

School Committee Members: Art Batacchi, Genis Melandez-Delaney, Carl Stewart, Bonnie Silvers, Maryellen Brown, Dennis Sears, Robert Law, David Travis, Fran Lartigue

Absent: Marcella Bush

Administration: Beth Regulbuto, Kerry Burke, Chris Regan, Sandi Hubbard (in audience)

Press: Corey Willey, Berkshire Record; Kristin Palpine, Berkshire Eagle; CTSB

Others: (See attached sign in sheet)

1. **Call to Order:** Ms. Silvers, Chair, called meeting #1541 to order at 6:20 p.m.

2. **Standing Reports**

a. Approval of Minutes of School Committee Meetings #1539 and special meeting #1540

- *Mr. Stewart made a motion to approve minutes #1539 as presented. Mr. Travis seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was unanimously approved.*
- *Mr. Stewart made a motion to approve minutes of special meeting #1540 as presented. Ms. Lartigue seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was unanimously approved.*

b. Enrollment: Enrollment as of March 1, 2018 was 686 down by four.

c. Miscellaneous Correspondence

3. **Student Representative Report** - None

4. **Public Comment**

Mr. Basler read a personal statement regarding the closing of the school in the Town of Monterey and asked the school committee to withdraw the motion to close both schools. He then referenced the attached letter from the Town of Monterey.

Ms. Silvers requested clarity in terms of the letter and what the Town of Monterey was requesting.

Mr. Basler explained that the Town of Monterey was requesting that the vote to close the Monterey School be tabled, and that the Town of Monterey will assume all operational costs of the Monterey School during the 'tabling period'.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Silvers stated that this item will be added to the next school committee meeting agenda, after consultation with legal counsel.

Mr. Sears made moved that the SBRSD School Committee is opposed to any Local, Commonwealth or National legislation that would allow or require any SBRSD staff members other than School Resource Officers to carry any working firearm of any type into any District building or onto District property. Mr. Law seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stewart had no objection to the substance of the motion, but asked where this motion fell under the agenda.

Ms. Silvers stated that this motion fell under item 5d Student Safety.

Mr. Stewart then withdrew his objection.

Mr. Sears moved that the SBRSD School Committee supports and approves actions by students who desire to participate in firearm protests similar to those taken by Parkland, Florida students. Mr. Law seconded the motion.

Mr. Travis asked if the motion could be amended to “...supports and acknowledges the rights of students to participate...”

There was further discussion regarding this.

Mr. Sears then withdrew his motion.

Mr. Travis moved that the SBRSD School Committee supports and acknowledges the rights of students to participate in non-violent firearm protests. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion.

There was further discussion regarding this motion.

Kerry Burke shared the legal advisory received from Murphy, Lamere & Murphy, P.C.

First Amendment Implications

Although school administrators are responsible for ensuring student safety and providing an educational environment that is free from disruption, they must be careful to respect the First Amendment rights of both students and staff. In striking this balance, schools should be mindful of the following:

- Political expression that does not disrupt the school setting is permitted and may not be regulated.
- Political expression may not be regulated based on viewpoint. Teachers and staff should remain neutral regarding the viewpoints expressed by students.
- By permitting students to participate in walk-ins on the school campus, the school district is creating a limited public forum. Therefore, if the school permits students to express one viewpoint, students expressing opposing or unrelated viewpoints must also be permitted to do so in a similar forum.
- While staff members have First Amendment rights when they engage in speech/expression that is a matter of public concern, this right is limited during work hours. Staff members should be reminded that their roles do not extend to supporting the student expressed message and during any student protest, all work rules, including attendance, remain in effect.

Roll Call Vote:

Art Batacchi – Yes; Genis Melendez-Delaney – No; Carl Stewart – Yes; David Travis – Yes;

Fran Lartigue – Yes; Maryellen Brown – Yes; Dennis Sears – Yes; Bob Law – Yes; Bonnie Silvers - Yes

Motion passes: 8 to 1

5. New Business

a. Student Spotlight – None

b. Approval of Overnight Field Trip (April 18-21, 2018) to Tampa, Florida (Grades 7&8) to provide students hands-on science experiences related to aquatic habitats. - A.VonRuden

This item was tabled to the March 15, 2018 meeting.

