

**Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee**  
**Frederick Hartnett Middle School**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**September 15, 2022**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Introduction of Members:**

Erin P. Vinacco, Chairperson  
Tammy A. Lemieux, Vice Chairperson  
Keri L. Gaudette, District Treasurer  
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary  
Charles Dunton, Member  
Daniel Keefe, Member  
Erin Zimmerman, Member  
Ted Novio, Member

Jason DeFalco EdD, Superintendent of Schools and Deirdre Farrell-Welch Interim Business Manager were also present.

The Pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited along with a moment of silence for Grace Burns who passed away on August 31st at the age of 101. Grace was a 23 year employee of the district as a cafeteria lunch server.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Gaudette, seconded by Mr. Dunton and unanimously voted to approve Consent Agenda A which includes Warrants and Minutes of August 25, 2022.

**Report of the Student Representatives**

- Next Friday is the homecoming dance.
- Football, volleyball, soccer, field hockey updates were given.
- The Marching Band won their first competition recently. The band's home show will be held on Sept. 24th at Medway High School.
- Chargers for Change, NHS, Student Council and GSA started their meetings.

There were no items for **Public Forum**

**Public Safety Bus Routes Glenside Drive**

Mr. Roberts & Mrs. O'Brien - parents of students riding the bus.

Raised request through Mr. Ducharme to take a look at the neighborhood.

For years the road was not a public road. Bus stop was always at the end of the road. This past April the road became a public road. This is when the request came in to make it a bus route that goes through the neighborhood. His son was almost hit a few times and he wanted to raise the issue. After first assessment it was determined the roads were too narrow to come through the neighborhood. He measured other roads the bus travels currently. The current bus stop is 20 feet and Glenside is 22 feet so this is not a good reason. He is just asking that the bus stop be at 2 or 3 intersections to get rid of the bottleneck and the congestion occurring at the bus stop. He doesn't feel they need to add new buses but just add 2 stops.

Mrs. Vinacco stated the school committee funds the buses but has never decided on bus stops. That decision lies in the hands of the bus company and public safety of the towns.

She agrees with the argument that the road size is not a good argument. The buses go down many narrower roads.

Mrs. Vinacco wants to hear from the chief of police in Blackstone personally.

Up until this year it was only one bus stop and now there are two bus stops.

Mrs. Gaudette stated a few years ago they had to go to the police to have the stop moved to Glenside and Park Street.

The chief of Blackstone doesn't have a specific recommendation that the School Committee would actually make the decision just that it would be a better forum to speak about it here. The Chief is not going to tell Tellstone Busing how to run their business and would like to discuss the public safety aspect with Mr. Tellstone.

Mr. Tellstone said the roads are wider at the ends. If they had to go into every neighborhood they just don't have the equipment to get it done. Alfonso Estates is a mirror of the Glenside Street and they treat Alfonso the same way as they do Glenside.

Mrs. Vinacco is fearful that if the bus went through the neighborhood she fears a child getting hurt that way since there are 113 houses in that neighborhood.

Mr. Roberts stated that half the parents do parent drop off now since this is a problem.

Mrs. Lemieux is asking "why can't they walk down to the bus stop?"

Mr. Roberts feels it's a long walk. It is now a bit over a ½ mile walk.

Now that they have the 2 bus stops they have traffic issues at both entrances instead of just one.

The chief was there for the later pickups and leading up to the few minutes before the buses showed up there were cars parked on one side. The most he saw on Glenside was 7 and on Park side the most he saw was 5.

He feels it may be unsafe to have the bus travel through the neighborhood.

Mrs. Gaudette feels the issue will come back up once the snow hits the ground.

Mr. Dunton asked that they come up with a plan through their neighborhood association.

Mrs. Gaudette feels that she has lived that issue and knows what they are talking about but trusts the safety aspect to the police chief and Tellstone Bus.

It will continue to be monitored but Mrs. Vinacco feels they stand by where the bus stops are at this time.

### **Unit B Contract**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Gaudette and unanimously voted to approve the Unit B Contract from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2025 for the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District Administrators' Association as presented.

### **Capital Planning Committee update- Mrs. Larkin Chairperson**

MSBA moved to senior study our Statement of Interest.  
Capital planning will regroup next week to see what the next steps are.

### **Report of the Superintendent- Jason DeFalco, Ed.D**

#### **Covid 19 Lead Nurse Karen Young**

The commissioner of the Department of Education changed their regulations in May of 2022.

Mrs. Young will touch on those changes.

