

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Barre Town Middle and Elementary School – Library
February 21, 2018 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chad Allen - Chair
Jay Paterson – Vice Chair
Alice Farrell - Clerk
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins – departed at 8:31 p.m.
Kristin McCarthy

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent
Jaime Evans, Facilities Director
Scott Griggs, Principal
Jennifer W. Nye, Principal
Erica Pearson, Assistant Principal
Jacquelyn Ramsey-Tolman, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech Holly Hoyt Terrie Murray Victoria Pompei

1. Call to Order: Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair, Mr. Allen, called the Wednesday, February 21, 2018, Regular meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., which was held at the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library. The flag salute followed.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Delete Agenda Item 5.1
Postpone Agenda Items 5.5 – 5.10 until the March Meeting.

3. Visitors and Communications

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. Approval of Minutes – January 17, 2018 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the January 17, 2018 Regular Meeting.

4.2. Approval of Minutes – February 1, 2018 Tri-Board Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Paterson, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the February 1, 2018 Tri-Board Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Resignations/Retires/New Hires

This item was 'deleted' and is being kept in the Minutes as a place holder.

5.2 Proficiency Based Learning

Screen prints from a Power Point Presentation titled 'Proficiency Base Learning & Report Cards' was distributed. Mr. Griggs advised that this is the first year of implementation of Proficiency Based Learning and report cards. Mrs. Tolman began the presentation advising that Proficiency Based Learning focuses on students' demonstration of desired learning outcomes and that it is designed to identify and address gaps to provide equitable learning opportunities for every student. Proficiency Based Learning is a much more in-depth way for students to learn the skills they require. Proficiency Based Learning allows students to practice skills and encourages growth without negatively impacting final grades. Academic performance and Habits of Learning (the social / emotional piece) are reported separately in an effort to provide a more accurate picture of students' learning strengths and needs. Proficiency Based Learning involves practice, assessments, re-assessments, and Habits of Learning. At the high school level, students are allowed 'recovery days', which allow students an opportunity to improve their skills and knowledge. An example of a rubric for Habits of Learning on a second grade report card was shown. School Quality Standards used in part for the evaluation of Habits of Learning,

but evaluation also includes measurement of essential qualities that have been defined by a committee for each grade level. The definition of elements continues to be defined. Though some states have clearly defined statewide Education Quality Standards, in Vermont, this level of definition has not been defined at the State level. The State has made each district responsible for defining their own standards. In some circumstances, this lack of alignment can cause issues for students who are transferring to a new school. It was noted that the Great Schools Partnership is working with many different schools in the state and this does help at some level. It was noted that for informational and transparency purposes, this evening's Power Point presentation will soon be available on line for parents to view. 'Habits of learning' data is currently updated every two weeks. It was noted that data for elementary school students, is not yet available for viewing on Infinite Campus. Mrs. Tolman provided historical information regarding the implementation of Proficiency Based Learning systems throughout the United States. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins expressed concern, based on recent experience, that colleges are not familiar with the Proficiency Based Learning system and does not feel that this system is adequately preparing students for college. Mrs. Tolman believes that colleges will be adjusting to this evolution. It was noted that the change to Proficiency Based Learning (for all public schools) is mandated by Act 77 and the Vermont's State Board of Education Quality Standards. It is believed that by improving clarity and making learning goals more explicit, more students will have a chance to be successful and acquire the necessary skills needed in adult life. Mrs. McCarthy reiterated the concern that the new system does not prepare students for college, specifically in the area of assessments, which under Proficiency Based Learning can be taken multiple times, but in college, are only administered once and need to be passed on the first try. Mr. Griggs believes offering the freedom to practice, and freedom to fail, can be beneficial. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins suggested that it may be beneficial to poll juniors and seniors, now and in the future, regarding how they feel Proficiency Based Learning impacted their success or failure. Mr. Pandolfo believes the shift to Proficiency Based Learning is due to a nationwide issue of students not being prepared for college. Mr. Allen believes that the change to Proficiency Based Learning has assisted his 9th grader with improving some of his skills. Mr. Griggs provided an overview of the transition to PBL at BTMES, including development of standards and advised that those involved understood that the transition would involve struggle on different fronts. Mr. Griggs noted that, for the most part, the flow of education has not changed under PBL. Mr. Griggs shared some feedback from the GSP consultant including positive comments and areas for improvement. The consultant continues to observe in classrooms and participate in afterschool meetings, sharing information regarding 'areas for improvement'. The two areas identified as needing the greatest amount of improvement include learning targets and formative assessment. It is felt that the GSP consultant is meeting the expectations of the school. It is felt that areas where faculty needs support, have been identified. Mrs. Farrell stressed that every year in a student's life is critical and cannot be gotten back, therefore it is essential that we are educating students in the best way possible. Mr. Pandolfo advised that improvements in education are ongoing every year, and this year, during the transition to PBL, is no different than in the past. In response to frustration that not all teachers are transitioning consistently (some teachers do not allow re-assessments), it was noted that all staff should be allowing re-assessments and additional training of staff will be necessary. Mrs. Nye provided an overview of the transition to PBL and PBG at the elementary school level (K – 4). Mrs. Nye shared a prop (Proficiency Based Continuum) to help illustrate progressions for the lower grades.

