

Dighton~Rehoboth Regional District School Committee  
Regular Session ~ June 10, 2014

A Regular Session of the Dighton~Rehoboth Regional School Committee was held on June 10, 2014, in the Dighton~Rehoboth Regional High School library.

Present:

Christopher Andrade  
Richard Barrett  
Tiffany Bartholomew  
Eliza Couture  
Heather Cross  
David Katseff  
Susan Lorenz  
Raymond Medeiros  
Timothy Rapoza  
Janice Terry

Also:

Michael Malone, Interim Superintendent of Schools  
Gail Van Buren, Asst. Superintendent of Schools  
Catherine Antonellis, District Business Administrator  
Kellie Fagan, Recording Secretary

*Mrs. Couture stated that the committee would enter into regular session, and was being broadcast/videotaped with the help of the Rehoboth Cable Advisory Committee, at: 6:30 PM.*

*Mrs. Couture led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

Agenda Item #3, Vote to Approve Minutes:

It was moved by Mrs. Bartholomew, seconded by Mrs. Terry, and VOTED to approve the minutes of the May 06, 2014 Regular session. No vote taken.

Mrs. Lorenz noted an error regarding participants at the Day on the Hill workshop. Ms. Fagan will revise.

It was moved by Mrs. Bartholomew, seconded by Mrs. Lorenz, and VOTED to approve the minutes of the May 06, 2014 Regular session, as amended.

**VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS**

It was moved by Mrs. Bartholomew, seconded by Mrs. Lorenz, and VOTED to approve the minutes of the May 29, 2014 Special Executive Session.

**VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS**

Agenda Item #4, Bills and Payroll:

It was moved by Mrs. Lorenz, seconded by Mrs. Bartholomew, and VOTED to approve the bills and payrolls as presented:

V - #28	\$ 114,112.50
V - #1072	\$ 1,300.00
V - #1074	\$ 8,332.73

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V - #1075	\$ 797,703.79
V - #1076	\$ 548.99
V - #2500	\$ 695,403.28
V - #2501	\$ 1,100.27

***VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS***

Mrs. Couture announced that this would be Mr. Malone's last School Committee meeting, and that Dr. Anthony Azar will be part of the June 24, 2014 School Committee meeting. Mrs. Couture thanked Mr. Malone for his service to our district.

Both Mr. Medeiros and Mr. Katseff thanked Mr. Malone for his assistance and support while in the Interim Superintendent position.

Mr. Malone thanked the School Committee, the staff, the communities, and the parents in the district. Support your schools!

**Agenda Item #5, Public Input:**

Alycen Adams, Dighton, asked about the high school principal. Mrs. Couture stated that there will be an update in the Superintendent's report.

**Agenda Item #6, Correspondence & Enclosures:**

Mr. Malone highlighted:

- The notification from legal counsel regarding authorization to sign the MSBA Funding Agreements for the roof projects.

Mrs. Lorenz suggested that the Superintendent be given the authorization to sign, as the Chairperson is not always on the premises.

Mr. Katseff noted that the School Committee Chairperson be authorized to sign these documents (3 total).

It was moved by Mrs. Lorenz, seconded by Mr. Medeiros, and VOTED to authorize the Superintendent to sign the MSBA Funding Agreement(s).

Mr. Andrade ~ Aye  
Mr. Barrett ~ Nay  
Mrs. Bartholomew ~ Nay  
Mrs. Couture ~ Aye  
Mrs. Cross ~ Aye  
Mr. Katseff ~ Nay

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Mrs. Lorenz ~ Aye  
Mr. Medeiros ~ Aye  
Mr. Rapoza ~ Aye  
Mrs. Terry ~ Nay

AYE ~ 5.20    NAY ~ 3.8

MOTION FAILED

It was moved by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mrs. Bartholomew, and VOTED to authorize the School Committee Chairperson to sign the MSBA Funding Agreement(s).

*VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS*

Mr. Malone announced the resignations of Bridgit Martin and Jacqueline Striano. He thanked both staff members for their service to the students of our district.

Mrs. Terry asked about the District Treasurer's position. Ms. Antonellis announced that there are 5 applications, but there should be a search committee formed to review and interview appropriate candidates. Mrs. Couture asked for volunteers to be on the search committee. Mrs. Lorenz volunteered to be a School Committee representative on the search committee.

Mr. Katseff suggested that the town treasurers be included on this search committee. Ms. Antonellis expressed her interest in being on this search committee as well.

Mrs. Lorenz noted that Ms. Antonellis should be the contact person for that search committee.

*Agenda Item #9b, Vote to Approve Fundraising for the Dighton Middle School Soccer Team:*

Mr. Wheeler, Dighton Middle School Principal, asked that the present soccer team fundraising be continued for the 2014-2015 school year. Mr. Wheeler made the request on behalf of Mr. Crowley, Dighton Middle School Parent Group.

It was moved by Mrs. Bartholomew, seconded by Mrs. Lorenz, and VOTED to approve Dighton Middle School fundraising for the soccer team, for the 2014-2015 school year.

*VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS*

*Agenda Item #7a, NEASC Presentation:*

John Harrison, DRRHS Assistant Principal, and Co-Chair of the DRRHS NEASC Committee, and Jon Pacheco, DRRHS teacher, and Co-Chair of the DRRHS NEASC committee, gave a presentation on the upcoming NEASC accreditation visit. They outlined the following:

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- NEASC timeline/staff accomplishments to date (meeting the 7 standards)
- The next steps in the accreditation process

Mrs. Lorenz asked where the curriculum is lacking at the high school. Mr. Pacheco explained that there are issues before vertically and horizontally. There is no uniform, common format for curriculum at the high school.

Mr. Pacheco continued with:

- DRRHS strengths
- DRRHS needs ~ technology and infrastructure

Mrs. Terry asked about the Resource Officer. Mr. Pacheco clarified that the high school is looking for an "Intervention Officer", not a security guard. An Intervention Officer should be able to offer the students support and guidance. They should work with students, families, and staff.

Mr. Malone stated that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) must be created with the desired requirements for that position. Mrs. Terry noted that grant funds were used in the past to fund a Resource Officer. Could the district pursue grant money again, in order to secure student safety.

Mrs. Couture thanked the NEASC Subcommittee for all of their hard work ~ this is a huge task, but it will validate what is done at DRRHS.

Mr. Harrison noted that some School Committee members will be asked to be interviewed by the NEASC Visiting Team.

[Agenda Item #7b & d, Dighton Middle School and Beckwith Middle School Student Handbook Revisions:](#)

Mr. Wheeler and Mrs. Pincince reviewed the revisions for the 2014-2015 DMS Student Handbooks:

- Beckwith and Dighton Middle continue to align their handbooks
- There are minor differences only, which Mr. Wheeler reviewed
- Both principals need to work together on the Homework Policy (there may be too much homework required of students)
  - They will put together a committee to review that policy
- Both handbooks will be on the website

Mr. Andrade asked about the Accidents Policy; it states that parents are only notified for serious injuries. Is this the same as the district's current policy? Mrs. Pincince and Mr. Medeiros will double-check our policy manual. Mr. Andrade suggested that parents be notified of any/all injuries. He is asking that the 2 policies be checked against one another.

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Mrs. Terry noted that the School Committee contact information in the handbooks needs to be updated. Mr. Barrett is the current School Committee Secretary.

Mr. Wheeler and Mrs. Pincince noted the grading change. This system will now mirror the high school's grading system. The change will take place at both middle schools.

Mr. Katseff asked that the handbook wording be changed to Out of District Vocational Technical Schools (instead of "Bristol Plymouth") under the Vocational Student Application Process section.

Mr. Rapoza addressed the dress code at the middle schools. He felt that it is too vague. Mr. Wheeler explained the rationale behind this dress code policy. Mr. Wheeler and Mrs. Pincince also noted that a parent/guardian is contacted when a child is dressed inappropriately.

Mr. Medeiros stated that the Bring Your Own Device Policy will be out in time for the schools to insert them into the handbooks.

It was moved by Mrs. Lorenz, and seconded by Mr. Medeiros to move to an action item and to approve the Dighton Middle School and Beckwith Middle School Student Handbooks. No vote was taken.

