



**QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Committee Minutes
Thursday, October 11, 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 |
| | Dave Deschamps | Member, Barre |
| | William Hansen | Member, Hubbardston |
| | Ned Kelly | Member, Hardwick |
| | 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

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| Dr. Sheila Muir | Superintendent of Schools |
| Cheryl Duval | Director of Administrative Services |
| District Administrators/Staff | Kristin Campione; Julie Vincentsen; Tricia Worthington; Shelly St. George; Jill Peterson; Sue Musnicki; Colleen Mucha; Adam Couturier |
| Press: Parents/Town Officials | Ellie Downer, Barre Gazette |

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Kelly to approve the minutes of September 13, 2018. The motion passed by a vote of 13-0-1 with Mr. Hansen abstaining.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

a) Superintendent of Schools

- Superintendent's Report – Dr. Muir reported that Navy Week took place in September, with Quabbin as one of 13 stops across the country. The idea of the weeks is to put some Navy presence in regions that are not normally exposed to the Navy. All events are centered out of Springfield, and Mr. William O'Donnell, Senior Civilian/Flag Officer, is sponsoring this week in the area. Mr. O'Donnell is a Quabbin graduate and has participated in NJROTC events over the past four years.
- Quabbin Athletic Hall of Fame Induction – Dr. Muir attended the HOF Induction and heard from so many former athletes and coaches present about the importance of the athletic program and other extra-

curricular activities which help students persevere, have empathy, kindness, team work and collaboration.

- The District received the news from Senator Gobi's office that the district will be receiving \$119,000 in Rural School Aid. The official announcement will be made on November 5, 2018. This provides recognition that rural schools have fiscal challenges that other schools do not encounter.
- Dr. Muir attended a recent MARS meeting with the new Commissioner of Education and DESE officials who were there to listen and learn from regional school district and superintendents about the challenges rural schools face. The members present were told that they are on the radar screen of DESE and the legislature. There are some supplemental bills in the legislature for transportation and school safety.
- Tale of Four Cities – Dr. Muir attended this session in Holyoke. The mission is to raise awareness of the inadequacy in Chapter 70 funding.

b) Director of Administrative Services

- Presentation of warrants – Payroll Warrants 7 & 8, and AP warrants 11A, 11B, 12B, 13A, 13B were approved by the Warrant Subcommittee. Ms. Duval reminded the Committee that there will be a tutorial next month on how to view the warrants online.
- Director' Report – Ms. Duval reported that the district received an AI Moody's rating.
- Update on Food and Nutritional Services – Fresh fruits and veggies that students do not want go into the "Sharing Cooler". This has become very popular. One team member checks dates of the milk, yogurt, and makes sure the fruits and veggies are fresh. Students on free and reduced need to submit their applications prior to the October 12th deadline. At this time, there are 68 applications still out. Participation was down the first week or two of school and, as of today, have not hit the 500 meal mark. This year brings universal free breakfast to the Hardwick Elementary School. There is a pay as you go breakfast program in Hubbardston. Students in Hubbardston on free and reduced receive a reduced rate for breakfast.

Ms. Duval reported on the Meals/Labor Hour ratio. At this time there is one person for Oakham and one person for New Braintree. They begin their day at the high school. Four hours is charged to Oakham, five hours to New Braintree. Due to the number of lunches served daily, this represents that those schools are overstaffed.

The Quabbin Food Service program is on the list for audit this year. DOE will be in the district for four days in December and have chosen Hardwick and New Braintree to audit.

