

The Regular Meeting of the Brockton School Committee was held this evening in the George M. Romm Theater at Brockton High School.

Present: Mayor Balzotti, Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Mr. Robinson, Mr. Donegan, Mrs. Joyce, Mr. Carpenter, Mr. Healy, Mr. Sullivan

Note: These minutes contain a summary of the meeting and list items that were under discussion.

Mr. Minichiello called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

Hearing of Visitors

Mayor Balzotti explained that during the hearing of visitors portion of the agenda, speakers should limit their comments to three minutes and that the School Committee will take comments under advisement but not respond. Messrs. Ross DePina and Charleson Monfort addressed the School Committee.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Balzotti explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda, and asked if School Committee members wished to remove any items from it.

Mr. Minichiello wished to discuss *The Gelfand Family Charitable Trust GEMS 4-Year STEM Implementation* request from Item F, Enclosure 6, p. 7; Mr. Carpenter removed Item F, Enclosure 6, page 6, specifically the Title I, II, and III grants.

Mr. Minichiello moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following remaining items from the Consent Agenda:

- *Minutes of the August 13, 2013 Regular School Committee Meeting*
- *Minutes of the August 17, 2013 School Committee Retreat*
- *Report of the August 13, 2013 Finance Subcommittee Meeting*
- *Certified and Non-Certified Appointments*
- *Notification of Personnel Action: LOA, Resignations, Retirements*
- *Authorization to Submit the following:*
 - *No Child Left Behind Federal Entitlement and Allocations Grant*
 - *Federal Special Education Entitlement*
 - *Perkins Act Allocation Grant Program – Secondary*

Voted: to approve the Superintendent's recommendation, unanimous.

Mr. Minichiello asked Karen Watts, Grants Manager, to give an overview of the Gelfand Trust and the prior involvement that the district has had with this foundation. Mrs. Watts explained that the 4-year STEM Grant was introduced in 2010. Gelfand Endeavor in Massachusetts Schools (GEMS) has provided funding for, among other things, two science labs in the middle schools, a planning grant to implement a districtwide STEM initiative in all K-12 schools, curriculum and professional development, middle school science fairs over the past three years, and expansion of the science fair to include elementary schools this year. Mr. Minichiello said it is great that the district is seeking to partner with these types of organizations that bring funding for facilities and programs that the school department does not have money in the budget for.

Mr. Minichiello moved to authorize the submission of the Gelfand Charity Trust GEMS 4-Year STEM Implementation Grant.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Mr. Carpenter asked for clarification with regard to what impact Brockton's percentage of free or reduced lunches has on the Title I, II, and III grants. Mr. Petronio, Executive Director of Financial Services, responded that all of these grants would be affected. Mr. Petronio then went on to explain the steps the school department is taking to increase the number of returns processed by October 1st:

- Inputting has been moved to the Crosby Computer lab; day and evening staff will be processing the forms, hopefully within 48 hours of receipt,
- A raffle will be conducted again as incentive to parents and students,

- More outreach is being done - community outreach was done over the summer at various city events and will be done at the open houses, educating parents on the importance of completing these forms,
- Rejected applications will be “triaged” to further research eligibility
- Director of Student Information Systems is coordinating direct certification from the state

Mrs. Joyce asked Mr. Petronio about the Universal Free Lunch program that Boston Public Schools is piloting, she would like to explore this for Brockton. Mr. Petronio said that he met with the State over the summer with regard to this program; Brockton’s direct certification numbers will be important in determining whether the program will be feasible in Brockton. Mrs. Joyce said that if Brockton could find a way to do this without jeopardizing funding, it would be good for the students.

Superintendent’s Report

Opening of Schools

The Superintendent was excited to report that she was able to visit Brockton High School, East Middle School, Mary Baker School, and the Keith Center on the first day of school. She felt a great sense of community at all schools and was pleased with what she saw. 15,134 students were present on day one, the Parent Registration Center continues registering new students with 200 students and their families showing up to register the day before opening.

Elementary, Middle Schools Report

Elizabeth Barry, Executive Director of Learning and Teaching PreK-8, reported that she was pleased with the opening of schools at both middle and elementary levels. She announced that East Middle School’s new science lab will debut this month, utilizing “direct funding” from a \$2,000 grant from Big Lots. The free, highly-regarded Empower Yourself after-school program has expanded from two schools last year to now include students from all middle schools.

