

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

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

Press: CTSB Television, Ms. Julie Ruth (Berkshire Recorded)

Student Representatives: None Present

Others: Ms. Zoe Marinelli; Ms. Cathy Jo Willig; Mr. Jeremy Wells, Mr. Kevin Riordon, Mr. Ryan LaFalam, RDK Engineers, Mr. Thomas Kondel, Ms. Lynette Gagnon

1. Superintendent Hastings called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **Reorganization:**

A. Chair: Superintendent Hastings asked for nominations for Chairman. Ms. Silvers nominated Mr. Stewart. Ms. Lartigue seconded the nomination. Mr. Sears moved to close nominations, Ms. Lartigue seconded and it was so voted, unanimously.

Mr. Hastings requested a roll call vote on the election of Mr. Stewart. Mr. Stewart abstained; Mr. Flynn, Mr. Valentini, Ms. Silvers, Mr. Sears, Mr. Batacchi, Ms. Sparhawk, Ms. Lartigue and Ms. Rundle voted yes. Mr. Stewart was declared elected and assumed the duties of the Chair.

Mr. Stewart stated that in order for this to be valid there has to be a motion approved to waive the policy which requires six days notification prior to a reorganization meeting. Mr. Flynn stated that in this particular case we should go ahead because we cannot waive a policy once approved. Mr. Stewart suggested that we note this observation and move on.

B. Vice Chair: Mr. Sears nominated Ms. Silvers as Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Rundle. Mr. Stewart then moved to close nominations, and it was so voted. Ms. Silvers was elected Vice Chair on a roll call vote: Ms. Silvers abstained, Mr. Flynn voted no, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Valentini, Mr. Sears, Mr. Batacchi, Ms. Sparhawk, Ms. Lartigue and Ms. Rundle voted yes. Ms. Silvers then assumed the role of Vice Chair.

Ms. Silvers nominated Mr. Hastings as Secretary. Ms. Lartigue seconded the nomination, and it was so voted, unanimously.

Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Sparhawk, to reappoint Mr. Harvey Thompson as Treasurer. Mr. Flynn stated that he could not support the nomination of Mr. Thompson at this time, because he had violated Massachusetts General Law when he certified the assessments to the towns without checking them. Discussion ensued amongst the school committee members as to the role of the Treasurer and if he should be reappointed or not. Mr. Valentini stated that going forward we should

look at the operation of our business office and see wherein checks and balances can be built in. The process and policy of a Treasurer will be addressed at a future meeting.

Mr. Thompson was reappointed on a roll call vote: Mr. Flynn voted no, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Valentini, Mr. Sears, Mr. Batacchi, Ms. Sparhawk, Ms. Lartigue, Ms. Silvers and Ms. Rundle voted yes

Mr. Sears moved to appoint Murphy, Lamere & Murphy as District Counsel, seconded by Ms. Lartigue. It was so voted.

Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to reappoint Dr. Lisa Sylvia as the School Physician. It was so voted, unanimously.

C. **Subcommittees:**

With discussion and agreement among the Members, Subcommittees for the 2015-16 year were organized as follows:

- **Finance:** Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue to reappoint the Finance Subcommittee members with one change – Ms. Lartigue will replace Ms. Sparhawk. It was so voted, unanimously. The Finance Subcommittee will consist of: Messrs. Batacchi, Flynn, Sears, Valentini, and Ms. Lartigue
- **Collective Bargaining:** Reappointment of members to this subcommittee was waived to a later date. Current members are: Mr. Batacchi (exception of Unit D); Mr. Sears, Mr. Stewart, Ms. Lartigue; Ms. Silvers, Alternate.
- **Buildings, Grounds & Technology:** Ms. Rundle, Ms. Lartigue, Mr. Valentini, Ms. Silvers, (Mr. Flynn would like to take Jennifer Sahn’s place as a representative from the Town of Egremont until a replacement can be found), Mr. Batacchi – Alternate.
- **Transportation:** Mr. Batacchi, Mr. Valentini, Mr. Sears, Ms. Sparhawk. Mr. Flynn is stepping down.
- **Food:** Ms. Lartigue, Ms. Rundle, Mr. Batacchi. Mr. Flynn is stepping down.
- **Warrant Subcommittee:** Mr. Batacchi, Mr. Sears, Ms. Sparhawk, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Valentini. All members serve as alternates to the Warrant Subcommittee.
- **Executive Evaluation:** Ms. Silvers, Ms. Lartigue, Ms. Sparhawk. Mr. Flynn is stepping down.
- **Policy:** Mr. Batacchi, Ms. Sparhawk, Ms. Rundle, Mr. Sears. Mr. Flynn is stepping down.
- **Berkshire County Ad Hoc:** Mr. Stewart
- **Farmington River Regional School District-Southern Berkshire Regional School District Planning Board:** Mr. Sears, Ms. Rundle, Ms. Sparhawk, Ms. Silvers – Alternate. Mr. Flynn is stepping down.
- **The Cooperation Subcommittee** is eliminated.

