

School Committee Members: Art Batacchi, Carl Stewart, Bonnie Silvers, Fran Lartigue, Bob Law, Maryellen Brown, David Travis, Marcella Bush, Charlie Flynn

Administration: Superintendent Hastings, Christine Regan

Press: CTSB, Cory Willey - Berkshire Record

Student Representatives: None present

Others: Kerry Burke, Mary Turo, Karen Frighetto, Jennifer Dowley, Neil Barbieri, Glenn Devoti, Julie Hannum, Lynette Gagnon

1. **Call to Order:** Superintendent Hastings called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
2. Superintendent Hastings welcomed the newly elected school committee members to the board. Maryellen Brown from the Town of Monterey, Bob Law from the Town of Sheffield and David Travis from the Town of New Marlborough. He also congratulated Mr. Batacchi and Ms. Bush for winning their elections.

3. **Reorganization:**

- A. **Election of Chairman:** Mr. Hastings asked for nominations for Chairman.

*Ms. Silvers nominated Mr. Stewart. Ms. Lartigue seconded the nomination.*

Discussion ensued. Mr. Flynn noted that there should be a rotation in the election of chair to the committee and that other towns should be represented. Mr. Stewart agreed that the Chair should maybe have a term limit going forward and suggested that the Policy Subcommittee look into this.

<i>Vote: Mr. Flynn – No</i>	<i>Mr. Batacchi – Yes</i>	<i>Ms. Silvers – Yes</i>	<i>Ms. Lartigue – Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Law – Yes</i>	<i>Ms. Brown – Yes</i>	<i>Mr. Travis – Yes</i>	<i>Ms. Bush – Yes</i>

Mr. Stewart was declared elected and assumed the duties of the Chair. He welcomed the new members to the school committee.

- B. **Election of Vice Chair:**

*Mr. Sears nominated Ms. Silvers as Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Lartigue.*

Mr. Flynn made the same comment as stated above. Ms. Lartigue moved to close nominations, and it was so voted unanimously.

Ms. Silvers was elected Vice Chair on a roll call vote:

<i>Mr. Flynn – No</i>	<i>Mr. Batacchi – Yes</i>	<i>Ms. Lartigue – Yes</i>	<i>Mr. Law – Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Brown – Yes</i>	<i>Mr. Travis – Yes</i>	<i>Ms. Bush – Yes</i>	<i>Mr. Stewart – Yes</i>

She then assumed the role of Vice Chair and thanked the members for their confidence.

4. **Approval of Minutes:**

*Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to approve the minutes of meeting #1516 as submitted.*

*Mr. Flynn, Ms. Brown, Mr. Travis, Mr. Law abstained, all others voted yes.*

5. **Communications from the Audience Pertaining to this Evening's Agenda Items**

Student Representative Report: none

## 6. Update(s)/Presentations:

### A. **Superintendent Search Consultant Presentation** – Jennifer Dowley of Dowley Associates, Millerton, NY

Ms. Silvers introduced Jennifer Dowley as the Superintendent Search Consultant hired to help the district with the process of selecting the next superintendent.

Ms. Dowley stated that she is an independent consultant and that her job is to help the district find the best possible superintendent to step into Dave's shoes when he leaves at the end of the school year.

Ms. Silvers will hand out the job description, which was developed by the Executive Evaluation Subcommittee. Glenn Koocher has been a great partner and is augmenting all of the work that the subcommittee is doing. The deadline for applications is December 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Dowley will be working closely with the Superintendent Screening Committee and Executive Evaluation Subcommittee and will report back to the school committee.

The first part of the search was to refine the criteria of who was being sought by the school district.

