



**QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Committee Meeting**

MINUTES – June 11, 2009

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT CENTER

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING – CALLED TO ORDER: 7:33 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Acting Superintendent Cheryl Duval, with the following School Committee members present:

1. Attendance:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Richard Allan [arrived at 7:36 pm] | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robert Dupuis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> [open] | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charles Miller |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Barringer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paula Bolger |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Brophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lee Wolanin |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ned Kelly | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Thomas Tashjian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timothy Williams [arrived at 7:40 pm] | <input type="checkbox"/> Peggy Thompson |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Edward F. Leonard | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cheryl Wolfe |

2. Administration:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Susanne Musnicki |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clare Barnes | <input type="checkbox"/> Jason Newton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Berlo | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joan Paula |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Burnett | <input type="checkbox"/> Mark Pellegrino |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cheryl Duval | <input type="checkbox"/> Debbie Pelley |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martha Femino | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marilyn Tencza |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tracey Hippert | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jan Williams |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anthony DiBenedetto | <input type="checkbox"/> Patricia Worthington |

3. QRTA Representative – Dennis Dextrateur
 Student Representative –
 Ted Gumula, QRHS Athletic Director

4. News Media:
 Worcester T&G – Craig Semon
 Barre Gazette –Ellie Downer

Visitors/Faculty: Erik Demetropoulos, Barre Police Chief
 Rodney Josephson, Barre Fincom
 Lisa Williams, Hubbardston parent

SECTION I: REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Acting Superintendent Duval announced that this is a re-organizational meeting.

	<u>Motion</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Opp.</u>	<u>Abs.</u>
Mark Brophy moved to nominate Ed Leonard as chairperson	MB	NK	11	0	1
• Ed Leonard took over as chair, and asked for nominations for vice chair					
Mark Brophy moved to nominate Lee Wolanin as vice chair	MB	NK	11	0	1
Ned Kelly moved to nominate Melissa Widing as secretary	NK	LW	12	0	0
Cheryl Wolfe moved to nominate Ronald Christenson as treasurer	CW	RD	12	0	0
Lee Wolanin moved to nominate Acting Superintendent Duval as parliamentarian	LW	MB	12	0	0

RECALCULATION OF WEIGHTED VOTE: Chairman Leonard recommended that this standard practice be deferred until the July meeting, barring any objections, since the Town of Barre does not have any final census numbers to give the School Committee, and they have a great number of non-responses to the census. There was no objection raised.

SECTION II: MINUTES

Voted: To accept and place on file the minutes of May 14, 2009.

<u>Motion</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Opp.</u>	<u>Abs.</u>
RA	LW	12	0	0

SECTION III: WARRANTS/REPORTS

Payroll warrants #24 and 25 and accounts payable warrants # 24 through 27 were previously presented and signed.

SECTION IV: ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

1. **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS:**
Acting Superintendent Duval noted that all monthly reports from Administrators and Principals were sent electronically to school committee members last week for review, and were mailed to those who do not have email access.
2. **DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:** Payroll warrants #24 and 25 and accounts payable warrants # 24 through 27 were previously presented and signed.
 - **Authorization to Borrow in Anticipation of Funds for Fiscal Year 2010:** [Please see Action Item No. 1 below]. Charlie Miller asked how often the short-term loans are taken and was told that it is standard procedure to request this, as only one-fourth of state receipts are received on the last day of the fiscal year, which does not leave sufficient funds for the first payroll of the new fiscal year, thereby necessitating the borrowing.
 - **Two year option for transportation contract:** Bill Burnett, Manager of Support Services, stated that he has spoken with Mr. McCarthy at the bus company and would recommend the 2 year option for transportation contract. [Please see Action Item No. 2 below for further details].
 - **Copy Paper Bid recommendation:** Bill Burnett made a recommendation regarding the awarding of the paper bid for the upcoming fiscal year. [Please see Action Item No. 3 below for further details].
3. **TEACHER ADVISORY:** Dennis Dextrateur was present and reported the following.
 - The Special Olympics will be held at QRSD tomorrow. He thanked volunteers who have worked so hard for this event.
 - QRSD has some new inductees for the Hall of Fame. Those names will be released soon.
 - The Links Crew has completed training, there are over 72 high school students who have been trained.
 - Final Exams begin next week and the last day of school is June 23rd.

