



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

BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Student Success and Technology Subcommittee

Thursday, April 17, 2025

12:30pm, Tahanto Multi-purpose Room

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

Present: School Committee: Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti, Mrs. Elisabeth Mancini

Administration: Mr. Albert G. Ganem Jr., Interim Superintendent; Ms. Nicole Bilotta, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Mr. John Campbell, BMS Principal, Ms. Renee Legendre, Tahanto Assistant Principal, Ms. Kara Ford, Adjustment Counselor; Ms. Lisa Sequeria, Tahanto Principal, Mr. Joseph Sposato, Interim Director of Technology; Sally Stukuls, Director of Curriculum and Grants, Grades 6-12; Cindy Sykes, BES Principal

Also present: BES parent

I. Call to Order - Mrs. Jessica Deglialberti called the meeting to order at 12:34pm

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Business Items & Reports -

- Mr. Joseph Sposato - Interim Director of Technology moved forward with safety and security for all of the district students and staff
 - Content filtering - The content filtering from BBRSD covers devices in school and at home or where they are using a BBRSD email login. Students are finding ways to get around blocks and this will require extra layers of protection.
 - B-Y-O-Device - shared one to one/ bring your own device - BBRSD has enough devices for all students. Devices are provided in the elementary schools, but at the MS/HS they can bring their own devices. Bringing a device from home limits the district security measures they can implement because they do not own them. If everyone used a district device it would be fair and equitable across the board. Mrs. Deglialberti supported bringing it to the full committee for a vote. Mrs. Elisabeth Mancini was in support of school devices being used. Ms. Renee Legendre spoke to what they see in the school and the accountability of if a student is using a BBRSD login outside of school on the internet without control. The elementary principles agreed content filtering is needed at their schools and described experiences they have had.

- Mr. Sposato noted that tightening things up will allow for better management. The group spoke about issues with external emails and pros and cons of more regulations on that. There are different ways to go once a direction is decided. There have been big issues with students communicating with parents during the day. It creates issues with the professionals in the building with knowing what is going on and for kids to know the proper people to go to if something is going on. The principals at elementary schools are working to educate students and parents on the proper channels.
- Cell Phone Free Lunch Day/Refresh Day – Ms. Lisa Sequeira & Ms. Renee Legendre - Ms. Kara Ford spoke about the freshday phone free lunch. Students were told ahead of time about the no phones. She felt it was a good idea to start small and then get bigger. Ms. Sequeira put together a survey with the data from the Refresh day. around ¼ of students responded. Mrs. Legendre reviewed the survey results. A majority of students appeared unphased. When participating in a game or activity at lunch results were mixed. A majority of students prefer having their phones and not participating in more phone-free lunch opportunities in the future. Around a quarter noted maybe participating again, with some adjustments. Mrs. Legendre reviewed the key takeaways from the survey. High school students are allowed to go outside for lunch, but not middle school. They have had issues with noise from outside affecting the school building. There are instances where students use their phones to engage with each other in games. Ms. Ford noted in guidance they are not allowed to use their phone and create a safe space and provide fidgets for the students.

Ms. Sykes explained how refresh day worked for BES and how it was different from the high school since they do not have technology. Mrs. Degliaberti noted her feelings on cell phones in schools as well as Ms. Mancini, but they will have to see what the school committee as a whole feels. Mr. Campbell noted the issues with phones with children and the concerns of the effect on their wellbeing.

- Grassroots BES Cyber Security with Boylston PD event – 2/24/25 – Ms. Cindy Sykes & BES Parent
- BES Parent request for New Norms Cell Phone Advisory Board
 - Per the Mass A.G.'s Cell Phone and Social Media in Schools Toolkit - BES parent, Stephanie Johnson shared her support for cell phone education and not having them in schools. It was mentioned that there could be the potential for a new norms advisory board.
- Virtual Cyber Safety & Bullying Parent Presentation - April 16th, 6pm - The event first was put together to address concerns from parents. The Boylston PD Police Chief John Annunziata had a parent night with about 25 parents with questions and they talked about resources. There was lots of outreach afterwards and parents began monitoring the phones more. They asked for a night for

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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parents and children. Mrs. Sykes noted an uptick in cell phone use issues on the buses. Mr. Campbell noted that was happening on BMS buses as well. Mr. Sposato expressed this would be a culture shift and will take years to fully implement and for the new norm to set in.

Mr. Ganem noted the presentation from the DA and how companies are monitoring use and the need to have the buy-in from parents and starting at home. Mrs. Deglilberti noted different educational tools to help change cell phone behavior. Ms. Sequeira felt students do not need smart phones and she is a big proponent of flip phones and making parents comfortable with that. Mr. Ganem shared the way many families have been brought up with phones. They will put the DA presentation about cell phone use on the website from April 16th and information in the newsletter for parents to see.

- Additional resources- Wait Until 8th, Let Grow, Anxious Generation Book/Podcast/Depression and Test Scores

The group talked about action items, which included considering family nights at each school and getting parent support for those. Ms. Legendre will look at data for the community and felt meetings at MS/HS level would be more difficult. Other issues come with taking phones away and the responsibility of the district.

Another action item included looking into districts who are implementing cell phone policies and talking to them about how they got there. Ms. Ford spoke about the cell phone panel she sat on in the fall and what some schools are currently doing.

They also spoke about how much at the high school level are phones used as tools and what would it look like budgetarily for the district. The group spoke about further things to think about with the phone use or non use.

At some point a forum with different stakeholders may be beneficial to have and creating a policy would be a joint effort with the Policy Subcommittee.

- Exploration of options for Organization Culture Survey - This came from the Educational Commonwealth Project, which Ms. Stukuls found through a job-alike last year. The district will be working with them next year for the Strategic plan, which will conduct surveys of the district and community.
- Brainstorming on how to better utilize/mobilize/match the community/parent resources with teacher/classroom needs (knowledge, volunteering, enrichment donations for classrooms) - The group talked about potential ideas for donations to the district and getting the parents involved with lessons at the school.

XI. Upcoming Meetings

- Schedule Next Meeting - Mrs. Deglialberti will send a survey monkey out.

Meeting adjourned at 2:02pm

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