- **Eagle fund:** Ms. Silvers, Representative; Ms. Rundle, Alternate.
 - **Undermountain/Mt. Everett Youth Athletic Association Liaison:** Mr. Stewart, Representative; Mr. Batacchi, Alternate.
 - **Liaison to Southern Berkshire Child Care Program:** Ms. Lartigue Representative.
 - **MA Association of School Committees Representative(s):** Mr. Sears, Mr. Stewart. Mr. Flynn is stepping down.
 - **Liaison to Wellness Committee:** Mr. Stewart, Representative.
 - **Liaison to Early Childhood Task Force:** Ms. Silvers, Representative.
 - **Legislative Representative:** Mr. Stewart asked for volunteers to this subcommittee. Mr. Valentini volunteered.
 - Ms. Sparhawk moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers to approve the subcommittee memberships, as noted. It was so voted, unanimously.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Rundle, to approve the minutes of School Committee meeting #1,499 and the Special Meeting of November 16, 2015. It was so voted.
4. **Communications from the Audience:** There was no communication from the audience.

Mr. Valentini moved to amend the agenda to address item #6. E4 (Correspondence from Member Town Selectboards – Letter from the Town of Sheffield dated November 5, 2015) out of order as there were guests in the audience who had come specifically for this meeting. Seconded by Ms. Silvers. So voted unanimously.

Mr. Valentini explained that the district had received a letter from the Town of Sheffield specifically related to the fire suppression system protecting the auditorium stage at the Mt. Everett Regional School, which during routine boiler room work, was found to be not functioning. At the request of the Building, Grounds and Technology Subcommittee Mr. Valentini drafted a letter to the five towns addressing the concerns (Copies of letters on file with these minutes).

The issues with the fire suppression system were brought to the attention of RDK Engineers, the architectural/engineering/mechanical team currently working on the boiler project. The firm responded with a letter describing the existing system, the work on the system that has been completed as part of the recent Boiler Replacement Project as well as a description of the current condition of the system.

Mr. Valentini asked if the work being done on the boilers caused the problem. The problem was discovered as part of the construction project and that a permanent solution is under plan. Ms. Silvers asked what the anticipated time frame for completion of the project would be. Mr. Condell responded that it would probably be March 2016. The impairment plan currently puts in place an adequate water supply for the TACPAC.

5. Updates/Presentations:

- A. Global Education – this item has been tabled to the next meeting.
- B. Food Services Program: Mr. Jeremy Wells, Director introduced himself to the school committee. He stated that he has made a few changes to the food service program since he started. He has combined food safety and cost. By eliminating the salad bar there is less waste. He now uses portion cups and offers 6 or 7 varieties of vegetables and fruit offered daily.

Because of peanut allergies, the students are offered a choice of “Uncrustables” as a peanut butter and jelly sandwich substitute. These sandwiches are prepacked and so there is less chance of cross contamination.

Ms. Lartigue expressed her concern regarding the ingredients in the Uncrustables and the nutritional value of the sandwich. She would rather not see this as an option. She asked if it were possible to get a better quality peanut butter and jelly sandwich that is safe. Mr. Wells responded that he could discontinue selling the Uncrustables and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches altogether. The alternate to peanut butter is Sunflower butter which the students do not eat.

Ms. Lartigue then stated that we need to make the best possible food choices for our students within our budget. Ms. Silvers voiced her concerns about the number of students who rely on our meal benefits and if we eliminate the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches would they be getting the required amount of protein in their diet. Currently are district is at 33% free and reduced. Mr. Wells confirmed that the entrees served at school need to meet the requirements set by the state. There is a choice of up to 5 entrees offered at each meal.

Ms. Lartigue suggested that this might be a discussion to be held at a Food Subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Wells then informed the committee that the number of meals served has increased from last year. He is also looking at a grant for fruits and vegetables of \$2500. Performance based funding will generate an extra 6 cents per meal.

There was a discussion on providing snacks for the students who stay for after school programs, sports, homework, etc. Mr. Wells will look into the possibility of a vending machine.

The concern of students eating breakfast was also brought up. Currently the students arrive at 7:50 a.m. and some of them do not have enough time to get a breakfast. Ms. Silvers suggested applying to the Eagle Fund for a grant for next year. Ms. Marinelli mentioned that some schools do a grab and go breakfast.

Mr. Valentini had to leave the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

The problem of students charging lunches was also discussed. Currently the students are allowed to charge up to 5 meals. Mr. Wells then calls home as well as sending a notice via email that the student owes for meals. Mr. Stewart asked how the money is deposited in the students’ accounts. Mr. Wells replied that this can be done online or check. Ms. Rundle suggested contacting parents to encourage them to use Myschoolbucks. Parents would get the warning

notice, with the options for payments listed. Ms. Lartigue commented that part of the conversation with parents falling into delinquency is reminding them that free and reduced applications are always available to complete. Mr. Wells responded that he does correspond with parents letting them know that the applications are always available and if payment plans need to be established.

