

Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee
Mt. Everett Regional School
Sheffield, MA
January 29, 2015
Meeting #1,486

School Committee: Mr. Valentini, Ms. Silvers, Mr. Sears, Mr. Stewart, Ms. Sahn, Ms. Lartigue, Ms. Rundle, Mr. Batacchi, Mr. Flynn

Absent: Ms. Sparhawk

Administrators: Mr. Hastings, Mr. Turner, Mr. Simon, Mr. Devoti

Press: CTSB Television

Student Representative: Madison Ryan

Others: Ingrid Borwick, Mike Farmer, Angel Rote, Paul O'Brien, Tim Newman,

1. Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to approve the minutes of Meeting 1,485, as presented. It was so voted, unanimously.
3. **Communications from the Audience Pertaining to this Evening's Agenda**
 - A. Student Representative Report: Madison Ryan reported that Mt. Everett won Charlie's Fundraiser by raising more money than Monument Mountain per capita. Mount Everett raised \$800.00 and Monument \$1000.00. In the spring, Mt. Everett students get to paint something, perhaps Charlie's Fund logo, on Monument's hill.
 - B. There were no communications from the audience.
4. **Updates/Presentations**
 - A. Makers Space – Tim Newman and Paul O'Brien made a presentation about Makers Space. Last year they had 30-40 children in the program divided into 3 groups, and each group met once a week. This fall the program had 23 children divided into 2 groups, and each group met twice a week. The goal is to add a grade level each semester. They would like the program to evolve into an after-school program or somehow be integrated into the curriculum. There are discussions about Flying Cloud taking an active role in Makers Space. One of the program's goals is to make it to the Connecticut Invention Convention where Massachusetts has been given two slots. Tim and Paul believe Makers Space is a fantastic program that sets the stage for children to invent and create. Discussions with school committee followed about more details, outreach and fundraising for the program.
 - B. Moroccan Exchange Program – Mike Farmer explained that in order to have an exchange program with Moroccan students there needs to be a formal program and agreement in place. The superintendent from the Moroccan school has signed the agreement and now this district has to sign in order to bring students over. The plan is to have 2 students come in the spring for a 3 week period. Dennis Sears moved to sign the exchange agreement. The motion was seconded by Maria Rundle and it was approved unanimously.

5. Business

A. Request for Approval of Mt. Everett 2015-2016 Program of Studies:

Glenn Devoti reported that this year's Program of Studies is about 95% complete, and the only thing that may change is staffing. The program is similar to last year with only minor revisions and a couple of changes in electives. Charlie Flynn moved to approve the Program of Studies. The motion was seconded by Maria Rundle and approved unanimously.

B. Superintendent's Report (Glenn Devoti and David Hastings):

- 1) Poetry Out Loud – Won by Kristin Wolf who will head to Springfield for the Semi-finals; Eli Gold came in second.
- 2) Athletics – Hockey, Girls Basketball and Boys Basketball all have winning records; individual wrestlers continue to dominate in tournaments; Cheerleaders providing great spirit to our games
- 3) Robotics – High School Robotics traveling to Marlborough High School for League Championships. This will determine which teams advance to the State Championships on Feb. 28, 2015.
- 4) Music – Eli Gold and Charles Kerzner participated in Senior District Chorus and qualified for the All-State Chorus. They will be in Boston March 19th-21st. Max Lowenstein was in the All-District Band on Trombone. Junior Districts are March 14th at UMASS. Six students made Junior Chorus: Jack Martin, Ethan Benoit, Mickey Masters, Elizabeth Enoch, Ashley Kerzner, Bethany; Cabaret is taking place this Friday and Saturday.
- 5) 7th and 8th Grade – Thanks to the Sheffield Police Department for participating in the annual 7th grade murder mystery. 8th grade is reading "Parallel Journeys" and is studying the Holocaust and will take their trip to Washington.
- 6) MCAS Practice – the Mt. Everett Math Department will be conducting diagnostic MCAS testing for 7th, 8th, and 10th graders between February 3rd and 10th. Students will become familiar with the test format. Neal Barbieri will be sending a follow up letter to parents with the score and analysis shortly after the test.
- 7) Mardi-Gras Parade- 4th grade, in conjunction with the unit they are studying will do a Mardi Gras Parade in February. There will be no religious overtones and the focus will be on Spanish history and celebration, and the artwork the children have created.
- 8) Winter Carnival – Next week the elementary children will be participating in the annual Winter Carnival at Butternut Basin.

