

Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee
Frederick Hartnett Middle School
Minutes of Meeting
November 17, 2022
6:00 p.m.

Introduction of Members:

Erin P. Vinacco, Chairperson - arrived late.
Keri L. Gaudette, District Treasurer
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary
Daniel Keefe, Member
Erin Zimmerman, Member
Ted Novio, Member
Charles Dunton, Member

Tammy A. Lemieux was absent from the meeting.

Jason DeFalco EdD, Superintendent of Schools was present.

Report of the Student Representatives:

- Powder puff game to be held next week
- STUCO pep rally themes are being discussed
- Band cake decorating contest and raffle to take place
- Parent Teacher Conferences going on
- Thanksgiving football game at home at 10:00 a.m.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Gaudette and unanimously voted to approve the Warrants.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Gaudette, seconded by Mr. Keefe and unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of October 13 and October 27, 2022.

There were no items for **Public Forum**.

Report of the Superintendent

Family Support Services

Sara Rodrigues - District Social Worker

This year we have helped 25 families in Millville at Thanksgiving and 19 families in Blackstone.

Good Stuff Smokehouse helps us a lot and help families along with Bellingham Palace as well.

They are helping 136 kids this year for Christmas.

New program she created

Blackstone over the weekend backpack program

Have kids go home on Friday with a backpack full of food and return it on Monday when they return to school.

We want the families open to receiving the backpack.

It will now be for the winter months and she hopes it grows.

Designed to have 2 breakfast items, lunch items and drinks.

The 18-22 year old group from the high school will help her.

Hope to start it the 1st week of December.

Article submitted to Blackstone Enlightener today.

Donation boxes will be at all the schools as well.

Blackstone Food pantry is also helping us.

Brief overview on the new updated

37H $\frac{3}{4}$ statute Chapter 222

An Act Addressing Barriers to Care for Mental Health

- All discipline laws must be abided by in all Mass. schools.
- Act addressing barriers to care for mental health
- a fairly significant change to the school discipline process.

Three main changes:

- removes language from the prior 37H $\frac{3}{4}$.
- mandatory requirements around alternative remedies instead of discipline, counseling, collective problem solving. These must happen first.
- level of documentation that administrators must do now.
Series of checkboxes and narratives that must be documented.

There is an option for parents to refuse the presentations.

This is the Dept. of Education approach to reduce suspension and keep kids in school.

If the administrator feels the behavior is one that is dangerous they can suspend but must be able to prove that.

Dr. DeFalco feels you need both consequence and investigation.

For repeat offenders it is still a matter of intervention.

The intent of intervention is to be given at lunch time or after school when a student is not in the classroom. They may stay after school for intervention from 2:00 -4:00 and we pay our staff to stay with them.

Middle School Improvement Plan
Additional Middle School Positions (2) for Quarters 3 & 4
STEM and Spanish Teacher

Working to overhaul aspects of programming.

Looking at enrichment opportunities for students.

All open positions are filled thankfully with the exception of a paraprofessional.

We do have available funds in our salary line due to teacher turnover and retirement.

Looking for full time teachers who would be brought on board until Semester 2.

For the two positions if they opt for benefits we are looking at somewhere around \$70,000.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Zimmerman and unanimously voted to approve a STEM and Spanish Teacher at the Hartnett Middle School for Quarters 3 & 4 of FY23 at a total cost of approximately \$70,000.

Initial School Consolidation Model for FY24

Long Range and Short Term Facilities Plan

By June 2023 we will have in place both a long range and short term capital outlay plan for the school district. This plan may include more immediate school facility reorganization opportunities for the district. This plan will also include either an acceptance into the MSBA school building project pipeline or a plan for resubmission.

This will be measured by the successful completion of a reorganization model and timeline, as well as clear next steps with the MSBA.

Why Now?

- Two years of capital planning committee conversations
- Facilities Goal for FY22-23
- School Committee discussion during 10/13 and 10/27 meetings
- We need to "right size" the District with facilities that support the level of teaching and learning necessary to meet our goals.

- District was built for 3,040 students. Current PK-12 enrollment is 1477 with 23 students out of district.
- Regional Agreement outlines a Public Hearing and School Committee decision prior to January 1st to make any grade configuration changes.
- FY24 budgeting is beginning.

Major Considerations

- Enrollment shrinking faster than enrollment study projected
- Most buildings at half student capacity
- MES currently has 360 student/built for 495 students
- JFK/AFM complex currently has 355 students/built for 795 students
- FWHMS currently has 365 students/built for 840 students
- BMRHS currently has 395 students/built for 900 students
- A need to continue to approach grades 6 and 7 differently
- Grade 8 students already involved in much of the BMRHS school community

School Building Consolidation Plan Draft

- Move the district from four buildings to three
- MES: PK-2, 340 students
- FWH: Lower school 3-5 and upper school 6-7, 574 students
- BMRHS: Grade 8-12, 537 students
- Take the JFK/AFM Complex offline

Next Steps

- Family, community staff and student conversations
- Looking into MSBA reimbursement on the complex
- Building layout and class assignments
- transportation and school times
- review of staffing needs (Administrative/Building Maintenance/Food Service/Health Services?)
- Review and Reassign staff accordingly
- Develop budget
- share updates, feedback and final proposal with school committee
- public hearing and school committee decision December 2022

Under this model we are not going to change the start and end times for the schools.

