

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
April 11, 2024

The regular meeting of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee was held in the school cafeteria. The following members, staff and others were present:

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chair
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon
Paul J. Braza of Milford
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chair
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge
James M. Mitchell of Sutton
Tyler D. Bartlett of Upton
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Christopher C. Pilla, Treasurer
Anthony E. Steele, Asst. Superintendent/Principal
Ellie Poitras, Student Council Representative
Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

Members Absent:

Mark J. Potter of Douglas

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by the acting Chair, Mr. Finn. Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that Mr. Potter would be unable to attend and that the Chair, Mr. Hall would be delayed. Mr. Hall arrived at 6:03 p.m.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to waive reading of the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting of March 14, 2024 and to accept the minutes as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – C. Pilla

3.1. The Treasurer's Report dated February 29, 2024 was presented. The report reflected an ending balance of \$5,045,276.73 for Total Funds, \$925,429.70 in Project Funds, and \$4,119,847.03 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to approve the February 29, 2024. Treasurer's Report as presented.

Item 4. Student Recognition – Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

Dr. Fitzpatrick invited Principal Steele to join him for the following student recognitions:

4.1. On behalf of the District School Committee and Principal Steele, Dr. Fitzpatrick formally recognized Ella Costa of Milford, a junior in the Automotive Technology program at BVT and a member of the BHS/BVT Wrestling Co-op. Dr. Fitzpatrick congratulated Ella on her contributions and success as a MIAA Division 2 Central/West Sectional Finalist.

4.2. On behalf of the District School Committee and Principal Steele, Dr. Fitzpatrick formally recognized Landry Fitzgerald of Upton, a senior in the Plumbing program at BVT and a

member of the BHS/BVT Wrestling Co-op. Dr. Fitzpatrick congratulated Landry on earning Championship honors in the Vocational State Championship, MIAA Division 2 Central/West Sectional Championship and MIAA Division 2 State Championship.

Item 5. Comments by Student Council Representatives - Ellie Poitras & Sosie DerKosroffian

Ellie informed the Committee that Sosie could not join her at the meeting because she was at the CDMASC Regional Spring Conference, attending workshops, networking, and meeting with other student council e-boards. Also, the regional executive board elections happen at the spring conference. BVT's Zabel DerKosroffian, who served as a regional delegate this past year, was running for vice president of the regional board. Lastly, Ellie shared that Sosie arranged through a child life specialist at UMass Memorial Children's Medical Center to have the council make coloring packets for children undergoing treatment. They did this community-giving project at the last student council meeting. They assembled 100 packets for the hospital, which included an inspirational note, a coloring sheet, and crayons.

Item 6. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report - A. Steele

6.1. Principal Steele shared graduation information with the Committee including an invitation and program. The Class of 2024 Graduation Ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2024 at the Hanover Theatre in Worcester, MA starting at 5:00 p.m.

6.2. A handout of the SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Leadership Medal Results by Town was shared with the Committee. It showed a total medal count of 94 medals earned by BVT students: 36 gold, 27 silver, and 31 bronze medals in addition to 9 sweeps.

6.3. At the meeting, an Admissions Status Report for 2024 (as of April 11, 2024) was made available. The report included final application numbers for the 2023-2024 Admission Season, acceptances by town (historically from 2016 to 2024), and first-choice shop selections based on the initial application.

6.4. Field Trip Requests:

a. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to approve DECA's out-of-state field trip request to attend the DECA conference from April 25, 2024 to May 1, 2024 in Anaheim, CA.

b. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to approve the request, as presented, allowing students to attend the SkillsUSA Massachusetts event in Marlborough, MA from April 25, 2024 to April 27, 2024.

c. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to approve the request, as presented, allowing sophomore students in the Culinary Arts program to go to New Britain, CT on May 3, 2024.

d. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to approve the request, as presented, allowing sophomore students in the Engineering & Robotics shop to attend a NHRA Yes Program to observe applications in NHRA Drag Racing at the New England Dragway on May 31, 2024 in Epping, NH.

e. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was unanimously voted to give initial pre-approval for students to attend the SkillsUSA National Conference in Atlanta, GA from June 24, 2024 to June 28, 2024.