Ms. Dowley worked with five listening groups, which consisted of 45 individuals. The groups were made up of parents, student council, teachers & staff, select boards & town officials, and the administrative team. An online survey was also generated and responses were received from 40 people, half from the external community and half from the internal community. Everyone was asked to address several questions. Following are the questions that were asked of the groups and their answers:

1. The new superintendent is on board, it is 2011, what does the SBRSD look like? What are the strengths of the district that have been preserved and enhanced? What improvements have been made?
  - An excellent school experience for students that is rich and diverse in high quality academic, career/ Technical, extracurricular and athletic opportunities across all grade levels. This, in a tightly knit community with a strong welcoming culture to students of all learning styles.
  - Students are fully prepared for a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy with all students and teachers having knowledge of and access to online connections with national and global resources.
  - The district is deeply connected to and appreciated by its various communities for the benefit of students, towns and teachers – providing grants, underwriting, partnerships as well as learning and career opportunities.
  - Every group and most surveys brought up the challenge of declining enrollment and the corresponding diminishment of opportunities. Every group and most surveys stated that 5 years out, a re-alignment of some kind with other school districts will have taken place to ensure the excellence of education in points 1, 2 and 3.
  
2. What core competencies and important skills would your next superintendent need to have to achieve this successful vision?
  - Visionary
  - Strong background in and understanding of education
  - Someone who really wants to be here to engage with the district's issues
  - Collaborative management style; accessible and a relationship builder
  - Supportive of teachers
  - Good team player with strong listening skills
  - Creative, flexible problem solver who is willing to connect with and learn from communities facing similar issues
  - Skilled negotiator who will take a leadership role in seeking re-alignment options while engaging all the appropriate constituents
  - Future oriented and willing to make tough decisions
  - Excellent and motivating communicator – verbally and in writing – comfortable with wide range of audiences: students, teachers, parents, elected officials, community members.
  - Strong data, financial and analytical skills with ability to synthesize information and develop various scenarios for potential new alignments
  - Actively seeks connections with nonprofits, corporations and other entities to bring new resources to the district

3. What thoughts do you have about SBRSD sharing services and/or sharing superintendents?

Plus Side:

- More opportunities for academic, career/technical, extracurricular and athletic activities for all grades
- Students: more school spirit, larger classes and greater diversity for friends, access to more programs; they acknowledged this would be a difficult shift and called for a period of “morphing” to prepare for the new arrangements.
- The conversation of new alignments is actively underway among several Berkshire County school districts right now and both external and internal groups stated this is an ideal opportunity for SBRSD to take a lead in shaping a new arrangement
- They feel the timing is right and the district will enter this dialogue from a position of strength not as a result of a crisis but as a logical discussion given the change in leadership
- People spoke about the district’s assets (culture, strong academic programs, good infrastructure) as another positive contribution to the discussions
- Some financial savings

Down Side:

- Geography and corresponding transportation issues
- Maintaining culture and identify of individual schools
- Question about significant financial savings
- Big cultural shift
- Major challenge in thinking through all the moving parts – financial, governance, transportation, different calendars/schedules, etc.

4. Are there any special concerns you have that should be known to the Screening Committee or the School Committee about the selection of the new Superintendent?

- Many times “Time on Learning” was mentioned
- Cleanliness of buildings and maintenance
- Successor to Glenn Devotti when the time comes
- Concern about the down grade to a Level 3 School as a result of the opt out action – may lead to a further drop in enrollment
- Stronger academic programs in elementary school commensurate with those of the high school

5. What questions would you like the Screening Committee and the School Committee to pose to the candidates?

Acknowledge that this is a critical time. This is an opportunity to rethink how the district works. Several groups stated that the current model is not sustainable, but we need to proceed thoughtfully.

There were a number of questions that people came up with. Ms. Dowley has drafted a set of questions and sent it to Ms. Silvers, who will forward them to the School Committee to review, add or edit and email it back to Jennifer by Monday. The first meeting is on Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>. The screening committee has also been asked to develop questions for the candidates. Interviews will be held in January.

Mr. Stewart thanked Ms. Dowley for her work. Questions and answer session ensued.

Mr. Sears asked if the committee could get a copy of the summary of the questions.

Mr. Flynn, as a member of the Egremont Select Board thanked Ms. Dowley. Ms. Silvers mentioned that Ms. Hawver, who was unable to be here tonight, wanted to relay that the meeting was the most positive meeting she has experienced in a while between the town and the school district.

Ms. Silvers and Ms. Lartigue also complimented the Student Council of what a fantastic job they did as a listening group.

