

School Committee Members: Art Batacchi, Bonnie Silvers, Marcella Bush, Dennis Sears, Bob Law, Genis Melandez-Delaney, Fran Lartigue, David Travis, Carl Stewart, MaryEllen Brown

Administration: Superintendent Hastings, Christine Regan

Press: CTSB, Corey Wiley – Berkshire Record, Derek Gentile – Berkshire Eagle, Terry Cowgill – Berkshire Edge

Student Representatives:

Others: Beth Regulbuto, Frederick Borge, Mark Carson, Terry Cowgill, Pierre Leger, Susana Mapstone, Tricia Vollmer, Robert Miller, Heather Williams, Karen Frighetto, Melissa Byrne, Tim Schroepfer, Nat Yohalen, Marya Makuc, Erica Schroepfer, Karen Chamberland, Patrick Chamberland, Amy Truax, Mariane Cicenchia, Cathryn Miller, Marion Dodds, Danielle Melino, Nadine Hawver, Elizabeth Petty, Marilyn Fracasso

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Stewart called meeting #1525 to order at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Silvers motioned, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to amend the agenda to add transportation to Business #F as it relates to the FY18 budget. It was so voted unanimously.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Sears, to approve the minutes of school committee meeting #1524 of April 22, 2017. It was so voted unanimously.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE PERTAINING TO THIS EVENING'S AGENDA ITEMS**

A. Student Representative Report: None

B. Public Comment: Mr. Stewart informed the audience that the public comment will be limited to 20 minutes and went over the rules.

Mr. Stewart then read a letter from Nadia Makuc (copy attached) regarding the reduced positions in art, music and Spanish.

Mellisa Byrne from South Egremont addressed the committee regarding the lack of an after school program for the early kindergarten students who only attend ~~half day~~ **full day**. She requested that this be added to the next school committee meeting agenda.

Mr. Schroeper, Ms. Borge, Ms. Truax, Ms. Miller and Maggie Sarnacki all spoke in support of the art, music and Spanish programs in our schools and increasing the position to full time.

Mariana Cicenchia, a school choice parent, informed the school committee that she had started a petition regarding the reduction in the music, art and Spanish position to a .8. She read aloud some of the comments (report attached).

4. **UPDATES/PRESENTATIONS**

A. Mount Everett Internship Program – Heather Shogry-Williams, Youth Director, Berkshire Compact for Education

Ms. Heather Shogry-Williams introduced herself to the school committee. She explained a little about the history of the program. The BCREB implemented the School-to-Work statewide initiative in partnership with school districts beginning in 1991; School-to-Work became known as Connecting Activities in 1998 that initiated expanding integration with the education system. Between 2005 and 2017, 743 students from Southern Berkshire Regional School District were involved with internships and structured work experiences (62 students in 2017).

Berkshire Compact for Education works closely with the Mt. Everett Guidance Department. Copies of handouts attached.

5. **BUSINESS**

A. Preliminary Approval of Overnight Trip to Quebec, Canada January 12-14, 2018 - P.Leger

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to grant preliminary approval of the overnight trip to Quebec, Canada from January 12 to 14, 2018. It was so voted unanimously.

B. Approval of Overnight Field Trip to the National FFA Convention, Indianapolis, IN

October 24-29, 2017- D. Melino

Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to approve the Overnight Field Trip to the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN from October 24-29, 2017. It was so voted unanimously.

C. Vote to Participate in the Massachusetts School Choice Program for the 2017-2018 School Year.

Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Mr. Travis, for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District to participate in the Massachusetts School Choice Program for the 2017-2018 School Year. It was so voted unanimously.

D. Approval of School Choice Openings for 2017-2018 School Year.

Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Mr. Travis, to approve the School Choice Openings as presented for the 2017-2018 school year. It was so voted unanimously.

Discussion ensued. It was determined that School Choice is closed for New Marlborough Central for the 17-18 school year.

E. Public Comment – Policy BEDH and BECH-E

Mr. Sears advised that these policies will be addressed at the next policy subcommittee meeting which is scheduled for June 6, 2017. Discussion ensued.

F. Consideration of the FY18 Budget

Mr. Stewart explained that because of the timeline, and because our budget did not pass, we must vote on what measures need to be taken regarding the FY18 budget. There are 3 options:

(1) Reduce the budget that the school committee approved on March 27, 2017

(2) Vote for the budget to remain the same

(3) Increase the FY18 Budget

Mr. Sears explained that at this time 3 of 5 towns have approved the budget. The question is whether the budget passed in New Marlborough because the override did not pass. Mr. Sears has checked with DESE regarding the regulations and for clarity on whether the budget passed in the town of New Marlborough. According to DESE, if the Town of New Marlborough's intent is that the override was not tied to the school budget, DESE will accept that as the budget passed if the

Town of New Marlborough sends a signed letter from the Board of Selectmen stating this. Mr. Sears expects that this letter will be received shortly.