6.5. MAVA Outstanding Vocational Award Banquet: April 11, 2024 – Mr. Steele informed the Committee that the 38th annual MAVA Outstanding Vocational Technical Students Award Ceremony was being held at Mechanics Hall on April 11, 2024. The Outstanding Vocational Award recognizes those students whose scholastic and vocational technical achievements have significantly contributed to their local school district and, thus, to the total vocational technical education delivery system in the Commonwealth. Vocational Director Dr. Connors represented BVT at the award banquet with BVT's MAVA Outstanding Vocational Award recipient, Sara Lewis of Bellingham, an Engineering & Robotics senior.

Item 7. Policy Subcommittee Report - C. Hanratty

7.1. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to approve the classification of support personnel as presented.

7.2. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to approve the medical health insurance for retired support staff employees as presented.

7.3. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to approve the allowable expenses as presented.

Item 8. Budget Subcommittee Report – G. Finn

Mr. Finn shared that he had an opportunity to view Millville's warrant items. The warrant is a list or agenda of budget items and/or articles proposed for voters to act upon at the Town Meeting. The Millville Finance/BOS Committee and Town Manager are recommending their support of the BVT items (Bond/Budget).

a. Sutton (3/20/24) – Mr. Mitchell shared that he joined Principal Steele for the District's budget presentation to the Sutton Finance Committee on March 20, 2024. Mr. Mitchell shared that it went pretty well.

b. Grafton (3/20/24) – Mr. Yitts reported that he joined Dr. Fitzpatrick for the District's budget presentation to the Grafton Finance Committee on March 20, 2024. Mr. Yitts told the Committee that it was a positive meeting, a polite discussion and an informational exchange answering many questions on bond and roof repairs to better inform the finance committee.

c. Mendon (3/27/24) – Mr. Cray informed the Committee that joined Dr. Fitzpatrick for the District's budget presentation to the Mendon Finance Committee on March 27, 2024. Mr. Cray conveyed that the presentation in Mendon was a polite and informative discussion.

d. Upton (3/27/24) – Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that the District's budget presentation to the Upton Finance Committee on March 27, 2024 the Committee was equally supportive. However, the Committee did indicate that they felt the need to include a debt exemption for their cash flow. On the other hand, the Upton Finance Committee Chair spoke in support.

e. Uxbridge (4/3/24) – Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that Mr. Ebbeling and other BVT representatives joined him for the District's budget presentation to the Uxbridge Finance Committee on April 3, 2024, which was a lively and supportive discussion.

f. Bellingham (4/8/24) – Mr. Hall shared that he joined Dr. Fitzpatrick for the District's budget presentation to the Bellingham Finance Committee on April 8, 2024, which has enjoyed a

positive and favorable relationship over the years. It was an informational exchange that allowed an opportunity to answer many questions on bond and roof repairs to inform the Bellingham Finance Committee better.

Item 9. Superintendent-Director's Report – Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that he had new business to share relative to the budget presentations, as the State House Ways & Means (HWM) had just released its FY25 budget recommendations on the Governor's Budget. The HWM indicated that they would increase Chapter 70 Aid by increasing the 30 dollars per pupil minimum to an additional 74 dollars for a total of 104 dollars per pupil minimum in Chapter 70 Aid. For BVT, this increased Chapter aid by approximately 93,000 dollars, more than initially anticipated. In addition, they indicated an 84% reimbursement of regional transportation. The District will continue to monitor the State budget for updates. Dr. Fitzpatrick thanked the Budget Subcommittee for their help on the annual budget.

9.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick provided a report on the incredibly successful 30th annual Superintendent's Gourmet Dinner, which was held at the school on March 21, 2024. The evening event is a significant fundraiser for the school, which invites the Blackstone Valley to celebrate quality career and technical education each spring with a lavish reception and an elaborate dinner. This five-star dining experience is planned, prepared, and served by students, faculty, and graduates of the Culinary Arts program and, by design, gives current students a taste of the skills necessary for success in the food, beverage, and hospitality industry. The Culinary Arts Department, with contributions from the Facilities Department, Construction Technology, and Painting & Design Technology, did a wonderful job decorating the competition center to represent the theme the students had chosen: Buckingham Palace. The students take pride in their culinary training and maximize their portfolio with the work done at the dinner

9.2. A notification email from James Poplasky, Skills Capital Grant Manager/Executive Office of Education, dated March 28, 2024, was shared with the Committee. The email informed the District that it had been selected to receive a Skills Grant Award of \$153,000 through the Skills Capital Grant program.

