

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING**

Via Video Conference – Google Meet
April 8, 2021 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sonya Spaulding (BC) – Chair
Alice Farrell (BT) – Vice Chair
Guy Isabelle (At-Large) - Clerk
Gina Akley (BT)
Renee Badeau (BT)
Tim Boltin (BC)
Chris Parker (BT)
Sarah Pregent (BC)
Abigayle Smith (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

David Wells, Superintendent
Mary Ellen Simmons, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Emmanuel Ajanma, Director of Technology
Josh Allen, Communications Specialist
Stacy Anderson, Director of Special Services
Penny Chamberlin, Director Central Vermont Career Center
Hayden Coon, BCEMS Principal
Scott Griggs, CVCC Assistant Director
Chris Hennessey, BCEMS Principal
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources
Jennifer Nye, BTMES Principal
Erica Pearson, BTMES Principal
Brenda Waterhouse, SHS Principal

GUESTS PRESENT:

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Winton Goodrich	Josh Howard	Prudence Krasofski
Nicole Ladd	Jennifer Luck-Hill	Ted Mills	Cody Morrison
Michael Pope	Diane Solomon	Rachael Van Vliet	

As the meeting was held via video conferencing, a roll-call vote was taken for each action item. Each Board Member was individually polled and voted to approve all motions that are listed as unanimously approved.

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Thursday, April 8, 2021, Regular meeting to order at 5:31 p.m., which was held via video conference.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Agenda Items 7.1.1 through 7.1.7 should be numbered 7.1 through 7.7.

In response to a query regarding the absence of Committee Minutes from the packet, it was noted that Committee Minutes have not been included in the packet for several months. 7.1 – 7.7 will be ‘deleted’ from tonight’s agenda and will be added to the agenda for the second ‘regular’ meeting in April. Committee Minutes should be included in future Board packets. Agenda Items 7.1 – 7.7 will be kept as placeholders.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mrs. Akley, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as amended.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

3.1 Public Comment

None.

3.2 Student Voice

None.

4. Consent Agenda

Mrs. Spaulding advised regarding Agenda changes, noting that changes are being made to improve efficiency. Mrs. Spaulding advised that all items listed under Agenda Item 4 (Consent Agenda) will be approved under one motion. A request was made to pull agenda item 4.3.3 so that discussion can be held.

On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously voted to approve all Consent Agenda Items, with the exception of Agenda Item 4.3.3

4.1 Approval of Minutes – March 25, 2021 Regular Meeting

The Minutes of the March 25, 2021 Regular Meeting were distributed.

4.2 Central Office

The BUUSD Central Office Newsletter for April 2021 was distributed.

4.3 Building Reports

4.3.1 Spaulding High School

The Principal's Report for April 1, 2021 was distributed. A copy of the SHS Library Newsletter for April 2021 was distributed.

4.3.2 Central Vermont Career Center

The CVCC Director's Report for April 2021 was distributed. A copy of the CVCC 2021 National Technical Honor Society Student Inductees (dated 03/11/21) was distributed. A copy of the CVCC Program of Studies for 2021 was also distributed.

4.3.3 Barre City Elementary and Middle School

The Co-Principals' Report dated April 2021 was distributed. A document titled 'Garden News – April 2, 2021 was also distributed. Mr. Coon and Mr. Hennessey provided overviews of the grant funded Restorative Classroom Program (elementary level) and Rooms 7 (similar to the Restorative Classroom) & "Room "207" (open to all students) at the middle school level. The Restorative Classroom and Room 207 are for students that need Tier 3 services. Each student has an individualized treatment plan. Some of the students have been able to rejoin their regular classroom (for at least a portion of the day) and are transitioning out of the program. The goal is for students to not require a 1 on 1, to build skills and receive Tier 2 services. It was noted that creation of these classrooms has allowed the District to keep students in the community and has saved money by avoiding out-placement. Administrators are pleased with the success of these programs for students and noted a reduction in reliance on agencies and outside service providers. Administrators would like to expand the programs to include more students and continue with the goal of improving students' skills, and reducing the amount of support that some students currently require. In response to a query, it was noted that there is no designated administrator for this program. Oversight is provided as part of the Co-Principals' jobs. Mr. Coon invited Board Members to visit the school to view these classrooms. Mr. Allen is working with students to make videos regarding their success. Administrators were thanked for their efforts to improve the culture at BCEMS.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Building Report for BCEMS.

4.3.4 Barre Town Middle and Elementary School

The BTMES Building Report dated April 8, 2021 was distributed. The BTMES Newsletter for April 2021 was distributed.

4.4 Financials

Two documents were distributed; the BUUSD FY21 Year-end Projection Report and the CVCC FY21 Year-End Projection Report (both dated 04/06/21).

