

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, Mr. Carpenter, Mrs. Joyce, Mr. Healy, Mr. Sullivan, Mrs. Smith, 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 7:00 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

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 spoke briefly about Item C, John C. Thomas Memorial Scholarship, because grew up in the Ashfield School district near Mr. Thomas. He said that Mr. Thomas, an Olympic medalist, was a very humble and “understated” man who was a role model to all who knew him and very deserving of this recognition. Mr. Minichiello said that he never knew Mr. Thomas was a legendary track and field star and a two-time Olympic medalist, because he never spoke about his accomplishments. Mayor Balzotti agreed, adding that he was great community partner as well, he served the city on the Library Board of Trustees.

Mr. Sullivan asked to remove Items D and E from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

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

- *September 18, 2013 Regular SC Meeting*
- *September 18, 2013 Policy Subcommittee Meeting Report*
- *John C. Thomas Memorial Athletic Scholarship*
- *Notification of Personnel Appointments*
- *Notification of Personnel Action: Leaves of Absence; Resignation, & Retirements*

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

Mr. Sullivan referred to Item D, the donation from School on Wheels and expressed his appreciation for the donation of bus passes for the students at the Champion School. He then referred to Item E, the donation from Columbia Gas Company of Massachusetts to the Raymond School of \$1,000, in addition to backpacks and school supplies, thanking them for their generous donation. The Superintendent added that the donation from School on Wheels helped to provide transportation for the Champion students, and that any donation to our schools helps the principals to be able to do more for the student body.

Mr. Sullivan then moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approved Item D and Item E from the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded.

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

Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent began by introducing her "coach", Dr. Jim Marini. She said that as part of the Superintendent Induction Program, a year-long training for new superintendents which is supported by Race to the Top money, each new superintendent is assigned a mentor/coach who will spend eight hours per month with their mentee.

Introduction of Student Representative

The Superintendent was pleased to introduce Miss Jessica Freeborn, a sophomore at BHS, as the Student Representative on the School Committee. Mrs. Smith said she wants Jessica to be active participant at the School Committee meetings, and the Committee will be expecting to hear from her at each meeting. The Superintendent announced Mr. Derrick Monteiro will serve as Jessica's alternate. Jessica addressed the Committee briefly, saying it was a great honor to be selected to serve on the School Committee. Mrs. Joyce stated that she is looking forward to input from Jessica, that this will be the first time the student representative would have a "voice" at the meetings.

JROTC Presentation by Colonel Tripp

The Superintendent requested that the JROTC presentation be taken out of order. She then invited Colonel Robert Tripp to give a power point presentation.

Colonel Tripp's began by saying that the last time he was invited to speak before the School Committee was in 1995. His presentation included an history of the program, curriculum requirements, some of the activities and service projects that cadets participate in, and brief summary of the funding. Colonel Tripp emphasized that part of the mission statement is to teach the *responsibility of citizenship*, that each person needs to "give back". He clarified that no military obligation comes with participating in the program.

He introduced his replacement, Colonel Robert DeYeso, and current Instructor MSG (Master Sergeant) Dana Clark.

Mr. Minichiello expressed his appreciation for the great strides that have been made in the program under Colonel Tripp's leadership. He welcomed Colonel DeYeso and recognized MSG Clark's continued contribution to the program.

Colonel Tripp thanked the School Committee for the strong support that the School Committee has given for the JROTC program, and stated that the success of the program under his leadership is a result of the cooperative effort between the Mayor, Superintendent, and the School Committee. He announced that he received notification that, for the 14th year, the BHS JROTC program was awarded *Honorable Distinction* by the U.S. Army, the highest distinction given.

At this time Mayor Balzotti and the Superintendent presented Colonel Tripp with a Certificate of Appreciation for his 19 years in the program, his dedication and commitment to the students.

October 1, 2013 Enrollment Report

The Superintendent invited Mr. John Jerome, Deputy Superintendent, to give the report on the October 1st enrollment figures.

Mr. Jerome began by stating that Parent Registration Center reported 17, 295 students enrolled to date, but these are not the final numbers that will be reported to the DESE, there is still some refining to be done. Mr. Jerome referred the School Committee to a handout with detailed figures, and briefly explained with a power point presentation.