Question was raised as to why all selections can't be offered to all students. It was explained that due to the low volume of meals in each school, or 6.6 meals/labor hour, it can't work. Oakham and New Braintree have the same menus, Hubbardston and Hardwick have the same menus, and RLS has a separate menu.

c) Teacher Advisory Council

- No report was given.

d) Student Advisory Council

- MS/HS - Emily Mitko and Sierra Graves reported on events going on at the high school. Homecoming is Saturday, October 20th and the students are looking forward to that. Student government is working with school leaders and class officers to create more Quabbin Pride. Students are buying into the slogan "bequabbin". Students have mixed emotions about the new chairs. They believe that it is easier for collaboration, but feel that the chairs feel a little flimsy without a rack underneath. Students feel that the cafeteria has better selections this year, with a very busy Mexican station. Lines move much faster this year. The senior students feel that the IB program is preparing them for college courses and that AP classes have improved their education and helped them to be more analytical.
- Elementary – 5th grade students from Hubbardston Center School reported on their Nature's Classroom trip to Charlton and the fun they had. They reported that Hardwick Elementary had a fire prevention presentation with the Fire Department. They have a new initiative "Get Caught Being Good". Staff member catches a student "being good", fills out a form, and the student gets called to office, given a bracelet, and positive phone call goes home to the parents. NBGS/OCS said goodbye to Mr. Killough-

Miller with a little assembly. Ruggles Lane PTO hosted a family dance which raised money for Nature's Classroom. They have a Halloween party planned for October 26th and fire prevention presentation for PK -2 next week.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Administrative Review

- Meeting was held on Thursday, October 4th to discuss the Superintendent's goals. They discussed the process of the Superintendent's goals and about the cycle of evaluation. The Superintendent is responsible for coming up with goals for personal improvement, district improvement, and student learning. After goals are set, an action plan will be developed to meet those goals over the course of several months. The Superintendent will update the Committee periodically on the progress of those goals. At that point, goals and an action plan can be modified. The end of the cycle can be at the end of May where she will present evidence on meeting those goals. That information would be considered by the committee on the Superintendent's evaluation.

The evaluation outlines all practices that an effective Superintendent should be engaged in. The Superintendent will provide evidence to the Committee that will help to make adjustments to evaluations.

District Goals 1 through 6 were discussed and the subcommittee supported these goals, and the Superintendent is willing to challenge herself with these goals.

Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Kelly to accept initial draft goals for next year with an addendum to reference blended learning.

Motion passed unanimously.

b) Audit

- Review and acceptance of FY18 Audit Report - Richard Sullivan, Partner for the Auditing Firm Powers & Sullivan reviewed the FY18 audit report, financial statement and federal report. Mr. Sullivan reported that Cheryl Duval and the financial team were, once again, audit ready. All reports were consistently on time and accurate. Any questions that the team had during the audit were answered quickly and accurately. Mr. Sullivan indicated that he had no unusual items to report to the Committee. The results of audit testing resulted in a "clean audit" or "no findings", which is the best you can expect. In summary, Mr. Sullivan indicated that there was nothing to report to consider a deficiency, no internal control issues, and the FY18 audit was very positive and consistent with previous years. The School Committee publicly commended Director Duval and the financial team for the professionalism and exemplary job done through the audit process. Mr. Sullivan informed the committee that they should take into consideration compensated absences. The district is allowed to set aside money for reserves for vacations accrued and sick days accrued.

Mr. Brophy publically thanked Mrs. Duval and her team for a job well done.

Motion was made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Dr. Allan to accept the Auditor's report as written.

The motion passed unanimously.

- Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Kelly to accept the Internal Control Manual for federal grants. The motion passed unanimously.

c) Budget

- No report was given

d) Central Office

- Strategic Plan Update – working on finishing up the Strategic Plan. A final date has been planned for Friday, October 26th to complete Strategic Plan work.

e) Collective Bargaining

- No report was given

f) Plant and facilities

- Trane made a presentation at the subcommittee meeting and they have been asked to come back with more information. They discussed solar projects such as parking canopies, but need a good base in the

parking lots for canopies. This would also be the case with panels on the MS/HS roof. The roof would need to be replaced before solar panels could be put on the roof. The Capital Plan was discussed. Ms. Duval is putting the Capital Plan in another format for ease in understanding. Some issues in the Capital Plan do need to be addressed. Some of the items cannot be put into the QRSD budget, as they are over \$5,000 and have to go to the towns.

g) Policy & Review

- Motion made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mrs. Chamberlain to put Sections K & L of the Policy Manual on the table for 30 days for public review.

