Mission Statement: To support and challenge all students to achieve personal and academic excellence in a student-centered environment.

BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday May 13, 2025, 5:00pm
Tahanto Regional Middle/High School
Multi-Purpose Room

Stream link https://www.youtube.com/@bbrsdlive2893/streams

This meeting may be recorded, and your image or voice may be broadcast.

Due to technical issues this meeting may not always stream live, but we will make every attempt to do so and to record the meeting for future posting.

The items listed on the agenda may be discussed out of order as the Chair decides due to potential scheduling and timing requirements.

Present: School Committee: Mr. Michael Totman, Chair, Mrs. Meagan Grill, Vice-Chair; Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti, Mrs. Lisa Mair, Mrs. Elisabeth Mancini

Administration: Mr. Albert G. Ganem Jr., Interim Superintendent; Ms. Nicole Bilotta, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent; Ms. Jannel Fitzpatrick, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Mr. Aaron Osborne, Director of Finance and Operations; Ms. Lisa Sequeira, Tahanto Middle/High School Principal; Ms. Sally Stukuls, Director of Curriculum and Grants 6-12; Mr. Joseph Sposato, Interim Director of Technology; Ms. Cinthia Sykes, Boylston Elementary Principal;

Also present: Ms. Ilene Barry, Ms. Tracy Novick, and Mr. Steven Pacheco

I. **Call to Order -** Mr. Totman called the meeting to order at 5:00pm

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

III. **Public Comment - none**

IV. **Consent Agenda - Vote Needed - A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and seconded by Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti, Vote 5-0, motion passes.**

- 4.08.2025 Open Meeting Minutes
- 4.15.2025 Open Meeting Minutes

- 4.17 2025 Open Meeting Minutes
- 2.20.2025 Student Success and Technology Meeting Minutes
- 4.17.2025 Student Success and Technology Meeting Minutes
- Warrant

V. **School Committee Chair Report** - *Mr. Michael Totman - (00:56)* Mr. Totman thanked the communities for having both town meetings vote in favor of the budget. Mr. Totman thanked Mr. Albert Ganem, Mr. Aaron Osborne and their team for their work.

VI. **Superintendent Search Update** - *Ms. Tracy Novick - (55:29)* Ms. Novick reviewed the plan for the full search. She talked about the brochure that will be created to be posted for the position. She will send it to committee members to work on over the summer. She spoke about the days she would be in the district to meet with groups and she hopes to send the survey with back to school communications. She will also meet with the community and will be back at the meeting on September 23rd with all of the input and draft brochure and position description. They will also need to determine the makeup of the search committee. The position will get posted and be up for a month. Training will be done with the search committee, as well. In October, they will review applications and determine who to bring in. Ms. Novick explained how the process then turns back over to the school committee and they need to determine the timeline. She recommended bringing forward at least three finalists. They spoke about the district visits to the candidates' districts and having them in the district, as well. Tracy will send an updated timeline to the committee and a copy to be posted on the website. It will also be a part of the position posting. Mr. Totman will talk with Mrs. Hart about the schedule. The committee thanked Ms. Novick for coming in.

VII. **Business Office Update** - *Mr. Aaron Osborne (26:01)*

- Budget Report Mr. Osborne spoke about how things are trending similar to last time. There have been ups and downs in the health insurance. He also spoke about transportation challenges with the district and with Assabet Valley Collaborative. Additionally, he spoke about long term subs and normal subs and how much to the positive they are. It was also noted that Circuit Breaker can help cover special education costs. Mr. Osborne talked about the transportation costs for Boylson students to go to Assabet Tech and that the district has been paying for it. Boylston will be giving them money for the expense. His report was through the end of March. Mr. Osborne spoke about how the district uses Harpers for payroll which does not actually encumber salaries.
- Student Activities Accounts - Mr. Osborne spoke about the Tahanto Student Activity accounts he has been reviewing with administration and what he would like to do with them. If the clubs have not been held for a certain amount of time, they would get rid of it and transfer the funds to a closely related account as well as with class accounts. He described the moves the business office would like to make sure up the accounts. He does not know what the school committee has approved for the total agency account. He would like the school committee to authorize a maximum amount and move some money into more appropriate accounts. Only the students can designate how the money is used. The school committee cannot direct the money. **A motion that the school committee vote to authorize the following actions; Authorize the actions described above to renew or remove identified Student Activity Accounts and transfer balances remaining in removed accounts to the identified accounts and authorize a Student Activity Agency Account balance not to exceed $150,000 going forward, as presented to the school committee made by Mrs. Meagan Grill and seconded by Mrs. Beth Mancini. Mrs Jessica Delialberti motioned to amend the motion to not say the class of 2021 to reach out**

to disperse funds as well, seconded by Mrs. Meagan Grill, Vote 5-0, amendment passes, original motion Vote 5-0, original motion passes.

