**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Monday, October 22, 2018**

The bi-monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, October 22, 2018, in the cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street, Bristol, RI. Chairperson, Paul Silva, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 PM.

Present: Paul Silva, Chairperson; Erin Schofield, Vice-Chairperson; Marjorie J. McBride, Treasurer; William M. O’Dell, Secretary; John C. Bento, Brian Bradshaw, Diana Campbell, Adam M. Ramos, and John P. Saviano; Mario J. Andrade, Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Almeida, Director of Literacy and Title 1; Leslie Anderson, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Raquel Pellerin, School Business Administrator; and Andrew Henneous, Esq., District Solicitor

**OPENING BUSINESS**

All present were invited to join in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairperson Silva stated that he was going to rearrange the order of business as follows: begin with the executive session, continue with the Parent Request to Address the Committee Agenda item and then go on to Public Comment.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Pursuant to Open Meeting Laws 42-46-5 (a)(1) for the following:

1. Legal advice: parent/staff complaints, FERPA Open Meetings Act, liability issues
2. Legal advice: retaining an investigator re: parent complaints

MOTION: Mr. O’Dell made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:05 p.m.; seconded by Mrs. Campbell.

The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Silva stated that no action would be taken during the executive session.

MOTION: At 7:46 p.m., Mr. Bradshaw made a motion to adjourn the executive session; seconded by Mr. Ramos.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Parent Request to Address the Committee Relative to Complaint about Staff and Administration**

Chairperson Silva stated that he had received requests from a couple of parents looking to present to the School Committee for the purpose of informing the Committee about issues that have been taking place in the District. Chairperson Silva went on to say that he had given both parents the option of either speaking during Public Comment or being placed on a School Committee agenda. Chairperson Silva said that he had explained to each of the parents the protocol for speaking during public comment.

The protocol for Public Comment states that there is no interaction between School Committee members and the public during public comment as it could violate open meetings laws.

The protocol for an agenda item about a personnel issue legally requires that any employee who is at the center of the personnel concern must be notified beforehand in order to uphold their rights and protections.

Chairperson Silva commented that after tonight’s agenda was published, he began to receive correspondence from attorneys and union representatives for the staff members at the center of the parental concerns asking that any discussion regarding the employees they represent be postponed to the next School Committee Meeting to allow preparation and representation.

Chairperson Silva stated that the secretary to the School Committee emailed both parents asking if they would be willing to voluntarily continue their agenda item until the November 13th School Committee Workshop, and that if they chose not to, the School Committee would decide as a whole whether or not to move forward this evening with their agenda item in open session. Chairperson Silva stated that neither parent agreed to continue their agenda item to the November 13th meeting.

Chairperson Silva clarified that regardless of whether the School Committee votes to go forward with the parental complaint agenda item in open session, anyone can speak during Public Comment subject to the rules as described earlier.

MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to continue the Parental Request agenda item until the November 13, 2018 School Committee Workshop when all parties can be present to be held in executive session; seconded by Mr. O’Dell for discussion.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Ramos stated that tonight’s Parental Request agenda item is a difficult issue for him. Mr. Ramos stated that as a result, he researched the District’s School Committee policies for guidance regarding these types of situations. Mr. Ramos added that he also wanted to gather understanding on how this issue came to be placed on the agenda in open session, and the facts and circumstances of where the situation is today.

Mr. Ramos stated that it is important for everyone to understand that when the School Committee approaches sensitive issues of a personnel nature, it is important to ensure the protection of both employees and families.

Mr. Ramos stated that the School Committee has a policy that addresses how parents and/or members of the public who have concerns regarding employee’s performance can communicate those issues to the School Committee.

Mr. Ramos cited from School Committee Policy KLD, Public Complaints about School Personnel, which states that if a request is made to hear a personnel complaint by the public, it can be brought before the School Committee in Executive Session.

Mr. Ramos commented that it is important to be responsive and listen to the public while following our policy and not making exceptions.

Mr. Ramos stated that he would be inclined to vote against the motion to continue with the hope that this evening the parents will inform the School Committee of their concerns without naming personnel or speaking specifically of personnel performance.

Mr. Bradshaw echoed Mr. Ramos’ comments adding that he would not enter into a back and forth discussion that would violate the School Committee policy regarding public complaints.

Mr. O’Dell stated that he would be comfortable with the parents presenting their concerns in Public Comment because there would not be a back and forth dialogue with the School Committee adding that he is trying to avoid infringing upon someone’s rights. Mr. O’Dell explained the importance of process. Mr. O’Dell stated that the School Committee has received requests that attorneys be present for those who have been named in the complaints, and that he feels obligated to honor that.

