

## BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

6:30 p.m.

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School Multi-Purpose Room

1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505

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

**Present:** Mrs. Carol Lynn Costello, Acting-Superintendent; Mr. Michael Totman, Chair; Mrs. Meagan Grill, Vice Chair; Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti, Mrs. Julie Lee; Mr. Robert Holmes; Mrs. Lori-Anne Hart, District Clerk; Caroline MacKenzie, School Committee Student Representative; Mrs. Nancy Konisky, Director of Finance & Operations; Mrs. Janell Fitzpatrick, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Mr. Paul Mara, Technology Coordinator; Mr. Daniel Ayala, Director of Facilities; Mr. John Campbell, Principal of Berlin Elementary School; Mrs. Dawn-Marie Ayles, Principal of Boylston Elementary School; Ms. Sally Stukls, Principal of Tahanto Regional High School; Ms. Kara Ford, Assistant Principal of Tahanto Regional High School; Mr. Peter Doherty, Tahanto Educator & ELA Department Chair; Mrs. Lisa Sequeira, Educator & Science Department Chair; Mr. Matt Porcaro, Athletic Director; Ms. Meghan Logan, Coach

**I.** **Call to Order** at 6:34pm

**II.** **Pledge of Allegiance**

**III.** **Public Comments**

Patty Inwood- teacher from BES was joined by many colleagues that all work at BES.

The teachers and staff are very happy with Mrs. Ayles- they wanted to thank her publicly and let the committee know how well they believe she is doing as interim principal.

**IV.** **Communications**

Mr. Holmes had a communication that was discussed and resolved in the policy subcommittee meeting.

**V.** **Consent Agenda-Vote**

1. Payroll and [Payable Warrants](#)
1. [October 6, 2022, Budget, Facilities, and Safety Subcommittee Minutes](#)
1. [October 20, 2022, Budget, Facilities, and Safety Subcommittee Minutes](#)
1. [November 15, 2022, Open Meeting Minutes](#)
1. [November 28, 2022, Emergency Open Meeting Minutes](#)
1. [November 29, 2022 Policy and School Committee Effectiveness Subcommittee Minutes](#)
1. [December 6, 2022, Budget, Facilities, and Safety Subcommittee Minutes](#)
1. [December 6, 2022, Open Meeting Minutes](#)
1. [December 8, 2022, Emergency Open Meeting Minutes](#)

**Mrs. Hart made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, Mrs. Lee seconded. Vote 6-0, Motion passes**

**VI. Reports**

1. **Annual Cape Cod Field Trip Presentation**-*Peter Doherty, Teacher/English Department Head, Tahanto Regional Middle/High School*

Mr. Doherty presented a Cape Cod field trip that would be for a group of approximately 30 Tahanto students, mostly seniors, enrolled in particular classes. This teaches students about nature, philosophy, being in the moment, and how to apply what they learn in the classroom to the outside world. The trip began in 2012, stemming from the book “The Outermost House”, and was an annual occurrence prior to Covid. Mr. Holmes asked a question. Mrs. Lee asked a question. Mrs. Grill made a comment. Mr. Campbell made a comment.

**Mr. Totman moved the vote up. Mrs. Lee made a motion to approve the annual Cape Cod Field Trip. Mr. Holmes seconded. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.**

2. **Unified Sports Presentation-Mr. Matt Porcaro & Ms. Meghan Logan**

Matt Porcaro and Meghan Logan discussed Unified Sports which is a program through Special Olympics. Students with and without disabilities would have the opportunity to do various workout programs based on ability, giving all the opportunity to be part of a team while promoting inclusion and acceptance. Students work together for 6-8 weeks in an after-school program once or twice per week. Mrs. Logan would be the coach.

**Mr. Totman moved the vote up. Mr. Holmes made the motion to Approve a Unified Sports program at Tahanto for the 2022-2023 school year. Mrs. Degliaberti seconded.**

Discussion: Mr. Holmes asked the cost- Mrs. Konisky replied that we applied for grant for \$500 and one coach stipend is still available. This will cover the cost. Mrs. Hart asked if there were further financial obligations after the program completed, Mr. Porcaro stated there were none but this program would give the school a chance to test drive the company, to determine if future investments (Unifed Basketball, bocci, etc) would be worthwhile.

**Vote 6-0. Motion passes.**

3. **Tahanto Student Body Update - *Caroline MacKenzie***

Ms. MacKenzie informed us that students are excited about return of programs, field trips, and events at school. She told the Committee about the excitement of the return after Covid to “Deck the Halls” at Tahanto.

However, students are concerned about snow days- especially the seniors, many who are new drivers. She suggested being proactive rather than reactive.

Mrs. Costello assured Ms. MacKenzie that the school dept talks with each towns highway depts. to make sure roads are safe before making a decision about snow days and that new drivers are considered.

