



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
June 11, 2013**

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 (present); Mr. Eric Weiss, Member (present); Ms. Myndi Bogdanovich, Member (present)

ADMINISTRATION:

Dr. Judith Houle, Superintendent of Schools (present); Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning (present); Mr. Edward Dunn, Contracted School Business Manager (present); Ms. Christine Vigneux, BHS Principal (present); Mr. Thomas Ruscio, JBMS Principal (present); Mr. Robert Marchewka, Dean of Students/Athletic Director (present)

BHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:

(not present)

VISITORS:

Mr. Gary Brougham, Town Administrator; Ms. Brenda Aldrich, Selectmen Liaison to School Committee; Ms. Maria Scudere, BHS Teacher; Mr. Thomas Howell, BHS Teacher; Mr. Thomas Houle; Dr. Michael Knapp; Ms. Dawn French; Mr. Jim Russell, Republican reporter

MINUTES

- I. Call to order
Dr. Tsoumas called the Regular School Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. Special awards and presentations
 - A. Recognition of service to the School Committee: Eric Weiss
In recognition of Mr. Weiss' nine years of service on the School Committee, Dr. Houle extended her appreciation to him, on behalf of the Belchertown Public Schools and School Committee, and presented him with a gift of a Les Campbell framed photograph. Mr. Weiss said that he had enjoyed his time on the committee and his ability to contribute to the BPS, and he expressed his regret that he must now resign due to time constraints.

At this time, Dr. Tsoumas approved a brief recess for refreshments in order to celebrate Mr. Weiss' contributions to the School Committee with friends and family in attendance.
- III. Update from BHS Student Advisory Council representatives
None
- IV. Public comment regarding items on the agenda
None

V. Approval of minutes

A. May 28, 2013

MOTION: Ms. Popowich moved to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2013 Regular School Committee meeting, as presented. Mr. Fritsch seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-1 (abstention: Mr. Weiss)

VI. Reports and recommendations of the Superintendent

A. Field trip requests

1. JBMS to Lake Compounce: June 12, 2013

Mr. Ruscio presented his request for approval of an out-of-state field trip to Lake Compounce in Bristol, CT by JBMS students on June 12, 2013. He stated that this is an annual end-of-year trip which will be chaperoned by JBMS staff. Dr. Houle stated that she had reviewed the field trip request and found all the paperwork to be in order according to policy, and she therefore recommends approval by the School Committee of this request.

MOTION: Mr. Weiss moved to approve the JBMS out-of-state field trip to Lake Compounce on June 12, 2013, as presented. Mr. Fritsch seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

2. BHS Latin students to Italy

Mr. Howell presented his request for approval of a trip to Italy by BHS Latin students April 19-26, 2014. He asked that the School Committee also allow for flexibility in the travel dates in order to avoid higher weekend rates in air fare, and he stated that any school days missed will certainly be filled with academic content abroad. Students who have completed 1-2 years of Latin/Greek study will be eligible for the trip, and Mr. Howell expects approximately 15-20 students will participate. The general itinerary will include much time spent in ancient Rome, with day trips to Pompeii and Mt. Vesuvius also planned. He noted that there may be an opportunity to see the new Pope during one of his appearances at the Vatican, as well as exploring excavation sites beneath the Vatican.

MOTION: Mr. Weiss moved to approve the request for a trip to Italy by BHS Latin students April 19-26, 2014, with an allowance for flexibility in the scheduled travel dates in order to take advantage of better air fare rates, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

DISCUSSION: Ms. Bogdanovich questioned why there were two sets of dates proposed for this trip, and Mr. Howell explained that the second date was an option if a student teacher and other colleagues hoped to make the trip. However, since they were unable to, the BHS students were asked to choose which dates they would like to travel and the results were that more could make the trip in April.

Dr. Tsoumas asked if the students would be advised of appropriate decorum and proper dress for their visit to the Vatican, and Mr. Howell assured her that the BPS students will

be so advised. He added that the students always maintain a strong reputation of respect when representing BPS out-of-district.

Mr. Fritsch stressed the importance of the U.S. Embassy in Italy being aware of the students' presence there, and Mr. Howell replied that authorities are notified in advance of the trip and parents are also provided with all contact information.

3. BHS Cheerleading trip to Westfield State University UCA camp: August 7-10, 2013

Ms. Vigneux presented the request of Ms. CaroleAnne Donoghue, BHS Varsity Cheerleading coach, for an overnight trip to the UCA Camp being held at Westfield State University August 7-10, 2013. Up to ten cheerleaders will be offered the opportunity to attend this camp, and students will pay all associated costs and provide their own transportation. The students will be staying on campus in the dormitories and Ms. Donoghue will be chaperoning them at all times.

