



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
March 8, 2016**

LOCATION: Swift River Elementary School Library
TIME: 7:00 p.m.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Mr. Richard Fritsch, Chair (present); Ms. Myndi Bogdanovich, Vice-Chair (present); Ms. Dawn French, Secretary (present); Dr. Michael Knapp, Member (present); Dr. Thomas Laughner, Member (present)

ADMINISTRATION: Mrs. Karol Coffin, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services; Shawn Fortin, Director of Teaching & Learning; Mr. Thomas Ruscio, JBMS Principal

BHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:

VISITORS: Brenda Aldrich, Select Board, Ellen Finelli, Food Service Director, Dr. Brian Messier, BHS Band Director, Mr. & Mrs. David Gibson, Ms. Hailley Boutin, Amanda Saklad, Aimee Henderson, Marybeth Dinapoli

Minutes

Pledge of Allegiance

- I. Call to order
Mr. Fritsch called the meeting to order at 7:11 pm.

- II. Public comment regarding items on the agenda
There were no public comments regarding items on the agenda.

- III. Special awards and presentations
Superintendent Coffin presented the nominees for the Greenspoon Excellence in Teaching Award; those nominees were M. Barclay, V. Blunt, C. Reynolds, K. Swiatlowski, C. Tarnawa, M. Foli, L. Furman, and C. Goncalves. There were three awards this year going to M. Foli, L. Furman, and C. Goncalves. Superintendent Coffin congratulated all those nominated. Superintendent Coffin also noted this is the first year a guidance counselor, M. Foli, was nominated.
 - A. Ms. Hailley Boutin – Project 351, “Day of Service” - Boston
Superintendent Coffin presented Hailley Boutin with the Project 351, “Day of Service” award in recognition of her community service. Hailley spoke to the event in Boston. She participated with a group that made things for the homeless. She is currently working on a clothes drive to benefit the Cradles to Crayons group.

- IV. Update from BHS Student Advisory Council representatives
Mr. Cameron read the update;

CSS: celebrated Dr. Seuss week with related activities.

SRE: student volunteers are involved in a book making club.

CHCS: 5th grade started the LifeSkills program. They will study topics related to social-emotional wellness and substance abuse.

JBMS: Band had Jr. District concert at Minnechaug Regional High School, Saturday, March 19.

BHS: will host Language Fair Thursday, March 10 from 6-8 pm. Band and Chorus concert Thursday, March 17th.

V. Approval of minutes (A.I.)

A. February 23, 2016, Regular Session

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to accept the February 23, 2016 minutes as presented.

Second: Ms. French

Vote: 4,0,1 (Ms. Bogdanovich abstained)

VI. Reports and recommendations of the Superintendent

A. Food Service Update/Request for Price Increase – Ellen Finelli (A.I.)

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the increase in pricing for meals.

Second: Dr. Knapp

Vote: 5,0,0

Ms. Finelli presented an update to the School Committee;

- there are 24 employees
- feed 50% = 1200 lunches per day
- feed 60 adults
- they accommodate special diets
- 27% participate in free and reduced lunches

Ms. Finelli noted the greatest challenge she faces is participation. She noted the decrease has been steady. She noted that in 2010/11 there was 70% participation and it has gone down steadily since then. Ms. Finelli spoke to the state regulations concerning nutrition could be a cause of less participation. The state mandated 100% whole grains, sodium restrictions, etc. She noted over the past year the food service has tried different approaches to increase participation such as themes. She noted that the participation went up for that day but decreased immediately after. Ms. Finelli spoke to the food survey results;

- wait time too long – 38% BHS 34% SRE/CHCS
- menu choices – 80% BHS – 63% SRE/CHCS
- not enough food served – 38% BHS – 20% SRE/CHCS
- more time to eat – 28% BHS – 16% SRE/CHCS

Ms. Finelli is looking for a POS system for the fall which may cut down on wait time.