Mrs. Schofield stated that she agrees with Mr. O’Dell that there should be a process. Mrs. Schofield commented that she is not comfortable with not having proper representation for the personnel at the center of the parent complaints. Mrs. Schofield stated that she also understands that people have come this evening to speak expecting to be heard because they have been placed on the agenda.

Mrs. Schofield reiterated the importance that any comments made this evening, that those presenting would be mindful that children are involved and people are involved on all sides, and the importance of respect during the discussion.

Mr. Saviano stated that he will be voting against Mrs. McBride’s motion because he feels there are a lot of concerned, interested people present this evening.

Mrs. McBride clarified the process of making a motion. She explained that a motion is made in order to allow discussion by School Committee members.

Mrs. McBride stated that she agrees with Mr. O’Dell on the importance of process, but she also understands that a lot of people have come out this evening who care about the District’s children and that it is important they are heard. Mrs. McBride went on to say that she also believes it is important that everyone in the room who needs to be represented have that opportunity which is why she believes that the Parental Complaint agenda item should be continued to the November 13th School Committee Workshop to be held in executive session.

Mrs. McBride closed by stating that if the motion fails, she will not be part of a discussion about staff members who are not appropriately represented.

Mrs. Campbell asked several clarifying questions regarding the process that was followed leading up to tonight’s parental request being placed on the agenda. Chairperson Silva reiterated the process thus far.

Mr. Bento stated that he feels the proper thing to do is to wait until the November 13th School Committee Workshop, but he added that because a lot of people are present this evening, as long as no names or job performance are discussed and everyone is courteous, he would not have a problem voting no to the motion on the floor.

Chairperson Silva stated that he is concerned that the staff do not have adequate representation this evening. Chairperson Silva commented that he wanted to give the parents an opportunity to present, but that he also wants to give the employees the opportunity to have representation.

Mrs. Campbell asked for clarification regarding Public Comment protocol.

Mr. Henneous, the District’s lawyer, responded that as a general rule, the reason the School Committee members do not engage during public comment is to avoid the conversation moving to something that was not on the agenda thereby violating open meetings laws.

Chairperson Silva asked for a hand vote on the motion to continue the Parental Request agenda item to the November 13th Workshop.

The motion failed with a 6-2 vote; Mr. Bento, Mr. Bradshaw, Mrs. Campbell, Mr. Ramos, Mr. Saviano, and Mrs. Schofield opposed.

Mrs. McBride stated that she will not sit at the table for this discussion and risk the children, parents or employees from coming under scrutiny.

**PUBLIC COMMENT/PUBLIC FORUM**

*Alexis Santoro, North Providence, RI, Deputy Executive Director, RI Council 94*

Ms. Santoro cited legal references noting that any comments regarding the personnel issues of an employee must be done in executive session. She added that any discussion in open session would violate the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the parties.

*Chris Cobleigh, Esq. NEA*

Mr. Cobleigh echoed Ms. Santoro’s concerns reiterating the importance of personnel matters being heard in executive session.

Chairperson Silva asked for a motion to invite the legal representatives and the individual parents into executive session to address the School Committee.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Pursuant to Open Meeting Laws 42-46-5 (a)(1) for the following:

1. Parent Request to Address the Committee Relative to Complaint about Staff and Administration

MOTION: At 8:45 p.m., Mrs. Campbell made a motion to convene an executive session; seconded by Mr. O’Dell.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Schofield asked for clarification regarding whether or not a parent wants to be heard in executive session, can they speak in Public Comment. Chairperson Silva responded that anyone can speak in Public Comment under the rules that govern the agenda. Because the agenda item is listed as parents discussing complaint about staff and administration, there is the concern that employees would be named. Both union members present this evening spoke earlier about the necessity of having these discussions in executive session to avoid being found liable.

Motion passed with a 5-4 vote.

Mr. Bradshaw, Mr. Ramos, Mr. Saviano and Mrs. Schofield opposed.

MOTION: at 9:56 p.m., Mrs. McBride made a motion to adjourn the executive session, Mr. O’Dell seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Silva asked that a motion be made to extend the School Committee meeting past 10:00 p.m.

MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to revoke the policy which mandates that School Committee meetings must end at 10:00 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Saviano.