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to approve the BHS Cheerleading trip to Westfield State University for UCA Camp August 7-10, as presented. Mr. Weiss seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

B. Request for change to Athletic Handbook for 2013-14

Ms. Vigneux presented her request for a change to the BHS Athletic Handbook for 2013-2014 with regard to the policy on payment of student athletic user fees. She stated that Mr. Dunn had suggested that student-athletes pay their user fees prior to the first day of participation, since these fees are often not paid in time to keep accounting procedures in order. The request is being presented now so that it can be included on the Fall Registration for Family ID, which will be open on July 1st. The requested policy change, if approved, will be placed in the Athletic Handbook under BHS STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS and will read as follows:

"Student-athletes must pay a \$125 athletic fee prior to their first DAY OF PARTICIPATION in a varsity or junior varsity sport. If a student-athlete does not make the team after try-outs, the fee will be refunded."

MOTION: Mr. Weiss moved to approve the request for a change to the BHS Athletic Handbook for 2013-2014 with regard to the policy on payment of student athletic user fees, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

COMMENT: Ms Popowich inquired if these fees can be paid online, and Mr. Dunn replied that that is not currently an option. He explained that while other districts do offer this payment method, it is something that our district would have to set up with Lisa Banner, Town Treasurer. Noting that this would offer a convenience to parents, Mr. Dunn said that a PayPal account is being considered and he will bring more information on that possibility at the July 23rd meeting.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

C. Audit report: Scanlon & Associates End-of-Year Pupil and Financial Report for FY 2012

Dr. Houle referred to the audit report from Scanlon & Associates (town and school auditors) included in this evening's correspondence. This is an end-of-year pupil and financial report for FY 2012, and Dr. Houle commented that this report, which includes only three findings, is the shortest audit report she has ever seen in her career. She attributes that commendable outcome to Mr. Dunn as Contracted School Business Manager, and the Business Office staff. Since this report is informational only, there is no motion needed.

D. FY 2013 budget transfers

Mr. Dunn presented the list of FY 2013 budget transfers made through May 28, 2013, and explained that this list is updated periodically to keep up with changes in the district.

MOTION: Mr. Weiss moved to approve the FY 2013 budget transfers in the amount of \$500,596.86, in accordance with the recommendation of Mr. Dunn.

Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

COMMENT: Mr. Weiss asked how the budget will look at the end of FY 2013, and Mr. Dunn replied that it is right on target.

Ms. Bogdanovich asked about the increase in security costs, and Dr. Houle stated that this is due to increased video surveillance throughout the school districts' buildings and the purchase of cameras for that purpose.

E. Request for change in Preschool start date for the 2013-2014 school year

Dr. Houle presented a request from Ms. Sandra Bremer, CSS Principal, with regard to a change in the Preschool start date for the 2013-2014 school year. She asked that the School Committee consider changing the Preschool start date to Thursday, September 5th with the Pre-K visiting day changed to Wednesday, September 4th. This would allow for more parking availability and less congestion in the school on Kindergarten visiting day, and would be beneficial in keeping both programs organized, informative and effective for all involved.

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to approve the change in the Preschool start date for the 2013-2014 school year, as presented. Mr. Weiss seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

VII. Unfinished business

A. Update on FY 2014 budget

Dr. Houle presented an analysis of the FY2013 cherry sheet estimate as it compares to the FY2014 Governor's Budget (House 1). In reviewing these figures, and in using the typical 70/30 school/town split to gauge their impact, she noted that the projected available net revenue presents a gap of \$56,287.00 under the FY2014 House Final Budget Proposal, and \$70,644.00 under the FY2014 Senate Final Budget Proposal. Dr. Houle stated that the school district may have to find funds to cover this gap. Her hope is that when the final budget comes out, the gap will be less than projected.

VIII. New business

A. Superintendent's summative evaluation

Dr. Tsoumas stated that Dr. Houle would be presenting her summative evaluation to the School Committee using the standardized form from the DESE. This process requires the Superintendent to provide evidence on her previously established final four SMART goals in the areas of student learning, professional practice, and district improvement for the past school year.

Dr. Houle discussed key actions which demonstrated what she had accomplished this year relative to each of those specific goals.

At the end of the presentation, Dr. Tsoumas recapped the evidence and polled the Committee (with the exception of Ms. Bogdanovich who chose to abstain) to evaluate the Superintendent on each performance goal, and it was the Committee's consensus that the Superintendent had "exceeded" her goal in professional practice, "met" her goal in student learning, "exceeded" her first goal in district improvement (regarding implementation of curriculum and the Educator Evaluation system), and made "significant progress" in her second goal in district improvement (regarding community involvement in the bullying prevention and intervention plan). The Committee was then polled for the Superintendent's performance rating for each of four standards: instructional leadership, management and operations, family and community engagement, and professional culture. In the applicable areas for each standard, Dr. Houle was determined to be: "proficient" in instructional leadership; "proficient" in management and operations as well as "exemplary" in one area of that standard; "proficient" in family and community engagement; "proficient" in professional culture.

The Committee concluded the Superintendent's final formative assessment with a rating of "proficient" for her overall summative performance and Dr. Tsoumas completed and signed the document.

Ms. Bogdanovich asked to have a survey provided for future Superintendent evaluations that would allow the school community (parents, staff and administration) to participate and provide feedback to be included in the evaluation.

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

A. Collaborative for Educational Services (Ms. Bogdanovich)

Ms. Bogdanovich reported that she was unable to attend the last meeting of the collaborative, and she will also be unavailable to attend tomorrow night's meeting.