Ms. Dowley thanked the School Committee for the opportunity of presenting and would be happy to come to the meeting on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

## B. Elementary School Improvement Plan – Mary Turo

Ms. Turo welcomed the new school committee members. Ms. Turo stated that she had started working in August and with the excellent help and guidance from the School Council (parents and teachers) she was able to develop the School Improvement Plan which is based on the District Improvement Plan.

The areas addressed were:

- Align the English Language Arts curriculum and instruction with the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum frameworks
- Align Science instruction with the 2016 Science Technology & Engineering Frameworks
- Provide Access to curriculum for all students, providing support and training for teachers. All students receive a high-quality personalized education through differentiated instruction
- School Culture – improve and reinforce the positive behavior expectations established by administration and faculty using Character Counts.
- Increase community engagement. Continue literacy nights, expand it to a math night as well, monthly newsletters, parent orientation, teacher newsletters to increase information to parents and families
- Administrator Feedback to Teachers on a regular basis

Discussion ensued on access to curriculum and technology and how to infuse more technology in the classrooms. Two computer labs have been added in the elementary school. Mr. Stewart asked if there was a need for more computers in the elementary school. Ms. Turo is working with Mr. Thompson on how to increase technology in the classroom and would welcome any contributions. Mr. Law asked if the students were allowed to take the iPads home. At this point in time they are not allowed to bring them home. There was further discussion on the safety of internet use.

## C. Changes to Public Record Law – Carl Stewart

Mr. Stewart informed the school committee that Governor Baker had signed into law Chapter 121 of the Acts of 2016, entitled, “An Act to Improve Public Records,” which makes extensive changes to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, particularly in terms of the procedure for responding to requests and the obligations of public entities in facilitating the availability of information. The changes go into effect January 1, 2017.

The School District must appoint a Records Access Officer (RAO) who is responsible for coordinating the public entity’s response to public records requests. This will be discussed again at the December meeting.

*At this time Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Travis, to establish a Curriculum Subcommittee.*

Discussion ensued regarding the establishment of a curriculum subcommittee.

Mr. Stewart suggested that Ms. Silvers withdraw her motion and present an outline in a written form to the School Committee in written form.

Ms. Silvers withdrew her motion.

## 7. Business

### A. Subcommittees:

With discussion and agreement among the Members, Subcommittees for 2016-17 were organized as follows:

Chris Regan explained that under the new law a Warrant Subcommittee needed to be created to meet to sign the warrants and present to the full School Committee. There was discussion regarding this.

**Berkshire County Ad Hoc:** Carl Stewart

**Building, Grounds & Technology:** Arthur Batacchi, Maryellen Brown, Charles Flynn, Bob Law, David Travis

**Collective Bargaining:** Arthur Batacchi (except for Unit D), Dennis Sears, Bonnie Silvers (Alternate), Carl Stewart, Municipal Representative

**Eagle Fund Representative:** Bob Law, Bonnie Silvers (Alternate)

**Executive Evaluation Subcommittee:** Francoise Lartigue, Bob Law, Bonnie Silvers, David Travis

**Finance Subcommittee:** Arthur Batacchi, Marcella Bush, Charles Flynn, Francoise Lartigue, Dennis Sears

**MA Association of School Committees:** David Travis

**Policy Subcommittee:** Marcella Bush, Maryellen Brown, Dennis Sears

**Transportation Subcommittee:** Arthur Batacchi, Dennis Sears, David Travis

**Warrant Subcommittee:** Dennis Sears, Bob Law, Carl Stewart – All board members serve as alternates

**Undermountain/Mt. Everett Youth Athletics Association Liaison:** Carl Stewart, Art Batacchi (alternate)

**Liaison to Southern Berkshire Child Care Program:** Francoise Lartigue

**Liaison to Wellness Committee:** Carl Stewart

**Legislative Representative:** Dennis Sears

**Liaison to Early Childhood:** Francoise Lartigue

**Food Subcommittee:** There was a discussion on the need to have a food subcommittee. Mr. Flynn recommended putting the food subcommittee on hiatus until we feel the need to have one again.

*Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to approve the subcommittee memberships, as noted. It was so voted, unanimously.*

*Mr. Flynn nominated Mr. Hastings as Secretary, per policy. Ms. Silvers seconded the nomination, and it was so voted, unanimously.*

*Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to reappoint Mr. Harvey Thompson as Treasurer. It was so voted, unanimously.*

*Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to appoint Murphy, Lamere & Murphy, PC, as District Counsel. It was so voted.*

*Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to appoint Ms. Lynette Gagnon as Clerk to the School Committee. It was so voted.*

*Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers to appoint Lisa Sylvia as MD for the school district. It was so voted.*

**B. Request to set June 3, 2017 at Tanglewood for Commencement Ceremonies**

*Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to approve Commencement Ceremonies for the Mt. Everett Class of 2017 at Tanglewood on June 3, 2017. It was so voted.*

**C. Appointment of the Superintendent Search Committee:**

*Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Flynn, to approve that the individuals presented to the school committee comprise the Superintendent Screening Committee. It was so voted. (list attached)*

**D. Vote to Approve Budget Development Calendar Dates**

*Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to approve the budget calendar dates as submitted. It was so voted.*

#### **E. School Committee Member Use of School Email Accounts**

There was a discussion on the use of the school email vs. personal email accounts. Mr. Stewart will get a legal opinion regarding this issue before the December meeting.

#### **F. Report on MASC/MASS Conference – David Travis**

Mr. Travis attended the MASC/MASS conference in November. He stated that the conference was inspirational and encouraging and would recommend that we send more school committee members to this conference and make room in the budget for this.

#### **G. Superintendent's Report**

##### **1. Community**

- a. **Veterans' Spaghetti Dinner.** On November 5th, our National Honor Society, under Advisor Danielle Melino, served a Spaghetti Dinner in honor of Veterans at the Sheffield American Legion Hall. **Approximately 80 people attended**, including many veterans, who were provided the meal at no cost.
- b. **Shakespeare's The Tempest.** Our drama department presented two showings of Shakespeare's The Tempest on November 10<sup>th</sup> and November 12<sup>th</sup>. Today, our cast is performing at the Fall Festival in Lenox. We provided no-cost tickets to the New Marlborough Council on Aging as well as the Sheffield Senior Center.
- c. **Nutcracker.** This last weekend, the Albany Berkshire Ballet performed the Nutcracker ballet. The cast included several of our students and children of our staff.

##### **2. Staff.**

- a. **County-Wide Training Day. Over 30 SBRSD faculty and staff chose to go offsite to several of the 54 offerings at 2016 Fall Professional Development Day sponsored by the Berkshire County Superintendents' Roundtable.** Most educators elected to stay onsite to work on individual or team projects, including work with Edgenuity; restraint training certification; aligning writing instruction between grades 6 & 7; grade-level planning for new elementary teams; and continuing with strategic focus areas as outlined above in their roles as members of the District Leadership Team. This event was coordinated by William Ballen in cooperation with administrators and teachers from member districts, including me representing SBRSD. Special topic workshops and **professional learning communities (PLNs)** were held throughout Berkshire County on this election-day PD event. SBRSD attendees participated in workshops such as Best Practices in Inclusion; Math Literacy and Encouraging Math Talk; School Law Update; Arts and Social Justice; and Economics across the Curriculum, while others attended several ongoing PLNs for PE/Wellness, OT/PT, librarians and media specialists, and English Language instructors.
- b. **Staff Bios for the SBRSD Web site.** On Monday, November 14, Kari Giordano took pictures of staff people for the Faculty Bio Section of the district web site. This section contains biographical information on our teachers as well as an informal portrait that is tied to the bio. Each staff person will also designate a song that has special personal meaning.

##### **3. Students**

- a. **Annual Girls' Financial Literacy Event.** Last week, 20 8<sup>th</sup> grade students attended a day-long workshop on **Financial Literacy for Girls at Miss Hall's School.** Dawn Estes-Daub coordinated the trip. The keynote speaker was a professor at Smith College. The group, divided into small groups of six to eight students, had the chance to talk with woman bankers and business owners.
- b. **Universal Technical Institute (UTI).** On Wednesday the 16th, Kim Conant (Guidance Counselor) is taking a group of six students to Universal Technical Institute (UTI) in Norwood MA. UTI came to visit

Mt. Everett last week and spoke to a group of 12 underclassmen that Dawn Estes-Daub had identified as having vocational interests and then again with a group of upperclassmen. This technical school is specific to the automotive industry, they have programs ranging from collision repair and diesel to NASCAR and welding.