The motion passed unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Pursuant to Open Meeting Laws 42-46-5 (a)(1) for the following:

1. Parent Request to Address the Committee Relative to Complaint about Staff and Administration

MOTION: At 9:57 p.m., Mr. Bradshaw made a motion to go into executive session; seconded by Mrs. Campbell.

The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: At 11:16 p.m., Mr. Bradshaw made a motion to adjourn the executive session; seconded by Mrs. Campbell.

The motion passed unanimously.

**OPEN SESSION RECONVENED AT 11:20 pm**

Mrs. McBride stated that in the interest of time, she is requesting that all the agenda items, except Personnel, approval of the energy contract, and Subcommittee Reports, be tabled until the November Workshop.

MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to table agenda items 2-5 and 7-8 until the November 13th Workshop; seconded by Mr. Bradshaw.

The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Silva reported for the sake of the public that a very long Executive Session took place during which School Committee members listened to parents concerns. He added that no action was taken during the executive session.

Chairperson Silva thanked the parents and children who came to speak to the School Committee. He commented that their concerns had a major impact on the School Committee members and the other adults present in the room.

Chairperson Silva publicly apologized for saying that children should not be welcome into executive session.

**PUBLIC COMMENT/PUBLIC FORUM**

*Donna Razzo, Warren*

Ms. Razzo introduced herself as Mrs. Francis’ mom and Beilah’s grandmother which were the family members who addressed the School Committee this evening.

Ms. Razzo expressed her concern that in her years involved in local government, she never saw a meeting where the general public wasn’t allowed to speak. She felt that those actions were disrespectful to the people who were trying to speak.

She closed by saying that she was proud of her daughter and granddaughter for coming forward in what seemed like a hostile environment.

*Linda Rinoshytas, Bristol*

Ms. Rinoshytas expressed her concern that she did not hear any of the School Committee members speak on behalf of the children.

*Christopher Dias, Bristol*

Mr. Dias expressed his disappointment to see the School Committee protecting the Union rather than the children. He felt that the Union had more rights than the parents this evening.

Chairperson Silva stated that it is frustrating to have rules to follow during a meeting which makes him unable to run the meeting the way he would want to. He commented that he must follow the rules or there are ramifications. Chairperson Silva stated that if it came across that the School Committee was less concerned about the children in this District, that was not the intent. He stated that he has worked with this body on the School Committee for many years and not one person sitting at this table does not care about the children of this District or what is in the best interest of the children. Chairperson Silva apologized if it did not come across that way. He reiterated that the School Committee has compassion for the children of the District.

*Martha Dias, Bristol*

Ms. Dias clarified that she understands the importance of following policies and procedures, but believes that this evening the School Committee’s response in conveying enforcement of those policies and procedures was appalling.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES**

**RECOMMENDATION #S2018-73:**

Chairperson Silva stated that he had a conflict with one of the items on the Consent Agenda and would be recusing himself from the discussion. He turned the meeting over to Vice-Chairperson Schofield.

Vice-Chairperson Schofield stated that all items listed with an asterisk on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the School Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a committee member requests, in which event the items will be withdrawn from the general order of business and considered in the normal sequence of the agenda. There were no requests for a separate vote.

Vice-Chairperson Schofield asked for a motion.

MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Mr. O’Dell.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Silva returned to open session.

**S2018 - 73 A-K: CONSENT AGENDA - PERSONNEL**

A. APPOINTMENTS: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicants to the positions of Title I Family Involvement Coordinator, ESL Teacher (.6 Time), Special Educator (.5 Time), Secretary (10 mos.), Secretary, Teacher Assistant (Part Time) and two Technology Interns as listed below:

1. Diane H. Gallison Title I Family Involvement Coordinator

(Part Time)

Effective: For the 2018-19 school year

only

Reason: To fill a vacancy in accordance

with grant funding

Funding: Title I

2. Lisa M. Melo English as a Second Language Teacher

(.6 Time)

Effective: Oct. 29, 2018 for the

remainder of the 2018-19 school year

only

Reason: To fill a vacancy

Funding: Operational Budget

(12th Step)

3. Bethany M. Melo Special Educator – Hugh Cole

(.5 Time)

