



QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Committee Minutes
Thursday, April 25, 2019
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
	David Marsh	Member, Barre
	Walter Nutter	Member, Oakham
	Marcelino Sarabia	Member, Hardwick
	Geoffrey Spier	Member, Hardwick
	Peggy Thompson	Member, New Braintree

ALSO PRESENT

Dr. Sheila Muir	Superintendent of Schools
Cheryl Duval	Director of Administrative Services
District Administrators/Staff	Tricia Worthington; Jill Peterson; Sue Musnicki; Greg Devine; Colleen Mucha; Adam Couturier; Andrew Walsh; Kristin Campione; Clare Barnes
Press:	Ellie Downer, Barre Gazette;
Parents/Town Officials	

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chair Lee Wolanin.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mr. Brophy to approve the minutes of March 14, 2019. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

a) Superintendent of Schools

- Superintendent's Report – Dr. Muir announced that the Quabbin Regional High School has been granted designation as an Innovation Pathways High School. We are only one of 16 schools with that designation in the state of Massachusetts. This will offer our students the opportunity to earn certification in an IT pathway as well as a certification in precision tooling. The District has also applied for a Skills Capital Grant which will allow the purchase of equipment. The District has also received a grant for \$110,000 which will fund professional development and a one year clinician position to support the alternative high school and therapeutic program at the elementary school.

Dr. Muir reported that three of our science department faculty had applied for summer programs. Elicia Andrews will be working with Harvard Forest on a research project which will be studying how climate change affects tree growth. Ms. Andrews will be writing curriculum in regard to this to bring back to our students. Josh Schroeder and Maureen Chase have been selected to participate in a summer program at WPI in a Bioscience Bridge project. They will be learning basic programming skills to create environments. They will then develop curriculum as part of this work to bring back to our students.

Dr. Muir also reported to the Committee that the district had held a MS/HS School Choice Open House Night on April 10th. Current School Choice students gave tours, the NJROTC did the pledge to start the evening, the makerspace program handed out etched keychains that they printed, and the cafeteria program served samples of lunch items. Academic coordinators and administrators were available to answer questions. Attendees were very impressed with our school and the programs that we offer

- Rural School Aid Project – Majority vote will be required – the district received \$119,000 in rural school aid which is required to be used to benefit most schools. \$17,000 of the funds will be spent on a roof study for the schools, as most of them do need a new roof. The study will provide information as to what the timeline will be on roof replacement. The remainder of the funds would like to be used on a contract to purchase a districtwide phone system. Over time, this will reduce long distance calling. This will also save money for the towns, as normally they would pay this as a capital expense item. School Committee authorization is required as the district will have to enter into a five year contract.

A motion was made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mr. Brophy to recommend approval of the 5-year contract as written: Issue a 5-year contract in the amount of \$143,784.47 to Vertical for the purchase of a district-wide telephone system, including hardware, subscriptions and licenses, and a maintenance agreement with all purchases being procured under state contract #ITT50.

Motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote: Dr. Allan – yes; Mr. Marsh – yes; Mr. Brophy – yes; Mr. Deschamps – yes; Mr. Sarabia – yes; Mr. Spier – yes; Mrs. Chamberlain – yes; Mr. Correia – yes; Mrs. Thompson – yes; Mr. Nutter – yes; Chairman Wolanin – yes.

b) Director of Administrative Services

- Director's Report - Ms. Duval directed the Committee members to their packets which includes a recent article related to school meals fees that may be of interest. Ms. Duval also referenced the latest Moody's report dated April 12, 2019 which rated the district again at A1. Ms. Duval report that there had been 3 separate attempts to commit fraud against the district this week. Two of these were to pass fraudulent checks. The first instance was three checks – one on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The second was for 4 checks today. The District has protocols in place which detect these attempts and can catch them before any damage is done. The other attempt was through a fraudulent email which was made to look like it came from a Quabbin administrator. The email asked our purchasing coordinator to purchase 6 BestBuy gift cards in the amount of \$500 each and send copies of them via email. The purchasing coordinator is very well aware of the district's purchasing protocols and investigated prior to taking any action on this email.
- FY19 Budget Transfer Request – a 2/3 vote will be required
Motion made by Mr. Brophy and seconded by Mr. Deschamps to approve an FY19 budget transfer of \$240,155.11 from line 3300 Transportation Services (\$4,972.55); Line 4100-4300 Facilities (\$23,134.90); line 5100-5250 Benefits (\$35,342.26); Special Ed Transportation Line 3300 (\$176,705.40) to Regular Ed Tuition Line 9000 (\$45,900.00); Special Ed Legal Services Line 1435 (\$41,669.90); Special Ed Instructional Support line 2110-3200 (\$21,097.51); Special Ed Tuition Line 9000 (\$131,487.70)
Motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote: Dr. Allan – yes; Mr. Marsh – yes; Mr. Brophy – yes; Mr. Deschamps – yes; Mr. Sarabia – yes; Mr. Spier – yes; Mrs. Chamberlain – yes; Mr. Correia – yes; Mrs. Thompson – yes; Mr. Nutter – yes; Chairman Wolanin – yes.

- FY20 Budget update – Dr. Muir and Ms. Duval traveled to Boston to testify for rural school funding. Dr. Muir testified on the floor about the difficulties that the rural schools face. Dr. Muir and Ms. Duval have met or have meetings set up to meet with all of the district towns to discuss the budget. We are hopeful that additional funding will come through from the senate, and assessments can be reduced to the towns.
- c) Teacher Advisory Council
- Evan Barringer, QRTA President, reported that there had been another successful trip with the 8th grade to Washington, DC. He thanked Mr. Marsh and Mr. Deschamps for attending as chaperones. .
- d) Student Advisory Council
- Elementary – Matthew Erickson and Sophia Diaz, students at Ruggles Lane School, reported on their STEM class and all the projects they are working. They gave a demonstration of their Ozobot robots which they have programmed to follow certain paths. Ozobots are pocket sized robots that are programmable by the students.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Administrative Review
- No report was given
- b) Audit
- No report was given
- c) Budget
- No report was given
- d) Central Office
- No report was given
- e) Collective Bargaining
- No report was given
- f) Plant & Facilities
- No report was given
- g) Policy Review/Reform
- No report was given
- h) Special Education
- No report was given.
- i) QEMP
- Mr. Deschamps updated the Committee on the QEMP meeting that was held on March 27th. Very positive meeting which included town officials, school committee members, and Senator Gobi. Discussed that the economic developer, Todd Miller is working on a website entitled Quabbincountry.com which will highlight the district towns.
- j) Technology
- No report was given
- k) Warrant
- Since our last meeting, the Warrant Subcommittee met and digitally reviewed and approved the following warrants: Payroll 20, 21, 22 and Accounts Payable 31A, 32B, 33A, 33BV, and 34A. Mrs. Thompson gave kudos to Cheryl and her team on the work that they do.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Possible lease of New Braintree Grade School – Dr. Muir referred to the letter in the Committee members packets in regard to revised parameters placed upon leasing the New Braintree Grade School. Dr. Muir met with the Selectboard to come up with the revised parameters. Mr. Brophy stated that he still feels that the parameters set forth are too restrictive. He and Mr. Wolanin visited NBGS and saw only 3 classrooms utilized. He feels that with only two classrooms next year, there will be very little space utilized. He questions how the building will be shared and who will handle keys, issues, etc. He

feels that it is not as user friendly as he would like to see. Mr. Wolanin requested that for our next meeting, we have a list of parameters that the Selectboard have requested in order to review them all prior to sending out an RFP.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Cindy Lapinskas & Martha Carey, Montachusett Opportunity Council, attended the meeting this evening to bring the Committee up to date on the programs that they offer. The MOC Community Partnership is a part of a free program through the MA Department of Early Education and Care to involve parents in gaining valuable information about their child's development. They offer parent-child playgroups for children ages 0 to 6 in various locations, as well as in home visits.
- Randy Jepson, parent of a senior and a sophomore, attended the meeting and read a letter he had written expressing his concern over a disciplinary issue involving his daughter and another student. A copy of the letter was presented to Chairman Wolanin.

7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONCERNS

- Dr. Allan stated that our state funding is based upon October 1 figures and questioned whether all students, including homeschooled students, could be on our rolls on that day participating in classes. Dr. Muir explained that students are either enrolled at their public school, at a private or parochial school or as a home schooled student. It was explained that home schooled children has access to our sport programs, dances, etc. Data is submitted to the state four times per year, and significant changes to the numbers would raise red flags with the state.
- Mr. Sarabia and Mrs. Chamberlain expressed their concern over the parent complaint from this evening. Although they understand that Dr. Muir is not at liberty to discuss the situation, and that they believe the school would handle the situation appropriately, they wanted to be sure that the policies and guidelines that the district puts into place are followed.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- Alternative structured learning time plan for makeup of September 7th no electricity day (MS/HS only) – Dr. Muir explained that the MS/HS has an extra day to make up due to the September 7th no electricity day. Excessive transportation costs would be incurred to bring students in on June 18th (Tuesday). After much discussion with the administration, it was felt that what is commonly known as a “Blizzard Bag” would be a creative way to make up that day. Students would have an assignment from each teacher on May 13th and potentially have until May 28th as the final day of completion. Teachers would be available on May 18th for questions/guidance if necessary. Dr. Muir did make it clear that she is not a proponent of using these as a way to make up snow days going forward.

Motion made by Mr. Sarabia and seconded by Mr. Brophy to utilize an Alternative Structured Learning Day (ASLD) to make up the no electricity day of September 7th at the Middle/High school. The motion passed by a majority roll call vote of 10-1-0:

Dr. Allan – yes; Mr. Marsh – yes; Mr. Brophy – yes; Mr. Deschamps – yes; Mr. Sarabia – yes; Mr. Spier – abstain; Mrs. Chamberlain – yes; Mr. Correia – yes; Mrs. Thompson – yes; Mr. Nutter – yes; Chairman Wolanin – yes.

9. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

- None

10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Dr. Allan and seconded by Mr. Deschamps to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Bennett
School Committee Secretary

Approved by QRSD School Committee on June 6, 2019