

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

DRAFT

Monday, April 17, 2023

The meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held in person on Monday, April 17, 2023 at Mt. Hope High School in the Cafeteria located at 199 Chestnut Street, Bristol, RI 02809.

Present: Nicky Piper, Chairperson; Jessica Almeida, Treasurer; Tara Thibaudeau, Secretary; Kyle Jackson, Marjorie McBride, Carly Reich, Karen Cabral, Adam McGovern, and Sarah Bullard; Ana Riley, Superintendent of Schools; Diane Sanna, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent; Frank Caliri, Facilities Director; Lisa Colwell, PhD., Director of Student Support Services; Mary Ann Carroll, Esq., District Solicitor.

I. OPEN SESSION

Chairperson Nicky Piper called the meeting to order at approximately 6:34 pm

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Ms. McBride made a motion for the Committee to go into Executive Session pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(1) for discussion of job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person and a discussion of a grievance filed pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement;. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jackson. The motion was approved unanimously. The Committee went into Executive Session at 6:36 PM.

III. RE-OPEN SESSION

Chairperson Piper re-opened the Public Session at approximately 7:01 PM.

IV. OPENING BUSINESS

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Piper invited all present to stand to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Piper opened the Public Comment portion of the meeting by inviting the first speaker, Mr. Bill O'Dell, to the podium.

Bill O'Dell, Bristol resident and representative of Mt Hope Church which meets in the Colt School auditorium. Mr. O'Dell requested that lights in the front of the stage be replaced. He noted that the church would be willing to purchase the light bulbs but that he will need help installing them.

Susan Morettini, Bristol resident and representative of "Be Smart", spoke in support of the resolution for secure storage.

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VI. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairperson Piper asked if any member of the School Committee wanted to remove any items from the Consent Agenda. Ms. Almeida requested that Items H, I, and M be pulled. Ms. Thibaudeau requested that Items Cv, K, and L be pulled. Chairperson Piper pulled Items H, I, M, C5, K, and L, stating that they will be addressed later in the meeting. She then asked for a motion to approve all the remaining items under the Consent Agenda.

MOTION: Ms. Reich made a motion to approve the remaining items on the Consent Agenda; seconded by Mr. Jackson.

VOTE: The motion was approved with a vote of 8-1. Ms. McBride voted in dissent.

- A. Minutes of 3-27-23 School Committee Business Meeting
- B. Homeschool Requests (1 family)
- C. Approve Administrative Contracts as recommended by the Personnel Subcommittee:
 - i. KMS Assistant Principal (contract extension)
 - ii. MHHS Assistant Principal (contract extension)
 - iii. MHHS Dean of Students (contract extension)
 - iv. Athletic Director (contract extension)
 - v.
- D. Approve the removal of Policy GCEB - Part-time Licensed Professional Staff (combined with Policy JHC below) as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.
- E. Approve the removal of Policy CM - School District Annual Report (duplicate of DIE - Audits), as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.
- F. Approve the removal of Policy CI - Temporary Administrator Arrangements (no longer relevant), as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee
- G. Approve the removal of Policy DBA - Joint Finance Committee Appropriation (no longer relevant), as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee
- H.
- I.
- J. Review and Reaffirm Policy AA - School District Legal Status
- K.
- L.
- M.
- N. Approve the removal of Policy INDB - Flag Displays (no substantive content), as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee
- O. Review and Reaffirm Policy GDB - Support Staff Contracts and Compensation Plans, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee
- P. Approve the removal of the following Policies, (as per contract language), as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee
 - GDBA - Support Staff Salary Schedules
 - GDBB - Support Staff Supplementary Plans
 - GDBC - Support Staff Fringe Benefits

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- GDBD - Support Staff Leaves and Absences
- GDBE - Support Staff Vacations and Holidays
- GDC/GDCA - Support Staff Recruiting
- GDD - Support Staff Hiring
- GDE/GDEA - Part-time and Substitute Support Staff Employment
- GDG - Support Staff Probation and Tenure
- GDN-R Evaluation of Support Staff
- GDPD - Reduction in Support Staff Work Force

