



**QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**School Committee Minutes**  
**Thursday, September 13, 2018**  
**Educational Support Center**

**PRESENT**

Chair	Lee Wolanin	Member, Barre
Vice-Chair	Mark Brophy	Member, Barre
	Dr. Richard Allan	Member, Barre
	Debra Chamberlain	Member, Hubbardston
	David Correia	Member, Hubbardston
	David Deschamps	Member, Barre
	David Marsh	Member, Barre
	Walter Nutter	Member, Oakham
	Marcelino Sarabia	Member, Hardwick
	Geoffrey Spier	Member, Hardwick
	Peggy Thompson	Member, New Braintree
	Mark Wigler	Member, Hubbardston

**ALSO PRESENT**

Dr. Sheila Muir	Superintendent of Schools
Cheryl Duval	Director of Administrative Services
District Administrators/Staff	Gregory Devine; Sue Musnicki; Clare Barnes; Kristin Campione; Shelly St. George; Julie Vincentsen; Tricia Worthington; Adam Couturier; Colleen Mucha;
Press:	Brad Miner, T & G; Ellie Downer, Barre Gazette
Staff & Townspeople	

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mrs. Chamberlain to approve the minutes of August 1, 2018. The motion passed with Dr. Allan, Mr. Spier, and Mr. Sarabia abstaining.

**3. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

a) Superintendent of Schools

- Superintendent's Report – Dr. Muir began the meeting by introducing her mentor, Dr. Pat Grenier. As a new superintendent, Dr. Muir is assigned a mentor from her cohort that consists of 45 new superintendents. The cohort is facilitated by retired superintendents and Dr. Grenier is the lead facilitator and mentor coach.
  - Superintendent's entry plan: Dr. Muir explained that the purpose of an entry plan is to establish a set of intentional, inclusive activities that will guide the transition of the new superintendent in the QRSD. Even though Dr. Muir has been here for many years, she feels she needs to take a step back and take a fresh look at the district. Dr. Muir will be reviewing district data and interviewing key district stakeholders throughout the district itself as well as community

- members. She will be stating specific goals and will update at each meeting with a full report in January.
- School Safety Update – The district is continuing to update their safety plans and are following the FEMA guidelines. Updated safety bags have been placed in all of the learning spaces within the district. A safety information night for parents will be held on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Question was raised as to whether or not the town will continue with the School Resource Officer. Dr. Muir will meet with the chief to review the MOU. Mr. Sarabia questioned as to whether or not there has been a specific benefit to having the SRO in house. Mr. Devine stated that the SRO is visible in the building and is building relationships with the students. Ms. Vincentsen stated that she feels the same way. The students at RLS are happy to see the SRO and he does spend some time in the classrooms in both schools.
  - Opening Day Enrollments – Opening day was a great day for staff. Many 20 and 30-year members of the district were honored for their years of service. Student opening went well even though it was so hot. Dr. Muir commended the faculty and staff for continuing to teach and keep students engaged despite the heat. She also commended plant and facilities who did an amazing job keeping the floors dry as they hauled dehumidifiers and fans all over the district. Classes were cancelled at the MS/HS on September 7<sup>th</sup> due to a power outage from a storm the day before. Dr. Muir is looking for creative ways to make up the time. Opening day all staff members wrote what Quabbin meant to them on a small whiteboard and had their picture taken. The pictures were then set to music and the video shown at the opening day meeting. The committee had the opportunity to view this video this evening.
  - Staffing update – the district has 30 new staff positions with two of those positions at Central Office. Dr. Muir introduced Colleen Mucha as the District Director of Elementary Teaching, Learning and Support and Adam Couturier as the District Director of Secondary Teaching, Learning and Support.
 

The district hired two new stem teachers for K – 6. Last year the district only employed one for grades 3 – 6. This year the district is offering STEM in grades K – 6 as a special.

Concerns were raised over the summer about the lack of a full time nurse at NBGS. The district moved the MS/HS LPN, Kristen Kierman, to NBGS as the nurse and receptionist. Mary Amadio is office manager for both schools. If Ms. Kierman is busy with students and unable to answer the phone, it will ring at OCS and be answered by Ms. Amadio. Another concern was the size of the grade 4 classroom. This class was able to be split into two sections by transferring a Gr. 3 teacher from HES. The two 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes at HES were combined due to class size. Lunch is being transported to OCS & NBGS. Each building has one staff member who begins their day at the MS/HS, puts together some lunches and gathers the milk, fruit & vegetables. They then go to their respective buildings and finish cooking the meals. This is not cost effective for the district. Mrs. Thompson questioned why the students at OCS and NBGS do not get the same number of offerings as the other elementary schools. It was explained that with so few students purchasing lunches, it does not make sense to offer so many options, however, the Food and Nutritional Services Director is working to increase the options.
  - New Staff Reception – prior to the School Committee meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup>, there will be a new employee reception for the members of the School Committee to meet the new employees. New employees had orientation in late August. Human Resources Manager, Nancy Landry, organized a bus tour of the district for the new employees. The brief video of that day was shown to the committee.
  - Summer Professional Development – Numerous professional development sessions took place over the course of the summer with a number of staff members participating.
  - Dr. Muir also mentioned that she had met with Ryan McLane on behalf of the Hubbardston selectboard. The Selectboard is requesting a meeting with the Hubbardston School Committee members, Dr. Muir and Mrs. Duval. This meeting will take place on Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. The

purpose of the meeting is to set up communication goals, discussion of the budget and a budget calendar.