Ms. Finelli presented the price increases to the School Committee;

- CSS & SRE; \$2.50 to \$2.60
- CHCS; \$2.60 to \$2.75
- JBMS & BHS; \$2.75 to \$3.00
- adult meals; to \$4.00

Dr. Laughner questioned if the price increase has anything to do with participation. Ms.

Finelli did not have the information but would look at the data.

VII. Personnel update

Superintendent Coffin welcomed the addition of G. Podkowka to JBMS food service.

VIII. Unfinished business

A. 2016 – 2017 School Calendar (A.I.)

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the calendar as presented.

Second: Ms. Bogdanovich

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Superintendent Coffin presented the finalized calendar to the School Committee taking account of suggestions from a previous meeting. Staff will report on August 30th, students will report August 31st, there are 2 professional development days scheduled (Nov 8 and Jan 23), and the last day with no snow days would be June 16th with 5 snow days June 23rd. Ms. French suggested looking at removing the February and April vacations and replacing them with one week in March for next year.

Superintendent Coffin noted that is something that can be explored with the community. The School Committee was in favor of the March vacation suggestion. Dr. Knapp questioned the use of early release days for PD? Superintendent Coffin noted that would offer more PD for staff of individual schools but would a discussion with the union would be needed. Mr. Fritsch noted the school should be closed during election days to avoid public access to school during a school day. It was noted to check the date of next year's town elections day.

IX. New business

A. Kindergarten Policy Waiver Request – Mr. & Mrs. David Gibson

Mr. & Mrs. Gibson presented their request for a policy waiver for their child. They presented their opinion that not having a waiver available for the policy doesn't take into account variables. They spoke to the readiness of their student for kindergarten. Ms. Bogdanovich noted the policy was reviewed earlier last year and the change made at that time to add language that students must be age 5 by September 1st. The Committee looked at other districts and spoke at length with both administration and staff about the advisability of a screening process. Dr. Knapp noted he would support a waiver. Ms. French noted that it is not just age there are many other variables involved. Mr. Fritsch noted there are advantages to waiting the extra year.

B. BHS Music Dept. Field Trip Request – All State Music Festival/Boston, MA (A.I.)

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the Music Dept field trip request pending parent signature with regard to transportation statement.

Second: Dr. Knapp

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion:

Dr. Messier presented the request. This request was approved by Superintendent Coffin.

C. Approval of Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article (A.I.)

Motion: Ms. French moved to approve the Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article for May 9th.

Second: Dr. Knapp

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Dr. Knapp noted that transportation is not part of the School budget but is part of the town budget. This is an annual article to offset transportation costs and is not part of the operational budget. Superintendent Coffin will clarify at the budget meeting.

D. Policy GBEB – Staff Conduct: Drugs, Alcohol and Weapons (A.I.)

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to table the policy per attorney recommendation.

Second: Dr. Knapp

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Mr. Fritsch noted that after the policy was written the lawyer needs to look over to make sure it conforms to laws and statutes. Dr. Knapp noted he has issues with how some of the policy is written. There are parts he finds objectionable. The Committee requested Dr. Knapp put his requests and/or issues in writing to the subcommittee. This policy has been sent back to the subcommittee.

E. Accept Donation – Belchertown Band Boosters (A.I)

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to accept the donation.

Second: Dr. Laughner

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Superintendent Coffin presented the donation of \$1,800 to the JBMS music program to offset expenses to the Great East festival.

Additions:

F. Dr. Knapp would like to set a time, in May or June, to discuss the potential of distribution of meeting packet material to the public.

G. Dr. Knapp noted the MMA breakfast on March 4th. There were 2 state representatives present, Mr. Petrolotti and Mr. Kocot. Public records laws were discussed. Questions arose about the budget and the foundation budget, the news was discouraging. Dr. Knapp noted there may be some “small ball” ideas for funding our budget this year, one being funding charter school reimbursement. Superintendent Coffin noted she attended a luncheon that same day which was attended by Senator Lesser, the Senate president, and whip. Questions were raised about what happened to all the recommendations that were sent to the government regarding funding. She noted that many legislators did not understand what dropping the common core would do the education system. It would put us back 5 years to redo all the changes made in the past 5 years.