SECTION V: SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE –** Mr. Leonard stated that discussions have been ongoing regarding shared services, consolidation and collaboration. At it's April meeting, the Administrative Review Subcommittee assessed avenues of sharing resources and possibilities in light of an upcoming Superintendent search. The Commissioner of Education spoke at M.A.R.S. meeting in February and addressed the Haddad legislation which directed the Secretary of Education to promote consolidation and collaboration of school districts. Acting Superintendent Duval presented a Powerpoint slideshow regarding information that was presented by Secretary of Education Paul Reville at the June MARS meeting entitled "Building Regional Partnerships and District Capacity Across the Commonwealth" [see attached handout]. Some highlights from the report included: the current organizational environment, the distribution of school districts by size, comparisons among states, concerns about existing environments, EOE analyses, reasons why the district is pursuing school district reorganization, EOE goals for constructing legislation, indicators of what the EOE is not trying to do, core legislative concepts, tasks of the EOE and benefits of district reorganization. Mr. Leonard stated that finances are driving this initiative. At the MARS meeting, the Secretary stated that "collaboration and consolidation are going to happen; the need is urgent". Senator Brewer, in his attendance at a QRSD administrative Review Subcommittee meeting in May urged that the district be ahead of the curve and help to shape the future for this type of collaborative effort. The current intention is that School Committees will not be combined in consolidated districts. The models all leave governance as it is, but efficiency is created. On both a state and federal level, things need to change in delivery of educational services.

Dr. Allan stated that he has met with Mitchell Chester, Commissioner of Education over time and the Commissioner has promoted the concept of creating mega districts. He notes that districts need more efficiencies and better control of resources. Dr. Allan stated that in Maine, districts are being forced to combine and consolidate and there are challenges occurring along the way. Dr. Allan wants to see a consolidation of strong administration that will bring the district back to

the forefront where it once was, considered a leading district in Worcester County.

Mr. Brophy stated that the Commissioner used the phrase “enterprise and entrenchment” when speaking about this concept. The enterprise of education will continue in better, more efficient ways, and the entrenchment to move ideas should be considered. The state is encouraging districts to create models, be visionaries and to choose district partners, rather than to be forced into those partnerships. Consolidating like communities, achieving results, studying student populations and the workforce have all been considered over the last few months. It was noted By Mr. Brophy that approximately 54 districts in the Commonwealth are currently in a search for a Superintendent. Now more than ever, shared resource arrangements and options must be considered. A motion was made relative to this. [Please see Action Item No. 6 below for further details]. Additionally, it was noted that a letter from Mahar was received and expressed interest in looking at collaborative efforts. Other districts considered for shared services were Quaboag, Narragansett and North Middlesex.

When Mr. Wolanin asked if this arrangement would be effective July 1, 2009. Mr. Leonard stated that details would have to be worked out with North Middlesex and with the Commonwealth (DESE), that the districts would probably draft a Memorandum of Understanding which would be reviewed by the district’s legal counsel, presented to both District Committees and then signed by both of the districts. Mr. Leonard suggested that Dr. Marshall should be considered akin to a “CEO” of both organizations. It was noted that the two districts could collaborate in other areas as well, which is consistent with state directives. At this point, the state is open to suggestions about how best to accomplish the consolidations and collaborations. The Districts are hopeful that state grant funding will be available to assist in this initiative.

Charlie Miller stated that this is a great step in the right direction, and that it is a win-win situation for the districts. He is concerned about joint oversight by two boards and that arrangements need to be carefully drawn.