VIII. **<u>Superintendent of Schools Report</u>** - *Mr. Albert Ganem Jr. - (2:01:39)* Mr. Ganem thanked the communities for the budget process and for the support in passing it. He also thanked the school committee.

- School Council Representative - *Matthew Dowd* - no update
- School Choice - Mr. Ganem presented the school choice recommendations. For the elementary level there were no recommendations for added spots. For the high school they are recommending for 7th grade 4 open slots and for 1th grade, 3 open slots. Total of 7 open slots. He noted the number graduating is less then the number of students coming in for 6th grade. They looked at numbers in terms of supporting the students and there is also an unknown of possible move-ins. Mrs. Mancini would like to have slots for 9th grade. Ms. Sequeria looked into MCAS data of that cohort and there are lots of gaps in that grade level. With a smaller class they are able to target instruction better. They spoke about the class previously not meeting at the 5th grade level. Mr. Totman noted there are about 30 students coming into the building and this year they had to make cuts to staff in the building. The group spoke about the numbers in each grade. In 8th grade there are 14 known students leaving. Mr. Ganem explained lots of time was put into the numbers recommended with discussions from BBRSD administration. Mrs. Grill wanted a cost analysis done on what school choice entails. Mr. Ganem explained there are some aspects that do not amount to a dollar amount. The school choice process is a blind lottery. Mrs. Mancini would like to know the number of school choice students from Berlin-Boylston out to other districts. The committee plans to vote in June. They would like to know the number paying out versus what is being paid in and would like exit interview data for this year.
- Facility Forms- ***First Read -*** Mr. Ganem spoke about having updated facility forms. If there are any items needing adjustment, email them to him.
- Budget Update - The goal is to meet with the administration and hopefully bring back the cuts after March 11th.
- BES Principal Update - Mr. Ganem thanked everyone for their involvement in the process and the work they have done. It has been narrowed down to three candidates; Cheryl Cordero, Anne Duke and Robert Pelczarski. They will meet with administration on Wednesday, Mary 14th and hopefully meet with parents the following week.
- Staff Appreciation - He thanked staff and parents for their staff appreciation as well as the ice cream truck from administration and school committee.
- Graduation - Graduation is scheduled for June 1st at 2pm. He invited everyone to attend the event.

IX. **<u>Administrator Updates -</u>** (1:17:10)

- TAH Principal - *Ms. Lisa Sequeira* - Ms. Sequeira introduced Ilene Barry, a BBRSD World Language retired teacher and Steve Pacheco History/Social Sciences department chair and Varsity Softball Coach. She wanted to honor the legacy that the staff leaves in the students. She read a letter she received from alum, Brendan Shanahan. In the acknowledgement section he noted the BBRSD education and specific members of the staff. Ms. Sequeira noted it is a reflection of his own dedication and a reflection of the work educators have done. She wanted to acknowledge them for their contributions. Mr. Pacheco spoke about the book and that it was a tremendous piece of scholarship. There is a copy of the book donated to the school library for use once Mr. Pacheco reviews it.

- BES Principal - *Ms. Cinthia Sykes* - Ms. Sykes spoke about the Nature's Classroom trip going on. Next year she hopes the trip would not be in the MCAS window, which is ongoing as well as AIMSweb. She spoke about the year of Math and looks forward to seeing the growth. Additionally, she spoke about the dips in benchmarks in certain times of year. One of the teams went up 20% in ELA math.
- Director of Pupil Personnel Services - *Mrs. Jannel Fitzpatrick* - Mrs. Fitzpatrick spoke about the special education coordinator role plays in the district. She noted they average 20 years in special education each. She talked about their critical skills to student wellbeing. They participate in about 200 meetings a year and they are also the preschool coordinators. They are often the first point of contact within the district and how important they are. It is an essential position to the success, and compliance of the special education programs and she would like to keep the position at Tahanto. Mrs. Fitzpatrick also spoke about the Bridges Programs in the elementary schools. They are anticipating 11 students at the elementary levels for next year. They have the recommendation to bring them together under one roof based on discussions of the administration team. With the group sizes for next year there would be issues with two separate schools. Under one roof they could be divided differently and utilize staffing resources. It would not create any additional costs. They have gotten some feedback from parents in support through SEPAC. She noted they are nearing needing to add another special education teacher at Tahanto to meet the needs.

  Mrs. Fitzpatrick shared the new special education determination rating. BBRSD received a meets requirements rating which is a top tier rating. There were 17 different considerations that went into the rating score. Mrs. Fitzpatrick briefly reviewed those considerations. Mr. Ganem commended Mrs. Fitzpatrick for her work on the rating. Mrs. Mancini also thanked her for her work on finding a solution for the Bridges program.
- Director of Curriculum and Grants, Grades 6-12 - *Ms. Sally-Ann Stukuls* - Ms. Stukuls spoke about working with the Education Development Center and how they have had an extension of the grant for this year. Because of that they were able to have a coding course available. They were able to participate in an exhibition at Worcester State University, where they won a few awards. Through an ESSA grant they were able to fund a presenter to come in and talk to 6,7,8th grade. A survey was done with positive results. The fee he charges he uses as scholarships for students to attend his program.

