

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

**Monday, March 29, 2021**

The meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held virtually on Monday, March 29, 2021, via Zoom Conferencing. Chairperson Marjorie McBride, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:03 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; Joel Harrington, Interim Business Manager; Edward Clarke, M.Ed.,CAGS, Director of Student Support Services; Kathryn Brown, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent; Diana Campbell, Recording Secretary. **Guests:** Dr. Deb DiBiase, Principal of Mt. Hope High School, Dr. Nicole Lyons, Director of College and Career Readiness, and Lee Ann Beaupre, Human Resources Manager.

**I. Open Session**

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson McBride called the meeting to order at approximately 7:03 p.m.

**II. Opening Business**

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

**III. Accolades**

**FORMER SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The 2020-21 School Committee honored four former school committee members that gave so much time and energy in support of the district for the years listed below.

- John Saviano, 16 years (2004 - 2020)
- John Bento, 12 years (2008 - 2020)
- Brian Bradshaw, 4 years (2016 - 2020)
- Adam Ramos, 4 years (2016 - 2020)

**MT. HOPE HIGH SCHOOL WINTER 2020 STUDENT ATHLETE HONOREES**

Mt. Hope High School Student Athletes were honored for their achievements during the Winter 2020-21 Season!

**Mt. Hope High School Girls Basketball Team** was congratulated for their achievements as RIIL Division Champions for the 1st time since 1997; an undefeated regular season; and as RIIL State Finalists for the 1st time in School History: Coach Caitlin Booth, Coach Katie Kline, Assistant Coach James Brackett, Manager Geoff Keegan, Manager Kerri Ferreira and Student Athletes: Reyn Ferris, Amani Jackson, Laura Johnson-Hoffman, Aditi Mehta, Shivani Mehta, Mia Padula, Lauren Pais, Abigail Razzino, Aeryal Rodrigues, Isabel Savinon, Elsa White

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**Mt Hope High School Girls Gymnastics Team** was congratulated for their achievements as RIIL Division Champions, an undefeated regular season, and as RIIL Regional State Champions: Coach Nicole Daniello, Assistant Coach, Courtney L’Heureux. Student Athletes: Avery Furtado, Marissa Grenier, Caroline Nash, Reese Pavao, Nora Prendergast, Brooke Ramella, Maria Tucciarone

**Mt Hope High School Girls Varsity Swimming Team** was congratulated on their achievement as RIIL Division II Runners-up: Coach Adam Dutra and Coach Kasey O’Connor. Student Athletes: Dana Cobery, Isabelle Correia, Laura Deal, Allyson Devine, Megan Harley, Ann Krzywicki, Amelia Oliveira, Serena Sousa, Hope Tyska, Alyssa Wheeler, Erika Wheeler, and Eva White.

**IV. Public Comment**

There were no requests to make a public comment. Chairperson McBride noted that she will take questions from the Public after the presentations later in the meeting.

**V. Consent Agenda**

\_\_\_\_\_All items under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the School Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Committee member requests, in which event the items will be withdrawn from the general order of business and considered in the normal sequence on the agenda. Consent Agenda items are received and filed with no discussion or further action taken.

- A. Approval of March 8, 2021 School Committee Virtual Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of Human Resources Manager Contract
- C. Approval of two Homeschool Requests

Chairperson McBride pulled A. March 8, 2021 Minutes for a separate vote because they were amended after they were sent to the School Committee as part of their packet. Ms. Campbell explained that the amendment was a correction of the names of the members who voted, “No” on a motion to amend School Committee Policy DJ: Procurement.

MOTION: Mr. Cabral made a motion to approve the amended Minutes of March 8, 2021; seconded by Ms. Ellsworth. The Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson asked for a Motion to approve the other items on the Consent Agenda.

MOTION: Ms. Piper made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Ms. Bullard. The Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson McBride invited Superintendent Brice to introduce the new Human Resources Manager, Ms. Lee-Ann Beaupre. Superintendent Brice introduced Ms. Beaupre, noting her 17 years of experience as an HR Administrator in a variety of settings. She is currently working for an organization that operates multiple health, rehabilitative, and eldercare facilities and is responsible for all aspects of HR for 200 union employees. He explained that overall, there is a

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strong alignment between her experience and the vision of the District in improving operational efficiency and effectiveness. Her starting date in the District will be on April 26, 2021.

**VI. Presentations**

**A. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs**

Chairperson McBride introduced Dr. Nicole Lyons, Director of College and Career Readiness to give a presentation on the District's Career & Technical Education Programs at MHHS. Dr. Lyons went through her presentation. A PDF version of the presentation accompanies these minutes. She concluded her presentation by asking the community to start using the word, AND, placing equal importance to both College and Career Readiness.

Discussion: Chairperson McBride thanked Dr. Lyons for her presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Cabral noted that Dr. Lyons is an alumnus from MHHS. She is an example of how the District does hire qualified candidates from the local area.

