

Brockton, Massachusetts

Regular Meeting

May 18, 2010

The Regular Meeting of the Brockton School Committee was held this evening in the Theatre of the Dr. William H. Arnone School at seven-thirty o'clock.

Present: Mayor Balzotti, Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Mr. Bath; Mrs. Beyer; Mrs. Joyce; Mr. Carpenter; Mr. Daley; Mr. Sullivan; Dr. Malone, Secretary

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

Mayor Balzotti called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. followed by a salute to the flag.

### **Hearing of Visitors**

Carine Sauvignon, Director of the Gateway to College Program at Massasoit Community College, provided handouts to the School Committee regarding the Gateway Program, as well as inviting Committee members to attend the upcoming graduation at the Massasoit Conference Center.

Due to the number of people who signed the Hearing of Visitors sheet this evening, Mayor Balzotti announced that she would call people to the microphone according to the subject matter on which they requested to speak.

### *Two-Way Program*

The following individuals spoke on the benefits and continuance of the Brockton Public Schools *Two-Way Program*: Curt Wilson, Roy Walker, Renee O. Miller, Anna, Alee, Jamie and Wendy Winkler, Deliny Lopez, Bruce Dansby, Catherine Heggarty and Jay Sullivan.

### *BHS Fine Arts Budget Cuts*

Individuals who spoke on the Fine Arts budget cuts and the benefits of a performing arts program were: Jeffrey Bird, Jessica Cunningham, Sarah Walsh, Garret Merhej (and friend/student Phillip), and James Foley.

### **Recess**

At 8:17 p.m., Mayor Balzotti called a brief recess in the Hearing of Visitors to allow those who had spoken to leave the theatre due to her concern to *not* violate Fire Department laws.

### **Reconvene**

### *Pre School Program*

Mayor Balzotti reconvened the meeting after five minutes, and called upon Susan Wood and Diane Sullivan, both proponents of the preschool program being located at the Gilmore School, asking the School Committee not to change their position regarding same. Both Ms. Wood and Ms. Sullivan said that the Gilmore has far better amenities for the children, i.e., bathrooms, a gymnasium, a playground, and an auditorium.

### *BPS Libraries*

Nancy Tucker, Maranda Davids and Sue Doherty, all librarians, spoke on keeping the libraries open in the Brockton Public Schools. They provided the periodical, *School Libraries Work!*, which also included a separate insert titled, *Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners.*

*Raymond School*

Lori Lovering, parent, and Karleen Fernandes, former Raymond School student, addressed the School Committee and Superintendent on the subject of keeping the Raymond School open.

Others who spoke were: Paula Minchello, DECA instructor, regarding budget cuts in the BHS Business Education Program; Eleri Merrikin, science teacher, regarding budget cuts in the science program; and Scott Holmes, At-Large member of the CSAB, who spoke on behalf of the BHS Fine Arts programs and suggested that future School Committee meetings be held in larger venues.

The *Hearing of Visitors* portion of the meeting ended at 8:50 p.m.

**Student/Advisor  
Recognitions**

At this time, Mayor Balzotti moved to **Enclosure #10**, *Recognition of Students and Approval for Participation in the National History Day Competition, June 13 – 17, 2010*.

*Nat'l. History Day*

Dr. Malone introduced Emily Morrison and Lauren Seaver, first place state competition winners from the Plouffe Academy who will travel with their parents to the contest at the University of Maryland. The Mayor and Superintendent presented each student with a Certificate of Recognition.

Dr. Malone then introduced BHS students Jessica Analoro, state champion in the *Senior Individual Exhibit category*, and Kelsey Lynch, second place winner, also, in the *Senior Individual Exhibit category*. Both students were presented Certificates of Recognition by the Superintendent and Mayor, and they will represent Massachusetts at the contest in Maryland. Mr. Szachowicz, teacher/advisor, said that this is the 15<sup>th</sup> time that Brockton students have represented their state.

The Superintendent presented William Szachowicz with a Certificate of Recognition and thanked him for his 37 years of service to the students and Brockton Public Schools. Dr. Malone spoke on the sacrifice of teachers.

Mr. Daley moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the students participation in the above mentioned trip.

Voted: to adopt motion, unanimously

The students' work, titled, "*Women in America: Innovation and Opportunity*" and "*America's First Subway*," were on display during the School Committee meeting.

*SAC Rep*

Dr. Malone called upon Luke Flanagan, Student Advisory Council Representative to the School Committee. The Superintendent and Mayor presented him with a Certificate of Recognition for his service to the School Committee during the past year.

**Recess**

At 9:02 p.m., Mayor Balzotti called for a brief recess.

**Reconvene**

The Mayor reconvened the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

## Consent Agenda

The Mayor asked if School Committee members wished to remove any items from this evening's Consent Agenda. There being no requests to remove items, the Mayor called for a motion, and Mrs. Beyer made the motion to approve the following items listed in the Consent Agenda:

- Regular SC Meeting Minutes on May 4, 2010
- Chief Supervisor of Attendance Report, April 2010
- **BPS Field Trips:**
  - Grade 5 George School, Canobie Lake Park, NH, on 6/9/10
  - BHS Science Club, Horseneck Beach, Westport, MA, on 6/11-12/10
  - West Middle Grade 8, Canobie Lak Park, NH, on 6/18/10
  - BHS JROTC to Devens Reserve Forces Training newar Ayer, MA, from 6/21-25/2010
  - Davis Grade 8, Canobie Lake Park, NH, on 6/14/2010
  - Ashfield Grades 6 and 7, Canobie Lake Park, NH, 6/10/2010
  - Raymond School Grades 6 and 7, Canobie Lake Park, NH, 6/10/2010
- Submission of Coordinated Family & Community Engagement RFP, and expenditure of funds
- Bid Review Subcommittee Reports of May 4 and 11, 2010, including awarding of FY2011 bids to the vendors (attached)
- Finance Subcommittee Reports of May 5 and 11, 2010
- Notification of Personnel Action (Resignation and Retirement)

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimously

## Communication

Election Commission

John McGarry, Executive Director of the Elections Commission, has requested the use of the following schools as polling places for the 2010 election cycle, specifically, September 14 and November 2, 2010: Ashfield, Brookfield, Davis, Downey, East, Gilmore, Hancock, Huntington, Kennedy, North, Raymond, South and West.

Mr. Daley moved to allow the Elections Commission to use the listed schools as polling places for the 2010 election cycle.

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimously

## School Choice/ 2010-2011

The School Choice Law contained in the Education Reform Act of 1993 presumes that each School Committee will admit non-resident students under the School Choice Program unless there is a vote to the contrary by June 1 of each year following a Public Hearing on the issue of whether or not to participate.

Last year, the School Committee voted to continue the current structure of up to fifty (50) seats for interdistrict students at Brockton High School, with no more than ten (10) non-resident students in Grade 9 and the remaining forty (40) students assigned in Grades 10 – 12.

The Public Hearing on School Choice was held on May 18, 2010, at 7 p.m. in the Theatre of the Dr. William H. Arnone School, 135 Belmont Street, Brockton, MA.

Mr. Daley moved to continue what is currently in place for School Choice in the Brockton Public Schools, as listed above.

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimously

**BPS Revised  
Mission Statement**

Dr. Malone stated that, at the winter Retreat of the Brockton School Committee, it was requested that the Brockton Public Schools Mission Statement be rewritten. The Superintendent then organized a task force comprised of faculty, staff, administrators, School Committee members and parents to rewrite the Mission Statement. The task force met over the last three months, and the group worked diligently to develop a mission/vision/values statement that conveys the purpose of the Brockton Public Schools.

Dr. Malone recognized the Task Force members, and called upon Sharon Wolder, BHS Housemaster and member of the Task Force, who said that the group looked at what was in the best interest of the students, and reviewed the revised Mission Statement for School Committee members.

The Superintendent said that the rewriting of the Mission Statement was one of the best assignments he has been involved in, and looks forward to working with the group, again, on other projects in the future.

Mrs. Joyce then made the motion to accept the revised BPS Mission Statement.

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimously

**Learning & Teaching**

Dr. Malone informed the School Committee of the following ongoing activities in Learning and Teaching in the Brockton Public Schools:

*Good News/BHS*

Brockton High School has been selected for the National Association of Secondary School Principals/Center for Secondary School Redesign at Brown for their national Secondary School Showcase next February in San Francisco.

BHS' reputation for outstanding student achievement has earned them visits from 12 different states. Recently, the school was visited by Upper Darby Pennsylvania and Cortland, NY. Those who visited said that BHS is a remarkable place and wished the same successes for their schools.