4.5 Personnel Memorandum

4.5.1 New Hires

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Forms for Christine DiCicco (BTMES Grade 2), Viviana Hardy (BTMES Spanish), Angela Haggett (SEA Program), and Allie Bianchi (BCEMS Special Educator) were distributed. This agenda item was revisited after agenda item 6.1.1. There is concern that a generic motion to approve all items under the consent agenda, does not adequately/clearly document the action of the Board, and under New Hires, does not enter into the record, the names of those being approve for hire. Though there are procedures in place that allow for individuals to be hired prior to a Board meeting, the Board must formally approve the hiring of licensed staff in an open meeting. Mrs. Spaulding will contact the VSBA regarding methods of approving various agenda items.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Ms. Badeau, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Christine DiCicco, Viviana Hardy, Angela Haggett, and Allie Bianchi.

4.5.2 Resignations

Letters of resignation from Neil Kelly (BTMES 5th grade), Adrienne Feeser (BCEMS middle school Art), and Dale Burnash (BCEMS 6th grade) were distributed.

5. Current Business

5.1 Barre Area Development Presentation

Mr. Wells introduced Cody Morrison, Executive Director of the Barre Area Development Corporation. Mr. Wells and Mr. Allen have been working with the Communications Committee on ways to develop partnerships and spread the vision and mission of the BUUSD schools throughout the community. Through this initiative, Mr. Allen has been in contact with Mr. Morrison regarding ways in which BADC could assist. Mr. Morrison addressed the Board advising that the Barre Area Development Corporation is a non-profit economic development organization that works on behalf of the City and Town of Barre to help grow the local economy. The Corporation works to bring new businesses to the area, help existing businesses grow, develop public infrastructure and promotes the Barre Area through a marketing program. Both BADC and the BUUSD have similar goals. BADC works with many different entities, and would like to add the BUUSD to the list of those they work with. A successful school helps improve the economic infrastructure. A new focus of the organization is the Barre Rock Solid Marketing Program. One of the intents of this program is to bring new families to the area. Mr. Morrison believes it would be beneficial to make more connections between the schools and the business community. One goal is to increase local business participation with CVCC activities. Mr. Morrison was thanked for attending a recent Communications Committee meeting and for presenting at this evening's meeting. The collaboration is appreciated. Mr. Morrison advised that there is a direct correlation between strong school systems and successful businesses. Mrs. Akley suggested that the BADC touch base with Let's Grow Kids. Mrs. Akley will provide contact information to Mr. Morrison.

5.2 The Coalition for Vermont Student Equity: Pupil Weighting Study

Copies of two e-mails to Mrs. Spaulding, from Douglas Korb (Chair of the Marlboro School Board), on behalf of The Coalition for Vermont Student Equity (CVTSE) dated 04/01/21 was distributed. Mrs. Spaulding advised that some studies have been performed, and the results indicate that pupil weighting formulas need to be changed. Mr. Korb has asked that the BUUSD join The Coalition for Vermont Student Equity. Mrs. Spaulding advised that if the weighting formula is altered as suggested, the BUUSD pupil count would rise. In response to a query, Mrs. Spaulding advised that she does not believe there is a cost to join the coalition. Mrs. Spaulding believes that VSBA is neutral on this matter, but will contact them for confirmation. A list of school districts who have joined the coalition is found on their web site. Mrs. Spaulding will invite Mr. Korb to attend the next 'regular' Board meeting so that he can share additional information.

6. Old Business

6.1 Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals

6.1.1 Presentation by Design Team

Three documents were distributed; 'Belief Statements', BUUSD Mission Statement (DRAFT 04/06), and a document titled Strategic Plan Structure. Winton Goodrich addressed the Board and provided an overview of the project including; an overview of Design Team Members, and the process to-date (Design Team meetings, public forums, surveys, and identification of common Strategic Plan themes). Mr. Goodrich provided an overview of the Strategic Plan Structure, and displayed draft Vision, Mission, and Belief Statements. Mr. Goodrich advised regarding the importance of metrics to monitor progress, and Board oversight to see that identified goals are accomplished. Mr. Goodrich was thanked for his role in this initiative. It was noted that the process has been very successful with many community members providing feedback. Mr. Pope advised that as a staff member, he is very appreciative of this process and the Board's agreement to enter into this initiative. In response to a query, Mr. Goodrich advised that he believes the Design Team is on track to present the final plan to the Board in late April or early May.

