

Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee
Mt. Everett Regional School
Sheffield, MA
May 19, 2016
Meeting #1508

School Committee Members: Kristin Sparhawk, Carl Stewart, Vito Valentini, Marcella Bush, Arthur Batacchi, Francois Lartigue, Bonnie Silvers, Dennis Sears

Absent: Maria Rundle, Charlie Flynn

Administration: Superintendent Hastings

Press: CTSB

Student Representatives: Mary Shallaby, Angus Kerr

Others: Courtney English, Chris Clark, Michelle Shallaby, Karen Chamberland

1. **Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

Chair's Monologue:

Mr. Stewart stated that the district had gone through a difficult budget process and was happy to say that every town passed the budget, with the help of the town's residents and Select Boards. There were highs and lows to the process. Some of the highs were presentations by students, teachers. One interesting low mixed with the high is at the Monterey meeting the chair of the select board, argued to defeat the budget because the school district was concentrating on robotics instead of fixing the air conditioners. The high counter point was a note sent to him by Nadia Hawver stating - I love robotics and it is great that the school does it.

Mr. Valentini stated that at the previous meeting Mr. Stewart had said he was going to resign his position on the board. He was glad that he did not and that the citizens of the 5 towns once again demonstrated that they are supportive of the district.

Mr. Stewart also thanked Chris Regan for the wonderful job she did explaining the budget.

2. **Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Sears to approve the minutes of meeting #1506 as presented.

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Sears to approve the minutes of meeting #1507 as presented.

There was no discussion. It was so voted unanimously.

3. **Communication from the Audience Pertaining to this Evening's Agenda:**

A. Student Representative Report: Mary Shallaby, Grade 8 President and Angus Kerr, Grade 8 Vice President introduced themselves to the School Committee. They gave a brief presentation on the fundraisers that they did in the fall for the Washington Trip. They are also organizing a field day for the day after their graduation to try to encourage students to come to school because a lot of students think it is pointless to come to school. Mr. Stewart praised them for coming to the meeting.

4. **Updated/Presentations:** None

5. **Business:**

A. Request for Approval of Overnight Field Trips:

- Preliminary approval of the Mt. Everett HS Band and Chorus overnight field trip to Tennessee in 2017. Mr. Clark and Ms. English gave a brief overview of the field trip. Fundraisers will be held to help cover the cost of the trip which is approximately \$800-\$1000 for each student. They will also apply for grants.

Mr. Valentini moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to give preliminary approval of the Mt. Everett HS Band and Chorus overnight field trip to Tennessee in 2017. It was so voted unanimously.

- Approval of Overnight SWAG Club Students trip to Quincy MA – June 8-9, 2016. Superintendent Hastings stated that this was the same trip that the group did last year where they clean up the beach.

Ms. Sparhawk moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to approve the Overnight SWAG Club trip to Quincy MA from June 8th to June 9, 2016. It was so voted unanimously.

B. Approval of a one-year extension of the Superintendent's contract:

Mr. Stewart stated that he had spoken with our attorney, Michelle McNulty, and she had said that the easiest way was to prepare an addendum to the existing contract. All the terms are the same. Mr. Stewart also wished to point out that Mr. Hastings has refused an increase in his salary for the 2016-2017 school year.

Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to approve the one year extension of Superintendent Hastings's contract. It was so voted unanimously.

C. Approval of Chris Clark's agreement for his One Year Leave of Absence:

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to approve the Memorandum of Agreement granting Mr. Clark a one year sabbatical during the 2016-2017 school year under the conditions listed. It was so voted unanimously.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Silvers said that even in this difficult financial period, the school committee feels that Mr. Clark is a valuable asset to the district and thanked him for his dedication and hard work.

D. Approval of School Choice Openings for 2016-2017 School Year (per C76, s 12B):

Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to approve the 2016-2017 School Choice openings as presented. It was so voted unanimously.

A discussion ensued. Mr. Valentini and Mr. Sears had questions regarding the numbers open in each grade. Mr. Hastings explained the report and the enrollment numbers. Mr. Stewart explained the difference between in-district and out of district choice. Ms. Silvers explained that step 1 was notifying DESE that the district will accept school choice and step two is to list the number of open spots in each grade.