*MCAS*

Spring MCAS testing for Math grades 3 – 8 and grade 10 are now being administered. Students in grades 5 and 8 are also taking Science and Technology MCAS tests. Principals have reported students are focused and trying very hard. Most school sites report that attendance has been very good. Testing concludes May 27<sup>th</sup>.

### *TAG Selection*

The Brockton Public Schools is in the final stages of the selection process for placement in the grade 4 TAG program at the Angelo School. Student selection consists of a two phase process. In Phase One, students are screened on the basis of achievement and ability test data, as well as teacher recommendations, resulting in a pool of candidates who proceed to Phase Two.

In Phase Two, students participate in a series of performance tasks which are administered and assessed by teachers from the TAG program. Final selection is based on points earned in both phases.

Three classes of students will be recommended for entry into the grade 4 TAG program. Students not selected initially will be placed on a "wait" list should program openings occur. Dr. Malone visited the process with Mr. Jerome last week.

### *East Middle School Make-up Time*

- 1) April 4<sup>th</sup> flooding of EMS' NStar vault room, causing a probable safety hazard, forced the one day closing of the school
- 2) April 5<sup>th</sup> NStar/Clean Harbors pumped 25,000 gallons of hazardous waste (oil & water) from the building
- 3) Petition to Commissioner of Elementary & Secondary Education, Mitchell Chester, for a one day waiver from the statewide 180 day school year requirement was denied although, technically no loss of "Time-On-Learning" would result from the one closed day...as EMS (and all of our Middle Schools) already far exceeds the recommended ESE requirement of 990 hours

In order to comply, EMS...

- 1) with BEA's cooperation, remained open for 1 hr. 40 m. (100 additional minutes) on May 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, thereby totaling for the SY 2009 -2010 1,031.75 hours of instructional time
- 2) activities focused on numeracy & literacy in the extended time
- 3) cost to BPS was \$18,000.

### *BPS RIF Notices*

Dr. Malone announced that, yesterday, 430 Brockton Public Schools teachers received Reduction In Force (RIF) or non-renewal notices. Without question, it was one of the darkest days our school system has ever seen. Yet our staff, he said, showed great professionalism and class; despite the devastating news that many received, they returned to their classrooms and continued to provide their students with the high quality education that Brockton is known for.

The Superintendent said that the School System has absorbed millions of dollars worth of cuts in the past five years. He said we've tightened our belts, redirected resources, and, even though we've lost more than 200 teaching positions through attrition, we have been able to provide the best urban education in the Commonwealth. The \$9.7 million deficit we now face will have to be made up in personal services, which represents 80 percent of our budget.

Dr. Malone commended Mayor Linda Balzotti for her support; she was able to find an added \$3 million for the school department, reducing the cuts from a catastrophic \$12.8 million deficit. The School Committee and Superintendent are working diligently to lessen the impact on learning and find ways to keep our schools functioning in a productive manner.

We hope that as the budget process continues, Dr. Malone said, we will be able to call back more than half the teachers who received notices yesterday. Still, we recognize that this is devastating news for some of the hardest working and most productive educators in the country.

Dr. Malone said that in the coming weeks, we will also have to give notice to hundreds more paraprofessionals, custodians, administrators and secretaries who make our schools operate smoothly. Those losses will be felt, keenly.

Dr. Malone said that this is a situation that is being replicated across the country, and we know that, as the economy rebounds, so, too, will our schools and our city. In the meantime, he said, we will do what we have always done: we will put the needs of our students first.

Dr. Malone then proceeded to describe for the School Committee the reduced foundation formula which has caused BPS to receive less money than in the past, per pupil.

Dr. Malone said that BPS will continue its quest for reimbursement for the 128 Haitian students who have enrolled since the earthquake last January. The petition letter originally composed for Governor Patrick will be rewritten and will focus on the additional Haitian student population.

At this time, Mr. Minichiello moved to draft a letter/petition to send to the *federal* legislators, referencing the letter to the Governor and state legislators regarding the Haitian students.

Voted: to accept motion, unanimously

Dr. Malone then announced that Representative Geraldine Creedon informed him of her filing an amendment for funding on the Haitian student situation. He said that he appreciated her leadership on this bill.

