

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
VIRTUAL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, June 21, 2021**

The meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held in-person and virtually, via Zoom Conferencing) on Monday, June 21, 2021. Chairperson Marjorie McBride, called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 p.m.

**Present:** Marjorie McBride, Chairperson; Tara Thibaudeau, Vice-Chair; Sheila Ellsworth, Treasurer; Victor Cabral, Secretary; Nicky Piper, Carly Reich, Sarah Bullard, Erin Schofield, and Karen Cabral; Jonathan Brice, Ed.D., Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent; Thomas Wood, Director of Facilities; Rose Muller, Director of Technology; Mary Ann Carroll, Esq., District Solicitor; Lee-Ann Beaupre, Human Resources Manager; Edward Clarke, M.Ed., CAGS, Director of Student Support Services; Diana Campbell, Recording Secretary. **Guests:** Dr. Deb DiBiase, Principal of Mt. Hope High School; Deborah Kearns, Principal at Colt Andrews Elementary School, Tara McAuliffe, Principal at Rockwell Elementary School, Beth Roman, Principal at Guiteras Elementary School, Miranda Carpenter, Principal at Hugh Cole Elementary School, Dr. Nicole Lyons, Director of College and Career Readiness at Mt. Hope High School, Michelle King, Assistant Principal at Mt. Hope High School.

**I. Opening Business**

\_\_\_\_\_Chairperson McBride invited all present to join in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**II. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION**

**A. Using ESSER II fund for Summer School Enrichment at Elementary Level**

Assistant Superintendent Sanna recapped the proposal for the use of ESSER II funds for Summer enrichment, at the Elementary Level, stressing that the focus of the program is on academics as well as enrichment (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), with the students receiving 2 hours of academics and 2 hours of enrichment that incorporates the academics learned earlier in the day.

MOTION: Ms. Piper made a motion to approve the use of ESSER II funds for the proposed Summer Enrichment program at the Elementary Level; seconded by Ms. Reich.

**DISCUSSION:**

Ms. Ellsworth asked for a clarification on the number of students per class and the grades that will participate in the program. She wanted to understand how the different ability levels are going to be handled. Assistant Superintendent Sanna explained that the work will be broken up into small groups with students with similar ability levels. She added that there will also be math intervention programs to help with students that are behind on particular concepts. Ms. Ellsworth asked about the number of teachers and aides that will be working with the students. Principal McAuliffe further explained that the students will be in groups of 10, with teachers rotating around the small groups to provide instruction at the various levels. The students will be in different rooms doing a variety of activities, math, art, reading, science, etc. Ms. Roman suggested that the students will work together in a workshop model, with students rotating to various subjects depending on their academic needs.

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Chairperson McBride stated that the cost of the program is \$48,700, excluding transportation. Superintendent Brice added that the cost for transportation will be an additional ~\$13,000, over the 6 weeks, for all of the summer sessions at the elementary, middle, and high school levels..

Mr. Cabral asked how the students will be selected for the program, noting that he would like to see the program targeted at students in the “yellow” and “red” areas (below grade level) and not those students who are at the “green” level (at or above grade level). Superintendent Brice responded that all of the students will be selected based on performance and need. Students are being notified in several different ways, including personal telephone calls and going to the homes to speak to parents of students who are in critical need of continued instruction over the summer months. Superintendent Brice stated that the students that have been identified were done so for specific reasons. Some of those students are at the green level, but they have other needs that are not necessarily captured through assessments.

Ms. Reich advocated for approving the funding of the program with a prepared statement, citing the difficult year for students, parents, and teachers. She noted that the program will bring much needed fun to the students, along with academics, to spark interest in learning.

Ms. Bullard agreed with Ms. Reich, stating that children, aged 6-10 years old, who may be at the “green” level, but with special needs or ESL, deserve as much opportunity to catch up as those that are at the “red”. She stated that to not approve of the program because some students are in the “green” is short-sighted and wrong-headed.

Ms. Thibaudeau disagreed with Ms. Reich and Ms. Bullard. Her issue is that parents and teachers did not provide input to the program. They did not feel that we were getting enough from the funds. She noted that 50 students per week is not going to cover the gap in academics that the District is facing. She feels that the District needs to spend the funds more responsibly.

Assistant Superintendent Sanna added that there will be Summer tutoring and ESY to address children at Title I schools and those with special education needs. There will also be tutoring for ELL students, separate from the summer enrichment program.

Ms. Piper added that though the morning session is officially for academics, there will be academics that build on the morning’s session incorporated into the “fun” afternoon portion of the program, with math, coding, theater, etc. incorporated into projects the students will be working on.

Chairperson McBride stated that one week is not enough for the money. She also noted that the District does not need to bring in anybody from the outside to provide the education to our students.