6. **Business:**

A. Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Hastings reported the following:

- The Chamber of Commerce Breakfast was held at Mt. Everett on November 5, 2015. Between 55 and 60 local businessmen and businesswomen attended, catering was provided by the Culinary Arts Class and entertainment by the Madrigals and Jazz Band.
- The National Honor Society served approximately 90 people at a spaghetti dinner for local veterans on Saturday, November 7, 2015. Local veterans participated in the elementary school Veterans' Day celebration.
- An art reception for photographers Dan Mead and Sally Eagle, plus the National Art Honor Society Induction Ceremony, was held on November 5th.
- The eagle Fund Phon-a-thon was a success. They raised over \$8,000 over two days.
- The Albany Berkshire Ballet will be performing in the TACPAC on Sunday, November 22nd.
- The large skylights in the Atrium and Mt. Everett Library are installed.
- The Senior Citizen Luncheon will be on December 3rd from noon till 2:30 p.m.
- There will be a Spaghetti Dinner at Mt. Everett on November 19th to support the Berkshire County Soccer Hall of Fame Scholarship Fund.
- The annual Sheffield Campus evacuation drill to Berkshire School will be held on Tuesday, November 24th.
- Friday, November 20th is Linda Higgins last day as the Assistant to the Superintendent after service the district for 34 years. Lynette Gagnon will replace Linda.
- The November 3rd professional day was very productive.
- The district has contracted with Ms. Patricia DeAngelis, a math curriculum specialist from the Collaborative for Educational Services, for Math Coaching in the elementary schools.
- Mt. Everett students will attend the STEM Career Fair on Friday November 20th at BCC.
- Six students auditioned for and were accepted into the Senior Western District Chorus on November 7th. Our students had the top Bass score, the top Alto score and the third top tenor score.
- The Merry Wives of Windsor cast practiced at the Packer Playhouse in Lenox. The performance is on Saturday, November 21st at 1:30 p.m.
- The Lion King will kick off on December 4th in the TACPAC.
- The Undermountain Student Council did a fantastic job taking on leadership during our November Bee celebration with the focus on bullying prevention.
- Our Toddlers visited the Sheffield Senior Center on Wednesday and together made pretzels.
- The students participated in the Pulsera Project where they sold bracelets in order to support fair trade to help support a group of young people in Nicaragua.
- Massachusetts will be sticking with the MCAS, however the new test will look like PARCC and transition to a totally on-line test in the next few years. The 10th grade test will remain the MCAS for now.

- The Global Education Team was invited to participate in a late February 2016 conference in Germany, centered around music. Based on the recent events in Paris, we are stepping back a little in order to give us time to gather more information on the situation before requesting approval from the school committee.
 - There is also a projected trip to the Galapagos Islands in April 2016
 - Salsa and Flamenco Field Trip – the Spanish 3 class went on a field trip on November 13 2015 to Albany, NY for the performance of learning on Stage: Salsa and Flamenco.
- B. Ms. Silvers moved to set June 4, 2016 at Tanglewood for Commencement Ceremonies for the Mt. Everett Class of 2016. Ms. Sparhawk seconded the motion and it was so voted.
- C. Report on MASC/MASS Conference. Mr. Stewart updated the committee on the recent conference held by MASC/MASS. It was a great opportunity to network and get more information from other members. Mr. Stewart also mentioned that the MASC website is very informative.
- D. FY 2017 School Committee Calendar: Mr. Sears moved to change the December 10th meeting to December 9th. Ms. Silvers seconded the motion, and it was so voted. Following discussion, Ms. Silvers moved to approve the FY2017 Calendar. Ms. Lartigue seconded the motion and it was so voted.
- E. Finance Subcommittee: Ms. Rundle mentioned that the committee had talked about the fire suppression system in the TACPAC and what methods are in place with the testing of the new system. The Monterey school has been winterized. Mr. Turner updated on the roof and boiler project. There is one skylight left and then the roof will be complete. Expect to fire up the boilers the week of December 7th and run them all week. Training will be done with staff on Thursday, December 10th.
- Ms. Silvers gave an update on the Eagle Fund. Katherine Miller will let us know if the event is going to take place on December 14th at 6:15 p.m. She is contacting approximately 120 people. They hope to double the size of the endowment.
- G. Financial Updates/Transfers: Mr. Turner stated that there were No financial updates/transfers.

On a motion by Ms. Lartigue, seconded by Ms. Silvers, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Documents presented at this meeting:

- *Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1500*
- *District Policies: BDA, BDE, BDB, BDC*
- *Minutes of Meeting #1,499 and Special Meeting of November 16, 2016*
- *Graduation Date Request*
- *FY 2017 Budget Development Calendar (DRAFT)*
- *Letters from the Towns of Monterey, Sheffield, New Marlborough and response from SBRSD Building and Grounds and technology Subcommittee.*
- *Letter from RDK Engineering*