



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 27, 2014**

LOCATION: Swift River Elementary School Library
TIME: 7:00 pm

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Ms. Clare Popowich (present); Mr. Richard Fritsch (present); Ms. Myndi Bogdanovich (present); Dr. Michael Knapp (present); Ms. Dawn French (present)

ADMINISTRATION:

Dr. Judith Houle, Superintendent of Schools (present); Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning (present); Dr. Robert Gazda, incoming Interim Superintendent of Schools (present); Ms. Kristi Guzzo, Director of Student Support Services (present); Mr. Robert Lachance, Director of Buildings and Grounds (present); Ms. Ann Marie Beaupre, Director of Food Services (present); Ms. Christine Vigneux, BHS Principal (present); Mr. Thomas Ruscio, JBMS Principal (present); Ms. Eileen Farrington, SRE Assistant Principal (present)

BHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: (not present)

VISITORS: Dr. Linda Tsoumas, former School Committee Chair/Vice Chair; Mr. Eric Weiss, former School Committee Chair/Vice Chair; Ms. Beverly Phaneuf, former School Committee member; Mr. Jim Russell, Republican reporter
(See sign-in sheet for additional visitors.)

MINUTES

- I. Call to order
Dr. Houle called the Regular School Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. Reorganization of the School Committee
Dr. Houle stated that after the Town Election of May 19th, it is required under Massachusetts General Laws and School Committee policy that the School Committee be reorganized with election of its officers.
 - A. Election of officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary
Dr. Houle requested that a motion be made to elect the Chair of the School Committee.

MOTION: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to appoint Mr. Fritsch as School Committee Chair. Ms. French seconded the motion.

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to appoint Ms. Popowich as School Committee Chair. Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.
VOTE-to appoint Ms. Popowich as Chair: 2-3-0
VOTE-to appoint Mr. Fritsch as Chair: 3-2-0

Dr. Houle turned the meeting over to Mr. Fritsch as elected Chair.

Mr. Fritsch requested that a motion be made to elect the Vice Chair of the School Committee.

MOTION: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to appoint Ms. Popowich as School Committee Vice Chair. Ms. Popowich declined the appointment.

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to appoint Ms. Bogdanovich as School Committee Vice Chair. Ms. French seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-1 (abstention: Ms. Popowich)

Mr. Fritsch requested that a motion be made to elect the Secretary of the School Committee.

MOTION: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to appoint Ms. Popowich as School Committee Secretary. Ms. Popowich declined the appointment.

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to appoint Dr. Knapp as School Committee Secretary. Ms. French seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

B. Appointment of Subcommittee members:

Mr. Fritsch polled the School Committee to fill the positions on the various subcommittees, and appointments were made, as follows:

1. Curriculum & Instruction
Dr. Knapp, Chair; Ms. French, member
2. Personnel & Policy
Ms. Popowich, Chair; Ms. Bogdanovich, member
3. Property & Transportation
Dr. Knapp, Chair; Mr. Fritsch, member

C. Appointment of liaisons to Advisory Committees:

Mr. Fritsch polled the School Committee to fill the positions of liaisons to Advisory Committees, and appointments were made, as follows:

1. Healthy & Safer Schools Committee
Ms. Bogdanovich
2. Playground Committee
Ms. Popowich
3. Technology Advisory Committee
Mr. Fritsch

D. Appointment of member to the Collaborative for Educational Services Board of Directors

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to reappoint Ms. Bogdanovich as member of the CES Board of Directors. Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