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

Superintendent Brice stated that the vote against the program is short-sighted and damaging to students. He felt it is unacceptable to deny 300 students the opportunity to attend the summer program.

B. Using ESSER II funds for Summer School Enrichment at Kickemuit Middle School

MOTION: Ms. Thibaudeau made a motion to approve the use of ESSER II funds for the Summer Enrichment program at the Kickemuit Middle School; second by Mr. Cabral.

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### DISCUSSION:

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if the contract for the CORE was connected to the Elementary program. Assistant Superintendent Sanna answered that the contracts are not connected.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if it's the same student recruitment as at the elementary level and if the students who do not attend will still be able to move to the next grade. Assistant Superintendent Sanna stated that the program is not a credit recovery program, so students will be able to move on to the next grade if that's appropriate.

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously.

### C. Using ESSER II funds for Summer School Enrichment at Mt. Hope High School

MOTION: Mr. Cabral made a motion to approve the use of ESSER II funds for the Summer program at Mt. Hope High School; seconded by Ms. Thibaudeau.

### DISCUSSION:

Chairperson McBride asked about Ever-Fi. Assistant Superintendent Sanna explained that Ever-Fi is a free program that has been used for a number of years. It began as a Financial Literacy module, but contains other course modules as well. Ms. McBride asked for clarification on the course description, which doesn't seem to include financial literacy. Assistant Superintendent Sanna stated that there are many options that the program offers and that they are still working on which modules will be offered.

Principal DiBiase forward the curriculum guide that showed different aspects on financial literacy are included for students to choose from as elective courses. Students get a portion of a high school credit for the courses they take, depending on the number of hours they participate.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if the ESSER funds will be used for credit recovery and enrichment. Principal DiBiase responded, "Yes."

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if students will still have the option to attend credit recovery courses. Principal DiBiase responded that those students will still be offered in addition to other courses such as the Bridge program (to help with transition from 8-9 grade, up to 75 students), College and Career Boot Camp, ELA courses, and Get-ready Math courses to strengthen foundational skills to help move to the next level course, DRONE certification, the Ever-Fi programs (self-paced modules), Leadership Summit, Student Athlete Advisory, etc.

Dr. Lyons added that the Ever-Fi program was originally for Social Emotional, but Financial Literacy courses were added to the options offered to students.

Ms. Ellsworth stated that she wants to be sure that the funds are used for students who have fallen behind.

Ms. Bullard asked if any of the programs are mandatory. Principal DiBiase explained that everything is optional. None of the programs offered are mandatory. Ms. Bullard followed up to ask how the District is going to get students to the program if they are only offered academics.

Ms. Reich wants to be sure that the District is looking at the whole students, including those students that

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are not interested in academics. She noted that the students' mental health is still part of children's make-up and important to their continued interest in education.

Ms. Thibaudeau pointed out that the District is still in a critical financial predicament. She stated that the goal of summer programs should be to help students to achieve the skills needed to go on to the next level. She would prefer that the ESSER funds be used for additional teachers to decrease class sizes. She is not against enrichment programs but feels that now is not the right time.

Ms. Schofield would like to see more SEL everyday and not just in the summer. She feels that the proposed program will help to attract children to learn.

Ms. Piper agrees. She also pointed out that ESSER funds can not be used to hire teachers; it's not an option to pay for additional teacher salaries. She further stated that ESSER is for closing the gap between what the students know and what they need to know that was lost due to the pandemic.

Ms. Cabral stated that reading/writing are needed. She feels that some of the anxiety felt by some students is due to their lack of reading/writing skills. She would like to see the funds focused on reading and writing, adding that there are lots of opportunities to focus on fun.

Ms. Thibaudeau added that the Bridge program is very important to help with the transition from 8th grade to high school. She is torn about the need for the program, favoring some parts over others. She likes the Career/College Boot camp. She asked if there are minimums for class enrollment before a class is run. Dr. DiBiase answered that the minimum for most of the courses offered is 15-20.

Mr. Cabral asked Tara if she would vote against the motion or if she would prefer to offer an amendment? He does not want to see the motion voted down. Chairperson McBride stated that she is worried about "cherry picking", stating that it is enough that the program won't run if there is no interest in it.

Ms. Ellsworth asked if Credit Recovery is required. Dr. DiBiase answered that credit recovery classes are not required. Students can find other ways to make up the credits.

Ms. Schofield made a point of order, reminding the School Committee that they should not address each other directly. She would like to vote on the motion as it was made.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

**III. Adjournment - 7:07 p.m.**

MOTION: There being no more business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Bullard to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 pm; seconded by Ms. Piper. The motion passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Victor Cabral, Secretary  
/dbc**