VII. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ITEMS

A. Approve and Seal the minutes of the Executive Session

MOTION: Ms. Reich made a motion to approve and seal the minutes of the Executive Session; seconded by Ms. Cabral. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Standardize Monthly Financial Reports

- i. Cash Disbursements
- ii. Monthly Financial Report with Variance Analysis
- iii. Budget Transfer Report

Chairperson Piper stated that the financial reports are for discussion only; no vote is needed.

Ms. Thibaudeau requested the projected budget shortfall be shared with the Committee. Superintendent Riley stated that she would send it out to everyone.

VI.H. Review, re-code and rename Policy IND/INDA - School Ceremonies Observances/Patriotic Exercises to Policy IMD School Ceremonies and Observances, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

MOTION: Ms. Reich made a motion to approve the renamed Policy IMD School Ceremonies and Observances, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Bullard.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Almeida objected to the removal of "Patriotic Exercises" from the title. Superintendent Riley pointed out that Patriotic Exercises will have its own policy, IMDA, that will be proposed by the Policy Subcommittee in the future.

VOTE: The motion was approved unanimously.

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VI.I. Approve the removal of Policy HF - Superintendent Role in Negotiations, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to approve the removal of Policy HF, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Mr. Jackson.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. McBride asked why the policy was being removed. Superintendent Riley stated that the policy, as written, is more of a process than a policy. Ms. McBride responded that it didn't have to be a policy and that she would prefer to wait until there is a policy.

Mr. McGovern asked if the policy will be replaced with a new Policy HF later in the meeting? After Chairperson Piper responded that it would, Ms. Bullard withdrew her motion.

VI.K. Approve the removal of Policy HC - Scope of Negotiations, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

MOTION: Ms. Reich made a motion to approve the removal of Policy HC, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. McBride. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI.L. Approve the removal of Policy IB - Academic Freedom, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

MOTION: Ms. Reich made a motion to approve the removal of Policy IB, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Bullard.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Thibaudeau asked that the removal of the policy be put "on hold" until a replacement policy on Academic Freedom be developed.

VOTE: The motion was approved unanimously.

VI.M. Approve the removal of Policy INB - Teaching about Controversial Issues, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to approve the removal of Policy INB, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Reich.

VOTE: The motion was approved with a vote of 8-1. Ms. Thibaudeau voted in dissent.

C. Approve First Reading of GCE - Substitute Teacher Policy, which combines

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Policies GCE and GCEAA, and remove Policy GCEAA - Substitute Teacher Policy, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee

MOTION: Ms. Thibaudeau made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy GCE - Substitute Teacher Policy, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Bullard. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. Approve First Reading of new Policy JIBB - Student Member of the School Committee, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee

MOTION: Ms. Reich made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy JIBB, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Mr. Jackson.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Reich gave a history of the policy that was initiated by former Chairperson Erin Schofield.

Ms. McBride objected to the policy stating that there are lots of opportunities for students to voice their opinions. She also noted that the School Committee does not assign members of the SIT teams and that the policy does not include information on who chooses the student representative.

Ms. Bullard clarified that the policy provides students with “a seat at the table” but not a vote. She sees the policy as an opportunity for students to see the government in action.

Mr. Jackson is concerned that there may be a desire by some members who don't want to hear from students. Ms. Reich expanded on Mr. Jackson's comments, asking why the policy is scary to some members.

Ms. Almeida stated that it is not that she doesn't want to hear from students, but that there may be a better way to utilize the existing structure to make that possible.

Chairperson Piper stated that she supports the policy because she sees the students as experts on what's going on in their schools.

Mr. McGovern stated that he values the voice of the students but thinks that the Committee can hear from students through Public Comment. He would also like to see the student representatives voted on by their peers.