X. Reports of subcommittees/representatives

A. Curriculum & Instruction (Dr. Knapp/Dr. Laughner)

Dr. Knapp noted they met today, spoke about;

- catch up on data
- open ed resources – this will be discussion for next meeting

- shape and vision for the district
 - next meeting scheduled for April 26th
- B. Personnel & Policy (Ms. Bogdanovich/Ms. French)
Ms. Bogdanovich noted they discussed the 42 page bullying report and policy GBEB.
- C. Property & Transportation (Mr. Fritsch/Ms. French)
Ms. French noted the met tonight, spoke about;
- formation of facilities study committee
 - 5 year capital improvements – Gary Brougham and Brenda Aldrich attending
 - who could serve on facilities study committee
 - posting for those that would like to serve on committee
- Dr. Laughner questioned who would serve as chair of committee. Mr. Fritsch noted that a chair would be chosen by the committee. Dr. Laughner suggested going outside the community for an engineering consultant to potentially guide recommendations. Superintendent Coffin noted the committee, after formed, would need to come before the School Committee to make a request for a consultant.
- D. Finance & Budget Subcommittee (Dr. Laughner/Dr. Knapp)
Dr. Laughner noted they meet next Monday.
- E. Collaborative for Educational Services (Dr. Knapp)
Dr. Knapp noted they meet March 30th. Mr. Fritsch requested Dr. Knapp spearhead a taskforce to inform about our position regarding funding. Ms. Aldrich noted she will bring up at a Select Board meeting as well.
- F. Healthy & Safer Schools Advisory Committee (Mr. Fritsch/Ms. Bogdanovich)
Mr. Cameron noted at the last meeting they discussed the engineering study by Tighe & Bond with regard to traffic patterns. They noted there are a number of short term fixes such as, signage and painting lines. Other fixes would be to expand the rotary in front of SRE and improve the entrance to BHS.
- G. Technology Advisory Committee (Dr. Laughner)
Dr. Laughner noted they have not met.
- XI. Correspondence
- A. Agenda, March 8, 2016
 - B. Minutes, February 23, 2016, Regular Session
 - C. Food Service Dept. information
 - D. 2016-2017 School Calendar
 - E. Kindergarten entrance age waiver request
 - F. Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article
 - G. BHS Field Trip Request – All State Music Festival/Boston, MA
 - H. Policy GBEB- Staff Conduct: Drugs, Alcohol and Weapons
 - I. Band Booster's donation

- XII. Vote to enter into Executive Session under M.G.L., 30A, §21, Part 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation as conducting said business in open session would have a detrimental effect on the School Committee's bargaining or litigation position. The Committee will not return to open session.

School Committee voted to enter into executive session at 8:35 pm. They will not return to open session.

Richard Fritsch – yes

Myndi Bogdanovich – yes

Dawn French – yes

Michael Knapp – yes


Thomas Laughner – yes

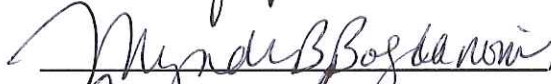
Respectfully submitted by,

Ramona Griffin

Non-Confidential Recording Secretary to the School Committee

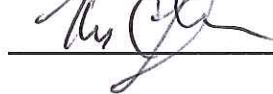
School Committee members' signatures:

 _____, Richard Fritsch, Chair

 _____, Myndi Bogdanovich, Vice Chair

 _____, Dawn French, Secretary

 _____, Michael Knapp, Member

 _____, Thomas Laughner, Member

Belchertown students, both individually and collaboratively, will be innovative thinkers, problem solvers and unique, creative contributors to their community and the world.

The Belchertown School Committee conducts its business in open session pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21 of the Massachusetts General Laws. The public is welcome to comment only on items on the agenda for this meeting as noted above. If you wish to address the School Committee regarding an item not on the agenda for this meeting, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at 413.323.0423 or via email at superintendent@belchertown.org to determine the best way to address your concerns (see [School Committee Policy BEDH](#)).