



Mission Statement: To support and challenge all students to achieve personal and academic excellence in a student-centered environment.

BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 5:00 pm

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School

Multi Purpose Room

Revised 9/6/2024 at 4:15pm

Stream link <https://www.youtube.com/@bbrsdlive2893/streams>

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

Present: School Committee: Mrs. Meagan Grill, Chair; Mrs. Julie Lee, Vice Chair; Mrs. Lori-Anne Hart, District Clerk; Mr. Michael Totman; Mrs. Lisa Mair; Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti

Administration: Mr. Albert G. Ganem Jr., Interim Superintendent; Mr. Dan Ayala, Facilities Director; Ms. Nicole Bilotta, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Mr. John Campbell, Berlin Memorial Principal; Mr. Daniel Deedy, Interim Director of Finance & Operations; Ms. Jannel Fitzpatrick, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Ms. Renee Legendre; Tahanto Assistant Principal; Mr. Paul Mara, Technology Coordinator; Ms. Lisa Sequeira, Tahanto Middle/High School Principal; Ms. Sally Stukuls, Director of Curriculum and Grants 6-12; Ms. Cinthia Sykes, Boylston Elementary Principal;

Also Present: Mr. Peter Doherty; Ms. Beth Mancini; Mr. Steven Pacheco; Ms. Danielle Rinker

I. Call to Order - Mrs. Meagan Grill called the meeting to order at 5:00pm

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments - Mrs. Grill explained how public comment will work.

Ms. Beth Mancini from Berlin noted she attended the Policy subcommittee meeting and that she asked the committee to consider not voting today and put the policy in place as stated by MASC and they can work with the policy

Mr. Steven Pacheco read a statement for Mr. Bill Whitehead, high school English teacher at Tahanto. His statement noted he has seen what works for the district. He shared that the policy subcommittee meeting was positive, but did not like that the committee was set to go forth with the policy and that it was said teachers could form a group to discuss it. He suggested adopting the

MASC policy and forming a committee to have more discussion and collaboration to get the policy right.

Mr. Pacheco, speaking for himself, would like to work together now and asked the committee to not vote now.

Ms. Danielle Rinker, a Tahanto teacher, thanked the policy subcommittee for allowing them to attend the meeting. Policy ILD is a discussion that needs to continue and asked the committee to adopt the policy as written and then to form a committee for further discussion and to ensure all students are supported while exploring real world issues. She asked the committee to vote no.

Mr. Peter Doherty, Tahanto teacher, concurred with the other sentiments He agreed with using the current policy and he would stay during the meeting if the committee had questions.

- IV. **Communications** - Email from parents about policy ILD - Felt all surveys should have parent permission to make it equitable.

Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti reached out to Ms. Tracey Novak from MASC and she had concerns that it could put the district in a bad position and needs to be handled carefully.

- V. **Consent Agenda** - **A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and seconded by Mrs. Lori Hart. Mr. Michael Totman asked not to vote on 6/17/2024 minutes and that he would like items that were offered to the town of Berlin to be added in. Mr. Michael Totman made an amendment to the motion about the consent agenda to remove June 17, 2024 minutes, seconded by Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti, all in favor, 6-0, amendment passes. Vote on the original motion, all in favor, 6-0, motion passes.**

1. June 17, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes
2. August 27, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes

VI. **Reports**

- Chair's Report – *Mrs. Meagan Grill* - Mrs. Grill explained there was a subcommittee that met last week and chose Mr. Aaron Osborn for the Director of Finance and Operations. He introduced himself to the group. He has worked in corporate and public finance and teaching. Mr. Ganem explained he worked with Mr. Osborne in Hampden-Wilbraham. For the Director of Finance position the Superintendent makes the offer and the school committee votes.

Mrs. Grill asked for patience and if there are paycheck issues and to please contact Mr. Ganem and Mr. Dan Deedy.

- Superintendent of Schools Report - *Mr. Albert Ganem* -Mr. Ganem spoke to the payroll issues in the district. It was a human error issue that caused the problems and a lack of training. They are working to rectify the issues. He apologized for it taking place. He thanked the union and staff for their patience. Mr. Ganem has met with admin and is working on bussing issues. He noted he has lined up Ms. Tracy Novak on October 22 for training for the school committee. He has a book study called Spirit Work for the school committee to read. Lastly, he apologized for not getting to classrooms with Principals yet.