## **Huntington School Redesign**

Dr. Malone called upon Principal June Saba of the Huntington School to give the PowerPoint presentation on the Huntington School Redesign. Ms. Saba introduced the Huntington team members assisting with the presentation: Marybeth O'Brien, Grade 4 teacher; Melissa Henry, K teacher; Diane Chase, Grade 4 teacher; Natalie Pohl, RRS, Administrative Intern and Kelly Smith, Grade 2 teacher.

The presentation covered: Theory of Action; Mission; Vision; Core Values; Community Service Projects by Grade Level; Uniforms; Professional Development; Accountability/Instructional Rounds; and Extended Learning Time school hours and sample schedules.

Ms. Saba said that next year's plans include an on-sight clinic with the help of BAMS, Dr. Terrasi and John Snelgrove, as well as an adult English Language Learners program, through the assistance of the Community Schools Program.

Ms. Saba thanked her ILT members, Dr. Cancell and the Executive Team for their support.

Mr. Minichiello said that the Huntington School staff enthusiasm and energy are evident, and he said that the School Committee recognizes what Ms. Saba and her staff are trying to do. School Committee members thanked Ms. Saba for an informative presentation.

Dr. Malone said that he will bring the Huntington School team back on an upcoming School Committee agenda to continue the work.

Mr. Minichiello moved the Superintendent's recommendation to accept the report, as presented.

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimously

**Finance Subcommittee** Mr. Minichiello announced that the Finance Subcommittee met this evening to hear a report on the BPS food service program presented by the Chartwells Dining Food Service Provider. Chartwells has managed the food service program since July 1, 2006.

Mr. Minichiello moved to accept the report given by Chartwells, to continue the current contract into FY2011 based on conditions and assumptions presented on the evening of May 18, 2010, and to accept the guarantee, as presented.

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimously

## **FY2011 Budget**

Dr. Malone called upon Aldo Petronio, Executive Director of Financial Services, who distributed a handout containing information useful to the School Committee in preparation for the Finance Subcommittee meeting on May 20, 2010. Mr. Petronio also gave a brief description of the materials and provided rulers to the School Committee, as well.

Dr. Malone said that these materials were being provided for the School Committee's deliberation on Thursday evening and are being shared with them as subcommittee members for their review. The materials are working documents.

Dr. Malone said that this is a transparent process, and invites School Committee members to call or see him, individually, at any time. He said that his administrative team has placed a lot of hard work into preparing the budget preparation materials handed out this evening.

Mr. Minichiello moved to accept the FY2011 Budget report, as presented.

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimously

## **New Business**

Mr. Bath stated that the Superintendent, two weeks ago, made an incredible and magnanimous gesture to forego his evaluation for the completion of the budget process and commended Dr. Malone for doing so.

Mr. Sullivan informed the School Committee that he wished to add to the June 1, 2010 School Committee Regular Meeting Agenda his intent to rescind the motion made and adopted under New Business at the April 13, 2010, which reads, “...*to combine all early childhood education and move it to the Gilmore Academy facility, and keep the Huntington School open.*”

Mayor Balzotti, Chair, stated that Mr. Sullivan’s request to rescind the abovementioned motion was duly noted and would be added to the June 1, 2010 School Committee regular meeting agenda under *Unfinished Business*.

Mr. Minichiello also commended the Superintendent for prolonging his evaluation. He said that some may or may not know that the Superintendent stated that he would not take any compensation if School Committee offered it as a result of the evaluation process, which was also mentioned in the budget process for other administrators. He said that he appreciated the Superintendent putting the budget first, and, as a bookkeeping matter, there will be a follow up with legal counsel so that everything is done in writing to protect the Superintendent and School Committee, and be within the letter of the law. We appreciate you putting the budget first in order to meet a deadline over your contractual agreement with us, said Mr. Minichiello.

Mrs. Beyer commented on the success of the Spelling Bee and reviewed the remaining schedule.

Mayor Balzotti took a moment to thank everyone who worked this evening, and said to expect upcoming School Committee meetings to be lengthy. She reminded members of the Public Hearing on Budget, at 7 p.m., in the BHS auditorium, on June 1, 2010.

Mayor Balzotti also said that she would entertain a motion on changing the June 1, 2010, Regular School Committee Meeting. Mr. Minichiello moved to change the date of the June 1, 2010 Regular Meeting of the School Committee to June 2, 2010, at 7:30 p.m., in the BHS auditorium.

Voted: to accept motion, unanimously



**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew H. Malone, Ph. D.  
Secretary

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