- Close Contact: Quarantine has been eliminated regardless of vaccination status as long as they remain symptom free for the entire 10 days following exposure to the COVID-19 positive individual. If they develop symptoms they should stay home and test.
- Positive case is still in isolation. Isolate for 5 days and mask for 5 days.
- Eliminated the medical waiting rooms in the nurse's office.

There were 29 Covid cases in September and 6 in August. This is up from last year but we also had masks last year.

We still have at home tests the nurses are giving out if students ask for them. They are always offered tests if they are being sent home by the nurses office. The Town also has available tests.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Larkin, 7 in favor, 1 abstain- Mr. Dunton to approve the new Covid 19 handbook as presented by Mrs. Young, lead nurse.

### **Substance Abuse Intervention**

They have been thinking through as a leadership team how can they support students vaping or using alcohol or marijuana.

It is not a rampant issue but they battle the vaping issue daily. What is the best way to intervene? There are consequences in place when this happens. At the end of the day children are using substances for a reason. They want to get to the core of the issues. Parents are also involved in these conversations.

Tier II interventions. Kids who need a bit more intervention than other students. Trying to reset the behavior of substance abuse in the schools.

Mrs. Young has been in touch with agencies. Families can opt in or opt out of this.

Mrs. Young - iDECIDE, promotes education and empowerment, instead of punishment, as an equitable response to adolescent substance use. Providing youth with science based knowledge and skills, it challenges young people to make decisions that align with their core values and future goals to support their own personal well being.

Developed by Mass General and Harvard Department of Public Health and the Institute of Health and Recovery. It is not specific to any one drug.

There are 4 core modules that cover topics such as brain development, neurobiology of addiction, drug effects, industry tactics, risk and protective factors, motives for use, triggers and healthy alternatives, core values, wellness and long term goal setting.

Done with a facilitator one to one or group format. ADA accessible.

Evidence based program with evaluation.

Could be student referrals and referred to the team. Parent consent is needed for students age 18 or under.

Stakeholder interviews with the people handling the infractions. Also a schoolwide survey that the students take.

Parents have been notified via email once and also in another manner probably on the website.

Mrs. Larkin feels that the younger kids are going to have trouble with the survey. It is a lot and she feels they will have trouble with it.

It is aimed more at the High School group vs. even the Middle School group.

There are about 100 schools involved in it now.

There will still be a consequence for vaping but we have had students vaping with marijuana cartridges and alcohol use. In the past they went home but now they want them to have an in school intervention with this piece plus the consequence piece.

Parents can opt out of any of this at any time. We need the information back by the end of September.

The program attempts to educate and empower but not punish.

There is no cost for this. Different ways to address substance abuse are explored.

This is meant for the middle intervention student and try to prevent kids from getting to the next level of substance abuse.

Dr. DeFalco wanted the Committee to be on the front end of this but they are not here for a motion approval.

Now they meet with their adjustment counselor and stay in school because they don't feel they should go home to maybe make the problem worse. They are 2 or 3 days out of the classroom. They need intervention to change behavior. What is the right push and pull on the issue.

### **Technology Update - Dan Saltzmann**

Funding - Electronic Communications Fund (ECF) Reimbursement

7.171 billion dollar program

- new program
- rules have changed midstream (deadlines)
- Great deal of uncertainty in the school IT community
- Reimbursements can take a few weeks, but more likely a few months.

BMR applied and was approved for the purchase of \$428,722 in student and staff chromebooks

ECF should be reimbursed for between \$354,280 and \$373,405 of the \$428,722.

- staff devices only reimburse up to \$400 per device
- student devices will reimburse 100% of the device cost and under some circumstances will reimburse for other costs such as warranties and licenses.
- reimbursements were submitted for approximately \$100,000.
- reimbursements for remaining \$250,000 will be submitted as soon as invoicing is complete.

SaaS Online Resources: Library Upgrade

New Library Software: Artemis ILS from Biblionix

- Replaces the district's old Winnebago solution that was self hosted on Windows Server 2003
- Completely cloud based
- 2400 annual recurring, 4800 one time costs
- training is underway

SaaS Online Resources: Learning Platforms

- New: Wonders Reading Program Elementary Levels
- New: Math Program K-8
- New: Math Program for the High School
- my PLTW - Project Lead the Way, Real World Learning for the Middle School
- Star Renaissance - District ELA/Math formative assessment suite
- Real World Learning High School Program
- College application tool
- Amplify Middle School Reading Program
- StemScopes Science and Technology for Elementary Grade Levels
- MyOn Online Personalized Reading Program

Hardware & Server Updates

- 816 New Chromebooks (funded by ECF)
- HS and Grade 3 refreshed
- Loaners in all schools
- MCAS devices
- Carry us through SY 23 - 24
- 113 Viewsonic Viewboards: 65" touchscreen displays
- all classrooms in HS, Complex and Millville
- Fully implemented

Servers:

- All main servers refreshed and running modern windows server software
- All server hardware refreshed and fully implemented
- two level backup system full implemented
- HS, Complex and Millville: Teachers now on chromebooks - most all Windows PCs retired in these classrooms.

