

Minutes of School Committee Meeting 10/19/2017

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, October 19, 2017 in the School Committee Room. School Committee Chair Ms. Kate Brody called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Ms. Brody, Ms. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas, Ms. Pine, Mr. Sarli, Mr. Messore, Dr. Dillon, and Mr. Fiore.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Douglas Fiore, Director of Administration and Finance, led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Achievement Recognition

Mr. Messore announced the following achievements across the District:

October is National Principals Appreciation Month and the School Committee and Administration recognized and expressed appreciation for the contribution of all district Principals: Dr. Andrew Anderson, of Barrington Middle School, James Callahan of Sowams School, Joseph Hurley of Barrington High School, Tracey McGee of Hampden Meadows School, Patricia Tolento of Primrose Hill School, Tracey Whitehead of Nayatt School, and Assistant Principals Erica Bulk of Barrington Middle School, Edward Daft and Nicole Varone of Barrington High School, and Gino Sangiuliano of Hampden Meadows School.

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) released the 2017 School Report Cards. Barrington High School, Barrington Middle School, Hampden Meadows School, Nayatt School, and Sowams School, received Commended status.

Hampden Meadows School celebrated its 9th year of participation in the Walk and Bike to School Day on October 4th with an all-time high of 270 students participating.

Barrington High School Quiz Show team, comprised of Daniel Sheinberg, Michael Lamontagne, Christina Curran, Clara Kugler, Brendan Fay and Jonny Zhang, competed at the High School Quiz Show "Super Sunday" event and achieved the highest score to clinch the number 1 seed at the November televised event.

Barrington High School Senior Katie Zitzmann was the top Rhode Island finisher in the Northeast Cross Country Championship girls' competition at Brown University.

Information and Proposals

Dr. Dillon presented the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) 2017 data by grade level and by subgroups. She noted that this will be the final report of PARCC data as the District will be administering Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) in grades 3 – 8, the PSAT in grade 10, and the SAT in grade 11 beginning next year. She reported that Barrington Public Schools (BPS) exceeded the 95% participation rate set by the state by 3%, Barrington High School, Barrington Middle School, Hampden Meadows School, Nayatt School and Sowams School achieved Commended status with all district schools reaching or exceeding the 750 proficiency score.

Dr. Dillon introduced the 2017-2018 Student Achievement Priorities for Gap Closure noting a gender gap in ELA, gains made with coaches and specialists, internal assessments and increased access to technology. Areas of focus include reading, writing and vocabulary, content changes in math curriculum; and an overview of K-5, 6-8, 9-12 and district-wide action plans. A discussion ensued regarding the effect of technology use on K-5 writing skills, an apparent gender gap in literacy, a decrease in math scores, and Primrose Hill School's PARCC performance. Mrs. Brody commended Dr. Dillon on the comprehensive data presented and thanked the school principals for their collaboration.

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At this time, Ms. Brody offered parents the opportunity to ask questions relative to the data presented while the school principals were present.

Ms. Maraidh Thomson of 3 Ridgeland Road, asked about Project Read materials being used in reading and writing instruction at the K-3 schools. Dr. Dillon responded that Project Read materials at these schools were outdated and have been updated.

Ms. Kristen Pearse of 47 Chapel Road, expressed her concern that the 27% gap between Nayatt and Primrose Hill Schools' math proficiency data appears to not be a top priority item. She asked what solutions are being explored. Dr. Dillon responded that all students in all schools at all grades are a priority, and that work is being done on curriculum, professional development, additional services, intervention and enrichment.

Mr. Messor commented on the multiple data points for measuring student performance. PARCC data is only one piece. Administrators and teachers also use common assessments, screening and benchmark data. We should not make performance assessments based only on PARCC testing results. He agreed with Dr. Dillon that our District prioritizes ALL students in ALL schools at ALL times. Force field analyses are used to help identify some of the specific factors that cause students to perform well or not. He stated that a small number of students can skew the testing outcomes for an entire school. The District, as part of its strategic planning work with Studer Education, will be looking carefully at school improvement goals as well as at the growth in special education. The 2017-2018 School Improvement Goals will be presented at the next School Committee meeting on November 2nd.

Ms. Brody requested that there be a change in the order of an agenda item under "School Committee, New Business" to address a field trip request.

Dr. Anderson presented the Barrington Middle School Aqua Cluster's request for approval of a field trip to New York City to learn about the Industrial Age and immigration. The trip will include visits to Ellis Island, the Tenement and Jewish Heritage Museums, and the Museum of Mathematics. Students will also attend a Broadway show, *The Lion King*. A discussion ensued regarding field trips offered to other clusters, funding for such trips, and attendance.

Ms. Clancy moved, and Mr. Alessandro seconded approval of the Barrington Middle School Aqua Cluster field trip to New York City on May 3 and 4. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Brody, Ms. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Ms. Pine voting in the affirmative.

Public Comment

Ms. Amanda Brougham of 25 Appian Way, thanked the School Committee and Dr. Dillon for the PARCC data presentation. She asked about the two grades at Primrose Hill School that worked with a consultant using Project Read tools last year, and if there is data on the progress for those grades. Ms. Brougham also asked about the use of end-of-year assessments at the beginning of the year, math supports that may be in place at Primrose Hill School, and the number of Title I students with IEPs. Dr. Dillon stated that using end-of-year assessments helps to identify areas of strength and need to help target instruction. She also reiterated that math supports are the same in all schools, and that it continues to be her recommendation to provide additional support for math.