It was noted that the Report Card Committee (included both BTMES and BCEMS staff) worked together to develop a report card format that encompassed all of the standards, without being cumbersome. Administrators have worked diligently to assure that staff have evidence based documentation to back-up report card grades. Mr. Griggs advised regarding steps taken to implement PBL and PBG (at the middle school level), including faculty training, determination of standards for report cards, collaboration with BCEMS, and ongoing support with Great Schools Partnership. Additionally, it was noted that PBG has been applied to end-of-year awards and co-curricular eligibility, Professional Development, and finalization of an expanded rubric for Habits of Learning. It was noted that grades are no longer used to determine eligibility for co-curricular activities. Mr. Griggs provided examples of some of the rubrics for Habits of Learning. Mrs. Tolman advised regarding how PBL and PBG ties in to the high school. Mrs. Tolman provided information relating to the impact PBG has on college admission. Concern was raised that the terminology used in PBG is not aligned between the middle school and the high school.

Mrs. Tolman advised regarding the role of Differentiation in PBL. Instructional strategies are designed based on individual learning needs and styles, and provide flexibility in methods to assist students with meeting defined standards. Concern was raised that students, who reach proficiency before others in the class, will be given 'busy work' as the teacher works to assist other students who are still trying to meet proficiency. Mrs. Nye believes it would be beneficial to have a system that puts students in classes based on abilities rather than by age. Mrs. Nye stressed the importance of focusing on the entire child including areas where students excel. Mrs. Tolman distributed a document listing the Ten Essential Components and advised regarding related professional development that has been requested. Mrs. Tolman advised regarding the provision of consistency of supports from elementary school through high school, including the use of GoEnnounce (for Personalized Learning Plans), vertical team collaboration on Content, and cross-school collaboration on Unit Development and grading practices.

The presentation continued with an overview of the development of an expanded Communication Plan to help assure that the school community and the greater community are kept informed regarding the progress of the transition to PBL and PBG. Methods of communication include district web pages, newsletters, Curriculum Committee Minutes, and providing additional information on the BTMES web site, Facebook page, monthly newsletters, and written information provided with report cards and at Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences. Additionally, there is a questionnaire that allows parents to submit PBL and PBG questions and comments.

Mrs. Tolman and Mr. Griggs provided information regarding some frequently asked questions and comments. Board Members were advised of a link, and encouraged to watch the CVU video regarding their transition to PBL. It was announced that 8th grade students need to be aware that their 4th quarter Habits of Learning scores will be used to determine eligibility for co-curricular activities in the fall of 2018.