C. Requests for Overnight Field Trips:

- 1) 10th Grade Economics Class Trip to Baltimore/Washington, DC from March 4-6, 2015 was unanimously approved on a motion by Maria Rundle and seconded by Vito Valentini.
- 2) FFA Trip to Sturbridge, MA, March 16-18, 2015 was unanimously approved on a motion by Charlie Flynn and seconded by Vito Valentini. Charlie Flynn reported that the Policy Subcommittee will not create a policy requiring gender specific chaperones but will leave it to practice of judgment.

D. Vote to confirm Intent to Use Any Funds Accrued as a Result of Installing New Roof and Boilers to Reduce the Principal of Remaining Bond Issue.

Ms. Silvers read the following motion:

MOTION: It is the intention of the School Committee that any funds accruing to the district as a result of installing a new roof and boilers, such as the selling of energy credits, will be used to reduce the principal of the remaining bond issue until the bond is retired. Further, it is the School Committee's intention to work with the district administration to seek opportunities to apply for such funds.

Ms. Rundle seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

E. Subcommittee/Representative Reports

1. Finance Subcommittee- V. Valentini

Mr. Valentini reported that at their last meeting there were two presentations:

- a) NextSun Energy presented on solar energy and net metering
- b) Bruce Turner and David Hastings presented the budget as it stands up to this point.

Mr. Valentini explained that the budget is in flux, and information from the state is needed to move forward. In preparation for this, every budget item that is not a contract and not in the district's control has been level funded. Examples of items not in the district's control include Unit Contracts, Health Insurance Costs, and Utility Costs.

Mr. Turner reported that the governor has to produce his budget by March 4th. The revenue side is the biggest issue. For example, the district initially had an additional \$200,000 from the state in transportation but it was taken away. Everything is currently in a state of flux.

Mr. Valentini also reported that he had three conversations with the NextSun representative where he confirmed that it is a 20 year contract where the district would purchase electricity at 70% of the GI rate. A discussion took place about the possibility of the district having its own solar panels and the amount of purchased electricity decreasing. Also, there was discussion about the fact that this contract has a \$2.3 million early termination fee unless another school district or municipality of a similar size would buy the district out. It was decided that a decision not be made and that the NextSun representative be invited back to give a presentation to the school committee. Additionally, no money should be spent on lawyers reviewing this contract until the school committee makes its decision.

2. Executive Evaluation Subcommittee – C. Flynn

Mr. Flynn reported that Dave Hastings gave the committee a draft of his goals and will provide the final product in 2 weeks. The Executive Evaluation Subcommittee meeting is February 11th at 6:00pm.

3. Policy Subcommittee – C. Flynn

Mr. Flynn reported that they have 8 or 9 policies to bring forward for the school committee to review on February 12th.

4. Building, Grounds & Transportation Subcommittee – V. Valentini

The subcommittee continues to work tirelessly on the capital project and everyone is doing a fantastic job.

Mr. Flynn made a motion seconded by Mr. Valentini to amend the agenda to consider the letter written by Dennis Sears and now wants to speak for the school committee. Unanimous vote to adjust the agenda.

Mr. Flynn then made a motion, seconded by Mr. Valentini asking the school committee to support a letter by Dennis Sears to the Department of Energy Resources to change the CMR. Motion was approved unanimously.

5. Transportation Subcommittee – no report from Kristin Sparhawk as she was not present.

6. Negotiation Subcommittee – D. Sears

Mr. Sears reported that the union will submit a proposal to the subcommittee two weeks from tomorrow. The school committee will then have two weeks to respond with a counterproposal.

F. Financial Updates/Transfers: There were no financial updates or transfer requests.

G. There were no communications from the public.

On a motion by Mr. Flynn, seconded by Ms. Silvers, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Documents presented at this meeting:

- *Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1,486*
- *Minutes of School Committee Meeting #1,485*
- *Minutes of January 20, 2015 Special School Committee Meeting*
- *International Partnership (Sister School) Agreement with the Lalla Amina School*
- *Overnight Field Trip Requests:*
 - *for the 10th grade to Baltimore/Washington, D.C., March 4-6, 2015*
 - *for the FFA members to Sturbridge, MA, March 16-18, 2015*
- *Southern Berkshire Regional School District Form of School Committee Vote – MSBA Accelerated Repair Program*
- *Motion Re: funds accruing to the district as a result of installing the new roof and boilers*