  Ms. Stukuls also spoke about training in the district that has gone on including, safety trainings, book studies, and series of professional development. They have started UDL in classes and are having Katie Novack come in at the beginning of next year. She also spoke about the visits to the community that have been made about the Wellness Policy and the data that has been collected. They are going to use the feedback to make updates to the policy. Lastly, she spoke about the STEAM committee and the development of the EUREKA series to bring in speakers. They just brought in Nobel Laureate Victor Ambriose to speak. Mr. Totman spoke about experience with kids using Python. The EUREKA series is on the website for viewing.
- **Interim Director of Technology - *Mr. Joseph Sposato***
    - **Student firewall/security issues -** Mr. Sposato thanked the parent that made them aware of a technology situation that they learned of at 11pm on 5/12/2025. Mr. Sposato summarized the incident and the technology safeguards they put in place once they learned of it. The pathway was only open to district people, not the general public. Mr. Ganem spoke to the steps taken with students involved. He thanked the parents for letting them know it was happening. Ms. Mancini inquired if the google classroom will be looked into further. Mr. Sposato noted they are looking at all sorts of different measures

to see if they should be utilized or not. Mr. Ganem noted professional learning will be done with staff.

Mr. Sposato shared there are several firewalls being changed out at the schools to update safety and security. They are also working on the wifi. He also spoke about looking further into only using BBRSD based technology so that there is more control over what is happening on the device and safeguards to be put on them. Mr. Ganem will get input from parents. Ms. Sequeria described the variety of ways the technology is being used in the classrooms. Most being used for small parts of a lesson, some do not rely on it at all. Teachers are walking around while students are on devices to ensure proper use. Ms. Sykes explained ways the elementary schools are using the chrome books. Some ways include using it for handwriting, research, and math programs. They have cut back on some filler games. Bark has been helpful in monitoring kids. She shared they are keeping an eye on them. The group spoke about how they sign off on the handbook with policies on technology use from BBRSD. The district is looking into screen time use as well. They also noted not as many learning opportunities for students to learn computer typing schools.

X. **<u>Subcommittee Updates</u>** (1:51:11)

- Student Success and Technology Subcommittee - *Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti* - Mrs. Deglialberti spoke about the recent meeting about content filtering and BYOB devices. They talked about the Attorney General's cell phone toolkit and how they were piloting a cell phone free lunch during Refresh Day. She spoke about the data they discussed and the support for taking them out of schools and a possible advisory board to spearhead that. Additionally, she spoke about the different resources available. The district held a couple cyber bullying events recently and they are going to reach out to other districts to see policies that they use. A culture survey will be done as part of the strategic plan. Lastly, they are looking into how to utilize the community for enrichment in the schools.
- Budget and Facility Subcommittee - *Mrs. Meagan Grill* - no update
- Superintendent Search Subcommittee - *Mrs. Lori Hart* - no update
- Policy Subcommittee - *Mr. Michael Totman* - no update
- Tahanto Parking Lot - Mr. Totman noted he received messages from Mr. Mecum about sketches for potential parking. He noted they need to do something about the parking going forward since there is a lack of parking available for students and events.

XI. **<u>Business Items</u>**

- Approval of donation of Boylston Night WooSox tickets to BES students - **Vote Needed - A motion for the approval of the donation of Boylston Night WooSox tickets to BES students made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and seconded by Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti.** Discussion: Matt Meccum is donating 1 ticket per student per the Boylston night WooSox game. **Vote - 5-0 motion passes.**
- Approval of the Tahanto 8th Grade Field Trip to Canobie Lake - **Vote Needed - A motion for the approval of the Tahanto 8th grade field trip to Canobie Lake made by Mrs. Meagan Grill and seconded by Mrs. Lisa Mair.** Discussion: Field trip taking place for a celebration of 8th grade graduation. It needs to come forward since it is out of state. **Vote 5-0, motion passes.**

XII. **<u>Executive Session I. and will not return to open session</u>** - Motion to enter executive session and not to return to open session Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter

30A, Section 21(a), Purpose (3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (BBEA CBA) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares. Made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and Mrs. Beth Mancini. Roll Call: Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti, Mrs. Meagan Grill, Mrs. Lisa Mair, Mrs. Elisabeth Mancini, and Mr. Michael Totman, entered at 7:32pm.

XIII. Upcoming Meeting

- June 10, 2025

The listing of items is those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may, in fact, be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

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