Ms. Meghan Siket of 9 Highview Avenue, thanked the Administration and Committee for their hard work and applauded the fact that five District schools were commended by Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). However, she expressed concern regarding Primrose Hill School's PARCC scores

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compared to the District's other K-3 schools. Ms. Siket noted that, though there may be equality of inputs, there appears to be inequitable outputs. Ms. Siket also commented on the 2017 SurveyWorks data that indicates Primrose Hill School teachers feel classrooms are too crowded. She asked that Primrose Hill School be given all the resources it needs.

Ms. Gina Bae of 64 Governor Bradford Drive asked about co-teaching and professional development relative to closing the gap for special needs students, and about the use of Project Read with regards to writing deficiencies and vocabulary. Dr. Dillon explained about the partnership between special and general education teachers, and the professional development that is done to support this partnership. She also noted that the schools are using the Lucy Caulkins writing curriculum, which can now be found on the website.

Dr. Dillon noted that Primrose Hill School has the highest standard of error with PARCC scores. For this reason, she believes we need to be cautious making decisions based solely on this information. Nonetheless, she agrees that greater math support is warranted.

Old Business

Superintendent and Staff

Ms. Clancy provided an update on the Barrington Middle School (BMS) Building Project including confirmation, by two independent cost estimators, of the project status at \$122,000 under the \$68,400,000 approved budget, including approximately \$5,000,000 in contingencies. Construction documents are 60-70% complete. She stated that the Building Committee will continue its scrutiny of the project budget to identify efficiencies with the goal of bringing the project in under budget. The following are some of the major milestones coming up: completion of construction documents in mid-November, 2017; contractor bid and review phase in December, 2017/January, 2018; contract award in February 2018; and the start of construction in March, 2018. Ms. Clancy reported that the Building Committee anticipates confirmation of a date and time at which to hold a Community Forum in early December to share the completed plans with the community. The next meeting of the Middle School Building Committee will be held on Monday, November 13th at 7:00 p.m. at the Barrington Middle School Library.

Mr. Messore reported on the Strategic Planning Process, including an update on the October 18th Steering Committee meeting and the Committee's review and analysis of the data collected during the focus groups held on October 4 and 5. He also reported that building leaders met with Studer Education relative to school improvement goals for each school. A brief discussion ensued on the ongoing work of the Leadership team. The next Strategic Planning Steering Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 9 at 4:00 p.m. at the Barrington High School Library.

School Committee

No School Committee Old Business at this time.

New Business

Student Representative to the School Committee Update

Mr. Sarli provided the Student Representative report.

- The Hurricane Harvey Relief Dinner was a success.
- Sunrise introduced the "% Rhode Islander Test" based on local trivia and pronunciations.
- Junior students took the SAT's.
- Coffee House event on Tuesday, October 24th at 6:00 p.m. at High School.
- Highlights of Spirit Week.
- Homecoming weekend.

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Ms. Brody reported on a communication she received from Ms. Erin Schofeld, Vice Chair of Warren-Bristol Regional School Committee regarding the addition of a Student Representative to their School Committee. She stated that Mr. Sarli has volunteered to speak with Ms. Schofeld. Mr. Sarli confirmed he had corresponded with Ms. Schofeld and will be providing her feedback on his experience as the Student Representative to the Barrington School Committee.

**Superintendent and Staff
Personnel**

Mr. Messore announced the resignation of Ms. Whitney Hassett Norton, Reading Specialist, Hampden Meadows School.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

Decision Items

Ms. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Brody, Ms. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Ms. Pine voting in the affirmative.

Discussion Items

Mr. Messore stated that the next School Committee meeting will focus entirely on School Improvement Goals.

Mr. Alessandro requested that the Director of Administration and Finance provide the Committee an estimate of costs associated with additional resources that may be added after the budget approval process. Mr. Messore cautioned associating a cost to individual resources.

Dr. Douglas requested that the potential impact that classroom layout and design may have on skills development, particularly at Primrose Hill School, be explored.

Announcements

Mr. Alessandro announced that the Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition Breakfast held on October 13th was well attended and informative. He recognized and thanked Ms. Karin Wetherill for organizing the event.

Mr. Messore announced that Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) Commissioner Wagner and Deputy Commissioner Snider will be visiting Barrington Middle School tomorrow, October 20th.

Ms. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded adjournment of the regular meeting at 9:51 p.m. to convene in Executive Session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 42-46-5 (a) (3) for Discussion regarding the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Brody, Ms. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Ms. Pine voting in the affirmative.

Ms. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded adjournment of the Executive Session at 10:05 p.m., and sealing of the minutes. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Brody, Ms. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Ms. Pine voting in the affirmative.

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Ms Brody reported that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Ms. Clancy moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded adjournment of the regular meeting at 10:06 p.m. The motion passed 5-0 with Ms. Brody, Ms. Clancy, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Douglas and Ms. Pine voting in the affirmative.