



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, February 11, 2025, 5:00 pm

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School

Multi Purpose Room

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

Revised 2/10/2025 at 8:30pm

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

Due to technical issues this meeting may not always stream live, but we will make every attempt to do so and to record the meeting for future posting.

The items listed on the agenda may be discussed out of order as the Chair decides due to potential scheduling and timing requirements.

Present: School Committee: Mr. Michael Totman, Chair, Mrs. Meagan Grill, Vice-Chair; Mrs. Lori Hart, District Clerk, Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti, Mrs. Lisa Mair, Mrs. Elisabeth Mancini

Administration: Mr. Albert G. Ganem Jr., Interim Superintendent; Ms. Nicole Bilotta, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent; Mr. Richard Cameron, Assistant Principal; Mr. John Campbell, Berlin Memorial Principal; Ms. Jannel Fitzpatrick, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Ms. Renee Legendre, Assistant Principal; Mr. Aaron Osborne, Director of Finance and Operations; Ms. Lisa Sequeira, Tahanto Middle/High School Principal; Mr. Joseph Sposato, Interim Director of Technology; Ms. Sally Stukuls, Director of Curriculum and Grants 6-12; Ms. Cinthia Sykes, Boylston Elementary Principal;

Also present: Mr. Matthew Dow, Student Council Representative and members of the public.

I. Call to Order - Mr. Michael Totman called the meeting to order at 5:00pm

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments - Mr Jason Paquette, a Berlin parent, spoke on the budget process for 2024-2025 and suggested helping voters understand the reasoning for why cuts or tax increases would need to be made. He would like to hear the story with supporting data.

IV. **Communications** - none

V. **Consent Agenda** - A motion to approve the consent agenda made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and seconded by Mrs. Meagan Grill, All in favor, Vote 5-0, motion passes.

- January 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes
- January 24, 2024 Meeting Minutes
- Warrant

VI. **Reports**

- **Chair's Report** - *Mr. Michael Totman* - Mr. Michael Totman shared that the committee met with MASC representative, Tracy Novick, the night before. She spoke about having a public search for an interim superintendent for another year, due to issues with last year. She went over the timeline of the search at the beginning of the school year for next year, instead of this winter. The committee would need to vote on interim search or full time search.
- **Superintendent of Schools Report** - *Mr. Albert Ganem Jr.* -
 - o *Mr. Matt Porcaro* - Mr. Porcaro provided a quick overview of the athletics, which included budgeting of supplies, transportation, officials, field rentals, EMT, and workforce for the games. He also shared what the scheduling for the year looked like with the teams, what registration with ID/Arbiter entails and team organization. There are also opportunities for student ambassadors including conferences and workshops. Mr. Totman asked what changes were happening now with the full time position versus the part time Athletic Director/teacher position. Mr. Porcaro is now able to help with field or bus situations if they arise during the day, where before he was in class and is unable to act quick enough. Ms. Lisa Sequira explained Mr. Porcaro is now able to help with student tracking and grade performance, which has been a big help with the principals being available to do other tasks/meetings within the school and increase parent communication. Mrs. Meagan Grill and Mr. Matt Mecum will be contacting Mr. Porcaro on grants they are looking into for the fields. Mr. Porcaro spoke to the evaluations and training the coaches will have. Communication to parents goes through Arbiter and Google classroom. Bark has also been put in place for the district within the last week.
 - o Strategic Plan - *Ms. Pam Gould (5:15pm)* - Mr. Albert Ganem shared that they plan to do a strategic plan for the next several years that includes committee members from the schools, both town administrations, and the community. Ms. Pam Gould and Mr. Zeffro Gianetti explained how the process of developing the strategic plan would work for the district. It would help give a roadmap to figure out where they need to go. It would help set goals through the district from the school committee down through superintendent, principals and teacher development. The benefits of using a consulting firm would help the administration participate in the process rather than having to drive the process.

The plan could also help with looking for a new superintendent and seeing how they will work with the plan. Ms. Gould explained how the Portrait of a Graduate would work along with the strategic plan. The POG helps the students understand what the expectations are. Ms. Gould went through an overview of the TLA Strategic Planning Process. She explained doing it in the spring and fall also helps break the costs up between fiscal years. Surveys will go out to the community for feedback to help collect

data to create the culture of the district. There are a series of six meetings throughout the process and at the end present the district with a draft and once voted on by the school committee graphic design comes in to create a document to help tell the story of the district. There would be a dashboard document as well as the detailed plan. Mrs. Lori Hart commented on how she liked how an outside firm would be running it and how much enthusiasm they both have for creating the plans. Typical length is around four months from start to finish. TLA is still a resource to BBRSD even after the plan is completed.