The only feedback Dr. DeFalco has received to date has been from the administrators. The unions are happy we are planning to have meetings to let everyone know of the plan. All were open to the conversation.

Parent meeting will be the week of November 28th.

Plan was to finish all conversations by December 2nd. Gather all info and send all feedback to the school committee by the next meeting. Mrs. Vinacco said let's move the school committee meeting to a later date. They will move the meeting to December 15th.

They will vote to approve a public hearing tonight with a date to be determined. Mr. Keefe said as long as they give two weeks notice. It gives the public a chance to hear the information and ask questions and we as a Committee can decide where they are going on that night.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Gaudette and unanimously voted to hold a public hearing in accordance with the Regional Agreement school consolidation plan and in accordance with the Regional Agreement on grade configurations that students shall attend schools in accordance with the approval of the Superintendent and vote of School Committee. The proposed change being grade level assignment not including students with disabilities. The public hearing of at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the School Committee members present will be held by January 1, 2023 to be implemented the following school year with the date of meeting to be determined and held prior to December 31, 2022..

Dr. DeFalco will send it out tomorrow to families to meet to discuss this.

Mr. Keefe asks if they can get the questions out and feedback first before they come up at the hearing.

Important to know the building Complex is still part of the Regional School district even though it is owned by the Towns. The plan is that the regional offices will remain there as well as the BICO classrooms.

This move is part of the new blueprint and there are many things such as the MSBA project as well. They want to give the best quality of education while making the most of the space we have.

If we are approved by MSBA it's 270 days to get the feasibility approved from when the official letter is received.

The new building is a necessity due to the state of the building. The consolidation of schools is for other reasons due to cost savings.

School Committee items:

Superintendent Contract July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2027

Copy of our newest contract with our Superintendent is in the School Committee packets.

Met in Executive Session to negotiate.
Extend Dr. DeFalco's contract through June 30, 2027.
He received a 3% raise and \$2500 merit award based on his evaluation.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mr. Novio and unanimously voted to approve the contract for Superintendent Jason DeFalco EdD. through June 30, 2027 to include a 3% raise and \$2500 merit award for the FY23 school year.

Dr. DeFalco is humbled and honored to continue the work in the district.

Mrs. Vinancco stated the hours he puts into this district is not reflected in this contract.

Update expenditure and revenue

- Account. 1450 - district wide information management showing a negative \$269,000. This is due to Federal reimbursement that we are waiting for.
- The salary for the Director of Learner Services was not in the correct line.
- Management of Building - 4220 asbestos work charged there but it was put in a different line. Should be in a capital line.
- 6700 SRO details are over.
- We are over on our insurance due to new employees.

Mr. Hebert stated we are in need of another truck eventually. We have a 20 year old truck but it is rotting out. The old truck would make a perfect back up truck in the future. We have our snow plow money.

Dr. DeFalco stated we will ask the principals to slow spending but not freeze due to the high cost of utilities this winter. We need to be cautious.

Personnel update to be placed on file.

Facilities

Scott Hebert - Facilities Director

HS

Industrial Burner will be in on Nov. 25th to replace the pressure relief valves.

Update: We did receive a grant from MIIA for the sum of \$9000 to be used towards the quote of \$11,600.

The softball infield mix was delivered by a tractor trailer so they had to dump it in the parking lot. Mr. Hebert has been making several trips using our truck to bring the mix to the field.

HMS

Mr. Hebert received a quote from Automated Logic to replace the VFD drive for a sum of \$9,349.

Complex

Playgrounds: The process wood fibers have been installed on the AFM playground.

MES

The building automation system will be replaced by Siemens, we are waiting on Siemens to give us a start date. MIIA has agreed to cover the cost of the project up to \$59,000.

Playgrounds: Processed wood chips have been installed on both of the playgrounds. We had the fence on the Pre-school playground by the slide moved to accommodate the recommended six foot safety fall zone.

Surplus Item at Middle School

The cafeteria manager is looking to deem a milk cooler at the middle school as surplus.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Gaudette, seconded by Mrs. Zimmerman and unanimously voted to deem the milk cooler at the middle school as surplus.

School Committee Forum

Dr. DeFalco will get everyone the dates on concerts for christmas.

The School Committee Meeting on Dec. 8th will be changed to Dec. 15th.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary

