

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

Present: Mayor Carpenter, Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Mr. Robinson, Ms. Clark, Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Joyce, Mr. Healy, Mr. Henningson, Superintendent Smith, Secretary

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

Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

## Consent Agenda

Mayor Carpenter explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda, and asked if there were any items School Committee members wished to remove for discussion.

Mr. Minichiello asked that Item C, the Minutes of the February 1, 2014 School Committee Retreat, be removed for discussion.

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

- *January 21, 2014 Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes*
- *January 28, 2014 Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee Meeting Report.*
- *December 3, 2013 Minutes of the CSAB Meeting*
- *January 29, 2014 Accounts Review Subcommittee Meeting Report*
- *Ken Snelgrove Memorial Scholarship*
- *BHS JROTC Out-of-State Field Trip to Fresh Meadows, NY, March 8, 2014*
- *Chief Supervisor of Attendance Report for January, 2014*
- *Notification of Personnel Appointments: Certified, Non-Certified*
- *Notification of Personnel Actions: Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements*

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

With respect to the minutes of the February 1, 2014 School Committee Retreat, Mr. Minichiello stated that the Mayor, Superintendent, School Committee members and district administrators had the opportunity to discuss many significant issues facing the district. He said the meeting was very productive and he felt that, going forward, the Committee will work well together for the good of the district.

**Mr. Minichiello then moved to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2014 School Committee Retreat.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

## Superintendent's Report

The following details Ms. Freeborn's BHS update for the Committee:

- The school wide Science Fair was held today and was a success;
- Freshman Orientation for incoming eighth graders is February 26, 2014, at 6 p.m.;
- The BHS Drama Club will present "Wiley and the Hairy Man" on February 28, 2014, at 7:30 p.m.

### Commissioner of Education Visit to Brockton Schools

The Superintendent reported that on February 6, 2014, the Commissioner of Education visited the Brookfield, Baker, and Barrett Russell schools; due to traffic he was unable to observe Breakfast in the Classroom at the Brookfield School. The visit included a 45-minute focus group discussion at which School Committee members, district administrators and staff were able to discuss successes and challenges in the Brockton schools with the Commissioner. The Superintendent said that Commissioner called the visit "excellent."

### DESE Breakfast in the Classroom Challenge

The Superintendent announced that she had received a letter from the DESE, congratulating the Brookfield School as one of nine schools in the state that has met or exceeded the State's challenge to increase participation in the school breakfast program to 35%. The Superintendent reported that, at the Brookfield School, between 85 and 90% of the students are now having breakfast at school.

Mrs. Joyce asked the Superintendent what she thought was the main reason for the increase in participation, the Superintendent replied "the time"; that having breakfast available when class starts serves more children. Superintendent Smith also stated that the Breakfast in the Classroom program is quick, clean, and a positive addition for students and schools.

The Mayor commented that he was able to observe the breakfast in the classroom program, he said he was amazed at how "seamless" the program ran, without disruption, children were eating while doing their school work. He said he has been a supporter of universal breakfast and that he is aware there are some issues to be worked out, but that the program does not take away from class time and, in fact, it is probably helping learning. Mr. Robinson added that the schools have always encouraged eating a good breakfast during MCAS testing; however, *every day* is an important learning day that should include breakfast, and he looks forward to when all of our schools are participating in the program.

### First Read of Draft 2014-2015 School Year Calendar

The Superintendent presented the draft calendar for the School Committee's review and discussion, and announced that no action was being requested from the committee tonight. There were no questions about the calendar.

### MCAS Data Presentation 2

The Superintendent invited Dr. Ethan Cancell and Mrs. Elizabeth Barry to come forward to present the MCAS data report that was postponed at the January 21, 2014 meeting. Using power point, the test results for individual schools were presented and explained.

Dr. Cancell talked about “lessons learned” from the efforts made at the two priority schools, East Middle and Huntington. He said that the support of the School Committee has been critical with respect to taking measures to help the schools, and that support has paid off. The Superintendent stated that there is much hard work to be done; the district recently designated the Arnone, Baker, and Raymond schools as priority schools as well.

Mrs. Barry talked about supports that the Learning and Teaching department has implemented at the elementary level that are making a difference, including the following:

- Understanding by Design in Math
- Grade-specific citywide trainings
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- School Liaisons at designated Priority Schools

Mrs. Barry said at East and the Huntington schools, professional learning communities, interventionists to target instruction and remediation, and protected class size are strategies that are paying off. Mrs. Barry said that investments in staff, technology and facilities upgrades are also needed.

Mr. Minichiello asked Mrs. Barry to explain how PBIS affects learning; Mrs. Barry explained that there are fewer discipline referrals to the office, which translates to more time in the classroom, resulting in more learning time.