Motion passed unanimously.

- Subcommittee met on October 1st. An update on the Starrett program was given by Brent Bolger who is teaching the class. Currently have 22 students in the class. At this time, Guidance is still working on internships for 2nd and 3rd trimesters.

School attendance procedures implemented at the high school have created a culture shift about students being in school. Chronic absenteeism and tardiness have reduced dramatically.

Blended learning was discussed. Professional development over the summer for 13 participants was focused on using Google Suite to support blended learning. Currently have a project based blended learning PD opportunity at Central Office with 28 participants. Administration is in the process of putting together a pilot team of teachers – 4 elementary, 4 middle and 4 high school who will be trained as leaders for blended learning and will have the ability to teach other teachers.

A full MCAS update will be presented at the November meeting for elementary and secondary MCAS results. There was an issue at the high school due to the new accountability updates by DESE. The district used to be rated by number and now is rated as “classifications”. The overall 2018 accountability classification for the high school is “requiring assistance or intervention”. This classification is a result of low participation rate for students with disabilities. Our participation was 24 out of 26 students, or 92% for the grade 10 math test. One of these students was unable to participate in the MCAS testing due to a medical condition which the school did receive verifying documentation. As a result, the student did not participate in the spring 2018 math or English grade 10 MCAS tests. The student’s inability to participate would raise our participation rate above the 95% threshold to 96% for math and 100% for English Language Arts. The district has appealed this classification to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

District Review Update – The district undergoes a DESE district review every 5 to 6 years. DESE focuses on 6 possible areas – Leadership & Governance; Curriculum & Instruction; Assessment; Human Resources & Professional Development; Student Support; Financial & Asset Management. DESE’s focus in their review of Quabbin was in three areas – Curriculum & Instruction, Assessment & Student Support. Leading up to the review, the district had to do a self-assessment of the 6 categories and review of document and data. DESE visited the district on January 25, 26 and 30th. They did 16 hours of interviews and focus groups with 53 stakeholders. They also did 48 classroom observations across various subject areas. Since that time, they have done an analysis of data. They provided a draft report which had minor changes after review and have now provided the final report. The district was aware of weaknesses in some areas, and DESE makes recommendations in regard to those, and, if necessary, will provide someone to guide the district through the recommendations. Dr. Muir is confident that what is in the review will be helpful in the final stages of the Plan for Success (Strategic Plan).

h) Special Education

- Subcommittee met and discussed out of district placements. Currently have 55 students in out of district placements – 35 from Quabbin and 20 from Stetson. The District is programmatically responsible for the 20 OOD students from Stetson, but their hometown is financially responsible for transportation and tuition. There are more social emotional needs for out of district placement. Subcommittee discussed the preschool program and the possibility of growing that program.

i) QEMP

- Breakout group meetings will take place on October 17, 2018 at Central Office.

- j) Technology
- No report was given.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Update to timeline and procedures for school closing per QRSD Regional Agreement – Joint Public Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 18, 2018. Members in attendance will be Superintendent Muir, Ms. Duval, and representatives from district towns' school committee members – Mr. Brophy, Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Nutter, Mrs. Chamberlain and Mr. Sarabia, as well as a quorum of the district towns' selectboard members.

The agenda will include explanations of the timeline and overview of school closing. Discussion will include how buildings are being utilized across the district. The presentation will bullet initiatives the district has taken over the years with area schools. The difficulty in reaching out to other entities in regard to leasing is that Dr. Muir is not an agent for the Town of New Braintree.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONCERNS

- None

8. NEW BUSINESS

- Correspondence from New Braintree Selectboard – i.e., permission for internet connectivity for new camera system. Andrew Walsh, Director of Technology has some concerns as this is outside of the current policy. A meeting will be set up between Mr. Walsh, Dr. Muir and Lt. Kevin Landine of the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department.

9. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

- None

10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mr. Brophy to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m.
The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Bennett
School Committee Secretary