- o Student Council Representative - *Matthew Dowd*. Matthew Dowd let the group know about the events going on in the district. They were doing a Kindness/spirit week and AP literature exhibitions. There was also a student trip to Quebec that was a great experience for those that went. Mrs. Mancini commended Mr. Weideman on his work for the trip. Mr. Totman noted any kind of opportunities they can provide like that trip are welcome. Mrs. Deglialberti also noted how it tied to the Portrait of a Graduate of a global citizen.
- o School Choice - Mr. Ganem asked for school committee input on what direction they would like to go in for school choice. He will have opening data for the next meeting.
- o K-12 Schools Students and Information Protection - Mr. Ganem attended a training on the K-12 Schools Students and information protection, as well as the admin team. They are prepared as a district if something were to happen and they will protect the students' rights. There are things in place to keep the students and their information safe.
- o Cell Phone Policy - *Ms. Renee Legendre* - Ms. Renee Legendre spoke about how the Attorney General's office introduced the Study Act and how it would require formal policies about electronics on school grounds. They hope to start the conversation with all stakeholders and start with Policy and Student Success and Technology subcommittee meetings and then go to PTO, student advisory groups, and teacher team meetings. She hoped to have a draft timeline next month. Mrs. Grill asked about the rule in the handbook about how middle schoolers were not to be on their phones and how they can make sure it is being enforced. Mr. Sposato noted it's harder to lock things on the devices when they are not owned by the district. Mr. Totman noted there are probably ways to instill proper etiquette with devices and finding different ways to formulate plans around the use. Mr. Cameron explained they have been re-directing kids on their cell phone use and telling them to put it away. Ms. Sequeira noted parents could also get phones for students in middle school that do not have internet access, as an option. Mrs. Hart thanked the school administration for their work on trying to enforce the phone rules. Mrs. Mair noted resources Mrs. Julie Lee shared about cell phone use.
- o Town Reports - Town reports were submitted by BBRSD to both towns.
- o Vocational Schools Update - Mr. Ganem is still pursuing information about vocational opportunities. At Assabet there are more openings in sophomore year and that has been shared with the high school.

- **Administrator Updates -**

- Director of Curriculum and Grants - *Ms. Sally Stukuls* -
 - i. District Report Cards - Ms. Sally Stukuls discussed the district report card that came out on January 31st. It is a general overview of material already presented. She noted her report breaks down the different areas. The difference in class size was discussed. Mrs. Grill expressed that every kid in a grade should be doing the same curriculum and that it is not always being done. The strategic plan will help with the curriculum portion. Graduation rates were also discussed.
 - ii. AP Scores - Ms. Stukuls the data she put together. BBRSDranked 12 out of 28. BBRSD range percentage(70.8%) is within the normal range.
- Director of Pupil Personnel Services - *Mrs. Jannel Fitzpatrick* - Ms. Jannel Fitzpatrick spoke about the Special Education services and numbers provided this year at 249 and what those services entail. She also noted SEPAC meets monthly and a basic rights presentation that was held in January. She spoke to the work that has been done since the 2023 determination rating. When the report came out all of the items had already been addressed and she noted the issues with MCAS and how they have looked into them and have been developing an action plan. They want to priotice UDL learning across the district and do already have staff in the district trained well in it. The next rating will come out in March for the 2024 determination rating.

There is a multilingual community that is thriving in BBRSD. At the elementary level services needed have doubled and she noted the services provided by the BBRSD teachers. BBRSD has posted a position for a permanent nurse in the district and a second float nurse for 2 days a week. Mrs. Fitzpatrick also noted her report talked about education stability, homelessness, and active duty service member families. This year all preschool families who applied were able to be given either their first or second choice. They are looking to identify more PD opportunities for the preschool teachers. The group spoke about how there is only one ELL teacher between the elementary schools and it is something they are watching since the student number has increased and about adding in extra support. Mr. Osborne noted it is high on their ask list. Mr. Totman shared that it will need to be communicated what the challenges would be if the district did not get more support and as if it did.. This year the preschools will remain at Berlin and Tahanto instead of the potential move to Boylston. The group discussed the difference in the number of sick visits between the elementary schools.

- Athletic Director - *Mr. Mathtew Porcaro* - noted above

- **Business Office Update** - *Mr. Aaron Osborne*

- FY25 and FY26 Budget Update - The business office needs authorization from the school committee to set up district credit cards. They are called P cards and can be set up for specific purchases. It is important to have, especially when larger purchases need to be made. Cards would be given to the Interim Superintendent, Director of Finance and Director of Facilities.

Mr. Osborne reviewed the budget presentation. The presentation is on the BBRSD District main page for viewing. Mrs. Grill noted in some of the numbers salaries are not encumbered. Mr. Osborne explained they are working on how the system can encumber salaries properly. He noted in December they presented in both towns and will be presenting this week to Berlin.

As of now there is a 4.22% increase down from around 7% in the prior presentations. State figures have come in and there are items the schools have noted could come out. Mr. Osborne showed a comparison of the budget from version one to version two. He reviewed the offsets that would be possible to use. Proposals included using funds from school choice, circuit breaker reimbursement and IDEA Grant Funds, which totalled just under \$2,000,000 to offset the budget. Additionally, Ms. Osborne noted the budget drivers for each school and the operating assessments. One goal is to pair down the use of agency paras and hiring regular employees. The items in the presentation are level service and nothing new added into it from last year. Factors are continuing to come in that will be worked into the budget.

The debt assessments were gone over and traditionally those numbers were assessed in the capital assessments. The total FY26 capital assessment for Berlin totalled \$2,421,954 and Boylston's totalled \$2,267,608. Mr. Osborne is hoping to get feedback from the towns on where the current numbers sit with them. Mrs. Hart thanked Mr. Osborne for all the time and work he has put into the budget and providing the budget reports. He welcomes all types of feedback on his process. Mr. Ganem spoke to Berlin and they hoped BBRSD could Delay to March 10th. BBRSD already has a meeting scheduled for March 11th to vote. Mrs. Grill asked to have a list of asks and the priorities. Mr. Osborne will get together with the administration to discuss.

Subcommittee Updates

- Student Success and Technology Subcommittee - *Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti* - none
- Budget and Facility Subcommittee - *Mrs. Meagan Grill* - no update
- Superintendent Search Subcommittee *Mrs. Lori Hart*
- Policy Subcommittee - *Mr. Michael Totman* - no update

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

VII. Business Items

- Approval of the BEC (Boylston Education Collaborative) to host a Bingo night and sell alcohol (if approved by the town of Boylston Selectboard) for the purpose of fundraising - **Vote Needed motion of the approval of the Boylston Education Collaborative to host a bingo night and sell alcohol if approved by the town of Boylston Selectboard for the purpose of fundraising made by Mrs. Lori Hart and seconded by Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti.** Discussion: The same event was held last year. A member of BEC, who owns Breens in Worcester, provides the alcohol. It would be with a TIPS certified server, police detail and no alcohol would be allowed in the school building. **All in Favor, Vote 5-0, Mrs. Meagan Grill abstained, motion passes.**
- **Approval of pursuing a permanent versus interim superintendent - Vote Needed - Motion to officially start an interim superintendent search made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and seconded by Mrs. Lori Hart.** Discussion: Mr. Totman spoke to how they met with MASC the day before and this approach may be better for the district. Mrs. Deglialberti also noted West Boylston is also looking for a Superintendent. Official search kick-off would be in September. **All in Favor Vote 6-0, motion passes.**
- Approval of the Youth Risk Survey - **Vote Needed - A motion to approve the Youth Risk Survey made by Mrs. Lisa Mair and seconded by Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti.** Discussion: BBRSD was one of 79 schools selected to do a Youth Risk Survey. Mr. Ganem recommends

taking a pass on it, at this time. Mrs. Hart noted not liking how some of the questions were constructed and how you could potentially narrow participants down based on how it would be administered. **All in favor-0, Nay - Mrs. Beth Mancini, Mrs Meagan Grill, Mrs. Lori Hart Mrs. Lisa Mair and Mr. Michael Totman, Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti marked as present, Vote 0-5, Motion did not pass.**

- Approval of Tahanto proposed courses - **Vote Needed - A motion to approve the proposed courses in the drive made by Mrs. Lori Hart and seconded by Mrs. Meagan Grill.**
Discussion: Mrs. Sequeira summarized the five proposed courses and how they will benefit the Tahanto students. **All in favor, Vote 6-0, motion passes.** Mr. Totman asked that they promote these new course opportunities.
- FY25 and FY26 Calendars - **First Read**
- Approval to update district contacts listed within the policies - **Vote Needed - A motion to approve to update ACAB, ADF, and JBA made by Mrs. Meagan Grill and seconded by Mrs. Lori Hart.** Discussion: They are moving away from names and designating positions on the policies. **All in favor, Vote 6-0, motion passes.**
 - **ACAB** - Sexual Harassment Policy For Sexual Harassment Against Students
 - **ADF** - Wellness Policy/Nutrition, Food Allergies, Physical Activities Mission and Goals
 - **JBA** - Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination for Students
- **Motion to approve request p card set up as discussed by Mr. Osborne made by Mrs. Lori-Hart and seconded by Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti.** Discussion: The group talked about how the process with the cards will work. **All in favor, Vote 6-0 , motion passes.**

VIII. Executive Session I. and will not return to open session -motion to enter Executive Session I and II pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose (3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (BBEA CBA) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares

Executive Session II. - pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose (1) to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.

Made by Mrs. Lori Hart and seconded by Mrs. Lisa Mair, Roll Call: Mrs. Elisabeth Mancini, Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti, Mrs, Meagan Grill, Mrs. Lori Hart, Mrs. Lisa Mair, and Mr. Michael Totman - All aye, Vote 6-0, motion passes. Executive session entered at 8:25pm

IX. Upcoming Meeting

- February 25, 2025

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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