- c. **Hong Kong Visiting Students.** A group of 4 students from Hong Kong will visit Mt. Everett from Dec. 3-17. The first few days they'll spend in NYC, and then will be accompanied by a group of art students on the 6th. They will visit the museum of art and design and take a walking tour of the sculpture of Central Park with artist and writer G.A.Mudge, and finally they will visit the Met before heading home. While here, the exchange students will participate in a number of activities with their classmates and hosts.
- d. **Annual Sportsmanship Summit at Gillette Stadium.** The MIAA holds an annual Sportsmanship Summit at Gillette Stadium for high school athletes. The kids hear guest speakers who talk about sportsmanship and leadership. The student athletes attending are **Chandler DeGrenier, Kersten Cutlip, Kenneth Edwards, and James Gulotta.**
- e. **STEM Fair.** About a dozen students will be attending an all-day STEM career fair at BCC on **Friday, November 18th.**
- f. **Entry to Entrepreneurship.** Anyone age 14 - 25 may apply for our business planning program for young people, Entry to Entrepreneurship. The program guides students through the process of writing a business plan, while maintaining a special focus on the local economy. Classes are held once a week for ten weeks, 3:15 - 5:15 pm at Berkshire Community College's South County Center, 343 Main Street, Great Barrington. Students are required to submit a registration fee of \$25 or 25 BerkShares by January 11th, and classes begin on January 25th. All students who complete the program will be awarded 200 BerkShares.
- g. **Jungle Book:** will be performed **December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup>** in the TACPAC. This year's cast is the biggest it has been in years, with over **60** elementary students involved. This includes a back-stage tech crew of 10 students. It's great to see our super elementary school actors, working under the direction of **Courtney English and Ralph Petillo**, with help by **Dan Kringer on Stage Management.**
- h. **All Western Mass Chorus.** Six of our students were selected for ALL-WESTERN MASS CHORUS: Eliza Maggio (All-State Audition); Jesse Schmerzmiak (All-State Audition); Simon Salzman (All-State Audition); Charles Kerzner (All-State Audition); Andrew Haiss; Jake Martin

## **H. Subcommittee/Representative Reports**

1. **Transportation:** Mr. Batacchi mentioned that the committee had met after the last school committee meeting and there were discussions on some of the items needed in the new contract. This has been turned over to Chris Regan so as to develop the bid to go out to the bus companies.
2. **Executive Evaluation:**  
Ms. Silvers informed the school committee that the subcommittee is looking at a transition plan for the new superintendent and looking at all the contingencies. Ms. Silvers suggested that another person be selected to the Executive Evaluation Subcommittee, with Ms. Lartigue being on the Superintendent Screening Committee there may be potential conflicts. David Travis was selected.  
Regarding the superintendent search, an ad has gone out to every district in the commonwealth and to all of MASC's contacts.

## **I. Financial Updates – Chris Regan**

1. Transfers – none
2. Vote to Approve District Warrants – Chris Regan stated that dates need to be set for Warrant Subcommittee meetings.
3. Vote to Accept Grants and Gifts:  
*Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to accept a donation of \$312.50 from Leisure Pools Service Company, Southfield to reimburse the food service department for costs associated with the Eagle Fund Pasta Dinner. It was so voted.*

*Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Sears, to accept the grants of \$572,584. It was so voted.*

8. **Communication from the Public/Requests for Future Agenda Items:** Nothing to report
9. **Adjourn:** Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

**Documents Presented at this Meeting:**

*Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1516  
SBRSD Superintendent Search Listening Group Questions  
Undermountain Elementary School Improvement Plan  
Public Records Law  
FY18 Budget Development Calendar  
Motion to establish Superintendent Screening Committee  
Warrants/Grants and Gifts*