All pc's still in use have been upgraded and running a modern version of windows.

He is proud of the folks in the IT dept. and they have made a lot of progress in the last few years.

### **MSBA Visit today**

Thank you to the capital planning committee which Tara Larkin chairs.

So much work has been done to get us to this stage. Not rushed, very thorough, facilities study done, facilities director doing the work.

We have outgrown the facility as far as instruction.

Good discussion today and the district taking the right steps and keeping them at the table.

There was a good spectrum of people at the table to discuss.

### **Deirdre Farrell-Welch, Interim Business Manager**

Mrs. Farrell-Welch has been in the District part time for 3 weeks. She feels it is truly a joy to be here.

After 6 years of being out of the schools she is running around everywhere and so happy to be here.

The visit today was extremely rewarding. MSBA was ready and prepared and so was the district. Every question came from the Statement of Interest.

The Team worked on a fabulous powerpoint presentation that MSBA did not view.

OPM - MSBA are working hand and hand. The architect was one of the best ones she ever ran across with all questions directed at curriculum initiative for kids and instructional programs for students. She feels they nailed it.

They took a GoPro of everything. They have 22 visitations to make and ours was the 3rd they have to do in the Commonwealth.

On December 21st at the MSBA board meeting they will decide which schools get invited into the pipeline.

Even if you get invited this year you are looking at 5 years out.

We lost 100 students who left the district. We need strategies to keep students in our district. We need the facility.

The important piece is the Capital Planning Committee's next steps.

Mrs. Lemieux feels that having the stakeholders of the Towns being part of the Committee is so important.

### **Report of the Business Office**

Mrs. Farrell-Welch is working with the business office. She will learn more about the timing of the reports, etc.

There are deficit areas in some line items. They want to evaluate where they have salaries encumbered and where it needs to be moved.

She worked closely with the assistant treasurer and met with the auditors to see how we are doing.

She is looking for P.D. days for staff.

A Personnel Report was placed in their packets.

### **Facilities Report Scott Hebert, Facilities Director**

#### **HS:**

- Industrial Burner has replaced 1 of the two heating coils, the other is still on backorder. Industrial Burner is also scheduled to replace the pressure relief valves. That work will begin as soon as all the parts arrive.
- A carbon monoxide detector has been installed in the boiler room as requested by our insurance inspector.
- Baseball and softball dugouts are completed, the work on the softball infield has begun, however due to last week's heavy rains Mr. Hebert had to reschedule the delivery of the infield mix.



- During last week's rain storms the High School had one leak which is a drain pipe that runs down into the boiler room.

**HMS:**

- A carbon monoxide detector has been installed as requested by our insurance inspector.
- During last week's rainstorm the building had two water leaks, one in the gym storage closet and the other one was in the guidance office storage closet.

**Complex:**

- Playgrounds: We have received a 2nd quote from Ultiplay playgrounds from Blackstone MA and are currently waiting on a set of plans so we can see exactly what is in the quote.
- During last week's rain storm the building had two leaks, one in the back storage room in the library and one leak running down a corridor wall.

**MES:**

- Playgrounds: We received a quote from Ultiplay playgrounds. We are waiting on the plans for Complex before committing to a contract.
- During last week's rainstorm the building had one major leak in room 204, it was coming down between the exterior wall and the flashing on the roof where the Atrium meets the roof.

**Use of Facilities Requests**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Gaudette and unanimously voted to approve the facilities request by the Hartnett PTO for use of the HMS Gym, Cafeteria and Atrium for the 6th grade social to be held on 9/16/22 from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

**School Committee Forum:**

- Mrs. Larkin - Gave information on the 7th grade social, 8th grade luncheon and Color Run moving to October 7th.
- Mrs. Vinacco stated for our website go to [bmrdsd.net](http://bmrdsd.net) and you will see a bright and beautiful website. It has now been cleaned up. Homecoming weekend is Sept. 24th and she invited School Committee members to attend any athletic games or the band show if they are able.

The next meeting is a Workshop on 9/29 @ 6:00 p.m.

- Mrs. Zimmerman stated there will be a BMRSD SEPAC event on October 22nd - there will be a "truck a truck" available for kids to explore, a car show, different community clubs and activities and food trucks! Event is to benefit the BMRSD SEPAC.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mr. Keefe and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard  
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary