**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Monday, September 10, 2018**

The bi-monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, September 10, 2018, in the cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street, Bristol, RI. Chairperson, Paul Silva, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:03 PM.

Present: Paul Silva, Chairperson; Erin Schofield, Vice-Chairperson; William O’Dell, Secretary; Marjorie McBride, Treasurer; John Bento, Brian Bradshaw, Diana Campbell, Adam Ramos and John Saviano; Mario J. Andrade, Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Almeida, Director of Literacy and Title 1; and Leslie Anderson, Director of Pupil Personnel Services;

**OPENING BUSINESS**

Chairperson Silva invited all to join in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

MOTION: Mr. Saviano made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2018 meeting; seconded by Mrs. McBride.

The motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA FOCUS:**

*1. Mark Pompano, Director of Security, Newtown, Connecticut:*

 *Presentation on Incident Command, Messaging [Public Information*

 *Officer] and Student-Parent Reunification.*

Mrs. Schofield introduced Mr. Mark Pompano, Director of Security, Newtown, Connecticut.

Mr. Pompano described his work history while employed with the Newtown Public schools in 2008 which included a baseline assessment of school security procedures already in place.

He described how he learned of the Sandy Hook incident which took place in 2012.

Mr. Pompano explained the lessons learned during the Sandy Hook incident regarding communication and the importance of timely and accurate information to families.

Mr. Pompano described the incident command structure that was developed.

Mr. Pompano stated that he recommends establishing procedures rather than policy.

School Committee members asked Mr. Pompano about security personnel, including armed officers, and how to increase parent understanding regarding procedures that are in place which cannot be made public.

Mr. Pompano responded that Newtown has been very transparent with drills using newsletters to explain details to parents, including off campus staging areas. They do not give specific locations.

Mr. Pompano stated that he provides orientation to new staff members. Emergency procedures are available electronically, and flipcharts are updated.
“Emergency Go Bags” are provided for each teacher.

A discussion ensued regarding staffing.

A School Committee member asked whether there is onsite security in the evening at the schools. Another School Committee member asked about the timeline for communicating to parents.

Mr. Pompano cautioned about consequences of sending information too quickly without accurate facts. If law enforcement or the Fire Department is involved, the District must speak with them first to make sure the information they are looking to disseminate is accurate.

A question was asked on how security positions are funded.

Mr. Pompano responded that funding has shifted over the years. He added that the officers are all now funded through the Newtown budget.

A question was asked regarding who takes control of a school incident - local police or the School Department.

Mr. Pompano responded that the Newtown Police respond.

A question was asked about who Mr. Pompano specifically reports to.

Mr. Pompano responded that day to day he reports to the Superintendent. Mr. Pompano also mentioned that the Security and Safety Committee meets monthly and is chaired by himself and the president of the Teachers Union.

A question was asked regarding parent expectations concerninig communication.

Mr. Pompano responded that communication is done through the PTA presidents and the school principals via social media.

A question was asked regarding the level and frequency of communication.

Mr. Pompano responded that communication templates are used which have been shared with Mrs. Schofield, Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee Chair.

A question was asked whether the policy vs. procedure concerns are related to potential liability.

Mr. Pompano responded that yes, liability is a concern.

A question was raised concerning the amount of training for armed security officers.

Mr. Pompano responded that the training period is for three days each summer.

A question was asked regarding Incident Command Control and the process for determining what incidents rise to this level.

Mr. Pompano responded with a description of incidents that warrant parent notification.

A question was raised concerning keeping a balance between increased security personnel while still creating a welcome environment.

Mr. Pompano described the lessons learned regarding reunification.

A question was raised regarding increased camera use and teachers response.

Mr. Pompano stated that there are no cameras in the classrooms. Only school administration and security personnel can view monitors. He added that only himself and the administration can download video from the cameras.

Questions regarding camera preference, visible or concealed; and parent training re: how to reach all parents.

Mr. Pompano responded that communication works best through the PTA, community meetings and newsletters.

A question was raised on whether there are different security approaches between schools that have/have not experienced a school shooting.

Mr. Pompano responded that yes there are different levels of community expectation.

A question was raised regarding different approaches to security personnel.

Mr. Pompano responded that Newtown opted for a soft approach.

Mrs. Schofield raised a question regarding personnel that are qualified to be Director of Security when there is not an appointed staff member.

Dr. Andrade responded that the District would have access to police chiefs regarding communication and consultation of school incidents.

Mrs. Schofield clarified Mr. Pompano’s recommendation to use procedures for specifying levels of events and communication expectations.

Mr. Pompano clarified that it is important to make sure parents and staff understand terminology.

Mr. Bradshaw brought up parent expectations when communication specifics are not delineated in policy asking how do you communicate to the parent that they may not hear right away.

Mr. Pompano responded by saying through training and a public information officer.

Mr. Mike Skidmore, Hugh Cole parent, asked whether Newtown has seen an impact having an armed officer present in the schools.

Mr. Pompano directed the question to Chief Canario. Chief Canario explained that officers are assigned to Bristol Warren Regional School District (BWRSD) schools. There is a Security Resource Officer (SRO) at Mt. Hope High School, and frequent school checks are conducted to ensure that doors are locked.

Dr. Andrade described BWRSD’s relationship with the Bristol and Warren Police Departments and the MHHS SRO. He also mentioned current discussions regarding placing an SRO at KMS.

Dr. Andrade shared the security upgrades that are being planned for BWRSD to include:

Camera Systems

Security Film

Communication Systems

Security Doors

In addition, there will be ongoing training for the schools within the District by Bristol and Warren Police Officers.

Mrs. Schofield clarified that she is in favor of armed police officers in the BWRSD schools.

Chairperson Silva thanked Mr. Pompano for his presentation. Mr. Pompano offered to provide additional assistance.

Mr. Pompano invited the School Committee to attend a Security & Safety Committee meeting.

Mrs. Campbell requested a copy of the New York Times articles that Mr. Pompano mentioned.

Chairperson Silva thanked Chief Canario, Bristol Chief of Police and those police officers present. Chief Canario assured everyone that the students safety is his priority.

Mrs. Campbell asked Chief Canario his opinion on having a District Security & Safety Commission. Chief Canario responded that he believes there is a strong process in place which will continue to improve.

*2. School Committee Microphone Discussion, Rose Muller*

Mr. O’Dell shared the concerns regarding the current sound system being used by the School Committee and the need to have someone at the meeting to adjust the levels.

Mr. O’Dell provided suggestions for speaking into the microphones, sound system settings, and room tuning.

Mrs. McBride stated that there were concerns with the previous sound system and the new system which is currently being used.

A discussion ensued.

**ADJOURNMENT - 8:53 PM:**

MOTION: At 8:53 p.m., Mr. Saviano made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mrs. Campbell.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

William M. O’Dell, Secretary

/kd