Mr. Jerome highlighted the following:

- The lower numbers in kindergarten class size are a result of the opening of the Barrett Russell School with thirteen kindergarten classrooms
- There are 45 additional seats remaining, which is more than we have had in the past
- Lower numbers in grade 1 class sizes across the district are a result of moving some kindergarten classrooms out of some of the schools, to the Barrett Russell

Mrs. Joyce asked Mr. Jerome whether a 14th classroom could be opened at the Barrett Russell to further accommodate kindergarten enrollment, Mr. Jerome responded no, there was no room. She asked if adding to the Gilmore was an option, to which Mr. Jerome responded yes, there are available kindergarten seats at the Gilmore School that can be filled. Mrs. Joyce expressed her concern about the high grade 1 numbers at the Davis School; Mr. Jerome responded that he expects to see relief for that in the next school year, as a result of the lower kindergarten numbers this year. There was a brief discussion about class sizes of 27 and 28 students and what can be done to remedy the problem. Mrs. Joyce and Mr. Donegan both felt that it would be good if some of the students in those crowded classrooms at the Davis could be moved to the Downey or the Baker, because the class sizes there are much lower; Mr. Jerome answered with some obstacles to moving children from one school to another once they have been seated.

Mr. Jerome addressed the remainder of the spreadsheet, clarifying the numbers for the TAG (talented and gifted) program at the Angelo and the actual class sizes at the middle schools. He summarized by stating that the numbers will be adjusted daily to bring Infinite Campus enrollment figures and Parent Registration Center numbers together, and was pleased that this year the numbers differ by only 75 – 80, whereas previous years have been off by hundreds. He reminded the School Committee about how Chapter 70 funding is calculated, stating that he feels confident about funding because of the good job that Mr. Petronio has done processing lunch forms to meet the October 1 deadline.

The Superintendent added that over the past two years enrollment grew by roughly 500 students each year, an additional 500 students this year, and 463 last year. She added that she hoped Committee members have had a chance to visit the Barrett Russell. She said a report from the Parent Registration Center will be presented in the near future with regard to this year's registration process; at that time she would like to look at the report to assess what can be done to improve the process for parents and staff.

MCAS 2013 Results

The Superintendent announced that the results were released just over a week ago; a data presentation by Dr. Ethan Cancell is planned for the October 15th meeting, at which time the Committee will receive detailed information and have the opportunity to ask questions. Mrs. Smith stated that the district leaders are just starting to digest all of the information, and shared some highlights, adding that she was “speaking with caution”. She reported that the two focus schools, East Middle and the Huntington, have seen impressive gains and the efforts at these schools have paid off, and the Arnone School made noteworthy gains.

Superintendent’s Transition Team Report

The Superintendent reported that on September 19th all Transition Team members were brought together—representatives from businesses, community, colleges, Chamber of Commerce, BPS leadership, to develop a three to five-year strategic plan for the Brockton Public Schools. She has scheduled Superintendent Forums at the middle schools on four Wednesdays in October, at which the community is invited to come and share ideas, concerns and feedback. These forums will be broadcast on local cable television for those who cannot attend.

Mrs. Smith mentioned in brief that BPS has been selected by the Department of Education to undergo a *District Review*, and she will have more to report going forward.

Items to Refer to Subcommittee

Mr. Minichiello asked to schedule a Curriculum Subcommittee meeting on Tuesday, October 8th at 7:00 p.m. The Superintendent will notify members of the location.

Unfinished Business

Mayor Balzotti reported that at the August 13th School Committee meeting, Mr. Scott Holmes and Ms. Jean Mech presented the Community Schools Advisory Board 5-Year Strategic Plan; approval from the School Committee is required in order for the Board to move forward with the plan.

Mr. Minichiello motioned to approve the Community Schools Advisory Board 5-Year Strategic Plan as presented at the August 13th Regular School Committee Meeting. The motion was seconded.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

New Business

Mr. Sullivan asked whether the negotiations with First Student and their drivers was resolved; the Superintendent responded that negotiations are continuing, and that she is in contact with Mr. Quinlan from First Student as needed. She added that she is pleased that the buses are “rolling”, adding that Brockton does have a contingency plan in place to ensure that the schools would have minimal disruption.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD
Secretary/Superintendent
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