Mr. Stewart stated we now have 3 towns of the 4 required to pass our budget. He also informed the committee that there is an expense item that did not exist when the budget was passed. That is the cost of the District's litigation with the Town of Egremont. This will be in excess of our usual bills for legal counsel. This process could go through till August 2018. The tax payers of Egremont will be paying their legal bill plus their portion of the district's legal bill.

The Finance Subcommittee has recommended that the district bring the same budget forward for recertification, with the understanding that we have open meetings with the general public for feedback.

Mr. Sears moved, Mr. Law seconded, that the school committee recertify the budget at the amount previously submitted.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Silvers brought up the issue regarding the article in the Berkshire Edge about the new bus routes and the elimination of a bus route that goes to New Marlborough. She expressed her concerns about parents and students left without transportation.

Chris Regan explained that after the transportation bid came in at a much higher rate the bus routes needed to be redefined and consolidated. The route from Our Lady of the Valley, picking up students who go to New Marlborough is not included in the budget (the cost of this bus route is \$52,000). Because Ormsbee was garaged in New Marlborough it did not cost extra to bring students to New Marlborough on their return. We will now have to pay for another bus to bring students from Sheffield to New Marlborough.

There was further discussion regarding the bus routes. The option of trading the after school bus for a regular bus was also discussed so that the route could be reinstated. It was recommended that the transportation committee meet to go over the bus routes, Mr. Travis would like to be involved with this. Mr. Stewart recommended that the transportation subcommittee be involved in any decisions or discussions regarding the bus routes.

The School Committee recommended that Mr. Hastings to call the parents that would be affected by this change and let them that know that the school committee is committed to not eliminating that bus and that the district is working on a solution.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Batacchi – Yes; Ms. Melendez-Delaney – Yes; Ms. Lartigue – Yes; Mr. Travis – Yes; Mr. Stewart – Yes; Ms. Silvers – Yes; Ms. Brown – No; Ms. Bush – Yes; Mr. Sears – Yes; Mr. Law – Yes. Motion passes 9-1.

G. Superintendent's report

Community

- a. **Linda Higgins Memorial.** Friday, March 26, 2017 at 3:00 p.m., there will be a dedication of a memorial stone and garden to Linda Higgins just outside the Community Entrance. Linda served our district for 34 years, first as the secretary to the Elementary Principal at Sheffield Center, then as the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. She mentored many of our district's superintendents, keeping us on track. She knew absolutely everything that there was to know on

any topic regarding the district. We appreciate everyone who donated to the memorial through donations or work. Four of our upper classmen worked with Kurt DeGrenier on the landscaping. (**Jonas Malicky, Lilianna Zyszkowski, Logan Willi, and Owen Wilkinson**)

- b. ***Into the Woods***. The very advanced Sandheim musical production of *Into the Woods* ran for three days, May 19-21. The production had 30 students from grades 7-12, both on-stage and in technical roles. Ellen Maggio's costuming received raves from the audience. This was the final performance for **Jesse Smerechniak, Simon Salzmann, Eliza Maggio, Anna James, and Eastlynd Bates**.
- c. **Mount Everett School Choral Concert** - Grades 7-12, was May 23rd, 7:00 PM in the TACPAC
- d. **Music Banquet tonight!**
- e. **Mount Everett Band Concert** was just outstanding. The concert featured the Jazz Lab, Jazz Band, Middle School Band and High School Band. It was a great concert, and showed that the stage will soon be too small to accommodate our bands.
- f. **Elementary Spring Concert** is on **MAY 30th at 6:30 p.m. in the TACPAC**.
- g. **Elementary Open House**. We had a large turnout at Open House Wednesday night at UME. The classrooms and hallways were full of displays show-casing student work. The PTO unveiled its new UME ***Spirit Wear Collection*** (t-shirts, hats, sweatshirts). The **Art Show** filled the halls with colorful student artwork. The music program featured the Grade 3 and 4 recorder performance. Grade 4 parents attended a parent meeting about band with Courtney English as well.
- h. Members of **Club Creative** (6th grade musicians) will be featured at this **Friday's opening of the Sheffield Farmer's Market from 3-6:30pm**. The event goes on, rain or shine. We look forward to sharing our music with the community!
- i. The annual **All-School Spring Sings** will be happening on Tuesday, June 13th at NMC @ 1:30pm in their gym and **on Monday, June 19th at UME @ 1:30pm**. Both take place in the gym of the school. Parents and friends are invited to join in this annual end of the year celebration!
- j. **The Vernal Pool Trail**. Steve Antil, Mt Everett Science Teacher, has set up a Self-Guided Tour brochure for the Mount Everett Vernal pool behind the Softball Fields.
- k. **Memorial Day**. The Mount Everett Band will be performing for Memorial Day parades in New Marlborough, Sheffield and Monterey. The band supports the ceremonies with the National Anthem, a special Memorial Day piece, Hymn to the Fallen, and Taps.
- l. **Jim Kelly** hopes to be able to cross over the school land to reach the Sheffield Forest area for a project that he is doing. In the process, he will be turning the slabs left from the Tennis Court trees into wood chips. This project will be completed this summer. I am unsure as to whether this will need School Committee approval. If so, he would like to be on the next meeting's agenda. The School Committee stated that this does not need school committee approval.

