Gmail

**Michael Totman <mtotman@bbrsd.org>**

# Concern Regarding BES Principal Resignation

4 messages

**Lisa Kelley** <lisa.antonellis@gmail.com> Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 9:50 AM
To: mtotman@bbrsd.org, mgrill@bbrsd.org, lhart@bbrsd.org, jdegliaberti@bbrsd.org, "lmair@bbrsd.org" <lmair@bbrsd.org>, "emancini@bbrsd.org" <emancini@bbrsd.org>, "aganem@bbrsd.org" <aganem@bbrsd.org>, "nbilotta@bbrsd.org" <nbilotta@bbrsd.org>

To the Members of the BBRSD School Committee and Interim Superintendent Ganem:

We are truly disheartened to hear that Cindy Sykes has submitted her resignation as Principal of Boylston Elementary. In no world can I imagine this was an easy decision for her, and it raises many questions for our family, with a 5th grader and Kindergartner, who have now experienced 3 principals and 3 superintendents in a matter of 6 years in the school system (soon to be 4 of each position). In all of my interactions with Cindy, both as a parent and as Co-President of Boylston Education Collaborative, her passion for BES is both obvious and unmatched. If I recall correctly, part of her interview process detailed her commitment to the district and desire to retire here, something our school so desperately needed after both Covid and 2-3 years of upheaval in administration. While working in education is certainly no easy feat, I cannot imagine a scenario in which Cindy made this decision willingly. Her honesty, transparency and hard work has been above and beyond over the last two years. She arrives early, stays late, and attends so many events outside of her working hours. She is more than happy to meet with any parent or student to hear their concerns or questions, and works collaboratively with all to find solutions.

At this point in time I cannot help but wonder what broader issues are at play within our towns and district that are contributing to such frequent turnover in otherwise qualified and passionate individuals. I would urge the School Committee, if not the Towns of Berlin and Boylston, to conduct an audit of our school department, and to poll staff members in an effort to learn what is truly going on. An anonymous survey of classroom teachers, the individuals who are working with our children for hours on end and see the impact of this turnover, would certainly help identify areas for improvement. Something seems amiss and the families being directly impacted deserve to know the truth.

In closing, I would also like to better understand where the search for a permanent Superintendent stands. I have not seen any updates on this as of late, and would have expected to see a search committee or other news provided by this point in the year.

Thank You,

Lisa Kelley

Parent, 5th and K

Co-President, Boylston Education Collaborative

**Michael Totman** <mtotman@bbrsd.org> Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 9:50 AM
To: lisa.antonellis@gmail.com

Thank you for your email. I'm currently away from the office and focusing on various projects but will be sure to respond when I return. thank you.

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Michael Totman, Chair
Berlin Boylston Regional School Committee
508.386.5000

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**Michael Totman** <mtotman@bbrsd.org> Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 10:08 AM
To: Lisa Kelley <lisa.antonellis@gmail.com>
Cc: mgrill@bbrsd.org, lhart@bbrsd.org, jdegliaberti@bbrsd.org, "lmair@bbrsd.org" <lmair@bbrsd.org>, "emancini@bbrsd.org" <emancini@bbrsd.org>, "aganem@bbrsd.org" <aganem@bbrsd.org>, "nbilotta@bbrsd.org" <nbilotta@bbrsd.org>

Thank you for your concern. I believe I can speak for the committee that we are also emotional how Mrs. Sykes is leaving, but respect her decision as it seems to be based on personal reasons for her. This is a personnel matter so we won't be able to comment much more on that.

We can look into an independent audit, but that hasn't been budgeted for so we'll have to see what it would entail.

1. Please note that Cindy's statement mentions a personal reason for leaving, not anything having to do with the district. We can't share more than that as these are personnel and privacy issues.
2. Former Superintendent Costello was our intended long term Superintendent but she retired with health concerns as has been stated previously.
3. Before Costello, former Superintendent Zanghi simply reached an age where he chose to retire.
4. Former Principal Ace Thompson made a personal choice to move on.
5. Former interim Principal Ayles was not hired full time by former Superintendent Costello.

I understand the emotional attachment that forms between parents and their childrens educators, but from the other perspective these are people with their own families, lives, and careers to think about. They make decisions for their careers just like we do with our employers. Have you ever decided to change jobs in your career? I have, and it wasn't necessarily because of the working environment but rather just a personal choice I made. Situations change, priorities shift, I think the emotion of this situation is causing people to see ghosts where there aren't any, and we are going to focus on moving forward to find the future leaders of our district.

Fortunately for the district, BMS has not suffered nearly the amount of changes as BES. We can certainly look into the factors between the towns to see why this has been the case.

You also asked about the superintendent search. This was discussed at our March 11 meeting and you'll also note it listed on the April 8 agenda which was posted last week. We are progressing with the search and will review candidates.

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**Mail Delivery Subsystem** <mailer-daemon@googlemail.com> Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 10:09 AM
To: mtotman@bbrsd.org



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the recipient's email address for typos or unnecessary spaces. For more information, go to
https://support.google.com/mail/?p=NoSuchUser d9443c01a7336-229b78b5368sor66573975ad.13 - gsmtp
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Final-Recipient: rfc822; jdegliaberti@bbrsd.org
Action: failed
Status: 5.1.1
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550-5.1.1 The email account that you tried to reach does not exist. Please try
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550 5.1.1 https://support.google.com/mail/?p=NoSuchUser d9443c01a7336-229b78b5368sor66573975ad.13 - gsmtp
Last-Attempt-Date: Mon, 07 Apr 2025 07:09:10 -0700 (PDT)

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**noname**
4K