Mrs. Lee thanked Ms, MacKenzie for sharing, asked her to explain Deck the Halls. Ms. MacKenzie explained that it takes place the week before winter break, that the students decorate hallways with their grade's spirit color. She noted that it brought a lot of cheer.

Mr. Totman congratulated the football team and all athletes.

#### **4. Sub-Committee appointments**

- a. Budget, Facilities, and Safety – Mr Totman appointed Meagan Grill as the Chair and Julie Lee as a member
- b. Student Success and Technology – Mr. Totman appointed Michael Totman as the Chair Michael Totman, and Robert Holmes and Jessica Degliaberti as members.
- c. Mr Totman renamed the Policy and School Committee Effectiveness subcommittee to Policy, Personnel, Negotiations and School Committee Effectiveness – Mr. Totman appointed Lori-Anne Hart as the Chair and Robert Holmes and Michael Totman as members
- d. Mr. Totman renamed the Personnel, Negotiations, and Superintendent Evaluation subcommittee to Superintendent Evaluation. Mr. Totman appointed Lori-Anne Hart as Chair and Meagan Grill and Jessica Degliaberti as members

#### **5. Discuss School Committee Calendar meeting day change**

Mr. Holmes has a personal conflict on Tuesday evenings and is hoping to change School Committee meetings to either Wednesday or Thursday evenings. The principals and staff will get back to Mrs. Costello with schedules

#### **6. Subcommittee Reports**

- a. Budget, Facilities, and Safety – Meagan Grill- This subcommittee discussed the budget to be presented tonight. The subcommittee would like to thank everyone for their hard work on the budget and believes this will bring many opportunities for the students in this district. The subcommittee is also following up on the placement of a cell tower near Tahanto which will hopefully help with cell service at the school.
- b. Student Success and Technology – *Michael Totman*- This subcommittee did not meet this month due to a scheduling conflict.
- c. Policy and School Committee Effectiveness – *Lori-Anne Hart*- This subcommittee reviewed various policies to be voted on this evening and the MCAS Policy newsletter. Mrs. Hart apologized that the report she submitted was not available in the drive.

- d. Personnel, Negotiations, and Superintendent Evaluation- This subcommittee did not meet this month.

## 7. MCAS Report

Mr. Doherty gave a PowerPoint presentation showing MCAS scores and how they are being reported. He noted that the state has changed the way they grade MCAS over the past few years. He was able to show that the change in reporting did not accurately show how well the district did, using the old method of reporting to show the same results. The Biology exam is the most recent change.

The state continues to make changes to how they grade tests. Mr. Doherty used a bar graph to demonstrate how the state has re-organized/increased expectations as to what is proficient/advanced for this year's graduating students and how much more will be expected of our current grade 4 students when they are seniors.

Mr. Doherty explained that because the way of grading the exam is ever changing, one other way to look at progress is to measure how one specific class does year over year. Another way would be to review how specific students have grown from 3rd-10th grade. On a positive note, the building dept heads between elementary and middle/high school have begun communicating about MCAS scores and types of learners. Prior to regionalization, the schools were islands but have begun to collaborate, knowing today's 3<sup>rd</sup> graders need to be equipped for high school, and speaks to Acting-Superintendent Costello's "Portrait of a Graduate."

Mr. Totman appreciated this effort, explaining that the message to parents is "we are working together." He said that the idea of 3 separate buildings/schools is no longer, that we need to be focused on "one student".

## 8. **Director of Finance and Operations - Nancy Konisky & BBRSD Leadership Team**

### a. **NRT Bus Update**

Currently we are still scheduled to have a full staff by the end of January. NRT still has no substitutes; this mean when someone is out we must double up a run or delay one pick up until another bus can go back for that route. NRT is trying to entice new drivers with pay increases.

In January, a new app will be released called "Where's my kid".

Mrs. Degliaberti asked a question about the new app. Mrs. Konisky responded.

Mrs. Hart conducted a pilot for "Where's My Kid" last year. She had a positive experience with this. Only issue would be when there is a sub bus as a substitute sometimes uses a different bus with different GPS tracking on it.

Mr. Holmes commented about the bus situation regarding money being spent/contract needs not being met, wanted to know if there were viable financial repercussions. Mrs. Konisky noted she

hadn't paid invoices for Oct-Nov and would pursue an adjustment. She noted that while we were in a 2-year contract with them, they have been trying to work with her. Mr. Holmes requested access to the sealed contract. Mrs. Konisky said she would share it with him and noted that we "need to solve this ourselves", that we need to find more drivers/parents are encouraged to help by seeking employment with NRT. She explained that the problem is widespread, noting that Marlborough Public Schools have 40 or so busses and have drivers for approximately 30.

The Food Service Dept is also looking for help at all schools. Kudos were given to our Director of Facilities, Mr. Ayala (also known as "Lunchman Dan") who has been helping out in the lunchroom.