Mr. Andrade suggested that the revisions be brought back to the committee for a vote at the next meeting.

The committee will vote on the middle school handbook revisions at the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

[Agenda Item #7e & c, Palmer River and Dighton Elementary School Student Handbook Revisions:](#)

Mrs. Miguel and Mrs. Manchester reviewed the revisions for the 2014-2015 Palmer River and Dighton Elementary School Student Handbooks:

- School handbooks were aligned with each other, with minor differences
- Mrs. Miguel read the new vision statement for Palmer River
- Remaining revisions were identified by each principal (both schools made the same handbook changes)

Mr. Andrade inquired about the After-School Program wording in the handbook. They will need to delete "YMCA", and make it generic. He also reiterated that the Accident Policy for the elementary schools must be reviewed; the policy should reflect the district's policy. Mrs. Manchester will hold on that section of the handbook, until the June 24, 2014 meeting.

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Mrs. Lorenz addressed the committee regarding the District Policy Manual. Does the committee need to approve the entire manual, before individual policies can be implemented? Mr. Medeiros explained that policies that have been approved can be implemented.

The committee will vote on the elementary school handbook revisions at the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Agenda Item #7f, Policy Subcommittee Report:

Mr. Medeiros stated that the committee reviewed Section K of the District Policy Manual. The School Committee will vote on Section L later in the meeting. The "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) Policy will be emailed to committee members for their review. The subcommittee is still reviewing the "Residency Policy". Mr. Medeiros will discuss the new finger-printing law at the next meeting.

Agenda Item #7g, Superintendent's Report:

Mr. Malone spoke on the following:

- The PARCC versus MCAS handout was reviewed
  - Mrs. Van Buren will give a presentation on this issue, and make a recommendation to the committee
- The implementation of the finger-printing mandate will begin shortly:
  - The finger-printing will be performed at an out-of-district location
  - The confidential results will be reviewed and logged by the Superintendent's secretary
  - Finger-printing will be a requirement of the job
  - There may be a cost to the employee
  - There still needs to be a determination on who will be finger-printed
- There will be no "looping" initiative at the elementary schools ~ administration will review this issue at a later date

Mr. Malone reminded the committee that professional development will accompany any new initiative that may be implemented, and that "looping" will not take place.

Mrs. Terry stated that School Committee members need more information given to them. Mrs. Couture agreed that awareness and communication are vital.

Maria Cronin, Dighton parent, addressed the committee regarding elementary school looping. Mr. Malone reiterated that the administration would revisit this matter at a later date.

Shirley DeMello, Dighton Elementary School Grade 1 teacher, addressed the committee regarding looping.

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Committee discussion ensued.

Mr. Malone stated that the looping initiative will not happen at this time.

Agenda Item #7h, Chairperson's Report:

Mrs. Couture reviewed the following:

- The Dighton town meeting: the school district budget passed
- The 2014 graduation was held Saturday. The graduation was wonderful and congratulations to the Class of 2014
- The Taunton gazette featured the "Best and Brightest": three students from DRRHS were honored: Brendon Henrique, Hannah Rogers, and Bailey Avila (nomination). Each student will be recognized this Thursday at Bristol Community College.

Mr. Malone stated that the PARCC vote must be taken by the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. Mrs. Van Buren will give a 'pros-and-cons' presentation, and make a recommendation to the committee.

Agenda Item #8a, Staff Update:

Mr. Malone reviewed the staff list for the 2014-2015 school year:

- Staffing sheets were given to committee members, listing each school and district-wide
- Personnel have been notified, and the union contract language will be adhered to
- There may be a few final revisions/tweaks to the budget
- A list of open position will go out to district staff (transfer requests will be reviewed)
- Some non-renewal notices are going out, based on principal recommendations

Mrs. Bartholomew asked if team leaders at Palmer River will still be funded. Ms. Antonellis stated that they would.

Mrs. Bartholomew then addressed the foreign language program at the middle schools. She asked if the middle Schools still offer 8<sup>th</sup> grade foreign language, and will a student from the either school will be able to enter the high school at a level II Foreign Language Program. Mrs. Van Buren said that they will.