Public Comment:

- In response to a public question on the inclusion of courses in the District for the Trades that do not require a college education, Dr. Lyons responded that there is flexibility in the District to offer programs and pathways. Dr. DiBiase also responded that she takes student interest into account when making decisions on the program offerings at MHHS. Superintendent Brice also noted that some programs are cost prohibitive to start up. He used the example of Automotive, as a very expensive program to start up.
- A second public question was about the Home Building program that used to be included in the curriculum, wondering if some of the old equipment can be revived for students who may want to participate in a trade-related program. Dr. Lyons responded that it is important for the community to endorse the programs and show that the District's programs matter. She explained that to offer a program there are some criteria that must be approved by the CTE Board of Trustees. That doesn't mean that there is no path to provide the program for students who are interested. She pointed out that to get the architecture and construction programs up and running, it's important for business and community members to support the work by providing opportunities for real-world learning off-site of the school. Superintendent Brice stated that there needs to be student interest, pointing out that there is a difference between participating and completing the program, including an assessment and 80 hours of experience. He noted that many students who start taking the courses, change their minds about the path before their senior year. Chairperson McBride suggested that the CTE Committee consider options on how to offer some of the basic life skills as they build their Strategic Plan.
- A third public question asked if programs should be stopped if there is a lack of interest. Dr. Lyons responded that the District would consider data collected over time before cancelling a program if there is low interest in a single year. As a follow-up, the questioner remarked that he appreciated that the District was looking into opportunities for students to work with local businesses to get experience.
- It was noted that some students use the programs to explore their career opportunities, even though they may change their minds about a career path before graduation. Superintendent Brice noted that for a program to be on a transcript, the program must be

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completed. He agreed that high levels of participation in the early class offerings in a program are a good thing, but the District is still exploring the data to determine why students are not completing the program offerings.

- Ms. Thibaudeau noted that she is aware of what the Committee is doing and that she is very excited that the District is moving in the right direction for everyone.
- Ms. Bullard agreed that the program works.
- Ms. Schofield wanted to know how the school gauges student interest in a program, if students can jump into a program after Freshman year, and if the equipment that the District already owns is up to date so that the students can move their skills into the private sector afterwards. Dr. Lyons did point out that in Middle School there are programs, such as Jr. DECA, that provide students with opportunities to explore. She explained that it's not easy for a student to jump into a program later at the High School because they would not be able to complete some of the courses that are a year long. She noted that they could gain experience and skills, they just wouldn't get the certification. She noted that the school's equipment is up to date and that they are always looking to keep it current.
- Ms. Cabral asked if they used surveys to gauge student interest and the goal for the number of program offerings.. Dr. Lyons replied that the goal is to have 7 approved programs and 4 pathways. Dr. DiBiase also noted that the surveys measure more than just interests, they measure a student's strengths, so that they can be steered to programs where they can be successful.
- Assistant Superintendent Sanna added that there are programs on the list for approval that are very strong with students. Re: technology, there have been several grants from PrepareRI and the Governor's Workforce Board for the purpose of purchasing industry-standard equipment for the programs.
- Ms. Piper remarked that she feels that the CTE program can differentiate the district within the State.

### **B. Reopening of School - Spring 2021**

Superintendent Brice presented his plan to re-open schools in the District. A PDF version of the presentation accompanies these minutes. His plan continues to evolve as he receives feedback and guidelines from the State Health Department, staff, and members of the community.

Discussion:

- Ms. Reich likes that there are options for parents who are concerned about their children's safety. Superintendent Brice stated that he shares Ms. Reich's concerns about the students who choose to learn from home. He also noted that safety is the priority and explained how it can be maintained.
- Ms. Piper explained that transportation may be an issue if parents are being asked to drive their children to school if possible. She also mentioned the challenge to teachers who are being asked to teach a full classroom of students while also including some students who are learning remotely. Superintendent Brice that it will be a challenge, but he feels that the teachers have great classroom management skills and will be able to be successful with support from their building administrators when there are issues that are more difficult.
- Ms. Piper asked about teachers who may need to quarantine. Superintendent Brice stated that he believes that State guidance does not require teachers to quarantine, explaining

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that by following social distancing guidelines and getting vaccinated, that there is no need to quarantine.

- Ms. Thibaudeau asked why the high school is going back over time. Superintendent Brice stated that the High School will be phased in over a week.
- Ms. Thibaudeau asked if a student is absent will they be able to participate in the classroom. The answer is that if a student is absent, they are not allowed to attend virtual classes. Students who miss in-school learning because they are in quarantine will be allowed to attend virtual classes.
- Ms. Cabral asked if nurses are provided with student seating charts. Answer=yes

The discussion on school reopening will continue at the next workshop when Superintendent Brice will update his presentation with new guidance and after discussions with the BWEA. In the meantime, members of the School Committee were asked to send their questions to the Superintendent before the next meeting on April 12, 2021.

**VII. Discussion and/or Possible Action**

**A. Acceptance of an Ocean State Job Lot Donation**

Explained that the District has received a donation of PPE, including hand sanitizer, wipes and face shields to be used in the schools, valued at \$24,000.

MOTION: Ms. Thibaudeau made the motion to accept the Ocean State donation; seconded by Mr. Cabral. The motion passed unanimously.

**VIII. Adjournment - 9:49 p.m.**

MOTION: There being no more business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Cabral to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Thibaudeau. The motion passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Victor Cabral, Secretary**  
/dbc