In summary, Dr. Cancell stated that Brockton has great challenges, however, the district has a history of intervening and bringing positive results, and through the efforts at the two priority schools great lessons have been learned.

The Superintendent announced that she recently addressed staffs at the Baker, Raymond, and Arnone schools, and has asked these principals to prepare a list of requests to assist their schools.

A question and answer period followed. A concern voiced by more than one School Committee member was that efforts to support priority schools do not come at the expense of the other schools. Mr. Minichiello commented that that collaboration across the system—the sharing of ideas, successes—is very important, so that children at all of our schools have access to the same educational opportunities. Mayor Carpenter said there was a lot of good news in the report, the troubling piece for him is the disparity between schools within the district, stating that it is important that our system is one where educational opportunity is equal no matter where a child attends. He believes that class size will be the biggest challenge.

More discussion followed with respect to addressing Brockton’s kindergarten enrollment age and the impact a preschool program would have. The Mayor said that there will be budget and space issues associated with preschool, but we will need to find a way. The Superintendent added that the district has a plan in place and she wants to be ready to implement if Brockton ends up with funding for preschool.

Administrative Appointment – Deputy Superintendent of Learning and Teaching

The Superintendent announced that she is recommending Mrs. Elizabeth Barry for the position of Deputy Superintendent of Learning and Teaching.

**Mr. Minichiello moved to approve the Superintendent’s recommendation to appoint Mrs. Barry as Deputy Superintendent of Learning and Teaching.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Mrs. Barry thanked the Committee and said that she is excited to take begin her new responsibility. Mr. Minichiello spoke highly of Mrs. Barry’s qualifications, work ethic, and the work she has already done in the district.

Presentation of Plaque to Outgoing Deputy Superintendent John Jerome

The Mayor announced that this is the last official School Committee meeting for Deputy Superintendent John Jerome. Together with the Superintendent and Vice Chair, the Mayor presented Mr. Jerome with a plaque in appreciation of his 40 plus years of service. Mr. Jerome received a standing ovation from all.

**Unfinished Business**

Facilities Master Plan

The Superintendent asked Deputy Superintendent of Operations Michael Thomas to update the Committee with respect to the facilities master plan; Mr. Thomas said that the School Committee made it clear at the retreat that they would like him to go forward with the process. He indicated that this would follow bid regulations, he estimated the cost to be \$150,000 and \$250,000 for a 20-year master plan. Mr. Thomas explained that as part of the master plan, the consultant will meet with stakeholders—facilities, district administrators, community members, staff, and will put together a plan that will give the district the data needed to make informed decisions. The Superintendent added that having a master plan will position Brockton to be ready to apply for funding when the opportunities arise. Mrs. Joyce asked whether it would be possible to begin the process before July; Mr. Thomas and Mr. Petronio, Chief Budget Officer, responded yes, that a “hold” would be placed on awarding the bid, *pending funding*.

Mayor Carpenter clarified that the recommendation to go forward with a request for proposals would not require a formal vote, because the Committee was not appropriating money. The Mayor affirmed his belief that this is a good move that will enable Brockton to be eligible to apply for available funding in the future. He said he has no doubt that classroom space will need to be created.

**New Business**

February 11, 2014 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Report

Mr. Minichiello reported that the purpose of the Finance Subcommittee meeting held at 6:30 p.m. this evening was to discuss a rate increase for the Extended Day Program. At that meeting, Maxine Richardson, Director of Community Schools, explained that in order to accept the Department of Early Education and Care increase for vouchers, Brockton is required to increase rates for private pay families, but that the increase would be very small. Mr. Minichiello said that the Subcommittee *reluctantly* agreed to recommend this increase to the full School Committee for approval.

**Mr. Robinson moved to approve the report of the February 11, 2014 Finance Subcommittee Meeting.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

**Mrs. Joyce moved to approve the rate increase to private pay families as presented by Mrs. Richardson to comply with the EEC rate increase.**

Voted: to adopt the motion, unanimous.

Joint Informational Meeting - Mr. Minichiello announced that a Joint Informational Meeting for the public will be held on Thursday, February 13, 2014, at 7 p.m., where city officials, school committee members, school department personnel and representatives from Southeastern Regional Technical High School will be present. He reviewed the agenda and stated that the School Committee will participate as a *collaborative board*.

The Mayor acknowledged the impressive work done by the students at the BHS Science Fair. He also thanked Mr. Mike Simmons, the BCCA cameraman who has been recording the meetings for the past four years, for the time he has spent making the school committee meetings viewable for the public. Mr. Simmons recorded his last school committee meeting tonight.

**Items to Refer to Subcommittee**

Mrs. Joyce asked for a Safety/Security/Transportation meeting to be scheduled at which she would like to have the new Police Commissioner available to discuss changes to and financial implications for the school police department.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD  
Secretary/Superintendent

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