Staff

- a. **Kari Giordano** was recently published in the summer edition of School Arts magazine. Her article is entitled "Install Happiness"...Happiness is a choice.
- b. **Stephanie Graham** was featured in the May edition of School Arts Magazine. The work of one of her students was on the cover as well. Her article was entitled "Know your Place".
- c. **Girls' Basketball Coach, Scott Rote** was recognized as Berkshire County Girls Coach of the Year by the WBEC Sports Caravan.

Students

- a. **Special Olympics**. On May 5th, we were well-represented at the 2017 Special Olympics, held at

Monument Mountain High School. Along with our athletes, we had many participating Mount Everett 11th and 12th grade helpers, to include **12th Graders** Matt Funk, Chelsea Hill, Julia Groeber, Kenny Edwards and Tim Robitaille and **11th Graders** Sarah Beckwith, Cavan Brady, Lauren Edwards, Jim Gulotta and Marya Makuc

- b. **Northampton Pride Parade.** Six of our young women represented Mt. Everett and the **Mt. Everett Gay-Straight Alliance** in the Northampton Pride Parade on May 6th. Among other things, they marched for LGBTQIA rights and dignity. Students were Lily, Sofia, Morgan, Katrina, Audrey, and Eli.
- c. **Athletics.**
 - i. **Baseball** is 12-7 and has qualified for the Western Mass Tournament
 - ii. **Softball** is 16-2 and has qualified for the Western Mass Tournament.
 - iii. **Gwendolyn Carpenter** was named Berkshire County girls basketball MVP by the WBEC Sports Caravan.
- d. The **third grade visited Plymouth Plantation** today.
- e. **New Marlborough Central: Amadons Song and Dance workshop** Performance is June 6th at 1:30 PM. Amadons come from Maine (Mt Everett Grads) and do special Song and Dance program in the morning and then put on a performance at 1:30.

H. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Building, Grounds and Transportation – Art Batacchi
Mr. Batacchi stated that the BG&T subcommittee had met twice. They are still working on the repair/upgrade of the tennis courts. David Travis is helping with working on new signs and designs for the schools. They are also working on the LED lighting project for the schools to see if it is going to be cost effective or not.
Mr. Batacchi is seeking approval on the Linda Higgins Memorial.
Ms. Silvers moved, Mr. Sears seconded, to seek approval of the Linda Higgins Memorial. It was so voted unanimously.
The SBCCP is seeking expansion to one more classroom at Undermountain Elementary.
Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Law, to grant the SBCCP expansion to one more classroom at Undermountain Elementary. It was so voted unanimously.
- b. Finance Subcommittee – Mr. Dennis Sears
Mr. Sears reported that the Finance Subcommittee had met to review the budget. The Finance Committee of each town was also invited to attend the meeting because Mr. Clark Rowel was going to be there to go over the bond issues. The Finance Committee asked for time to take this information back to their towns for discussion.
- c. Executive Evaluation: Ms. Silvers informed the school committee that they will be meeting next Tuesday.
- d. Policy Subcommittee: discussed earlier in the meeting.

I. Financial Updates – Chris Regan

- a. Transfers – None at this meeting
- b. Vote to approve District Warrants
Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to approve the warrants of May 5, 2017 and May 19, 2017. It was so voted unanimously.

c. Vote to accept Grants and Gifts – None at this meeting

6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** To discuss strategy with respect to litigation (Egremont V. SBRSD) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and Chair so declares and not to return to Open Session.

Mr. Stewart stated that he did not feel that there was a need to enter executive session.

Ms. Lartigue objected and requested that they enter executive session. Further discussion ensued.

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Sears to enter executive session and not to return to Open Session

Roll call vote to enter into executive session:

Ms. Melendez-Delaney – Abstain; Mr. Batacchi – Yes; Ms. Lartigue – Yes; Mr. Travis – Yes;

Ms. Silvers – Yes; Ms. Brown – Yes; Ms. Bush – Yes; Mr. Sears – Yes; Mr. Law – Yes;

Mr. Stewart - Yes

Open Session adjourned at at 9:15 p.m.

Documents Presented at this Meeting:

Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1525

Overnight Field Trip-Quebec, Canada Jan 12,2018

Overnight Field Trip – FFA Convention – 10/24/17

Warrants, 5/5/17 and 5/19/17

Policy BEDH and BEDH-E

SBRSD School Choice Openings

Berkshire County Regional Employment Board-Berkshire Compact for Education

Letter from Nadia Makuc