

The Regular Meeting of the Brockton School Committee was held this evening in the George M. Romm Little Theatre at Brockton High School at seven o'clock.

Present: Mayor Carpenter, Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Mr. Henningson; Mr. Jordan; Mrs. Joyce; Mr. Robinson; Mrs. Sullivan; Mrs. Smith, Secretary

Absent: Ms. Wilson

Also Present: Executive Team Members

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

Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Carpenter explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda, and asked if School Committee members wished to remove any items. Mr. Minichiello requested Item C, Donation of Printers to the George School, be removed for discussion.

Mrs. Joyce moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- Approval of August 18, 2015 Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes
- Approval of August 18, 2015 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Report
- Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Appointments – Certified and Non-Certified
- Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Actions: Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements

Voted: to adopt the recommendation, unanimous.

Mayor Carpenter invited Mr. Minichiello to discuss Item C; Mr. Minichiello said he is always pleased to acknowledge donations made to the schools, he thanked parent Christine Duncan and the Boston Westin Hotel for the printers.

Mr. Minichiello moved to accept the donation.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Superintendent's Report

Opening of Schools Report

The Superintendent reported the following: 1,331 certified staff reported for work on Tuesday, including 22 new teachers, 19 positions are still unfilled. Total enrollment is 16,748, including 1,299 kindergarten students. Districtwide attendance was 93.37%.

The Superintendent said at the George Elementary School the traffic was well managed but she could still not get in to the school until later in the morning, at East Middle School class sizes were larger than she would have liked but students were engaged in learning when she arrived. She said she will wait until closer to the October 1st cutoff date to have a conversation about class sizes across the district. The Superintendent thanked teachers for always coming through and making this a great school opening. She also reported that she attended Freshman Orientation at BHS on Monday, where over 1,200 freshmen and their parents were welcomed, given tours, and met housemasters and other staff.

Elementary Schools

Mrs. Saba-Maguire reported that it was a great opening at the elementary level, the Raymond School is piloting uniforms and it was well received, many students showed up for school proudly wearing uniforms. She reported that she attended a professional development for kindergarten teachers as they prepare to pilot "Reaching for Reading", she will be watching closely to see if this is something the district will want to implement systemwide. She was able to visit the Downey School which had a smooth opening, and received only positive reports from administrators who visited the other elementary schools. At the Huntington School, new Principal Diane Lynch and staff were greeted with a surprise from FoxNews, who showed up to present grade 3 teacher Mindy Redmond with \$500 toward a set of books for her classroom. Mrs. Saba-Maguire reported that schools will now begin meeting kindergarten students and families as assessments begin in preparation for kindergarten opening.

Middle Schools

Dr. Murray reported that, overall, middle schools had a great opening day. There were no reports of transportation issues; he stated that class sizes are large, middle school principals are all very proud of their teachers. Dr. Murray said staff and students are very excited about the return of middle school sports. He mentioned that there is interest at the middle school level for uniforms, they would be a welcome addition and alleviate a lot of angst and anxiety among students at that level.

Mrs. Barry added that she paid particular attention to how schools addressed the incoming sixth grade "anxiety", at the Ashfield School she saw that once everyone was in their homerooms, grade six students had the hallways to themselves to find their way around. At East Middle School, she was impressed by the welcome given to the many students who transferred in as a result of the Raymond School's reconfiguration to a K-5 school. Mr. Minichiello commented that he spoke with a middle school counselor who told him that he sensed a drop in morale last year with loss of middle school sports, the students love the competition and it promotes school spirit, as well as being a motivator to many kids to come to school. He said this was the biggest concern he heard last year from parents.

Mrs. Sullivan said she saw pictures of children eating outside in the outdoor cafes and asked how many schools have them, Mr. Thomas responded.

Alternative Schools

Mrs. Barry reported that Dr. Terrasi visited the Keith Center which houses the Champion, Pathways and Russell schools, approximately 100 students were present. There have been staff reductions at the Keith Center and they are implementing a new master schedule intending to maximize use of staff, all in all it was a good first day there. At the Goddard School, Mrs. Barry reported that she visited the Goddard School to find Principal Lander preparing a science lesson; she was happy to have a districtwide science coordinator who came in to give support. The Superintendent said this is why "vertical articulation" is important and she is pleased that Brockton has this model in place at all levels.

Brockton High School

Principal Wolder reported the opening was "better than the best". She credited that in part to the extensive planning for freshmen: there were 75 student mentors, members of the Cape Verdean Association and SHUPP (South Shore Haitians United for Progress) and parent advocates there to meet the families and provide support. She thanked the custodial staff for doing a phenomenal job making the school look better than it has in years, and for the willingness to help with anything that was asked of them. At the end of the day, there were no complaints and no one was returned by the buses.

Superintendent Smith complimented Empower Yourself students at BHS for the beautiful lanyards they are making and selling as part of their entrepreneurship.

The Superintendent said the substitute budget was increased this year, but will be watched very closely. Permanent substitutes have been placed at the high school to make sure the content level subjects are covered,

Deputy Superintendent of Operations Report

Mr. Thomas reported the following: 10,743 lunches were served; 50 buses and 50 vans transported just over 9000 students across the districts with the usual expected, first-day delays; he was happy to report that First Student upgraded a large part of their fleet with vehicles that are 2010 or newer; the Davis modular rehab was well received, two pod build-outs at Raymond are finished and people were happy; all buildings looked good--they were safe and clean, some lighting was upgraded.

Mr. Minichiello asked Mr. Thomas for an update on the pod build-outs. Mr. Thomas reported that five out of seven at the Davis are complete, four out of seven at the Raymond are complete, with plans to finish these schools by the summer. He said he would like to begin the build-out of the Downey School pods next summer as well.

The Superintendent acknowledged the hard work done in the Human Resources Office by Dr. Kathleen Moran and supervisors Matt Beals, Tracy Holland, Elise Martineu and staff. They have been working diligently since May, placing over 90 teachers that were involuntarily transferred, with the additional burden of the fingerprinting requirement, and they have done an excellent job.

The Superintendent thanked the Mayor and School Committee for their commitment to support the school district, she said although Brockton is a very large school district on a tight budget, we are still able to provide all students with access to transportation, sports, clubs, art and music and many other programs without having to charge a fee.

Superintendent Smith said she attended the inauguration of Dr. Fred Clark, a native Brocktonian, as the new Bridgewater State University President on Tuesday. Mayor Carpenter also attended and invited everyone to attend a reception for Dr. Clark at City Hall on Thursday; he said BSU has been a great partner to the City and school district.

Items to Refer to Subcommittee

Superintendent Smith said there are a few policies that need to be updated at subcommittee, and she would like to set the retreat date before the end of September. Mr. Minichiello said he will schedule a Superintendent's Contract subcommittee meeting once school committee members complete the Superintendent's evaluation, hopefully by the end of this week.

New Business

Mr. Henningson thanked the public for the generous donations of school supplies to the annual drive. This year he will give the donated items to the Huntington, Davis, and George schools and hopefully next year, he will be able to donate to three more.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD
Secretary
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