- E. Appointment of Sick Bank Committee Members
Mr. Fritsch and Ms. French will serve on the Unit A Teacher Sick Bank Committee, as determined by a unanimous vote of the School Committee. Dr. Knapp will serve, with Mr. Fritsch serving as substitute as needed, on the Sick Bank Committees for the remaining four bargaining units (B, C, D, and E) as well as the Administrative Sick Bank Committee, as determined by a unanimous vote of the School Committee.
- III. Special awards and presentations
Ms. Popowich, on behalf of the School Committee, presented Dr. Houle with a gift of an engraved crystal bowl in recognition of her service to the Belchertown Public Schools and its students. Members of the audience included faculty and former School Committee members who were present to honor Dr. Houle as well. Dr. Houle expressed her appreciation, stating that it had been her pleasure to serve the community and its children.
- IV. Update from BHS Student Advisory Council representatives
None
- V. Public comment regarding items on the agenda
Ms. Christina Aponte expressed her gratitude, as a parent and BPS employee, to Dr. Houle for her five years of service to our district, and her continued dedication as she approaches the end of her tenure here.
- VI. Approval of minutes
 - A. May 13, 2014
MOTION: Ms. Popowich moved to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2014 Regular School Committee meeting, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.
VOTE: 4-0-1 (abstention: Ms. French)
- VII. Reports and recommendations of the Superintendent
 - A. Out-of-state field trip: JBMS to Lake Compounce
Mr. Ruscio presented his request for an out-of-state field trip by JBMS to Lake Compounce, Bristol, CT, on June 12, 2014. He stated that this is an annual trip taken at the end of each school year by all 7th and 8th grade students.
Dr. Houle stated that she has reviewed this out-of-state field trip request and found it to be fully compliant with all safety and liability requirements as required by school policy, and she recommends approval of this trip by the School Committee.

MOTION: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the JBMS out-of-state field trip to Lake Compounce on June 12, 2014, as presented. Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.
VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously
COMMENT: Mr. Fritsch asked if all students will participate in the field trip regardless of ability to pay, and Mr. Ruscio replied that, as stated in the itinerary, the Student Activities Account will be used to sponsor students with financial need. Mr. Fritsch also questioned why there were only four teachers named as chaperones, and Mr. Ruscio explained that those individuals were listed as organizers of the trip, and that all JBMS faculty and paraprofessional staff will be attending as chaperones, as stated in the itinerary.

B. Approval of Mathematics textbooks, Math 9

Dr. Houle stated that the Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee has already approved this textbook and it was moved forward to the School Committee for its first reading on May 13th. A vote for approval can now be taken at this second reading.

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the Mathematics textbook, Math 9, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

DISCUSSION: Dr. Knapp noted that this proposed curriculum item had been discussed at the meetings on May 13th, but he briefly reviewed the reasons for the purchase of this new textbook, and he also explained the required steps for approval by the School Committee of any new instructional resources.

C. School Committee meeting calendar: 2014-2015

Dr. Houle presented a proposed calendar for 2014-2015 School Committee meetings, noting that it follows the pattern of previous years with meetings to be held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, with the exception of the summer months and December. Due to the timing of the November holidays, Dr. Houle suggested that there be only one meeting that month as well. In addition, Dr. Houle proposed one change to this draft calendar due to a scheduling conflict for Dr. Gazda, and therefore she recommended that the August meeting be changed to August 26th.

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the 2014-2015 School Committee meeting calendar, as amended with a meeting change to August 26th. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

D. Policy regarding background checks

Dr. Houle reviewed the handout which details the policy for fingerprint-based Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) checks made for non-criminal justice purposes. She stated that this policy will be implemented by the Belchertown Public Schools, as follows: this year's new hires must be fingerprinted by August, 2014, and all new hires moving forward after the adoption of this policy will be required to have a CHRI check at the time of hire; those employees who were hired prior to this year will complete the CHRI check over time through 2017. Dr. Houle also noted that there are fingerprinting locations in Pittsfield, Greenfield, and Springfield. The cost is currently \$55 for teachers and \$35 for support staff.

Dr. Knapp noted an error in the handout, in that two items were numbered as "IV.", and Dr. Houle will correct the document.

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to accept the policy regarding background checks (CHRI), as amended with the reordering of numbered procedures. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

E. Increase in school lunch prices

Ms. Beaupre presented her request for an increase in school lunch prices. She noted that while she does not want to increase these prices, she must be compliant with the regulations from the Healthy, Hunger Free Act of 2010. Food service departments must use a formula which is based on the weighted average for paid lunches, and this amount is used to determine reimbursement for free lunches.

Ms. Beaupre recommends that the price for lunches at CSS and SRE be raised from \$2.25 to \$2.50, and at CHCS, that the lunch price will increase from \$2.50 to \$2.60. These increases will give a weighted average of \$2.65 per lunch, since JBMS and BHS are currently at \$2.75.

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the increase in school lunch prices at two schools (CSS and SRE), as presented. Ms. French seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

DISCUSSION: Mr. Fritsch asked if there was a program available for students who could not afford to pay for school lunches. Dr. Houle explained that the "free and reduced lunch program" has been in place for many years in the Belchertown Public Schools. It is the reason for the price increase as outlined in Ms. Beaupre's request this evening, as it complies with the government mandate, and it is the basis for the formula used in setting the price increase as approved by the School Committee in this motion.

VIII. Unfinished business
None

IX. New business

A. School Committee member orientation

Dr. Houle stated that the following documents have been provided in this evening's correspondence as a refresher of information for School Committee members in light of the reorganization.

1. Open meeting law guide

The members were asked to review the Open Meeting Law Guide carefully, sign the "certificate of receipt of open meeting law materials", and return this document to Central Office.

2. Belchertown Policy Manual: Policies BCA and KE

Dr. Houle reviewed Policy BCA: School Committee Code of Ethics, and Policy KE: Public Complaints. Also included was a BPS brochure which serves as a guide for families with questions and/or concerns and which offers the appropriate contact information with regard to specific issues. A discussion ensued about the proper administrative channels to follow when wishing to resolve an issue, and the chain of command as listed in both Policy KE and the brochure. The consensus was that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, prior to involvement by the School Committee.

3. Conflict of interest training

Dr. Houle reviewed the document provided which summarizes the state's conflict of interest law, and advised the School Committee members that online training must be completed by all municipal employees (which by definition include committee/board members). Both an "acknowledgement of receipt" (summary of bill) and online training "receipt" (completion of online test) must be signed and returned to C.O. for forwarding to the Town Clerk.

4. MASC training

Dr. Houle discussed the extensive training opportunities which are offered to districts by the MASC. Ms. Popowich recommended that all School Committee members take advantage of these trainings since, with the exception of herself, the current board has little to no experience. She feels that this training is necessary in order to move forward and best represent the district. Dr. Knapp concurred, stating that the board needs to learn how to properly conduct the

business of the School Committee. Ms. Bogdanovich also concurred, and it was decided that she will contact the MASC about setting up training for the School Committee members. Information with regard to training will be placed on the June 10, 2014 School Committee meeting agenda for discussion. In addition, Dr. Houle noted that Ms. French, as a newly elected School Committee member, must attend a mandatory School Committee orientation program within one year ("Charting the Course"). This is an MASC workshop that is held at various times and locations throughout the Commonwealth.

X. Reports of subcommittees

A. Collaborative for Educational Services

1. Report from May 14, 2014 meeting

Ms. Bogdanovich reported on items of business conducted at this meeting: CES meetings may be changed to the fourth Wednesday of the month due to scheduling conflicts; a vote was taken on email and video marketing policies, with minor language changes; strategic goals will be discussed collectively by the CES, meeting in small training groups; financial reports were reviewed with no items of concern; the bylaws will soon be finalized with only a few districts left to sign.

B. Curriculum & Instruction

Dr. Knapp reported that this subcommittee met recently and all current business has been addressed.

C. Healthy & Safer Schools Advisory Committee

Mr. Cameron stated that a meeting of this subcommittee was held on May 15th, at which he and Ms. Phyllis DuComb, Nurse Leader, reviewed the prototype for classroom survival kits. He also stated that he has been in contact with Home Depot and Walmart to request donations for the contents of these kits. Mr. Cameron said that the next meeting for the subcommittee has not yet been scheduled, pending notification from these potential contributors.

