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at SRE Library.

F. Property & Transportation (Mr. Fritsch/Dr. Knapp)

Dr. Knapp reported that this subcommittee has not met recently, nor is a meeting yet scheduled in the future.

Mr. Dunn reported that the bid process for a new school bus contract has been advertised, and this will be a joint bid including the districts of Belchertown, Ware and Hadley. The bids are due Tuesday, February 18th at 11:00 a.m. and the bid opening will be held in Ware. Mr. Dunn stated that he will present the results of the bidding process for the school bus transportation contract at a future School Committee meeting.

G. School Safety Task Force (Mr. Fritsch)

Dr. Houle noted that the next meeting of the School Committee on February 25th will take place in the BHS Auditorium in order that the Emergency Operations Plan be reviewed with enough accommodation for the anticipated public interest.

H. Technology Advisory Committee (Mr. Fritsch)

1. Report from February 5, 2014 meeting

Dr. Houle stated that no updates were available on this meeting since Mr. Fritsch was not present. This report will be presented at the next School Committee meeting.

VIII. New business

None

IX. Unfinished business

None

X. Correspondence

A. Agenda: February 11, 2014

B. Minutes: January 14, 2014

C. Excerpts from *A Celebration of Poets*, featuring the works of CHCS students

D. Memorandum regarding graduation date for the Class of 2014

E. Community Partners Network Directory of Services and Supports

F. Revised Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

G. Thank you letter to Mr. William Kirk for the donation of a television to BHS

Dr. Houle noted that a letter of thanks had been sent to Mr. Kirk on January 24th in acceptance of his generous donation of a flat-screen television to BHS.

XI. Adjournment

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to adjourn the Regular School Committee meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0-0, approved unanimously

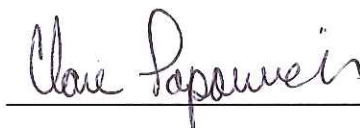
Respectfully submitted by,



Kathryn A. Petersen

Non-Confidential Recording Secretary to the School Committee

School Committee members' signatures:

 Linda Tsoumas, Chair Clare Popowich, Vice Chair Michael Knapp, Member

The mission of the Belchertown Public Schools is to ensure that every student meets with success every day. To that end, we pledge to ensure that we have rigorous, standards-based curriculum; instruction designed to meet the needs of diverse learners in every classroom; and access to the global learning community via state-of-the-art technology in schools that are communities of respect and civility for all.

2011-2015 Strategic Plan Goals (adopted by the Belchertown School Committee, 3/1/11):

Goal #1: To have guaranteed (standards-based and implemented by all), viable (doable and accessible to every student), seamless K-12 curriculum in every content area.

Goal #2: To have rigorous (standards-based), relevant (grounded in 21st Century skills), differentiated instructional practices with the ability to access the global learning community via technology available to every learner.

Goal #3: To implement a plan to ensure that our students understand the importance of acceptance, tolerance, and respect supported by all adults in the community.

The Belchertown School Committee conducts its business in open session pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21 of the Massachusetts General Laws. The public is welcome to comment only on items on the agenda for this meeting as noted above. If you wish to address the School Committee regarding an item not on the agenda for this meeting, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at 413.323.0423 or via email at superintendent@belchertown.org to determine the best way to address your concerns (see [School Committee Policy BEDH](#)).