Mr. Leonard stated that when the district first regionalized as a K-12 district, there were issues and conflicts to be resolved. The strength of this arrangement is that there is no shared governance between the two Districts. We will continue to govern our own district, while seeking collaborative opportunities, allowing us to increase educational capacity and promote financial viability. Dr. Marshall knows both districts well and will be an asset to both districts.

Dr. Tashjian asked if Dr. Marshall would be hired as a Superintendent or as a consultant and noted that under the Regional Agreement, the School Committee has the authority to hire and fire the Superintendent. He asked how that would affect the authority of the School Committee. Mr. Leonard stated there is nothing in statute that precludes the arrangement, and in fact, the Haddad legislation encourages it to occur. The District shared a superintendent a couple years ago when Supt. Pat Martin acted as interim.

The motion was amended by the maker and the second to conclude with the phrase “or sooner if agreed”.

Dr. Tashjian said that he hopes this is not the only direction that the district is moving in, as administrative savings are not the only mechanism to provide savings in education.

Mr. Leonard said that he envisions a “hub” district concept that would allow Quabbin to share services with other districts, including but not limited to financial, curriculum, technology and special services.

Dr. Allan stated that it is sometimes frustrating that there are many ideas, but no individuals who have the time, skill or energy level to pursue those ideas. This is something that the School Committee can direct a strong Superintendent to undertake.

Charlie Miller asked if there were any other terms and conditions mentioned in the letter from the North Middlesex District. Mr. Leonard said that this arrangement would be in place for a year, and is subject to continuous review.

Mr. Brophy made a second motion. [Please see Action Item No. 7 below for further details].

Police Chief Erik Demetropoulos was present as a resident of Barre and an employee of the town. He asked if this position is one that would need to be posted before any hiring was done. Mr. Demetropoulos stated that personally, he believes the district can thrive with supplies, technology and services, and not only a change in administration. Mr. Demetropoulos stated that in response to Dr. Allan’s comment about being able to “direct a strong Superintendent to undertake...” anyone whether strong or not can be directed by the School Committee.

Mr. Leonard stated that the direction that education is moving in is not necessarily geographical, with the availability of internet and wireless or virtual communication. This is the best opportunity for the district to gain a highly qualified candidate.

Mr. Lee Wolanin stated that students school choice in from nearly 12 towns, and when asked why the chose Quabbin Regional School District, it is because of the program offerings. Mr. Wolanin does not wish to see the district collaborate with a weaker district, and that North Middlesex is a strong District that will match well with Quabbin.

Mr. Robert Dupuis said that he understands Charlie Miller’s concerns about sharing of time and compensation. However, he knows Dr. Marshall and feels strongly that she embodies the highest professional and ethical character and will give the district what they are compensating her for.

Rodney Josephson of Barre was present and asked what the Mission Statement is for the district. Members of the School Committee noted that the Mission statement is on the wall in the entry way.

2. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING ADHOC SUBCOMMITTEE – Chair Cheryl Wolfe had nothing to report. Chairman Leonard suggested that this committee consider meeting in August. It will be discussed again at the July meeting.

3. BARRE SUBCOMMITTEE – Chair Lee Wolanin reported that this subcommittee met on June 8, 2009. Topics of discussion at the meeting included:

- Summer projects
- MCAS
- Lower student population
- PIM (Performance Improvement Mapping) results
- Farewell to Martha Femino, retiring Principal of Ruggles Lane, and cake in her honor; Mr. Wolanin stated that Mrs. Femino will be missed. She has always been available to the Barre Subcommittee and is very dedicated to the students, working many long hours. Dr. Allan remarked that “as good as an educator she is, she is an even better person”.

Chairman Leonard circulated the subcommittee roster for the 2009-2010 school year and asked School Committee members to sign up for subcommittees they would be willing to sit on. He said that all School Committee members are eligible to sit on all subcommittees and would have voting rights, but are expected to commit to being present if they sign up for the particular subcommittees. Once all members have signed up, Chairman Leonard will appoint chairs of each subcommittee by the July meeting.

4. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE – Chair Mark Brophy reported that this subcommittee met last on May 28, 2009, at a meeting that was well-attended by the community. This subcommittee continues to work with the ongoing bad news of further cuts at the state and federal level, and is actively listening and responding to members of the community regarding their concerns. Mr. Brophy made a motion relative to this subcommittee. [Please see Action Item No. 4 below for further detail].

Mr. Leonard stated that the escalating bad news has continued, with the state first cutting \$500,000, then increasing to \$770,000, then to \$1.2 million, however, following a Special Education adjustment, the number dropped back to \$1.05 million. In order to accommodate that shortfall, a combination of reserves and cuts in the budget were made. In January the Governor reported that he would hold Chapter 70 funds harmless, even while local aid was being cut. However, that changed when estimated receipts were reviewed in mid-May and the Chapter 70 funds were cut and not held harmless. Mr. Leonard stated that \$1.8 million in anticipated federal seed funds would have been used for things like roof repairs, technology, books and programs and that is now gone. Additionally, the state has reduced Ch. 70 for FY 2010 by \$1.05 million dollars and the District has allocated an additional \$200,000 in a federal SPED grant for FY2010 to cover the shortfall in SPED circuit breaker. In all, the District will receive approximately \$3 million less next year from the State and Federal moneys than it anticipated.

At the last Budget subcommittee meeting, it was suggested that school choice funds be used to help offset the circuit breaker shortfall, however that is no longer necessary as Jason Newton, Director of Special Services, was able to secure funds from a grant for this purpose. Part of the funds from the ARRA grant had to be used for reinvestment, (i.e. in the SPED program), and the other part is to be used for recovery. This part was used for the circuit breaker reduction.

Mr. Brophy confirmed that this subcommittee is continuing to meet with Fincom Committees in all five (5) member

towns.

5. **CENTRAL OFFICE/AUDIT SUBCOMMITTEE**— Sub Committee Chair Lee Wolanin reported that this subcommittee held its last meeting on June 1, 2009 and focused primarily on two areas of discussion. The first was the Swine Flu/H1N1 Pandemic plan, which was a dense, 19-page document. It was not necessary for the School Committee to approve the same, but rather to ask any questions relative to the same. There were no questions from those in attendance. The second area was the School Choice lottery drawing for the upcoming fiscal year. There were many students requesting school choice entry for Grades 9 and 10, so a lottery was held and Mr. Wolanin pulled names from a hat, in following with both the district School Choice policy and the state law regarding the same. There were 17 students who applied in grade 9, 10 of whom were accepted, and the other 7 are on a waiting list. In grade 10, all students were accepted, but a lottery was done “just in case” it was needed. Mr. Wolanin stated that in following policy, preference was given first to students who have siblings already in the district. Mr. Leonard stated that most school choice student requests would be honored as sometimes students leave to attend vocational or private schools, thereby opening up seats in the district for those school choice students.
6. **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SUBCOMMITTEE** – Chair Mark Brophy reported that Collective Bargaining is in progress.
7. **PLANTS & FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE** – Chair Ned Kelly stated that a meeting of the Oakham School Roof Committee will be held on Friday, June 19, 2009. Mr. Kelly made a motion relative to this subcommittee. [Please see Action Item No. 5 below for further details].
8. **POLICY, REVIEW AND REFORM SUBCOMMITTEE** – Chair Dr. Allan stated that this subcommittee will meet on the 1st Monday in October.
9. **SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE** – Jason Newton, Director of Special Services was not in attendance at this meeting.
10. **TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE** – Robert Berlo, Director of Educational Services and Technology was not in attendance at this meeting.

SECTION VI: UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SECTION VII: SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONCERNS

Dr. Allan shared that he was thrilled to have attended the Hubbardston Center School concert today, and was a heartwarming event in such troubling times. He would like to send a note of congratulations on a wonderful show from the School Committee to Principal Joan Paula.