b) Director of Administrative Services

- Presentation of Warrants – Payroll Warrants 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 have been approved and #6 is available for review and approval tonight. AP warrants 1A, 2A, 3V, 4B, 5A, 6A, 7V, 8A, 9B, 10A, 10B & 10S area available for review and approval tonight. Mrs. Duval gave an explanation that the vendor warrants are labeled by the biweekly warrant schedule and the letters identify the type of payment transaction being made. A is payment by check; B is payment by wire; V is payment by auto-debit for cafeteria vending machines; S is a supplemental warrant for a payment that must be made but missed the deadline for that periods warrant.
- Director’s Report - In an effort to reduce paper waste, Mrs. Duval has been discussing with Andrew Walsh the possibility of saving warrants electronically in a secure folder that could be viewed by committee members prior to members signing the approval page. Folders could be created in either OneDrive, which could be accessed through an email link or Teams that could be accessed with school committee email address and password. If the committee would like to consider this option, a brief tutorial will be prepared at the next meeting with members volunteering to be on the warrant subcommittee. Status quo is also acceptable if the committee so chooses.
- Conference Committee Funding for Regional School Transportation - Mrs. Duval reported that with the passing of the Conference Committee’s budget, the FY19 cherry sheet projections included an additional \$93,173 in Regional School Transportation Reimbursement and an additional \$1,522 in Charter School Reimbursement from the revenue projections used to assess member towns. As we headed into annual town meetings, there was discussion at the state level for the possibility of increased transportation aid. At that time, town officials were told that any increase in aid would be passed along to member towns. This additional \$94,596 in projected revenue would have an impact on member town assessments as follows: Barre - \$36,809; Hardwick - \$16,450; Hubbardston - \$23,459; New Braintree - \$6,484; Oakham - \$11,491.

Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Sarabia to vote to authorize the district treasurer to recertify assessments for the district towns in the amount of \$94,694.

Motion passed by a roll call vote of 11-1-0: Dr. Allan – yes; Mr. Marsh – yes; Mr. Brophy – yes; Mr. Deschamps – yes; Mr. Wolanin – yes; Mr. Sarabia – yes; Mr. Spier – no; Mrs. Chamberlain – yes; Mr. Correia – yes; Mr. Wigler – yes; Mrs. Thompson – yes; Mr. Nutter – yes.

- Reallocation of FY19 Budget due to DESE Chart of Account Changes for Technology – It is customary after the beginning of the school year to review the fiscal year’s budget for necessary reallocation. The reorganization of Central Office positions necessitated reallocation of funds to proper DESE function codes, and DESE has implemented changes to some account codes in the area of technology in an effort to provide greater detail of types of expenditures so that a clearer comparison between and among districts can be made. Some of the changes include: Administrative technology expenses in the 1450 category will now be reported as 4400 or 4450 expenditures; Classroom Instructional Technology is now classified as Instructional Hardware for student and staff devices; Hardware, other than devices, will be reported in a separate account; instructional software including costs of licenses, subscriptions, and e-books; and distance learning and online coursework. The textbook category will include consumable workbooks and accessories. Staff and student hardware used in a special education program will be reported as a special education expense, software and licenses will no longer be designated as a regular education or special education expense.

Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Deschamps to amend the FY19 budget as reported in the Appropriation Control Report. Due to conflict of interest of some members, line 3510 was voted on separately by a roll call vote: Dr. Allan – yes; Mr. Marsh – yes; Mr. Brophy – yes; Mr. Deschamps – yes; Chairman Wolanin – yes; Mr. Sarabia – yes; Mr. Spier – abstain; Mrs. Chamberlain – yes; Mr. Correia – yes; Mr. Wigler – yes; Mrs. Thompson – abstain; Mr. Nutter – yes.

The motion was defeated by a weighted vote of 9.99.

Discussion then ensued as to whether or not the vote could be reconsidered. At this time, Mrs. Thompson shared the information that she was no longer a referee for the District, and it was decided that the committee could vote on the entire budget without the separate vote on line 36510.

A roll call vote was taken: Dr. Allan – yes; Mr. Marsh – yes; Mr. Brophy – yes; Mr. Deschamps – yes; Chairman Wolanin – yes; Mr. Sarabia – yes; Mr. Spier – abstain; Mrs. Chamberlain – yes; Mr. Correia – yes; Mr. Wigler – yes; Mrs. Thompson – yes; Mr. Nutter – yes.