Effective: Oct. 22, 2018, for the

remainder of the 2018-19 school year

only

Reason: To fill a new position

Funding: Grant Funded - IDEA

4. Emily G. Fox Secretary (10 mos.) – Pupil Personnel

Services

Effective: Sept. 3, 2018

Reason: To fill a vacancy

Funding: Operational Budget

5. Perry H. Bloomer Secretary – Pupil Personnel Services

Effective: Oct. 9, 2018

Reason: To fill a vacancy

Funding: Operational Budget

6. Kathryn A. West Teacher Assistant (Part Time) - Rockwell

Effective: Sept. 18, 2018

Reason: To fill a vacancy

Funding: Operational Budget

7. Mohammed S. Saine Technology Intern - District

Effective: Oct. 22, 2018 for the

remainder of the 2018-19 school year

only

Reason: To fill a new position

Funding: Operational Budget

8. Dylan R. Levesque Technology Intern - District

Effective: Oct. 11, 2018 for the

remainder of the 2018-19 school year

only

Reason: To fill a new position

Funding: Operational Budget

B. ESL/READING TUTORS/EXTENDED DAY SUPPORT: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following individuals for the 2018-19 school year only as ESL/Reading Tutors/Extended Day Support Tutors contingent upon grant funding:

Name Type/School(s)

1. Angela Hawkins ESL/Guiteras, Hugh Cole

2. Madlyn McArdle ESL/Guiteras, Hugh Cole

3. Laura Berard ESL/Guiteras, KMS, MHHS

4. Jane Oliver-Farnsworth ESL/Guiteras

5. Robin Mello ESL/Guiteras, Hugh Cole

6. Kathleen Podraza ESL/Hugh Cole, KMS, MHHS

7. Karen McCanna ESL/Guiteras

8. Jennifer Ramirez ESL/MHHS

9. Margaret Ballirano ESL/Hugh Cole

10. Paula Richards-Sousa Tutor Title I Reading/Private School

11. Susan Castigliego Tutor Title I Extended Day/Hugh Cole

12. Kelly Ferguson Tutor Title I Extended Day/Hugh Cole

13. Jessica Silva Tutor Title I Extended Day/Hugh Cole

14. Michaela Ferreira Tutor Title I Extended Day/Hugh Cole

15. Kelly Servant Tutor Title I Extended Day/Hugh Cole

16. Lianne Beauregard Tutor Title I Extended Day/Colt Andrews

17. Susan Corbett Tutor Title I Extended Day/Colt Andrews

18. Susan Jones Tutor Title I Extended Day/Colt Andrews

19. Kendra Cabral Tutor Title I Extended Day/Colt Andrews

20. Katelyn McCanna Tutor Title I Extended Day/Colt Andrews

C. SPECIAL EDUCATION CONSULTANTS: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following individual as a Part Time Special Education Consultant (Long-term Substitute) effective Oct. 15, 2018 for approximately 13 weeks contingent upon funding and student need:

Name Position Funding

1. Ella J. Coker Certified Occupational Therapist IDEA/Oper. Budget

Assistant (COTA) – Long-Term Sub

D. BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicants to the School of the 21st Century, Before and After School Program, as listed below (pending sufficient enrollment to warrant running this program and DCYF CANTS clearance):

1. Isabella A. Singer Child Care Provider (Part Time)

Effective: Immediately, for the

remainder of the 2018-19 school year,

Pending satisfactory completion of pre-

employment requirements

Reason: To fill a vacancy

Funding: Parent Fees/Self-Sufficient

2. Laura A. Octaviano Senior Child Care Provider (Part Time)

Effective: Immediately, for the

remainder of the 2018-19 school year,

Pending satisfactory completion of pre-

employment requirements

Reason: To fill a vacancy

Funding: Parent Fees/Self-Sufficient

3. Benjamin O. Manchel Senior Child Care Provider (Part Time)

Effective: Immediately, for the

remainder of the 2018-19 school year,

Pending satisfactory completion of pre-

employment requirements

Reason: To fill a vacancy

Funding: Parent Fees/Self-Sufficient

E. HIGH SCHOOL EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following individuals for the 2018-19 session only of the Mt. Hope High School Extended Day Program contingent upon sufficient enrollment:

Name Position

1. Kristen M. Davis Science Teacher

2 Jeanne Chaffee Math Teacher

F. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicants to the extracurricular positions listed below for the 2018-19 school year only (pending certification, funding and sufficient sign-ups to warrant running these programs):

ADVISORS – MT. HOPE HIGH

1. Gardner/Burke Nicholas Mendillo

2. Drama Club Nicholas Mendillo

3. Student Council (Co-Advisor) Daniel Parks

4. Student Council (Co-Advisor) Katherine Kline

G. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following applicants to the extracurricular positions listed below for the 2018-19 school year only (pending certification, funding and sufficient sign-ups to warrant running these programs):