5.3 Transportation Report

Mrs. Murray addressed the Board providing an update on the transition of busing. There has been some extreme weather, but she feels confident that the buses, as outfitted (with studded tires) have been working well. Drivers have gotten to know the students on their routes, have become very familiar with their routes, and few stops have been missed. Mrs. Murray meets monthly with drivers and feels the meetings are beneficial. Discussion of possible changes for the 2018-2019 school year will begin in March. Pre-school students are currently transported on 3 buses, but may eventually be on all of the buses. Mrs. Murray advised regarding adult supervision on the buses, noting that supervision is needed more on the afternoon runs than on the morning runs. Mr. Pandolfo advised that due to the transition of transportation, it was decided not to make major changes to routes during the first (implementation) year, but that in subsequent years, it may be beneficial to make route changes. Other items to be communicated with STA include high school transportation and transportation for Special Education students. Additional work has included improved communication between town road crews and Mr. Pandolfo to improve decision making regarding school cancellations and delayed starts. Additional communication will include the coordination of the timing of plowing roads and bus routes. Mrs. Murray has been communicating with bus drivers regarding areas of concern during 'mud season' and concerns have been discussed with the Road Foreman. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding whether or not STA has facilities to wash buses. In response to a query regarding previously discussed changes to routes, Mrs. Murray advised that things have worked out and that the safety of children is, as always, the greatest concern, and children are as safe as ever. It was noted that change is difficult, but everyone seems to be adjusting well to the transition. It will be important to keep the community apprised that routes are being reviewed and changes may be introduced next year. Mr. Pandolfo advised that it has been announced that certain stops in Barre City are being eliminated. It was noted that if a student's IEP requires certain provisions, bus routes may need to be altered to accommodate the Plan. Details regarding requirements for individual students cannot be shared due to confidentiality issues.

5.4 Facilities Report

A document titled 'BTMES CAPITOL REPAIRS/REPLACEMENT 5 YEAR PLAN' was distributed. Mr. Evans addressed the Board, referring to the distributed 5 year plan that was written with the assistance of Paul Belisle. The plan is to be used as a guide for future work. It was noted that the list is not in any particular priority order. Mr. Evans advised that some roof repairs are minor in nature, though some are major. Mr. Evans advised regarding the air conditioning system, which, if future budgets allow, will have units replaced. It was noted that each unit serves between 1 and 3 rooms. The woodchip boiler has been a good investment that has more than paid for itself. There is little maintenance involved with the boilers. Asbestos pipe insulation (primarily roof drains), will need to be removed. Asbestos is safe if left undisturbed, but when necessary to remove, is an expensive undertaking. Mr. Evans is not aware of any grant money available for asbestos abatement. The heating system controllers can be a bit time consuming to run when they need to be operated manually. It is beneficial to be able to operate them remotely via a computer. As budgets are reviewed during the year, Mr. Evans tries to spend money very cautiously, and towards the end of the year, uses the remaining funds to make some of the less urgent, but necessary improvements. Mr. Evans advised regarding penthouse enclosures for air conditioner units, which would run more efficiently, if enclosures were insulated and encapsulated. Mr. Evans advised regarding bleacher improvements, which will be made to improve safety (updates to, and installation of additional hand railings). The front entrance canopy entrance is aging and the Board may wish to have an architect or engineer assess the safety of it within the next few years. Bus loop traffic may also be reviewed at the same time. Over February break, maintenance personnel will be waxing floors, cleaning carpets and walls, painting, etc. If prioritizing, the top 3 items would be as follows: 1. Woodchip boiler (low cost fix), 2. Heating system controllers, and 3. Roof repairs. Regarding grant monies for bleacher improvements, Mr. Evans advised regarding how the VSBIT Safety Grant works and how he would like to use it in the future (rather than splitting \$10,000 between the 3 schools each year, spend the entire \$10,000 for one school per year, rotating the use between the 3 schools). It was noted that the bleachers are not unsafe, they just don't quite meet new safety requirements. Mr. Allen thinks it may be beneficial to see the 5 year plan broken down by year, including expenses by year. It may also be beneficial for the report to include pictures of some of the items that need improvements. It was noted that the report lists major items, but there are many other items that need to be addressed, e.g. carpet replacement etc... Ms. Pearson advised that the maintenance line item really needs to be increased in an effort to stay on task with items that need to be addressed. Mr. Allen feels it would be beneficial to identify the many items that will need to be worked on to continue investing in the building to assure items are addressed as the building ages. Future budgets to should be increased to accommodate addressing these needs. Mr. Evans stressed that much has been done to address safety in the school including installation of additional card readers and cameras, though there other items that could be done. Mr. Allen queried that in light of recent events in other states, what additional things should be done to improve safety in the district schools. Mr. Pandolfo advised that much discussion continues regarding student safety and advised that custodial staff will be receiving ALICE training in the near future. Ms. Pearson advised that the biggest recommendation from the VSBIT audit was guest procedures, which were put in place with the assistance of Mark Moody. Mrs. McCarthy wants assurance that students know where they should go in the event that they are not in the classroom when a situation occurs. Ms. Pearson advised regarding current procedures during lock downs and fire drills,