- c. Change the School Committee Meeting Date of May 17, 2018 (Alternative dates 5/10 and 5/15) – B. Regulbuto

Superintendent Regulbuto and Chris Regan will be attending the MASBO conference on May 17th. *Mr. Sears made a motion to move the school committee meeting from May 17, 2018 to May 10, 2018. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was unanimously approved.*

Mr. Stewart requested that item 5g. School Lunch Price Increase be addressed at this time.

- d. School Lunch Price Increase – Vote Required

Mr. Wells stated that per federal regulations we are out of compliance regarding what we charge for school lunch. The recommended increase would be 4.6% each year. The cost of lunch is currently \$2.75 and needs to go up to \$2.86 to be compliant.

Mr. Stewart moved to approve the school lunch price increase as set forth by Mr. Wells effective immediately. Ms. Lartigue seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued regarding when the increase would take effect.

Mr. Stewart then withdrew his motion.

Mr. Stewart moved to approve the school price increase to take effect on March 26, 2018. Ms. Lartigue seconded the motion.

Discussion followed regarding the increases for future years.

Mr. Stewart then revised the motion to approve the school price increase to \$2.90 to take effect March 26, 2018; \$3.10 to take effect on the first day of the 18-19 school year; and \$3.25 to take effect on the first day of the 19-20 school year. Ms. Lartigue seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion was unanimously approved.

- f. Student Safety

Beth informed the school committee that she had been asked to join the discussion with the students regarding what they are planning for their protest. The students are being very respectful of not disrupting the education process and thoughtful of where they think they will have the most effect. There are lots of ideas of way to express their concerns. There are also quite a few students who are attending the march in Washington on March 24th which is not sponsored by the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

Marya Makuc would like to invite the school committee on March 14th to attend the National School Walk-Out at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Silvers gave a breakdown of the events happening on March 14th.

Coffee with the SFO and friends will be Monday night at 6 p.m. in the Eagles Loft for parents and community.

- g. Entry Plan Findings – This was tabled to the meeting on March 15th.

6. Unfinished Business

7. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Policy Subcommittee –D. Sears
First Reading
Policy ADF – School District Wellness Program – Policy does exist but the Wellness committee brought forward some changes.
Policy EFD – Meal Charge Policy
Policy GBEBD – Online Fundraising and Solicitations
Policy ILD – Student Submission to Educational Surveys and Research
- b. SBRSD Future of South Berkshire Education Ad Hoc Committee – D. Sears
Mr. Sears reported that they had a meeting in Lee. The next meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2018 in Lenox. Mr. Sears informed the committee that an arrangement has been made with Dr. Bill Dagget to present at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center on Relevance & Rigor, Meeting the needs of our Students in the 21st Century, scheduled for April 24th.

Ms. Lartigue moved to transfer \$1250. Art Batacchi seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion was unanimously approved.

- c. Building, Grounds & Technology – Art Batacchi
Mr. Batacchi informed the school committee that they had met on Monday. They are currently over the \$400,000 capital in the budget and will need to prioritize needs.

Genis Melenadez-Delaney informed the school committee that she will be resigning from the committee and that this would be her last meeting.

- d. Executive Evaluation Subcommittee – B. Law
Bob Law informed the committee they had met on Tuesday. They went over the superintendent goals with Beth and talked about what kind of tools would be used for mid cycle evaluation and time line.
- e. Finance Subcommittee– D. Sears
Mr. Sears had nothing new to add.
- f. Negotiation Subcommittee – C. Stewart
Mr. Stewart informed that they has not been a meeting since the last report.

8. Chairman's Report

9. Superintendent's Report

10. Curriculum & Professional Development Coordinator's Report

See attached report.

11. Director of Student Services Report

12. Business Manager's Report

- a. Approval of Warrants: February 26, 2018

Mr. Stewart moved to approve the warrant of February 26, 2018. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lartigue. No discussion motion carries.

- b. Vote to Accept Grants and Gifts - none
- c. Budget Transfers - none

13. Future Agenda Items

- a. Report of College Submissions – March 15th Meeting
- b. College & Career Planning Initiatives for FY19 and Beyond – April Meeting

14. Adjourn

Mr. Stewart moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Lartigue. No discussion, motion passes unanimously.