SECTION VIII: NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Leonard stated that last Saturday, June 6, 2009 the Class of 2009 graduated. Mr. Leonard said it was a wonderful, different year this year, but he was thrilled to invite retiring Principal Joan Paula to speak for him at graduation and he thanked her for her remarkable contribution to the children and families of Hubbardston and to the Quabbin Regional School District. Mr. Leonard thanked Marilyn Tencza, Quabbin Regional High School Principal, for a fantastic job with graduation planning. Mr. Leonard asked Melissa Widing to send a letter of thanks to Sandy Lacroix, retiring High School Secretary for a fantastic job at her last graduation before retirement.

Mr. Leonard also recognized retiring Ruggles Lane Principal, Martha Femino, and thanked her for her hard work on behalf of the students in her school.

SECTION IX: ACTION ITEMS

	<u>Motion</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Opp.</u>	<u>Abs.</u>
1. Motion made to authorize the Quabbin Regional School District Treasurer, acting under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, §16(g) as amended by Chapter 13, §4 of the Acts of 1972, and with the approval of the Chairman of the District Committee to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of revenue, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009 and to issue a note or notes therefore, payable within one year, and to renew any note or notes as may be given, for a period of less than one year, in accordance with G.L. Ch. 44, §17.	MB	RA	12	0	0

VOTE: RA Y; MB Y; CM Y; PB Y; LW Y; NK Y; CW Y;
RD Y; TW Y; [open] ; PT ; JB Y; TT Y; EL Y;

2. Motion made to adopt the administrative recommendation to select the 2-year option for the bus transportation contract.	RA	LW	12	0	0
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3. Motion made to award the copy paper bid to W.B. Mason Company, Inc. for the price of \$25.42 per case for multiple location delivery as quoted in the May 18, 2009 bid submitted to the French River Education Center.	RA	NK	12	0	0
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4. Motion made to recommend that the district lower the Chapter 71 shortfall through E&D reserves and balance the budget through cuts. Cuts in the amount of \$486,827 would change the bottom line budget number to \$32,980,807.	MB	LW	11	0	1
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VOTE: RA Y; MB Y; CM Y; PB Y; LW Y; NK Y; CW Y;
RD Y; TW Y; [open] ; PT ; JB Y; TT A; EL Y;

5. Motion made to recommend amending the committee list for the Quabbin Regional Middle High School Roof Committee to include Leo McCaffrey of Oakham.	NK	LW	12	0	0
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6. Motion made to accept the proposal of the North Middlesex Regional School District Committee voted June 8, 2009 to share the professional services and compensation of Superintendent Dr. Maureen Marshall with the Quabbin Regional School District for FY2010, effective July 1, 2009 or sooner if agreed.	MB	RA	10	0	2
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7. Motion made to accept the proposal of the North Middlesex Regional School District Committee voted June 8, 2009 to have the Superintendent immediately investigate educational collaboration and shared services between North Middlesex Regional School District and Quabbin Regional School District that will increase educational capacity and enhance financial viability of the districts.	MB	RA	10	0	2
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SECTION X: EXECUTIVE SESSION *No executive session was necessary*

TIME:

PURPOSE:

- To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional competence of an individual.
- To consider the discipline or dismissal of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.
- To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the governmental body, and to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel.
- To discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices.
- To investigate charges of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
- To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property.

To comply with the provisions of any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.
Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 39, 23 (1)-(7).

MOTION: _____ ; **SECOND:** _____ ;

VOTE: RA ; MB ; CM ; PB ; LW ; NK ; CW
RD ; TW ; *[open]* ; PT ; JB ; TT ; EL

Return to Open Session – Time: _____ p.m.

MOTION: _____ **SECOND:** _____ **VOTE:** _____ **FOR:** _____ **OPPOSED:** _____

Meeting adjourned: 9:09 p.m.

MOTION: RA _____ **SECOND:** LW _____ **VOTE:** 12 **FOR:** 0 **OPPOSED:** 0

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa A. Widing, Executive Assistant