At the elementary level, Mrs. Barry reported that the schools were orderly and clean and she complimented the staff for their collegiality and professionalism, which aided in the smooth openings. She announced the administrative appointments that were made at several schools. Mrs. Barry stated that the PBIS behavior incentive program has been adopted in all K-5 schools this year, including the Barrett Russell. She reported that informational packets for all pre-K and kindergarten parents have been mailed out in preparing for the kindergarten opening on September 18th.

Ms. Sharon Wolder, Principal of Brockton High School, stated that attendance was 91%, with 1,200 freshmen enrolled. Mr. Donegan asked about the attendance percentage and Ms. Wolder responded that it is normal to have lower attendance numbers on the first day.

Dr. Terrasi gave a brief report on the programs at Keith Center-- the Russell School, Pathways Center, and Champion School. He said that staff at the Russell School will follow up on the low attendance percentage (60%), they will call all students who did not show up on the first day. He announced that two new courses will begin at the Keith Center on Monday, in partnership with Massasoit Community College. He also announced that one of the Russell students was publicly recognized by the Department of Education for writing a winning rap entry for a statewide poetry contest.

Common Core

The Superintendent announced that she will be providing school principals with a timeline describing what has happened in the Brockton Public Schools over the past three years in preparation for implementation of the Common Core Standards curriculum and the PARCC assessment. She will ask principals to share with their school community, including parents. She also highlighted the ongoing Parent Academies that Brockton uses to share and inform parents of what their children are learning and doing in school.

Educator Evaluation Update

The Superintendent said she is pleased to report that implementation of the Educator Evaluation Tool has begun. Leadership teams have been trained; these teams will now go back to the buildings throughout the district to train staff with regard to the new evaluation tool. Dr. Kathleen Moran, Executive Director of Human Resources, added

that principals were asked to introduce their training teams to their staff at the first building meeting; she said that she will continue to monitor implementation throughout the year.

Barrett Russell School Renovations

Mr. Michael Thomas, Executive Director of Operations, reported that the school is on-target to open on September 18th. An open house is planned for Tuesday, September 10, 2013, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.; Mr. Thomas said the furniture and “clutter” that is in the hallways will be cleared by that date. Mrs. Joyce reported that she and other School Committee members toured the school last week and that they were very impressed at how “welcoming” the school felt; she thanked the Facilities Department for the work that has been done at the school. Mr. Minichiello stated that, because the nearby park is heavily used by various groups, he would like to see more trash barrels around the park and he expressed his concern about appropriate supervision during afternoon dismissal. The Superintendent stated that she is very happy with the progress at the school.

Transportation Update

Mr. Thomas reported that as usual, buses were behind on day one. He has asked the bus company to be sure that the drivers wait a few extra minutes at each stop for the next five days. There are approximately 8,200 students on 49 buses, and 51 vans. This is an increase of 5 buses, which will be used to transport students to the Barrett Russell School, and one additional van.

Mr. Carpenter asked Mr. Thomas about the summer gymnasium projects at East and South middle schools; Mr. Thomas responded that the work is in progress and the gyms will be painted, floors refurbished, and new high-tech bleachers will be installed during the month of September, and that they would like to do the same next year at North and West middle schools.

Mr. Thomas said that other projects, including electrical upgrades in all schools without air conditioning, the biotech lab at BHS, an outdoor café at the Davis School, new carpeting in the library at the Hancock School, have been completed. Mr. Sullivan thanked Mr. Thomas for accomplishing all of these projects.

Items to Refer to Subcommittee

Mr. Healy suggested that the School Committee consider a Facilities Subcommittee meeting to begin planning for facility usage, Mr. Carpenter, who chairs that committee, responded that the School Committee’s plan is to work with the Superintendent this year on a master plan, looking at the use of all of our facilities. Mrs. Smith said that after the October 1st enrollment figure is determined, the master plan must be addressed, sooner rather than later, in preparation for the upcoming school year.

Mr. Carpenter asked that a review of the Edison Academy Student Handbook be brought to a Policy subcommittee meeting, to give the newly hired principal an opportunity to propose some changes to the handbook.

New Business

Mr. Donegan said he was pleased to see that six Brockton residents were hired since the August 13th School Committee meeting; he welcomed them, as well as all other new hires.

Mr. Donegan asked the Superintendent if the principal of the Huntington School could give an update to the School Committee with regard to the Bridgewater State University/Huntington School Partnership. The Superintendent replied that she intends to highlight all of the schools at the school committee meetings, including the Huntington School.

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD
Secretary/Superintendent

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