including how all students are accounted for. Mrs. Nye advised that the Barre Town Police Department is having more of a presence in the building and are working to get to know students better.

5.5 First Reading Scholarship Awards Policy (E31)

Copies of the policies referenced in Agenda Items 5.5 through 5.10 were distributed.
Action postponed until the March 7, 2018 Board Meeting.

5.6 First Reading Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Procurement Policy (E24)

Action postponed until the March 7, 2018 Board Meeting.

5.7 First Reading Capitalization of Assets Policy (E23)

Action postponed until the March 7, 2018 Board Meeting.

5.8 First Reading Search, Seizure, and Interrogation of Students by Law Enforcement Policy (F11)

Action postponed until the March 7, 2018 Board Meeting.

5.9 First Reading Search, Seizure, and Interrogation of Student by School Personnel Policy (F4)

Action postponed until the March 7, 2018 Board Meeting.

5.10 First Reading Travel Reimbursement Policy (E11)

Action postponed until the March 7, 2018 Board Meeting.

6. Old Business

6.1 Budget Development and Board Communication

Mr. Pandolfo advised that he, along with Jay Paterson and Paul Malone met with the Barre Town Select Board on 02/06/18 to present the budget. The presentation, which was very well received, was informative and included an overview of the Budget Highlights document. The Selectmen showed an appreciation for the Board's efforts to continue providing a high quality education in a fiscally responsible way.

Mr. Pandolfo distributed copies of the color informational brochure (Supervisory Union Annual Report) and SU Budget Report. These documents have been distributed in various locations, including all of the schools. There is a link to an electronic version on all of the district web sites. The brochure is also being promoted on Facebook, Front Porch Forum, and in school newsletters. This format for budget promotion differs from past years. The BSU and district schools will continue to look for ways to improve promotion of the schools and their budgets.

6.2 Act 46

Mr. Pandolfo advised that the first meeting (an organizational meeting) of the Act 46, 706 Study Committee, will be held on Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 6:00 p.m., in the SHS Library. A copy of the proposed agenda has been sent to Committee Members. This organizational meeting will include the appointment of a Chair or Co-Chairs. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the Secretary of Education has a deadline of June 1, 2018 to submit a draft Statewide Plan to the State Board of Education. The Secretary of Education is holding meetings with involved districts, but because of the formation of the new 706 Study Committee, does not feel that the BSU needs to meet with her at this time. The State Board of Education has a deadline of November 30, 2018 to issue a final Statewide Plan. It should be noted that the State Board of Education feels that November is too late to hold a merger vote, thus, if the Committee decides to hold a vote, they should try to hold the vote in September. Mr. Pandolfo will share this, and other information at the organizational Study Committee Meeting.

7. Board Reports

7.1. Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated January 25, 2018 was distributed. The report included information pertaining to; Negotiations, Act46, ALICE Training, the Director of Technology Search, Administrator Evaluations, and the Promotional Brochure. The BSU Promotional Brochure and Budget Reports were distributed earlier in the meeting. Mr. Pandolfo had nothing additional to report.

7.2 Principals Report

A copy of the BTMES Administration Report for February 7, 2018 was distributed. The report contained information relating to Preschool Screenings (04/05/18), Kindergarten Screenings (04/26/18 & 04/27/18), the Puppets in Education presentation, second grade students' visit to nursing homes, third graders who were recognized at the State House (relating to the Fire Safety Calendar), the successful fourth grade band concert, the upcoming Lip Sync Battle, Air Quality Testing (all samples tested without concern), Administrator Professional Development, and Upcoming Events. It was noted that there will be no school from 02/26/18 - 03/06/18. A copy of the Enrollment Report and the latest newsletter were also distributed.