Ms. Cabral disagrees with Mr. Jackson that the Committee is not interested in what students have to say. She just believes that this is not the right way to hear from them.

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VOTE: The motion was not approved by a vote of 4-5 Ms. Cabral, Ms. Thibaudeau, Ms. Almeida, Mr. McGovern, and Ms. McBride voted in dissent.

- E. Approve First Reading of revised and recoded Policy HE - School Committee Negotiating Agents to HF - School Committee Negotiating Agents, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee

MOTION: Ms. Thibaudeau made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy HF School Committee Negotiating Agents, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Cabral. The motion was approved unanimously.

- F. Approve the First Reading of Policy JHC - Student Health Services and Requirements, which includes content from Policy GCEB.

MOTION: Ms. Cabral made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy JHC Student Health Services and Requirements, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Thibaudeau. The motion was approved unanimously.

- G. Approve the revision, renaming, and re-coding of Policy GDA - Support Staff Positions to Policy GD - Support Staff, and the removal of Policy GD - Support Staff, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee

MOTION: Ms. Reich made a motion to approve Policy GD, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Bullard. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI C v. Approve Administrative Contract for Director of Facilities

MOTION: Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve the contract extension for the Director of Facilities; seconded by Ms. Bullard.

VOTE: The motion was approved with a vote of 8-1. Ms. McBride voted in dissent.

- H. Approve new Shift Supervisor Contract as recommended by the Personnel Subcommittee.

MOTION: Ms. Thibaudeau made a motion to approve the new contract for Shift Supervisor; seconded by Ms. Bullard. The motion was approved unanimously.

Superintendent Riley congratulated Antone Almeida on his promotion to Shift Supervisor, adding that the contract will go into effect on July 1.

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- I. Approve new CFO/Director of Finance & Administration Contract, as recommended by the Personnel Subcommittee.

MOTION: Ms. Thibaudeau made a motion to approve the new contract for CFO/Director of Finance & Administration; seconded by Ms. Cabral. The motion was approved unanimously.

Superintendent congratulated Ms. Danielle Carey and introduced her as the new District CFO to the School Committee. Ms. Carey stated that she is very excited to get started and that her first day will be on May 8, 2023.

- J. Approve the Secure Storage Notification Resolution

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to approve the Secure Storage Resolution; seconded by Ms. Reich.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. McBride stated that she doesn't believe that the resolution has anything to do with academics. While she agrees with the need for safe storage, she does not think it's the role of the School Committee to communicate about this with parents.

Chairperson Piper reminded the Committee that the resolution does not state that anyone will be going into student homes. Ms. McBride disagreed, stating that by sending a letter to the home, "we are in their homes".

Ms. Reich stated that it is the role of the School Committee to protect schools. She added that the resolution is a suggestion to parents, helping them to think about how they store their firearms.

Ms. Almeida suggested that the Town Police Chiefs come to the School Committee to discuss and provide information that can be shared with the Public.

Superintendent Riley stated that both Police Chiefs (from Bristol and Warren) support the resolution.

Ms. Thibaudeau stated that while she originally thought that the resolution was an over-reach, she has since learned that there are parents in the community who do not know about safe storage. She added that current state law is ambiguous about it. She suggested holding off on the resolution until the State provides better language that can be more useful to parents.

Ms. Bullard does not want to wait. She stated that the resolution demonstrates that the School Committee cares about safety adding that there is no timeframe for when the State will pass a law on this topic. She urged the Committee to listen to the experts.

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MOTION: Mr. McGover made a motion to amend the resolution to include Portuguese as one of the languages for the letter; seconded by Ms. Bullard. The amendment was approved with a vote of 8-1. Ms. McBride voted in dissent.

VOTE: The amended motion was approved with a vote of 7-2. Ms. McBride and Ms. Thibaudeau voted in dissent.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms Bullard. made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. McGovern. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Tara Thibaudeau, Secretary

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