E. Final Assessment to the Five Towns:

Chris Regan was at the MASBO conference so Mr. Valentini explained the letter that was sent to the Towns of Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough and Sheffield regarding the proposed final breakdown between operating, transportation and capital for the FY16 assessments.

He explained that Ms. Regan had to identify where some of the money came from. Some of the money came from E&D and some from reductions in the budget. Since the Town of Sheffield votes Capital and Operating & Transportation separately, the reduction was not great enough in Capital for them to be able to pay the capital assessment so what had to happen was it had to be adjusted.

The attached SBRSD Assessment Itemization chart shows the new assessments based on the use of E&D and actual budget reductions to reduce the towns' assessments. The actual numbers needed to be reflected in the minutes.

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to approve the final assessment of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District to the five towns. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Batacchi Yes Ms. Lartigue Yes Ms. Sparhawk Yes Ms. Silvers Yes

Mr. Sears Yes Mr. Valentini Yes Ms. Bush Yes Mr. Stewart Yes

Motion carries 8 in favor 0 opposed, 2 absent.

G. Discussion Regarding School Committee Summer Schedule:

It was suggested that the school committee meeting be held during the summer to address concerns that may arise. Discussion followed.

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, that the school committee holds 2 meetings over the summer, July 21st and August 25th at 6:00 p.m. in the Library. It was so voted unanimously.

F. Superintendent's Report:

1. Community Outreach:

- a. Band Concerts: The Middle and High School concert bands had their performance last night. The Percussionist Ensemble, a new part of the program, was just outstanding. The Arts are extremely important to the culture of the district, and this really showed in both the full house and in the performance of our student musicians.
- b. Mount Everett Choral Concert: Monday, May 23rd 7 PM.
- c. Elementary Grade 3-6 Spring Choral and Recorder Concert: May 31st, 6:30 PM. The grades 3&4 recorder prelude runs from 6 to 6:10 p.m.
- d. The elementary UME open house will be next Wednesday, May 25th, from 6 to 7:30 PM and will celebrate the arts via our K-6 art show by UME and South Egremont students and a musical performance featuring the K/1/2 students from 6:15 to 6:30 PM in the elementary cafeteria.
- e. Middle School Band Competition, Fantastic Festivals is June 2nd in Bloomfield, CT.
- f. FFA: The Mt. Everett brought animals to the Bushnell-Sage Library on May 12th as part of their outreach agriculture literacy program. The Mt. Everett FFA Horse Judging team competed at the State Competition on April 28th and placed 5th in the state.
- g. Peter Pan: "Peter Pan" was performed by the elementary and middle school students on May 13-15. We provided tickets to the Sheffield Senior Center, the New Marlborough Council on Aging, and Geer Village.
- h. Galapagos Island Trip Pot Luck: High School Cafeteria at 6:30 p.m. May 25th.
- i. New Marlborough Council on Aging Luncheon. The Culinary Arts Program will be catering the New Marlborough Council on Aging Luncheon on May 20th.
- j. New Marlborough Central Recognition and Pot Luck. The NMC recognition and Pot Luck Supper part was changed to June 9th from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at NMC (with the hope of holding the School Committee meeting there at 6:30 p.m.)

Ms. Sparhawk moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, that the school committee meeting on June 9th be held at the New Marlborough Central School at 6:30 p.m. Voted Unanimous.

- k. SWAG Adopt-a-Highway: SWAG will be doing its May Adopt-a-highway clean-up on Saturday, May 14th at 11:00 a.m. They meet at the American Legion Hall and work their way South on Rt. 7.
- l. Sheffield Historical Society Living History Event, May 27th: Our fifth graders will participate in a living history event at the Sheffield Historical Society on May 27th.

m. Southern Berkshire Child Care Program Outreach into the Community:

- May 11th visit to the Sheffield Senior Center. Observed Blue Bird nest with eggs. The class will return on May 25th and June 8th to see the babies. There was also a Senior-Toddler Umbrella-Sponge Art activity.
- May 19th visit to the Housatonic Valley FFA Open House. Toddlers will visit the petting zoo, look at fish in a pond and see the green house.

2. Staff:

- a. Mike Farmer graduated from Lesley University with a Doctorate in Ed Technology
- b. Jesse Carpenter was inducted into the Wesleyan University Wall of Fame last week.

3. Students:

- a. The Prom was May 13th at Crissey Farm. This was followed by a SADD-sponsored all-night After Prom Party at Mount Everett, with many staff people, including Glenn Devoti, attending.
- b. Senior Speeches. The seniors delivered their end of the year persuasive speeches this last Tues. & Wed. in the library. Our seniors did a great job, talking on topics that were important to them, ranging from the *importance of napping* to the *hazards of plastics* to *lowering the drinking age* to the *need to protect victims of sexual and domestic abuse*. Some of the speeches were very powerful.
- c. New Marlborough Central Science Fair. No fewer than 27 Science Fair projects were on display at NMC on May 17th. Tom Masters and David Travis organized and oversaw the event, which was a huge success!
- d. Special Olympics: Even with the rain on May 4th, 15 students participated in the SPECIAL OLYMPICS at Monument Mountain High School. The district won second place in the banner contest. This year, our athletes won medals in the 50m run, the wheelchair race, the 100m run, softball throw, standing long jump, running long jump, and wheelchair race! It may have been raining, but there was nothing but light shining through our kids as they played, competed, and enjoyed each other's company. The Long Jump event was run by juniors and seniors from My Everett. They were Parker Snyder, Patrick Hogelin, Morgan DeGrenier, Matthew Funk, Julia Groeber and Chelsea Hill. The faculty that attend with them are Josh King and Kelly Milan. Thank you to the support staff without whom we would never be able accomplish our goals! Amanda Colpack, Sue Shannon, Jamie Seward, Lori Koperek, Kathy Jo Grover, Jane Wright, Karen Muir, Anna Duryea, Nancianne Heath, Deanna Page and a host of spouse and student coaches.
- e. District Elementary Field Day: is May 26th with a rain date of May 27th.
- f. Biology Trip - May 20th: On Friday, May 20th Danielle Melino will be taking all 10th graders to the Bronx Zoo. This trip is funded by a Target Field Trip grant
- g. May 31st NMC 4th grade visit to UME 5th grade
- h. June 10th Grade 6 recognition night
- i. Fourth grade events:
 - Field trip to CT Science Center in Hartford on May 27th.
 - End of the year hike on the Appalachian Trail on June 3rd from Jugg End to Shay's Rebellion monument with a focus on weathering, deposition and erosion.
 - Trip to Berkshire school with accelerated ELA to see the Thoreau Cabin and do some nature activities and observations on June 8th.
 - YES conference at BCC on May 31st. 6 students going to learn about "hike safe" and "leave no trace", 2 national programs
 - Battle of the Books battle was May 17th. Many fourth graders participated. Rebecca Neet runs the club.

4. Other Issues

- a. Opt-Out Update. As of today, these are the numbers of students whose families have opted-out of state-mandated testing.
 - *New Marlborough* – Both classes under 90% participation
 - Grade 3: 8 students between two classes (out of 17 students)

- Grade 4: 4 students (out of 12 students)
- *Undermountain*
- Grade 3: 3 students Grade 4: 1 student
- Grade 5: 4 students Grade 6: 3 students

We could be looking at a Level 3. There was no impact in Mt. Everett.

b. Non-Unit Personnel salary increases:

- See the minutes of the January 9, 2014 School Committee meeting.
- “We adopt a formula of having increases commensurate with increases established by the Unit A bargaining unit.”

Mt. Stewart also explained the handout of the minutes from January 9, 2014 regarding the method of compensation increases for any employee at SBRSD who is not represented by a bargaining unit or a contract employee (Copy attached).

Mr. Stewart spoke regarding the opt out issue and the experiences cross the state. He predicts that it will have no effect at all, but we will find out.

Mr. Hastings mentioned that Mt. Everett graduation is June 4th at Tanglewood at 10:00 a.m.

G. Subcommittee Reports:

1. Executive Evaluation:

Ms. Silvers reported that the Executive Evaluation Sub-Committee had met to discuss decisions regarding the search for a new superintendent. The EESB is asking approval to be in charge of creating a plan for the search of the new superintendent. They were bringing this to the School Committee to ask for a motion.

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Ms. Sparhawk, that the Executive Evaluation Sub Committee be charged with creating a plan which they will present to the School Committee at the June 30th meeting but no later than the opening of school in September. It was so voted unanimously.

They do not want to be in charge, the idea is that the EESC felt it was part of their job to create a plan and present it to the SC.

The next item discussed at the EESC was outreach to the towns. Mr. Hastings explained the plan is to engage the towns in dialogue before the budget meetings.

Mr. Sears stated that the process starts in November and all the boards and finance committees are invited to the meetings. Yet we saw no tax payers or parents at the meetings. It’s obvious that the people out there who pay the taxes and the local governments are not in sync. He would be more concerned in getting taxpayers involved instead of the government of the 5 towns involved.

Mr. Stewart wanted clarification if this outreach is going from the school to the governing bodies, seems that it is important to define who we are going to reach.

Ms. Lartigue explained that one of the ways would be for Mr. Hastings to reach out to the people who have come to the table to discuss their concerns in a constructive way and show respect for the situation, but concern for the long term situation as well. It is a trial to see if we can do outreach in a way that is not pressured by the budget. Maybe there would be a free exchange of ideas when not sitting in a budget meeting. She would love to see more involvement. This is the most realistic, positive, proactive idea that we have not tried before.

Mr. Batacchi is in agreement with this idea. We need to come up with a different strategy to involve other people in how we are doing this.

Mr. Valentini also stated that any sort of outreach that we can do is a good idea. But sometimes aside from the fact that we have numerous open meeting, people deliberately did not come. Massachusetts law states that during the budget process the School Committee and Superintendent are required to make finance presentations to the towns, but we were turned down. The elected officials do not represent the feeling of the towns.

Ms. Silvers informed the members that included in the packet is the Superintendent's end of cycle summative evaluation report. This report needs to be completed on the computer and saved with the member's name and title. The form contains performance goals that were approved in February. The language in the standards were not changed, the state standards were used.

Ms. Silvers requested that the evaluations be submitted to her by June 1st. Mr. Stewart then has to issue a report and recommendation to the School Committee for a vote, either on June 9th or June 30th so that it can be submitted to DESE by July 1st.

Mr. Valentini mentioned that he will provide Ms. Silvers with the materials he has from the last Superintendent search.

2. Policy Subcommittee:

The following policies were presented to the School Committee:

First Readings of the following policies – May 19, 2016

IJND – Access to Digital Resource

IJNDB- Empowered Digital Use Policy

IJNDB-R – Technology Policies for Students

IJNDC – Internet Publication

IJNDD – Policy on Social Networking Sites – source MASC

Support Services – Food Service

EFA – Food Service Policy – Delinquent Accounts

Community Relations

KF-R – Community use of District Owned Facilities

Second Readings:

ADDA – adopted 5/19/16

EBC – adopted 5/19/16

ECAF – adopted 5/19/16

Mr. Stewart moved, seconded Ms. Silvers, that the School Committee waive an actual oral reading of the above policies. It was so voted unanimously.

Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Sparhawk, that the School Committee adopt policy ADDA. It was so voted unanimously.

Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Sparhawk, that the School Committee adopt policy EBC. It was so voted unanimously.

Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, that the School Committee adopt policy ECAF. It was so voted unanimously.

3. Report on Policy Consideration of Opt Out Policy:

Mr. Sears mentioned that the Policy Subcommittee had been asked to consider a policy on opting out of standardized tests. This had been discussed at their meetings, and the conclusion is that they did not know enough to write a policy. Recommendation was not no action be taken at this time, but wait to see how things play out this year before writing a policy.

Mr. Batacchi asked Mr. Hastings if there was any decision on the last day of school ending on June 10th. Mr. Hastings replied that the state regulations do not allow for a change to be made. Ms. Lartigue stated that the last day is usually well attended.

Mr. Sears reported on the FRRSD/SBRSD Planning Board. The FRRSD Grade 6 students will be visiting the SBRSD on June 1st for a shadow day.

H. Financial Updates and Transfers (as needed): Chris Regan was not present.

I. *Ms. Sparhawk moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. It was so voted unanimously.*

Documents presented at this meeting:

- *Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1508*
- *Minutes of Meeting #1,506 and #1507*
- *Overnight Field Trip Requests*
- *Superintendent's Contract Extension*
- *School Choice 2016-2017 Openings*
- *Memorandum of Agreement – Chris Clark*
- *Final Assessment Letter to the five towns*
- *First Reading Policies: IJND, IJNDB, IJNDB-R, IJNDC, IJNDD, EFA, KF-R*
- *Second Reading: ADDA, EBC, ECAF*