The motion passed by a weighted vote of 10.98.

c) Teacher Advisory Council

- No report was given

d) Student Advisory Council

- MS/HS – Mr. Devine reported that Navy week would take place at the MS/HS next week. Mr. William O'Donnell, Senior Civilian/Flag Officer and Quabbin grade, contacted Captain Brennock to see if there was interest in bringing some Navy events to Quabbin. There will be displays set up on the mezzanine; the U. S. Navy Ceremonial Guard Drill Team will perform, as well as the Navy Band "Rhode Island Sound. The U.S. Navy Parachute "Leap Frogs" will jump onto the football field and Mr. O'Donnell will address the student body.
- Elementary – Quinn Geary, student at Hardwick Elementary School, reported on opening year activities at the five elementary schools. All of the elementary schools had meet and greet activities before the school year began and have had their open houses.

#### 4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Administrative Review

- A subcommittee meeting will be held in October where Dr. Muir will discuss her goals for the new evaluation system for new superintendents. Dr. Muir stated that we had received a draft report of the Targeted District Review. The district submitted factual corrections. The report will go to Policy & Review/Reform and then to full committee.

b) Audit

- A meeting will be scheduled for just prior to the October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting at 5:45 pm.

c) Budget

- No report was given

d) Central Office

- Update on Plan for Success – the last meeting was held in August. Currently there is a draft form of the Plan for Success document. One more meeting will be held before the report comes to the full committee.

e) Collective Bargaining

- No report was given

f) Plant and facilities

- Schools look great. Plant and facilities did a great job over the summer. Some towns are looking for the Capital Plan. A meeting in the near future will be held.

g) Policy & Review

- First meeting of the year will be held on October 5, 2018.

h) Special Education

- No report was given

i) QEMP

- Update on QEMP – Meeting held on September 12<sup>th</sup> to review the final report. Members present broke off into groups and some have agreed to meet again on October 17<sup>th</sup> to continue this important work.

j) Technology

- No report was given

#### 5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- None

## 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

## 7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONCERNS

- Mrs. Thompson asked where she could bring concerns about food service. Her major concern is that the students at NBGS and OCS do not have the same or as many lunch options as the other schools. Dr. Muir and Mrs. Duval will work with the Food & Nutritional Services Director about the differences in the menus. Part of the problem is the number of students and participation.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

- Timeline and procedures for school closing per QRSD Regional Agreement. Dr. Muir opened by stating that the district has been talking and researching school closures for 5 to 7 years. Ultimately, the decision to close a school ends up with the town, but the process needs to be started early on with meetings and to meet a timeline.

Dr. Muir contacted the Center of Hope earlier this week and left a detailed message concerning their use of the New Braintree Grade School. At this time, she still had not heard back from them. She will continue to look at ways to utilize the building.

Mr. Brophy stated that we can move forward this evening with a vote to close the building in New Braintree, but can change direction at any time.

Mr. Sarabia suggested we bring the information that we have home, study it, and discuss it further before voting this evening.

Mr. Deschamps stated that he felt the process needed to be started early in order to keep parents informed. At the parent meeting in August, the biggest complaint was that they received information so close to the start of the school year. The parents want information sooner rather than later. He agrees to start the process.

Mrs. Thompson stated that it is a very sensitive issue with the Board of Selectmen, and she does not want to see them go into this process angry. She feels we could do something to bring revenue into the district and remain an educational building. Mrs. Thompson stated that the Selectboard is upset that when the town voted the budget at town meeting, there was no mention of school closure. She also stated that the selectmen are looking at the whole town, not just the parents who were surveyed.

Mrs. Chamberlain stated that she feels special education is our biggest expense and could we do something different to entice people with special needs to attend our district. She agrees that the committee has not had time to process or think about alternatives for the building and feels that it was not handled well.

Dr. Muir stated that after the parent meeting, she spoke with two selectmen. They expressed many of the same sentiments that Mrs. Thompson spoke about. They felt that communication about closure or moving students was not clear or timely and felt it was necessary to threaten legal action because there is a process to be followed in the Regional Agreement. They also indicated to Dr. Muir that it would be worthwhile to continue to pursue Center of Hope. However, Dr. Muir feels it is difficult to talk to COH when we do not have a timeline for available space. Before COH would commit, they would have to know for sure that space is available due to the permitting process they have to go through.

Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Nutter to initiate the process for consideration of the closure of the New Braintree Grade School, pursuant to Section IX(A)5 of the Regional Agreement.

Question was raised as to whether or not the district could initiate an MOU to work with New Braintree and maybe move the students and maintain the school through the district by helping with maintenance, etc.

Dr. Allan stated that we should take an opportunity this year to find something that is amenable to the town. Can we maintain status quo for this year and work toward finding a repurpose of the building. His fear is that if we take this vote, it will send a difficult message to the people in New Braintree.

Motion passed by a majority vote of 9-3-0 with Dr. Allan, Mrs. Chamberlain, and Mrs. Thompson opposed.

Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Deschamps to authorize the School Committee Chair or Superintendent to contact the Boards of Selectmen of the member towns to bring the process of scheduling the joint public meeting and the joint public hearing.

Motion passed by a majority vote of 9-3-0 with Dr. Allan, Mrs. Chamberlain, and Mrs. Thompson opposed.

**9. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 p.m.  
The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Bennett  
School Committee Secretary