9.3. Dr. Fitzpatrick reminded the School Committee that contributions to the School Committee Scholarship are appreciated. He invited the Committee to consider contributing. As the meeting came to a close some 300 dollars was donated with additional commitments to contribute by School Committee members

9.4. DESE 2023 Dropout Data Summary Report (if available) – Dr. Fitzpatrick shared past data and informed the Committee that the 2023 information was embargoed prior to this date.

9.5. DESE 2023 Graduation Rates (if available) – Dr. Fitzpatrick shared past data and informed the Committee that the 2023 information was embargoed prior to this date.

9.6. On behalf of the Business Manager, Nicole Ferguson, Dr. Fitzpatrick presented the following donations for approval:

a. On a motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to approve the donation of miscellaneous equipment from John Ritter, President of Nanostone Water, which will be used for instructional and training purposes in BVT's Biotechnology program and IT Department.

b. There was a disclosure that there was a \$500 dollar cash donation from Matthew Fitzgerald of Milford, MA. The contribution will assist the District in providing quality technical education and training.

9.7. Notification of Resignation(s):

a. The Committee is in receipt of a resignation letter dated March 12, 2024, effective immediately to care for elderly parents, from Kristina O'Reilly – General Cafeteria Worker.

b. The Committee is in receipt of a resignation letter dated April 1, 2024 from Holly Hollingworth – Extended Leave Liaison-School Counselor, who is relocating out-of-state and will not be returning in August 2024.

Item 10. New Business

Dr. Fitzpatrick shared the following new business items:

Mike Bellacqua, a custodian from Milford, notified us this week that he resigned for health reasons.

Representative Soter was on campus today to recognize Colby Milanoski, a student who recently attended Student Government Day at the State House. He also had a chance to attend the Career Fair that was being held on campus and was impressed by what he observed.

A graduate of the Culinary Arts program visited the Three Seasons Restaurant today and is now the proud owner of a restaurant in the state of Washington; it is great to see alums come back to visit.

Dr. Fitzpatrick shared an infographic designed for the MSBA Project with the Committee for their review and input and indicated that the FY25 budget and bond presentations are available on the school website.

Principal Steele shared that DESE had informed us they would not use a state-wide lottery for voc-tech schools, which is significant. They indicated that there are four vocational schools that will be monitored, but BVT is not one of them. Additionally, a Blackstone Valley Tech infographic was shared with the Committee. Principal Steele shared that it was created to inform those who were requesting more information about the school, its mission, admission initiatives, diversity: race enrollment and selected populations, and student/graduates outcomes. It will be shared with parents, alumni, and advisory committee members.

Item 11. Items for the Good of the Committee:

The monthly compilation of news clippings and correspondence packet was provided at the meeting for members to review individually.

Item 12. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on May 16, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 13. Meeting Closure:

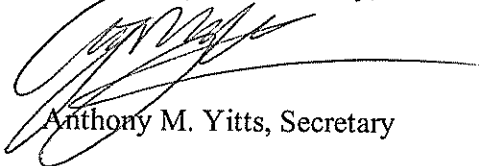
13.1. The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 7:00 p.m.

13.2. On a motion by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was voted to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

- Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of March 14, 2024
- Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated February 29, 2024
- Item 6.2. SkillsUSA District Medal Results
- Item 6.3. Admissions Status Report for 2024
- Item 6.4.a. Out-of-State Field Trip: DECA Conference, Anaheim, CA
- Item 6.4.b. In-State Field Trip: SkillsUSA State, Marlborough, MA
- Item 6.4.c. Out-of-State Field Trip: Culinary Arts Program, New Britain, CT
- Item 6.4.d. Out-of-State Field Trip: NHRA Yes Program, New England Dragway, Epping, NH
- Item 6.4.e. Out-of-State Field Trip: SkillsUSA National, Atlanta, GA
- Item 7.1. Classification of Support Personnel
- Item 7.2. Medical Health Insurance for Retired Support Staff Employees
- Item 7.3. Allowable Expenses
- Item 9.1. 30th Annual Superintendent's Gourmet Dinner Menu
- Item 9.2. MA Skills Capital Grant Award
- Item 9.6.a. Donation: Miscellaneous Equipment for Biotechnology Program & IT Department
- Item 9.6.b. Donation: \$500.00 Cash
- Item 9.7.a. Resignation: Kristina O'Reilly, General Cafeteria Worker
- Item 9.7.b. Resignation: Holly Hollingworth, Extended Leave Liaison-School Counselor
- Item 10. Infographics: MSBA Project and Blackstone Valley Tech
- Item 11. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,



Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary