



**QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**School Committee Minutes**  
**Thursday, December 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   |
|            | Dave Deschamps     | Member, Barre         |
|            | William Hansen     | Member, Hubbardston   |
|            | Fred Jean-Francois | Member, Oakham        |
|            | 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**

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

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mr. Brophy to approve the minutes of October 11, 2018. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

a) Superintendent of Schools

- Superintendent's Report

- Rural Aid Report – Dr. Muir reported that the District had received \$119,758 in funding. This is something that will be received yearly. There is a lengthy report to be submitted by February 1, 2019, and the criteria is to work on deficiencies over the next three years. Recommendation as to the decision on using the funds will be discussed at the next School Committee meeting. A budget adjustment vote may be necessary.

- October 1 Enrollment – Numbers were recently verified by the state. Unfortunately, we continue to lose enrollment throughout the district.
- Dr. Muir reported that we had recently reinstated the Wellness Committee. The Wellness policy currently has Dr. Marshall's name as Coordinator. Ms. Duval has agreed to be the Coordinator for the District. This needs to be confirmed by School Committee vote.  
Motion made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mr. Brophy to appoint Cheryl Duval as Wellness Coordinator for the District. Motion passed by a vote of 14-0-1 with Mr. Kelly opposed.  
A School Committee member will need to be recruited to be a member of the Wellness Committee.

b) Director of Administrative Services

- Presentation of Warrants – Payroll Warrants 9, 10, 11, 12, and AP warrants 14V, 15A, 16B, 17A, 18V, 19A, 20B, 21A were approved by the Warrant Subcommittee.  
Dr. Muir has learned that with changes to the Open Meeting Law, subcommittees must follow the same regulations per the OML. The District does not official have a Warrant Subcommittee, but it is now necessary to establish a committee, post the agenda and take minutes. This should be a 5 member subcommittee, and it would be most advantageous to meet on Tuesdays. The subcommittee will review warrants and sign to release checks. This is done on a 2 week cycle. The warrant is started on Friday with an internal deadline of 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, and a deadline of 4:00 p.m. with the bank on Tuesday. A brief tutorial was given by Director of Technology, Andrew Walsh.
- Oil Bid Update – The District works with the French River Educational Collaborative who purchases \$1.6 million in oil. There was only one bidder who was non-responsive because the company added conditions to the bid which automatically eliminates them. It will go out to bid again with a bid opening of January 3, 2019.

c) Teacher Advisory Council

- No report was given.

d) Student Advisory Council

- Elementary – Luke Salvadore and Sydney Gagne, sixth grade students at NBGS reported to the gathering on the many events going on in the elementary schools in the district. These included Spirit Week at the OCS/NBGS and a fall festival at OCS where NBGS students were bussed over and able to get together with their reading buddies from last year. On November 19<sup>th</sup>, K & 1 students from NBGS were bussed to OCS to have a Thanksgiving dinner as a “family”. McCarthy bus generously donated the bus for this trip. On this day, the Nutcracker was also performed at OCS. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, the OCS performed the play “Cinderella”. This was a Capstone project for 2 high school students which raised \$700 for the music department. Sixth grade is diligently fundraising for their Nature’s Classroom trip with magazines, cookie dough, butter braids, and chocolate.  
At HES, Mrs. St. George had a challenge with students where if they read 1,000 books by November 30<sup>th</sup>, she would allow them to duct tape her to the wall. Students read 1,204 books!!! HES also has a good deeds program where if a student is recognized for doing a good deed, positive phone calls go home and a post card goes home as well. Mrs. Barbara Page, Guidance Counselor at HES is retiring at the end of December and will be missed by the many families she has developed relationships with.
- MS/HS - Colin Brown and Mabel Matheson, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at the middle school, reported to the gather on the many events going on at the middle/high school. Middle school dances are sponsored by student government, and 20 students represent grades 7 & 8. At the September dance, there were 255 students in attendance; October dance had 245 students with costumes voluntary; the December dance had 148 students in attendance, and the rock wall was open for climbing. Middle school is having a talent show on Friday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. HS Yearbook Committee will be having spirit week next week and student government will be sponsoring a Snowball Dance on February 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### 4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Administrative Review