6.2 Modes of Instruction Update

A document titled 'Modes of Instruction Update: April 7, 2021' was distributed. Mr. Wells advised that the State released revised guidelines this afternoon. Mr. Wells shared on screen, a document titled 'Strong and Health Schools Survey Information: Modes of Instruction', and provided an overview of the data. Mr. Wells provided an overview of changes to guidelines, which pertain mainly to reduced social distancing protocols. Mr. Wells provided an overview of the revised in-person learning plan that will go into effect on 04/26/21. Mr. Wells advised that with a mid-day dismissal causing transportation issues at the high school level, the BUUSD is researching plans to potentially provide bus service at the end of the 'day' (12:35 p.m.). Additionally, Mr. Wells advised that in-person high school students will have all of their classes in-person. High school students that are committed to learning virtually, will continue to have their classes in the afternoon. It was noted that some parents have voiced concern that their students need to leave the high school at 12:30 p.m., but need to return a few hours later for sports. Mrs. Waterhouse provided an overview of interventions in place, some of which started in January. Afternoon interventions include structured support and special education services. Support and services are intended to assist students with meeting standards. Mr. Wells advised the BUUSD will be working more on the Recovery Plan, and it is hoped that next fall be bring fulltime in-person instruction. In response to concern that increased in-person learning was delayed, Mr. Wells advised that administrators and staff wanted to assure that they had adequate time to review the new guidelines. In response to a query regarding increased time for planning and team meetings (under the new plan), Mr. Wells advised that there is more time, for prep periods scheduled around lunch and specials, but more staff time is being used for supervision. A parent queried regarding the social/emotional aspect for high school students, and whether or not TA time will be included in the new schedule.

Mrs. Waterhouse advised that during hybrid learning, TA has been held remotely for ½ hour on Wednesdays. Under the new plan, TA will continue to be held remotely on Wednesdays, but the time will change to 1:00 p.m. It is anticipated that this practice will continue for the remainder of this year. A new schedule is planned for release on Monday, 04/12/21. Plans are being made to provide additional supports in the fall. Brief discussion was held regarding remote instruction options for next year.

7. Committee Reports

~~7.1 Communications Committee~~

~~7.2 Finance Committee~~

~~7.3 Facilities & Transportation Committee~~

~~7.4 Policy Committee~~

~~7.5 Curriculum Committee~~

~~7.6 Negotiations Committee~~

~~7.7 Regional Advisory Board~~

8. Other Business/Round Table

Mr. Isabelle congratulated David Poulin and Jacob Allen for being named Valedictorian and Salutatorian, congratulated CVCC National Technical Honor Society Student Inductees, and lauded the recognition program for students, staff, and athletes at SHS. Additionally, Mr. Isabelle commended resigning teachers for their service, noting that several wrote about their positive experiences in the BUUSD. Mr. Isabelle advised that he has been impressed by the number staff members who have been hired from out of state.

Ms. Smith thanked administrators for their hard work and the additional efforts being made to switch to more in-person learning.

Mrs. Pregent echoed Mr. Isabelle's comments regarding letters of resignation, and want to recognized Mr. Burnash for his many years of dedicated service. Mrs. Pregent noted that she appreciates all of the work involved in getting students back to in-person full time, and that she would like administrators to focus on looking forward to next year, with anticipation that COVID becomes maintained. Advance planning from the school will assist families in making their plans.

Ms. Badeau thanked building principals for their in-sight and sharing at tonight's meeting.

Ms. Parker echoed the appreciation to administrators for their work in planning for more in-person learning, and congratulated David Poulin and Jacob Allen for being named Valedictorian and Salutatorian, noting that Jacob is her neighbor.

Mrs. Farrell continues to be impressed with the amount of community involvement with the Strategic Plan, advising that their input is very helpful to the Board. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding kitchen materials that were placed for sale (by bid). Mr. Wells advised that using a substantial State grant, a number of pieces of kitchen equipment were replaced and the BUUSD is selling the used items.

Mr. Wells echoed the appreciation to teachers and administrators for their efforts in hybrid and in-person learning plans and, that he is excited to see students return to in-person learning after April Break.

Mrs. Spaulding expressed her appreciation to the Board for their thoughtful comments and questions and for reviewing board packets in advance of meetings. Mrs. Spaulding congratulated Mrs. Poulin as being the 'mom' of the Valedictorian.

9. Future Agenda Items

Mrs. Spaulding advised regarding the new Parking Lot section of the Agenda, noting that Parking Lot items will be reviewed and will be added to Agendas as appropriate.

- Committee Reports
- Design Team Final Plan
- Coalition for Vermont Student Equity
- Special Education Assistant Director Position Updates
- HR Report on Open Positions
- BCEMS Restorative Classroom and Rooms 7 and 207 Update/Data - (put in Parking Lot)

10. Next Meeting Date

There will be a Special Meeting of the Board on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via video conference. The April 22, 2021 Regular Meeting has been cancelled.

There will be a Special Meeting of the Board on Thursday, April 29, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via video conference.

11. Executive Session as Needed

11.1 Administrator and Superintendent Evaluations

11.2 Negotiations

Items proposed for discussion in Executive Session include Administrator and Superintendent Evaluations and Negotiations.

On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Ms. Smith, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the item proposed for discussion, specifically Negotiations, would clearly place the Barre Unified Union School District at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public. Mrs. Akley was not present for the vote.

On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Ms. Badeau, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Wells in attendance (for Negotiations and a portion of the Evaluations), at 7:41 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion. Mrs. Akley was not present for the vote.

The remaining information was provided by Mrs. Pregent.

On a motion by Mrs. Akley, seconded by Ms. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 10:23 p.m. Mr. Isabelle was not present for the vote.

12. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Ms. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 10:24 p.m. Mr. Isabelle was not present for the vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin