

Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee
Mt. Everett Regional School Library
Sheffield, MA
September 29, 2016
Meeting #1515

School Committee Members: Art Batacchi, Carl Stewart, Bonnie Silvers, Fran Lartigue, Vito Valentini, Maria Rundle, Marcella Bush, Charles Flynn, Mr. Sears

Absent: Lynette Gagnon, Kristen Sparhawk

Administration: Superintendent Hastings, Christine Regan

Press: CTSB, Cory Willey - Berkshire Record, Sheela Clary- Berkshire Edge

Student Representatives: None

Others: Karen Chamberland, Glenn DeVoti,

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Stewart, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** None
3. **Communications from the Audience Pertaining to this Evening's Agenda Items**
4. **Update(s)/Presentations:**
5. **Business:**

A. Discussion on 2016 MCAS, PARCC and Accountability Data

Mr. Stewart informed the committee that the purpose of this meeting was not to discuss the pros and cons arguments for and against MCAS and other standardized testing. The reasons we are meeting tonight are to:

1. Explain the purpose of what happened on Monday with the district accountability going from Level 2 to Level 3.
2. Why it happened
3. What does it mean
4. What if anything can we do about it

Superintendent Hastings has been dealing with this for the last several weeks, in anticipation that this might happen. Mr. Hastings explained that we were named a Level 3 District. Level 3 means the lowest 20% of districts in the state or districts that did not meet the 90% participation rate. The state has a rule that you cannot be a Level 2 district if you have less than 90% participation.

If every student in new Marlborough did not take the test it would not have any effect on our district level. Because we are a small district we have a high needs subgroup (88% of our high need kids took the test). The subgroups must have 20 students to be included. Mr. Hastings explained the high needs subgroup. There are issues with our kids in the high needs groups and how we want to get their scores and achievement up. We are doing a good job in the high school. In the elementary schools we need to fix the problems to help our most struggling kids reach their potential.

Out of 11 districts in Berkshire County or Western Massachusetts we were the only one dropped to Level 3. The district as a whole will not be reduced to Level 3 and we will have the same status as Berkshire Hills. The school will be at Level 3 but the district will be Level 2. The Regional District Assistant Team may provide us with some support.

Mr. Hastings had spoken with Erica Gonzales at DESE. She explained the difference between the two districts, Berkshire Hills Regional School District and Southern Berkshire Regional. Berkshire Hills did not meet its participation levels in the grade 4 PARCC tests. We did not meet our participation levels in the High Needs subgroup in Science. In the cases of both districts, DESE averaged the participation percentages of students over 2015 and 2016. For us, this meant averaging the High Needs Subgroup students in the Science tests (grades 5,8, and 10) in 2015 and 2016. The averaging brought Berkshire Hills over 90%.

In the case of SBRSD in the science and technology tests:

2015: 28 out of 29 students tested = 97% take the test

2016: 26 out of 32 students tested = 81% (six absent). Average of both = 89% which is under 90% that is why our district as a whole is Level 3.

Superintendent Hastings is filing an appeal with DESE based on a home-bound hospitalized 8th grade student who was coded as “MED”. If accepted, this appeal would change the district’s two-year average to 90.4% and return the district to Level 2 status.

Superintendent explained the MCAS & PARCC Test Achievement

- Grades 4,6, and 8 showed increases in their scores while grades 5 and 7 showed very small decreases in scores.
- Grade 10 continues to be at the top of the state:
 - English, with a Composite Performance Index of 100, is in a 22-district tie for top honors out of just under 300 districts.
 - Math, with a CPI of 96.8 is 57th from the top.
 - Science, with a CPI of 97.8 is 31st in the state.

As a district, we use the results of the annual testing to refine our curriculum and instruction to better serve our students. The data that we gain from the testing allows us to better identify children early on who may need additional support and find and correct possible gaps in our curriculum and instruction so that next year’s instruction will be better than this year’s.

Mr. Hastings further stated that we honor every child’s individuality and help all of our students to find their passion. We believe that we are charged to ensure that every student receives the tools to excel as a multi-faceted young person after completing his or her education in our district.

Discussions and comments from the school committee ensued.

Sheila Clary – asked for clarification on the 8th grade student who was sick.

- B. Resolution on the Settlement Agreement and Addendum to the Unit A Collective Bargaining Agreement regarding the Theatre Stipend Positions (Copy attached).

Mr. Stewart explained to the school committee that the agreement says is that these are the amounts that will be paid as a stipend to anybody who accepts a position with stipends. It does not require us to offer it to teachers to the exclusion of anybody else, all it does is set forth the positions and the amounts.

Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Sears, to accept the Resolution on the Settlement Agreement and Addendum to the Unit A Collective Bargaining Agreement regarding the Theatre Stipend Positions. It was so voted unanimously.

6. **Communication from the Public/Requests for Future Agenda Items:** Nothing to report

7. **Adjourn**

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Flynn, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. It was so voted unanimously.

Documents Presented at this Meeting:

- *Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1514*
- *Settlement Agreement and Addendum to the Unit A Collective Bargaining Agreement – Theatre Stipend Positions*
- *Accountability Data*