Mr. Katseff is requesting a staff listing for central office, similar to the ones received from each school. Also, he would like to know who evaluates the pre-school personnel. Ms. Antonellis noted that Mr. Riley, Special Education Director, does the evaluations.

Mr. Rapoza asked if the Technology Director position is out of the budget. Mr. Malone said that the Technology Director position is not in the budget. He did say, however, that this position can always be reviewed.

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Mrs. Terry stressed that the district needs a Technology Director.

Mr. Andrade addressed the committee regarding the funding of a Resource Officer; are there grants available. Mr. Malone said that there may be some money under the DARE Program.

Agenda Item #8b, Kindergarten Transition Program:

Mr. Malone updated the committee on the district Kindergarten program. The committee was provided with an: "Introduction to the Full-Day Kindergarten 2014-2015" hand-out. Mr. Malone stated that professional development will be given on the full-day kindergarten program for staff and for parents. He suggested that the committee have the principals give a presentation in August on student transitions (from half-day to full-day). The district is not offering transportation for half-day kindergarten.

Mrs. Van Buren stated that the elementary principals will send out plans to educate parents on the program.

Sue Lass, Rehoboth, questioned the timeline in the program. The children will only get ½ hour to eat lunch and have recess/quiet time? Mrs. Van Buren stated that this was a prototype draft for the program.

Mrs. Manchester and Mrs. Miguel addressed Mrs. Lass' concerns.

Mr. Rapoza reminded everyone that attending Kindergarten is not required.

Agenda Item #8c, Before-And-After School Program:

Mr. Malone reviewed the before-and-after school program. Ms. Antonellis stated that the Business Office is requesting a proposal (RFP) for a new Before-and-After School Program. Some RFPs the Business Office receives may include proposals for academics, tutoring, etc. This district isn't looking for a daycare; academics should be included for the children. The RFPs are due July 18<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Antonellis would like to implement a new program in the 2014-2015 school year. The Business Office will keep the committee updated on the RFPs.

The school committee will decide who is awarded the Before-and-After School Program, after RFP reviews and final recommendation from Ms. Antonellis.

Steve Patrick, Co-Chair DRRTA, asked if this is for the elementary schools only. Mr. Malone said that it would be.

Agenda Item #8d, RFP for Regional Agreement:

Ms. Antonellis updated the committee on the Regional Agreement RFP. Responses are due by June 20<sup>th</sup> and will be presented on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

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Agenda Item #9a, Vote to Accept Donation Requests:

It was moved by Mrs. Bartholomew, seconded by Mrs. Lorenz, and VOTED to accept a monetary donation in the amount of \$15.33 from Abibow Recycling, to the Beckwith Middle School.

**VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS**

It was moved by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mrs. Lorenz, and VOTED to move the approval of Section L of the District Policy Manual to an Action Item.

**VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS**

It was moved by Mrs. Bartholomew, seconded by Mrs. Lorenz, and VOTED to approve Section L of the District Policy Manual.

Mrs. Lorenz asked about policy LBC, which deals with the School Committee overseeing private schools in our towns. Mr. Katseff explained that the committee cannot dictate their curriculum, however, the School Committee does have the final approval of the school.

**VOTE ~ AYE ~ UNANIMOUS**

*Mrs. Couture stated that the committee would enter into Executive Session, as per MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, for the purpose of discussing potential litigation, union and non-union issues, and security, and would not return to open session.*

It was moved by Mrs. Bartholomew, seconded by Mr. Medeiros, and VOTED to enter into Executive Session, as per MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, for the purpose of discussing potential litigation, union and non-union issues, and security, and would not return to open session at 9:20 PM. Roll call vote:

Mr. Andrade ~ Aye  
Mr. Barrett ~ Aye  
Mrs. Bartholomew ~ Aye  
Mrs. Couture ~ Aye  
Mrs. Cross ~ Aye  
Mr. Katseff ~ Aye  
Mrs. Lorenz ~ Aye  
Mr. Medeiros ~ Aye  
Mr. Rapoza ~ Aye  
Mrs. Terry ~ Aye

MOTION PASSED

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*Richard Barrett, Secretary*