Mrs. Nye distributed copies of the 27th Annual Fire Safety Calendar and announced that 3 BTMES students were recognized at a ceremony held in the beginning of February. Ms. Pearson advised that the Lip Sync Battle will be held this Friday. Mr. Griggs advised that the Scripts National Spelling Bee was held today. Students were so successful during the spelling bee that the competition could not be concluded and will be finished on Thursday. Mrs. Nye highlighted the VINS Owls visit to kindergarten as well as the Puppets for Education presentation, and the Second grader's visits to nursing homes to culminate their dance unit. The first fourth grade band concert was a success. It was noted that over the course of the school year, enrollment has increased from 834 students to 862 students. Mrs. Nye advised that she recently met with PTO Representatives regarding funding for field trips. Between a donation from the PTA, the Positive Pie fundraiser, and the Bakeless Bake Sale, approximately \$10,000 has been raised. An additional fundraiser, involving a silent auction and raffle, is currently being planned.

7.3 Committee Reports

7.3.1 Finance/Facilities/Transportation Committee –

The next meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the BTMES Library. Mr. Paterson believes that the April and May Meetings may not be necessary.

7.3.2 Verbal Report of BSU Committees –

Curriculum Committee – The last meeting was cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

Policy Committee – The Committee met on Monday, February 19, 2018. Discussion included a review of a Transportation Policy change to accommodate a change requested by Spaulding High School. Additionally, each district school was assigned the task of reviewing district policies to identify policies that should be rescinded because they now exist at the SU level, or are actually procedures. BTMES has the greatest number of district policies to review. Ms. Pearson believes that the majority of the policies on the BTMES list can be reviewed/culled quickly, and that only a handful will require extensive research.

Finance Committee - This Committee has not met recently.

7.4 Financials

The BTMES General Fund Expenditures Report (dated 01/26/18) and the BSU Expenditures Report for FY18, were distributed. Mr. Paterson queried regarding whether or not financial reports reflect the new wage and health insurance premiums. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the retroactive pay will be in the next pay period, thus the information will not be included until the next report is generated. It is anticipated that year-end-projection information will be included in the next report.

In response to a query from Mr. Allen, Mr. Pandolfo advised that he believes that the most significant differences for health insurance will occur in line items that have small numbers of personnel.

Though the current projection calls for an approximate \$27,000 surplus, a better projection will be available next month.

Mr. Paterson, on behalf of the Board, Administrators, and the Community, presented gifts of appreciation to Mr. Allen and Mrs. McCarthy. Mr. Paterson expressed thanks to Mrs. McCarthy and Mr. Allen, for their service to the Board and the community as a whole.

Mr. Pandolfo expressed his thanks to departing Board Members, for their collegiality, guidance, and support over the years, both in his position as Superintendent and as Curriculum Director. It was noted that Mrs. McCarthy has served on the BTMES Board for 6 years. Mr. Allen has served for 4 years.

Mrs. McCarthy advised that she liked giving back to the community in this way and that she is proud of the community and its support of the school.

Mr. Allen conveyed his appreciation to Board Members for their time spent conducting Board business, and their willingness to be open and share ideas. He feels that there was good communication between Board Members and with the community and very much appreciates all the time and effort that Board Members put in. Mr. Allen feels that he has learned much during his tenure on the Board.

8. Future Agenda Items and Upcoming Committee Meetings

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library.

Agenda Items:

- Board Reorganization
- First Readings of Policies
- Act 46 Update

9. Approval of Warrants

No Warrants were presented for approval.

10. Executive Session

10.1 Administrative Evaluations

Administrative Evaluations were proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo, Mr. Griggs, Mrs. Nye, and Ms. Pearson in attendance, at 8:54 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the item proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. McCarthy, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 11:34 p.m.

11. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library.

12. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 11:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin