



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, August 27, 2024, 5:00 pm

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School

Multi Purpose Room

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

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

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

Administration: Mr. Al Ganem Jr., Interim Superintendent; Ms. Nicole Bilotta, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent; Mr. John Campbell, Berlin Memorial Principal; 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. Cinthia Sykes, Boylston Elementary Principal; Mr. Michael Wood, Interim Director of Finance & Operations;

Also present: Ms. Beth Mancini, Mr. Peter Doherty and other members of the public

I. Call to Order - Mrs. Meagan Grill called the meeting to order at 5:03pm

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments – Ms. Beth Mancini from Berlin noted that if the committee votes for the Wellness Policy with the listed restrictions on snacks for purchase it could result in students buying more than one snack due to how small the calorie packs are.

Mr. Peter Doherty commented asking to meet with policy subcommittee and have a conversation about the impact for the students and what the restrictions on surveys could do. Ms. Danielle Rinker and Mr. Steven Pacheco would also join. The previous survey was on harassment in LGBTQ+ students at Tahanto. He also noted that he wanted to know if the district lawyer knew that policy would be only the one being opt in versus opt out and that there could be problems with opt in and parents seeing the emails. The Policy Subcommittee will meet with Mr. Al Ganem and look into the Policy ILD. Mr. Ganem will have them attend a policy subcommittee meeting.

- IV. **Communications** – Mrs. Lori Hart noted 3 seats are open on the BBRSD School Committee and has informed the Secretary of State. On the ballot for Berlin is Ms. Lisa Mair and Ms. Beth Mancini. In Boylston there are two people running for one spot and they are Mr. James Waite and Mrs. Megan Grill. Instructions will be put on the website.

Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti shared that the Board of Health requested Hillside to be sprayed for mosquitos. She proposed the schools could look into being sprayed. Mr. Ganem, Mrs. Degliaberti and Mrs. Mair will meet to discuss.

- V. **Consent Agenda** – A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Mrs. Lori Hart and Mrs. Julie Lee, all in favor, motion passes

1. May 28, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes
2. June 6, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes
3. June 13, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes
4. July 22, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes
5. August 1, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes
6. August 6, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes
7. August 8, 2024 Open Meeting Minutes

VI. **Reports**

- Chair's Report – *Mrs. Meagan Grill* – Mrs. Grill noted Mrs. Carol Costello has retired and Mr. Ganem has officially started as Interim Superintendent. Mrs. Grill addressed the busses and lunch menu concerns. There is a lot of change going on and asks for patience. There are leads in fulltime business office candidates. Questions or concerns can be emailed to Mr. Ganem. School committee is responsible for policy, budget, and supervision of the superintendent. MSBA - Massachusetts School Building Association came out to view the roof at BES. BBRSD was selected to be interviewed for a grant for the BES roof. They are hopeful to hear back by the end of October. This was something Mrs. Grill worked on with Ms. Costello, Mr. Matt Mecum and the Boylston Select Board. Mr. Ganem explained it is quite a feat to get to this point and the connection can be helpful in the future if other items are needed.
- Superintendent of Schools Report - *Mr. Albert Ganem* – Mr. Ganem thanked the School Committee for the opportunity to lead the school district. He has met with admin, parents, teachers, Selectboard members, and students. He thanked Tahanto for a wonderful opening day and Berlin for the Ice Cream Social at BMS. He is working to line up strong people for empty positions. He met with the custodians and thanked them for their work in the district. All bus routes have been posted. He reported that they are ready for opening day and he will be going through the buildings. Additionally, Mr. Ganem noted the meetings should always be held like our children are in the room and to show people what is being done.
- Business Office Update - *Mr. Michael Wood, TMS* – Mr. Michael Wood shared an expense report to date from July 1st (start of the fiscal year). Some accounts will be adjusted as needed for hiring of staff. BBRSD is in good shape and that should be for the fiscal year. Busses are online. NRT can only do routes as best as they can with their knowledge of the area. Concerns can be sent to the Superintendent and they will do the best they can with the placement of those stops. There may be missing students on the runs and Mr. Wood recommended going to the closest stop to their home. There is also the bus app for use. During the summer BBRSD has

hired a new person in the HR and AP positions. There is a great how-to manual from Cheryl Sharon for the AP position that was left. An adult lunch price increase is something Director of Food Services, Mr. Rob Kilham would like to address in the future. A new contract will need to go to bid by January for the bus company. Mrs. Lee asked about flopping of the bus order. Mr. Ganem is working with a parent to recreate the routes for Berlin to give the bus company an option. Mrs. Grill noted it would be helpful to have manuals for each position.

- Administrator Reports (5 mins each)

- BES Principal - *Ms. Cinthia Sykes* – Mrs. Cinthia Sykes thanked Mr. Dan Ayala and the custodial staff for getting the school ready for the year. BEF and the PTO combined to become BEC, the Boylston Education Collaborative. The BES theme for the year is “Going for Gold”. They are building a sensory room at BES with great resources for teachers and students and hope to have it complete before the September 12th open house.
- BMS Principal - *Mr. John Campbell* – Mr. John Campbell also thanked Mr. Ayala and the custodians. BMS is ready to go and is doing a school wide goal this year of promoting student independence. He thanked LINK for the events over the summer.
- TAH Principal - *Ms. Lisa Sequeira* – Mrs. Lisa Sequeira noted staff were welcomed back and the custodians did a wonderful job along with the food service and Mr. Kilham. Sixth grade orientation was held by the High School student council. Athletics started practice the week before school on August 19th. The admin teams worked on enrollment over the summer and on why students were leaving. Enrollment happened up until the Monday before school. There are 77 students in 6th grade, 91 students in 7th grade, 83 students in 8th grade, 77 in 9th grade, 71 in 10th grade, 74 in 11th grade and 67 in 12th grade for a total of 540 students at Tahanto as of 8/20/2024. Some students attend QCC for 11th and 12th grades and there is also dual enrollment, Gateway and ACE. They are still counted as Tahanto numbers and can still participate in the after-school activities and sports. Mrs. Lee thanked Mrs. Sequeira for the data presented. Mr. Totman wanted to know what were the plans to fix things that pertain to students leaving. Ms. Sequeira is meeting with her staff to address those items. The schools may not need to all do the same things for open houses and conferences. For athletics she has spoken with Mr. Matt Porcaro about goals for the year and potential for coach evals, revision of athletic handbook and team building/engagement.
- Director of Pupil Personnel Services - *Mrs. Jannel Fitzpatrick* – Mrs. Jannel Fitzpatrick noted the highlights of pupil personnel services with new staff and the addition of a second OT. Extended school year was held for the first time at Tahanto. Grants were all submitted as expected and the focus for the year ahead is the new IEP form. They are analyzing the preschool program report.
- Director of Curriculum and Grants, Grades 6-12 – *Ms. Sally Stukuls* – Mrs. Sally Stukuls submitted an ESA grant, a Title 2A grant and a Title 4A grant for portrait of graduate and extends to strategic planning for this year. New staff orientation was held last Friday at Tahanto. Ms. Gail Kelleher works with Ms. Stukuls on the mentor program. She noted that once the Wellness Policy is approved they plan to take to different groups to present it as alternatives to how things have been done in the past and the importance of why policy needs to exist.
 - i. District Improvement Plan – At the Admin retreat they went through and color coding on whether items were in progress, completed, did not happen, or will

happen. She will be meeting with Mr. Ganem and Mrs. Degliaberti suggested sharing it with the towns.

- Technology Coordinator - *Mr. Paul Mara* – Mr. Paul Mara noted that all state reporting deadlines were met. 250 chrome books and 160 iPads were prepared. There is a new music tech lab at Tahanto. He also explained that installs of projectors and cameras at Tahanto are being finished. Walkie Talkies for basic needs were delivered on 8/27/24. He shared it is a large lead time to attain them. Mr. Mara thanked Beltronix for making sure BBRSD got them. They are building to building and are working in future to go beyond.
- Half Day Childcare Update Presentation - *Mr. John Campbell, Ms. Pam Frechette, Mr. Eric Hoffses, Mrs. Julie Lee, Ms. Cinthia Sykes* – Mrs. Lee explained that the PD half days will be handled by the Recreation Centers of both towns. Last year this calendar was voted on to increase more half days so teachers and teams could have more time to collaborate than in the past. Ms. Costello showed data that doing PD more consistently is done is higher performing districts. The rec departments are partnering with the schools and will be completely run by the Rec departments out of the elementary schools. They are town buildings. They have met throughout the summer on how it can be done. They would use their staff and run enrichment programs to the normal end of day dismissal time. Parents will pick up or students will they will go to the after school program. The difference in the calendar is that last year 4 full pd days. This year there are 3 full pd days. Last year there were 3 half days and this year there are 7. The full day was spilt into two and they added two more to benefit the staff and better prepare the kids.

Mrs. Lee created document about timelines and will share it with as many people as possible. The schools will determine how the students will be dismissed to the Recreation Programs. She described how the programs will be run on those days. It will include, lunch, recess, and theme-based programming. ACA standards will be followed for staff and student ratios. They discussed paying counselors and how they will be hired all through the towns. They noted a \$25 fee. Mr. Eric Hoffses explained the Recreation Programs do not have big budgets and will need to charge to run them. On the Recreation websites they can sign up online and pay online. There are no refunds, so they will have people sign up for two months at a time. There will be cutoffs dates for notification to prepare for staff. A survey has already been sent out to see who has been interested and there has been decent interest, so far. Mrs. Fitzpatrick said they will see who signs up and plan accordingly to meet those students needs.

Mr. Totman asked the committee to consider adding this into a line item in a budget for next year. Mrs. Lee explained if there is a hardship for a family BEC will help with a scholarship for Boylston and they are developing that for Berlin students, as well. He noted there are only a few two week spans in the calendar. Mr. Campbell shared if it is a school event there are also rules with special education. They discussed school sponsored events and not wanting to exclude anyone from the program. Mrs. Fitzpatrick said they will see who signs up and plan accordingly to meet those students' needs. Mrs. Degliaberti inquired about counselors in training and sibling discounts. They plan to look into how this year goes. Mrs. Hart thanked the Recreation Departments for their time and planning.

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

VII. Business Items

- Approval of Tahanto Regional Middle/High School Graduation date being moved back to the first weekend in June, to make it Sunday, June 1st, 2024 – **Vote – Motion to approve change the date of Tahanto graduation from June eighth to Sunday June first made by Mrs. Julie Lee and seconded by Mr. Michael Totman, all in favor, motion passes.**
- Approval of the Berlin-Boylston School Wellness Policy – **Vote**
Motion to approve made by Mrs. Lori Hart and seconded by Mrs. Lisa Mair – Discussion: Mrs. Mancini explained the a la carte bar students use to supplement lunch and some use it to buy snacks before sports and after school. She noted there are good choices on the lists but fears they may be buying multiples of the options listed. You can only buy them if money is in their account. If parents do not want students participating no money should be loaded. Mrs. Mair explained these are federal regulations. Ms. Stukuls and Mrs. Mair consulted with DESE. If fundraising with food involved and it includes snacks that are not on the smart snack list it has to be put up 30 minutes after school ends and has to be taken down before the next day. If policy is not approved BBRSD is out of compliance. They are working hard on a presentation to explain why it is being done and using it as a tool for education. Mrs. Hart explained the policy is the federal and state laws put into a readable policy for people to understand. It was not created by BBRSD. Mr. Kilham will work with admin to help provide options, if needed. Mrs. Lee raised concerns that the policy could do the opposite of what the policy hopes to do. This policy needs to approved to keep the free lunches. They are opening up the Wellness committee to students and others. **Mrs. Mair, Mrs. Hart, Mrs. Deglialberti and Mrs. Grill approved, Mr. Totman and Mrs. Lee opposed, 4-2, motion passes.**
- Approval of Nature’s classroom fundraising for both BES and BMS – **Vote – Motion to approve fundraising for Nature’s Classroom made by Mrs. Julie Less and seconded by Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti, all in favor, motion passes.**
- Approval of the Tahanto Regional Middle/High School Handbook – **Vote** – Mrs. Sequeira thanked Mrs. Mair for her work on the handbook. Mr. Totman expressed concerns that students can fail a course, but still participate in extra curriculums. Mrs. Sequeira explained that policy is consistent with MIIA policy. They are looking into how students could meet with someone before athletics. She also noted the athletics could be one of the things helping students get to school and would not want to prevent a student from participating from one hurdle. Senior privileges are signing out at the end of the day or sign in late if they have a free period. Most seniors have full schedules and do no access that. **Motion to approve the Tahanto regional handbook made by Mrs. Lori Hart and seconded by Mrs. Julie Lee.**
Mrs. Mair explained that going to practice could be good for them versus going home and potentially sitting. Mrs. Deglialberti explained research has been done about exercise and how it can help students. Mrs. Sequeira plans to meet with Mr. Ganem to discuss further. Tahanto will send attendance policies. **Mr. Totman amended the motion to edit the document to remove Nancy’s name and Carol and ad Al and put TBD for finance director and to amend the vote to be in place for fall semester only, Julie seconded, all in favor, amendment passes.**

All in favor of original motion with the amendment just voted on.

- Approval of the District Treasurer, Cynthia Henderson - **Vote** - Mr. Joe Meichalbeck served in this role for 17 years is retiring from being the BBRSD Treasurer. Mr. Ganem and Mrs. Grill shared their connections to Ms. Cynthia Henderson. The proposed annual salary is \$14,500. **Motion to appoint Cynthia Henderson as the District Treasurer for a contract period of**

August 28, 2024 through August 27, 2025 and vote next year for annual salary of \$14,500 made by Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti and seconded by Mrs. Julie Lee. She will work one day per month in increments of two half days and be available if questions arise. She will be beneficial with the new Director of Finance. All in favor, motion passes.

- **Approval of Interim Director of Finance, Daniel Deedy – Vote – Mrs. Grill noted he is retired and can give hours as TMS transitions out to cover the gap until a full-time person is determined. He will be in a consultant capacity.**

7:13pm motion made to adjourn the meeting, all in favor.

VIII. Upcoming Meeting

- September, 10, 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.

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