B. Curriculum & Instruction (Dr. Tsoumas/Mr. Fritsch)

At a Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee meeting held earlier this evening, Dr. Tsoumas reported that Mr. Cameron had presented three completed curriculum guidelines (History & Social Science Curriculum, Music Curriculum, Visual Arts Curriculum) for review by the subcommittee. He stated that, as with all other previously approved guidelines, a committee was formed for each of the three disciplines and each committee went through the process of unwrapping the state standards, and simplifying them into teacher-friendly terms. Each document was created in the same format, with each content area providing an essential question and content-specific standards and outcomes. These documents were then approved by the Instructional Leadership Team for submission for review by the Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee with a recommendation for approval by the full School Committee.

1. History & Social Science Curriculum

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to approve the History & Social Science Curriculum Guide, as presented. Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

2. Music Curriculum

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to approve the Music Curriculum Guide, as presented. Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

3. Visual Arts Curriculum

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to approve the Visual Arts Curriculum Guide, as presented. Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

COMMENT: Dr. Tsoumas asked that Mr. Cameron extend the appreciation of the School Committee to the staff and Instructional Leadership Team for their two years of diligent work on these curriculum guides.

4. Textbook requests: BHS Science Department

a. Field Geology

At a Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee meeting held earlier this evening, this request was not approved since the requested textbook includes a publisher's note indicating that portions of the text are out of date. The availability of more up-to-date textbooks in this subject will be researched and will then be sent back to the Instructional Leadership Team for reevaluation.

b. Advanced Placement Biology

At a Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee meeting held earlier this evening, Mr. Cameron stated that Mr. David Monroe, BHS science teacher, had submitted an Instructional Resource Proposal Form for the purchase of 25 Advanced Placement Biology textbooks for the course which will be offered in the fall. This proposal was reviewed by the Instructional Leadership Team on June 3rd, and it was recommended that it be moved forward to the School Committee. This will constitute the official first reading for the request of these AP Biology textbooks. The second reading, with a monetary value attached, will be brought to the School Committee for a vote at the July 23rd meeting.

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

The next meeting of this committee will be scheduled in the fall.

D. Jessica's Boundless Playground Committee (Mr. Weiss)

None; Mr. Weiss reported that \$40,000 had been received from the CPC at Town Meeting, and this committee is moving forward with design plans and fundraising efforts for this project.

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

This subcommittee will meet on July 23rd to review posting of policies to the School Committee web page, policy revisions and additions, and job descriptions.

F. Property & Transportation (Mr. Fritsch/Mr. Weiss)

None

G. Technology Advisory Committee (Mr. Fritsch)

The next meeting of this committee will be scheduled in the fall.

X. Correspondence

- B. Agenda: June 11, 2013
- C. Minutes: May 28, 2013
- D. Out-of-State/Country/Overnight Field Trip forms and backup:
 - 1. JBMS to Lake Compounce: June 12, 2013
 - 2. BHS Latin students trip to Italy
 - 3. BHS Cheerleading trip to Westfield State University UCA camp: August 7-10, 2013
- E. Memorandum regarding change to Athletic Handbook
- F. Audit report from Scanlon & Associates
- G. List of FY 2013 budget transfers
- H. Memorandum from Ms. Bremer requesting change in start date for Preschool
- I. FY 2014 Cherry Sheet update and analysis
- J. Superintendent's Summative Evaluation Documents
 - 1. Agreed-upon goals
 - 2. Formative assessment
 - 3. Summative evaluation form
- K. Curriculum documents and review forms
 - 1. History & Social Science
 - 2. Music
 - 3. Visual Arts
- L. Instructional Resource Forms: BHS Science Department
 - 1. Field Geology
 - 2. Advanced Placement Biology
- M. Memorandum to Selectmen and Town Clerk regarding School Committee vacancy
Dr. Tsoumas referred to this memorandum which was included in the evening's correspondence regarding the confirmation of a School Committee vacancy effective July 1, 2013. She stated that all letters of interest/resumes will be made available to the members of the School Committee and Board of Selectmen at the close of business on June 14th. She also noted that this information cannot be released in advance of that posted deadline for submission of letters of interest, and that the information will be provided to the two boards by paper copies, as sending this information electronically would compromise rules of privacy/confidentiality.

At this time, Mr. Brougham informed the School Committee that town revenues are expected to be increased by approximately \$340,000 due to properties recently sold at auction.

- XI. 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, Unit B, Secretaries, Unit C, Custodians, Unit D, Food Service Workers, Unit E, Paraprofessionals, and nonunion personnel 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.

Dr. Tsoumas – yes
Ms. Popowich – yes
Mr. Fritsch – yes
Mr. Weiss - yes
Ms. Bogdanovich – yes

The School Committee entered into Executive Session at 9:54 p.m.

BELCHERTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR SESSION
SIGN IN SHEET

DATE: 6-11-13

PLS. PRINT NAME BELOW

Robert Marchewka

Brenda Q. Novice

Mike Knapp

Thomas K. Roscoe

Christina V.

H. G. H.

Maria Sanchez

Dawn French

GARY BROUGHAM