- Business Office Update - *Interim Director of Finance* - Mr. Daniel Deedy - Mr. Deedy introduced himself to the committee and has spent around 40 years in education in various positions. For his overview of the business office he explained work has to be done on the FY24 budget report. Until its done, end of the year reports cannot be completed and cannot process E &D, which is not due until the end of November. For FY25 general funds there were some lines not encumbered. He noted the payroll issues and there is urgency to fix them.. He sees it as an opportunity to reset the business office.

Mr. Deedy has not had a chance to address bussing issues, but is working to get to them. He will be helping to get the E&D piece done and submitted. He thanked the superintendent for the opportunity to work with him and at the end of the day it's about the students and staff.

- Any business unforeseen by the chair within 48 hours of the meeting

VII. Business Items

- Approval of the Director of Finance and Operations - **Vote - Motion to approve the hiring of Mr. Aaron Osborne as the new Director of Finance and Operations made by Mr. Michael Totman and seconded by Mrs. Julie Lee, all in favor 6-0, motion passes.**

Mr. Osborne noted there are Issues with the assessment formula and staff turnover, payroll and payables challenges and will be working with Mr. Ganem and Mr. Deedy to work through them. He would like to sit with each member of the School Committee and with Fincomms from both towns and has a copy of the Regional Agreement. Mr. Ganem explained he and Aaron have worked on a strategic plan previously.

- Approval of Policy ILD - Student Submission to Educational Surveys and Research - **Vote motion to approve the policy ILD made by Mr. Michael Totman and seconded by Mrs. Lisa Mair. Discussion:** Mr. Totman explained there is a document with history on the policy he shared with the school committee. The policy subcommittee met with teachers. The original language proposed of opt in and has been taken out. He explained the proposed changed language was due to the time parents have to view the material and the issues it could cause. In the package there are two examples from Lexington and Wellesley. He suggested copying Lexington's. Mr. Ganem noted Mrs. Stukuls had reached out to other school districts and those that responded use an opt out option.

Mrs. Degliaberti reached out to Lexington Public Schools and they use policy ILD for external surveys. They have a different process for surveys within. Mrs. Lee noted she is not in support of the amendments especially with the opposition of four esteemed BBRSD teachers. **Mrs. Lee made an amendment to strike the edits made by the subcommittee and replace it with the original policy language seconded by Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti.** Discussion: The committee discussed the timeframe of parent notification. They noted it said 10 calendar days. Currently in BBRSD any student generated survey have to indicate what it is for how it's being used and that it is anonymous and optional. These conditions have been sent to staff for all surveys. All surveys must be approved by the teacher and if it is a sensitive topic they would identify if it would be sent to high school or middle school students..

Mr. Totman explained the point of the policy is for transparency to let parents know what children are being asked in school. He further explained why each amendment was proposed and gave an example of a child being required to answer. It was noted the surveys were not required.

The ILD original policy is aimed at external policy and Mrs. Degliaberti wanted to stick to the original policy. Mr. Totman noted that the BBRSD attorney looked over it. It was noted the third proposed amendment is where the issues are. Mr. Ganem proposed pushing the policy back to the policy subcommittee.

Vote on the amendment - 2-4, amendment does not pass.

Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti made a motion to table the topic seconded by Mrs. Julie Lee, 2-4, motion does not pass.

Vote on original motion - 4-2, motion passes.

Al wants to get a working group together for input to bring to the policy subcommittee not the other way around.

The committee voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:16pm, all in favor, 6-0 meeting adjourned.

- Approval of to remove Policy JH - Student Absences and Excuses -**Vote - tabled the attendance policies to work on the policies**
- Approval of donation of Ariens WAW 34 walk behind zero turn lawn mower to Boylston Elementary School from resident Serge Botsaris- **Vote** - Dan let the committee know he would like to donate the mower to the school, valued at 1599. A card will be sent. **Motion to approve the donation of the Ariens WAW 34 walk behind zero turn lawn mower to Boylston Elementary made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and seconded by Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti, all in favor, 6-0, motion passes.**

VIII. Executive Session

- Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose (2), to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, candidate for Director of Finance and Operations.
- Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose (3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (**Paraprofessionals CBA**) and litigation (**Konisky vs. BBRSD**) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining **and** litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares

IX. Return to Open Session -Business Item:

- Director of Finance and Operations contract, subject to final edits by District Counsel with the Chair authorized to sign on the Committee's behalf - **Vote**

X. Upcoming Meeting

- October 8, 2024 Regular Meeting

The listing of items is those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may, in fact, be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

The Berlin-Boylston Regional Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness, or any other class protected by state or federal law.