WINTER COACHES – MT. HOPE HIGH

Sport Position Coach

1. Hockey Head Coach Joseph DiBiase

WINTER COACHES – KICKEMUIT MIDDLE

Sport Position Coach

2. Basketball (Boys) Head Coach Kyle Valenzuela

\* Reappointment

H. CERTIFIED SUBSTITUTES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to place on file in the office of the Superintendent the following applications for certified substitutes pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements:

# CERTIFIED

# Name Area/Level

1. Christopher J. Garth n/a

2. Laura A. Octaviano n/a

3. Gregory J. Allen n/a

4. Marguerite A. Fitzgerald Elem Gr. 1-6

I. CLASSIFIED SUBSTITUTES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to place on file in the office of the Superintendent the following applications for classified substitutes pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements:

TEACHER ASSISTANTS

1. Ashley A. O’Blenis

SECRETARIAL

2. Amy L. Ewing

J. LEAVES OF ABSENCE: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to grant a leave of absence an Elementary Teacher as follows:

1. Noelle M. Mello Grade 5 Teacher – Rockwell School

Effective: December 26, 2018 for up to

13 weeks

Reason: Maternity leave in accordance with

Article 21, Section L1 of the Master

Agreement

K. RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to accept the resignations of Michael McGee from the position of Grade 5 Teacher and Tami Stallings from the position of Teacher Assistant as listed below:

1. Michael W. McGee Grade 5 Teacher – Guiteras

Effective: April 17, 2018

Reason: Disability Retirement

2. Tammi B. Stallings Teacher Assistant – Hugh Cole

Effective: Oct. 9, 2018

Reason: Personal

**SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES**Recommendation #S2018-78 - That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, accept the energy contract.

MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to accept the energy contract; Mr. O’Dell seconded.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. McBride stated that the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee is recommending an 18 month contract with Direct Energy for gas and electric which will put the District in a favorable place to bid next time.

Mrs. McBride commented that the District has installed energy saving equipment into the schools and will be looking to assess how much energy savings the District has realized as a result. Mrs. McBride stated that the Direct Energy contract will feature a fixed rate for 18 months. Mrs. McBride offered clarification as to the reasoning why a fixed rate was chosen over a variable rate.

The motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION/DISCUSSION**

Legal advice: retaining an independent investigator re: parent complaints

Chairperson Silva stated that during the earlier executive session, the School Committee received advice from the District’s attorney regarding retaining an independent investigator for issues brought about by parents. Chairperson Silva stated that Mr. Henneous recommended Matthew Oliverio.

MOTION: Mr. Saviano made a motion to retain Matthew Oliverio as the District’s independent investigator for parent complaints; seconded by Mrs. McBride.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Ramos asked for clarification that this investigator is only being retained for specific matters. Mr. Henneous responded yes, for specific matters.

Mr. O’Dell asked if the investigator will be retained by contract and how long.

Mr. Henneous stated that a contract will be set forth by the School Committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

**SUBCOMMITTEE/SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS & INITIATIVES**

Budget/Facilities Subcommittee

Mrs. McBride stated that she had nothing to report.

Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee

Mrs. Schofield reported that the next meeting will be Monday, November 5th at 6 p.m. in the Oliver Administration Building. The Subcommittee is working on the Crisis Management Procedures and Communication Policy and looking at outdated policies related to Crisis Management. Mrs. Schofield stated that the Subcommittee is also looking at a policy that deals with assault and dangerous weapons.

Mrs. Schofield stated that all are welcome to attend adding that she values the public’s input.

Personnel/Contract Negotiations Subcommittee

Mr. Silva stated that he had nothing new to report.

Wellness Committee

Mr. Ramos stated that the Committee met last Wednesday. He stated that the Wellness Committee is creating a health and wellness page for the District’s website.

Mr. Ramos shared information about an event called Raising Resilient Children which will be held on November 8th at 6:30 p.m. in the KMS auditorium. Refreshments will be served at 6 p.m.

The next Wellness Committee meeting is scheduled for December 12th at the Oliver Administration Building.

Chairperson’s Initiatives

Chairperson Silva stated that IT has advised the secretary to the School Committee on the best security practices moving forward when disseminating confidential information as is the case with the School Committee Packets. Karen Del Tatto will send out a short poll regarding choosing between one of two secure options. Chairperson Silva added that by using one means to disseminate supporting documentation, the process will be streamlined.

**ADJOURNMENT – 11:42 PM**

MOTION: There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. McBride motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:42 PM; seconded by Mrs. Campbell. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Saviano, Secretary

/kd