- No report was given
- b) Audit
- No report was given
- c) Budget
- Budget meeting timeline was discussed, with the first meeting on Thursday, January 10, 2018 at 5:30 p.m., prior to the full committee meeting.
- d) Central Office
- Strategic Plan Update – The final draft of the Strategic Plan was presented to the Committee. Motion made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Dr. Allan to accept the Strategic Plan for January 2019 – June 2022 as written. The motion passed unanimously.
- e) Collective Bargaining
- Food Service contract is on a two year cycle and is up this year. First meetings will be held in February or March.
- f) Plant and facilities
- Capital Plan Updated & Vote: The Capital Plan for 2018-2019 was approved at the subcommittee level and they are recommending approval of the entire Committee. FY20 funded or request of towns totals \$838,000. Motion made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Deschamps to accept the Capital Plan for 2018-2019 as presented. Motion passed by a vote of 13-2-0 with Mr. Spier and Mrs. Thompson abstaining.
  - Performance Contracting (Trane) came back to the subcommittee with information on ways to do stream lined RFQ process for energy projects in schools. New equipment would be necessary and the offset of new equipment would be paid for with the energy savings. As an example, if a new boiler cost is \$500,000, the district would have to have \$500,000 in savings. If the district did not see that savings over the life of the system, Performance Contracting would pay the difference. An RFQ would need to be done for an energy savings study at a cost of .07/square foot. If the district chose to go forward, the \$17,000 cost of analysis would get rolled into the cost. Members of the Committee did do some research on their own, and the company did not have good references. In addition, in order to access the energy savings, the District would have to purchase Performance Contracting’s maintenance contract, which the District cannot support. Motion made by Mr. Kelly and second by Dr. Allan to discontinue discussions with Performance Contracting. Motion passed unanimously.
- 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.
  - MOU for School Resource Officer – Discussion ensued that the District can withdraw from the agreement with a 30 day notice. Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Dr. Allan to accept the MOU between the QRSD and the Barre Police Department with the request to have a presentation of the SRO at the October, 2019 Policy Subcommittee meeting. Motion passed unanimously.
  - MCAS report – A comprehensive discussion of MCAS will be held at the February meeting.
  - Blended Learning Update – Dr. Allan reported that the representative from Edgenuity, Greg Moore, presented to the Subcommittee at the December meeting. There are numerous opportunities for students with blended learning. Some faculty members are already successfully using blended learning in their classrooms. The District is currently using Edgenuity for credit recovery and stand alone courses. The District has 20 licenses which means that up to 20 students at one time may work on courses. The District will work with the Highlander Institute to become a pilot in this part of the state for blended

learning. French River Educational Collaborative is also interested in beginning to explore if the Highlander Institute is willing to work with the districts they serve.

- Wellness/PE Waiver – A student had requested that her extracurricular horseback riding be taken into consideration for her Wellness/PE Waiver. After much deliberation, the subcommittee will not recommend that waivers be allowed for anything other than varsity sports.
- Program of Studies SY19/20 – Includes a course in regard to the Quabbin area which will include classroom work and outreach to the area.
- 504 Procedural Manual – The 504 manual is required by the state and is a state document. It has been written and reviewed by the attorneys we use for special education cases. Pages 38 – 42 are in regard to the grievance policy, and our procedures are a bit different. These will be reviewed.
- HS/MS Class Size Report – Discussion ensued about the possibility of using Edgenuity as a way to take care of classes that are 15 students or less. Mr. Devine will explore this possibility.
- Capstone Presentation Update – Dr. Allan reported that Owen Sweeney, senior at the HS spoke to the subcommittee about his Capstone project. Owen ran a town hall meeting for students with Congressman Jim McGovern. Owen facilitated the meeting and did all the work prior to the meeting with securing who would speak, etc.

#### h) Special Education

- Subcommittee met this evening and discussed that the numbers for special education have gone down. The subcommittee discussed a focus group for Preschool which would discuss expansion of the program. They are looking at alternatives, and will send a survey to those in the area. Discussions will include lower the fee, transportation, and the area for the preschool. Also discussed Stetson and that fact that they are down to 27 with 3 beds available.

#### i) QEMP

- Quarterly meeting was postponed. Have moved from one group into 3 groups of shared services, regionalization, and repurposing. One great outcome from all of these meetings is that discussions and dialogues are now ongoing that did not happen before.

#### j) Technology

- No report was given. Need to set up meeting to discuss MCAS and budget needs

### 5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Update to timeline and procedures for school closing per QRSD Regional Agreement – Joint Public Hearing was held on December 6<sup>th</sup>. It was discussed that the District wants only to move the children in the NBGS to OCS in order for the students to be together. However, the Regional Agreement does not allow this to happen without a vote to close the school.

Mrs. Thompson wanted to ask the Committee to vote not to close the school for a year. That would give the town the option to find something else to go into the building for full utilization of the building. Mrs. Thompson also stated that she felt it was obvious from the Public Hearing that the town does not want the building to close.

Discussion then ensued amongst the members about doing an “intradistrict” model as was suggested to Mr. Brophy by a resident of New Braintree. It was discussed that we need to focus on the outcome – it is not educationally viable for the children to remain at NBGS. However, we realize that all buildings are underutilized. The town and the district should work together to find a solution to repurposing the building.

Mr. Kelly asked the New Braintree town officials present if they would be willing to work with the District to find a solution for the building if we were to go out another year, and/or set up a friendly amendment to support moving the students. The town is in agreement that part of the building could be rented. Dr. Muir stated that she had met with the selectboard this morning as well as a company, TeachUs, who is interested in space at the NBGS. Selectboard indicated that they would be open to an MOU for the lease to sublet or renegotiate the lease. Dr. Muir did state that the lease with the town

would not terminate if the children were moved. The District is responsible for the building through the end of the lease, until 2025.

Dr. Muir did state that the District is not providing equitable education for NBGS/OCS students as compared to other students in the District. The Selectboard and Dr. Muir disagree that having all the students together provides the best education experience.

Mrs. Thompson feels strongly that preschool should come back to NBGS and if that were to happen, would make NBGS more viable.

Discussion ensued that whatever is done tonight will be just the beginning, and it just so happens that it is starting with New Braintree. Declining enrollments are happening all over the district, as well as the state.

Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Sarabia to move the process forward with the closure of the New Braintree Grade School.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion was defeated by a weighted vote of 9.86 for and 4.03 opposed. Dr. Allan – no; Mr. Marsh – yes; Mr. Brophy – yes; Mr. Deschamps – yes; Mr. Wolanin – yes; Mr. Kelly – yes; Mr. Sarabia – yes; Mr. Spier – no; Mrs. Chamberlain – no; Mr. Hansen – yes; Mr. Correia – yes; Mr. Wigler – yes; Mrs. Thompson – no; Mr. Nutter – yes; Mr. Jean-Francois – yes.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

## **7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONCERNS**

- None

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

- Ryan McLane, Hubbardston Town Administrator – Mr. McLane presented a brief presentation of the status of the town of Hubbardston's budget as they begin their process. He felt it was best to present directly to the School Committee. He explained that a 1% increase in our budget would annul the town's increase of \$40,000 in revenue. He also explained that 58% of the Hubbardston budget is in education. He is hoping to work with the District to align priorities within the Capital Plan. Mr. McLane also discussed regionalization within the town.
- Transportation Contract
  - Review of Transportation Bidders' Responses – 3 responses were returned from J. P. McCarthy & Sons; Durham School Services; F. M. Kuzmeskus, Inc. J. P. McCarthy came back with the lowest bid of \$5,329,050.00 for FY20-22 with the option of a 2 year roll over
  - Contract Approval – Motion made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mr. Marsh to approve the transportation contract with J. P. McCarthy & Sons as written. Motion passed by a vote of 14-0-1 with Mrs. Thompson abstaining.

## **9. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- None

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Hansen to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Bennett  
School Committee Secretary