D. Personnel & Policy

Dr. Houle reported that the CHRI policy had been reviewed and approved earlier in this evening's meeting.

E. Playground Committee

Ms. Popowich will contact Dr. Linda Tsoumas regarding the next meeting of this subcommittee.

F. Property & Transportation

None; Dr. Knapp suggested that a meeting be scheduled in order to address traffic issues at the schools at pick-up and drop-off times. It was decided that this subcommittee will meet on July 22, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at SRE Library.

G. Technology Advisory Committee

1. Next meeting: June 4, 2014

At this time, Dr. Houle recommended that School Committee members be chosen for the signing of warrants. Payroll warrants are signed by the SC Chair and Superintendent on a biweekly basis. Mr. Fritsch and Dr. Houle, followed by Dr. Gazda after 6/30/14, will sign these warrants. Accounts Payable warrants must be signed by three SC members on a biweekly basis, and it was determined that Ms. Bogdanovich, Dr. Knapp and Ms. French will sign these warrants.

XI. Correspondence

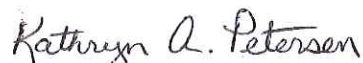
- A. Agenda: May 27, 2014
- B. Minutes: May 13, 2014
- C. Out-of-state field trip documents: JBMS to Lake Compounce
- D. Instructional Resource Form and quote for Mathematics Textbooks for Math 9
- E. Memorandum regarding School Committee Calendar for 2013-2014
- F. School lunch price increase documents
 - 1. Letter from Ann Marie Beaupre, Food Service Director
 - 2. Memorandum from the United States Department of Agriculture
- G. Open Meeting Law Guide from the Office of the Attorney General
- H. Belchertown Policies BCA and KE
- I. Questions? Concerns? A guide for families brochure
- J. Conflict of interest packet from the Town Clerk

XII. Vote to enter into Executive Session under M.G.L., c. 30A, §21, Part (3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Unit A, Teachers as conducting said business in open session would have a detrimental effect on the School Committee's negotiating position. The Committee will not return to open session.

Mr. Fritsch – yes
Ms. Bogdanovich – yes
Dr. Knapp - yes
Ms. Popowich – yes
Ms. French – yes


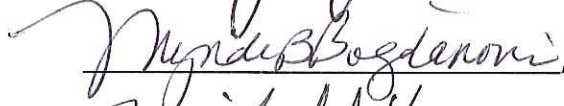

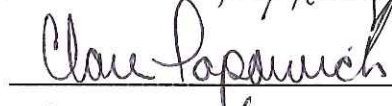
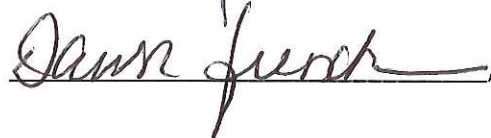
The School Committee entered into Executive Session at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



Kathryn A. Petersen
Non-Confidential Recording Secretary to the School Committee

School Committee members' signatures:

 , Richard Fritsch, Chair
 , Myndi Bogdanovich, Vice Chair
 , Michael Knapp, Secretary
 , Clare Popowich, Member
 , Dawn French, 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 Dr. Judith Houle, Superintendent of Schools, at 413.323.0423 or via email at jhoule@belchertown.org to determine the best way to address your concerns.

BELCHERTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR SESSION
SIGN IN SHEET

DATE: 5-27-14

PLS. PRINT NAME BELOW

DAVID Popowicz

ROBERT LACHANCE

ANGELA DiVico

Donna Sideris

Linda Trauman

Eric Weiss

Christina Aponte

Chruck & Vira

Kristi Gozzo

Thomas K. Ruscio

Ben Plauy

Ann Marie Benupre

Emerson Vigneux

BECKETT Vigneux