A Facility Assessment in the amount of \$35,000 has been donated by Northbridge Partners. That coupled with a \$10,000 grant means we can put the assessment out to bid.

#### **b. FY2024 Initial Budget Presentation**

Mrs. Costello introduced the budget by explaining that we are only in our 4<sup>th</sup> year as a district; she pointed out that we are very young and have great growth potential. She asked how we define ourselves, noting "what do we want for our children's future?" She noted that we are one district and that budget reflects our unified needs—not the "wants" or wishes. The budget is aggressive this year but it's our opportunity to keep our district competitive to other schools, from local to private to vocational. Ms. Costello further explained that the budget was a result of years of holding back on funding, giving the analogy of a wet paper grocery bag giving way. The bag is breaking, only some items can be saved; who determines what drops and what is saved?

Mrs. Konisky presented the budget for each school along with enrollment, there are several public documents she created that best explain her presentation:

[BBRSD Totals FY24 Preliminary Budget](#) , [FY24 Capital Plan](#) , [Enrollment History](#) , [Berlin Memorial Elementary 3 Year Capital Plan](#) , [Berlin Memorial Elementary School FY24 Preliminary Budget](#) , [Boylston Elementary 3 Year Capital Plans](#) , [Boylston Elementary School FY24 Preliminary Budget](#) , [Tahanto MSHS FY24 Preliminary Budget](#) , [Tahanto MSHS 3 Year Capital Plan](#) ,

Mrs. Deglialberti and Mr. Holmes made comments and had questions.

Mr. Campbell explained the benefit of some of the requested items and how they would enhance education/add to time on learning.

Mr. Holmes asked if these numbers were accurate, if there were grants that could be applied to decrease the ask. Mrs. Konisky indicated that she was not using the same presentation style as our former Finance Director, that she had already applied anticipated monies via grants, etc so the bottom line was accurate.

Ms. Grill suggested the need for a full time grant writer, Mr. Holmes noted it would pay for itself.

Mrs. Konisky explained the difference between level and above-level and presented the budget for all 3 schools as well as Capital Expenditures.

There was a discussion as to how we could get this budget information to the public since many don't have the time to watch the meeting. Mr. Holmes had suggestions that Mrs. Konisky was enthusiastic about implementing. Mrs. Degliaberti suggested using the weekly Newsletter.

## **VII. Business Items**

. **Mrs. Hart made a motion to Approve the initial FY2024 Budget and Capital Budget as presented; Mrs. Lee Seconded.** Discussion- Mr. Holmes asked a question. Mr. Totman, Ms. Costello, and Mrs. Grill contribute to answer. Mrs. Konisky comments that she appreciates the Budget and Finance Subcommittee, which allows the SC to collaborate on the budget. **Vote 6-0; Motion passes.**

a. **Mrs. Lee made a motion to approve Policy [JICA: Student Dress](#); Mrs. Hart seconded. Vote 6-0; Motion passes.**

b. **Mrs. Lee made a motion to approve Policy [AC: Non-Discrimination including Harassment & Retaliation](#), Mrs. Hart seconded.** Discussion: Mr. Holmes notes what was discussed at the beginning of the meeting, that the incorrect version in the drive. Correct policy will be uploaded and voted upon at another meeting. **Vote 0-6, Motion Fails.**

c. **Mr. Holmes made a motion to approve Policy [GBA: Equal Employment Opportunity](#); Mrs. Degliaberti seconded. Vote: 6-0; Motion Passes.**

d. **Mr. Holmes made a motion to approve Policy [GCF: Professional Staff Hiring](#); Mrs. Lee seconded. Vote: 6-0; Motion Passes.**

e. **Mr. Holmes made a motion to approve Policy [JB: Equal Educational Opportunities](#); Mrs. Degliaberti seconded. Vote: 6-0; Motion Passes.**

f. **Mr. Holmes made a motion to approve Policy [JFBB: School Choice](#); Mrs. Grill seconded. Discussion: Mrs. Hart noted that policy in drive is JFBB-I, not the correct policy. Vote: 0-6. Motion Fails.**

g. Approve the annual Cape Cod Field Trip : This vote was conducted during the Cape Cod trip presentation.

**Mr. Holmes made a motion to enter executive session in order to conduct negotiations with union personnel (BBEA) and to review and approve executive session minutes from 11/15/2022 and 12/6/2022 and to return to open session. Mrs. Grill seconded.**

**Roll call vote-Mrs. Hart: Aye  
Mrs. Grill: Aye  
Mrs. Degliaberti: Aye  
Mrs. Lee: Aye  
Mr. Holmes: Aye  
Mr. Totman: Aye  
Vote: 6-0, Motion Passes**

Respectfully submitted,  
Meagan Grill and Lori Hart

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori Anne Hart". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line through the middle of the name.