

BURLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2011

Chairman Stephen Nelson called this meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:30 p.m. in the School Committee Room, Administration Offices, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, Massachusetts. Present: Mr. Thomas F. Murphy Jr. (8:00 p.m. arrival), Mr. Michael DeSimone, and Mrs. Kristin Russo. Superintendent Eric Conti and Director of Finance and Operations Craig Robinson also in attendance. Mrs. Christine Monaco absent.

Approval of Minutes Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. DeSimone to approve minutes of 10/25/11; motion carried 4-0-0.

Approval of Warrant By consensus, this was postponed until December meeting.

Retirement Announcement Pupil Services Director Cath Estep announced her retirement¹ effective February 2012. The School Committee thanked Dr. Estep for her contributions, for the new and improved programs she implemented during nine years of service, and wished her well in retirement.

Public Participation None.

INFORMATION/REPORTS SCAB Committee Student Representative

Senior Jill Keaney reported her class was preparing for the pep rally and a cookie and pie sale. Junior Molly Gilpin noted they were planning a dodge ball tournament and trivia night fundraisers. The freshman representative announced they were reviewing ideas for fundraising: movie trivia, silent auction, selling candy canes, valentine candy, and iPod games.

Student representative Walter Kikuchi reported he'd met again with Mr. Attubato and Mr. Ratkevich regarding the 500-900 course requirements to graduate. As well as talking about dropping the 500-900 course requirement, they also discussed removing electives from the calculation for class rank, changing the level of 500-900 courses, and reporting class rank with a decile effective for next year's incoming freshman. Mr. Ratkevich suggested adding a fine arts course requirement. The Superintendent stated meetings have been productive and a formal proposal will be made in January by Mr. Attubato and Walter.

Walter noted that senior Rick Landry has suggested a rotating class schedule for the high school instead of always having period 1 as the first class. Principal Larkin is aware of this suggestion.

Subcommittee None.

Ways & Means No one in attendance.

COMMUNICATION

Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Charlie Franich and BCLC Director Christine Shruhan were in attendance to review the proposed Youth Risk Behavior Survey and draft parental permission form to be administered to high school students. The survey instrument is anonymous and focuses on health-risk behaviors including: tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors that result in sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies, behaviors

¹ Dr. Estep Retirement Announcement

that result in unintentional and intentional injuries, and physical activity. A parental permission form will be sent to parents in advance of the survey. Burlington received a grant for this survey and anticipates administering it after January 1. Burlington participated in limited surveys in 1999, 2000, and 2001. Results of the survey will be analyzed and submitted to Burlington. Moved by Mr. DeSimone and seconded by Mrs. Russo to approve the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the administration of the survey on a mutually agreed upon date; motion carried 4-0-0.

Building Project Update

Mr. Robinson reported that the Marshall Simonds project is currently: working two shifts on the addition and is on schedule. The learning center classrooms were completed and students moved in to the renovated area. Classroom area 15 is currently being renovated and should be complete in 6-8 weeks. In the kitchen, the vent hood has been installed. Mr. Robinson is coordinating with the Board of Health and Building Services for the targeted opening of the cafeteria on January 1. The paving company is completing a binder coat and an additional 20 parking spaces are being added in the rear.

At Memorial, there are less than 20 things left on the punch list – mostly waiting on ordered equipment. Progress on the field: final grading is being completed, sod will be installed next week, and the irrigation system has been installed. Mr. Robinson met with the Board of Health last week; there is concern with the operation of bio-retention area 1 – it’s not functioning properly due to silt buildup and the contractor will repair it so it drains properly. A maintenance plan will be available for spring presentation to the Board of Health and Planning Board.

INSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY
College Board Honor Roll

Dr. Conti announced that BHS has been recognized as one of fewer than 400 public school districts in the U.S. being honored by the College Board with a place on the 2nd Annual AP Honor Roll, for increasing access to AP courses while increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or high on AP exams.

OLD BUSINESS
District Improvement Plan –
Second Reading

Superintendent Conti presented the Draft District Improvement Plan at the October 25 meeting. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. Murphy to approve the District Improvement Plan for the 2011-12 as presented at the 10/25/11 meeting; motion carried 4-0-0.

Statement of Interest BHS
Renovations

At the previous meeting, the School Committee began discussing whether to renew the BHS elevator statement of interest with the MSBA or combine it into a larger comprehensive statement of interest for the high school. The elevator project is designed, would provide access to the lower level, and will cost approximately \$700 - \$800K. A comprehensive statement of interest could include: replacement of the 40 year old hvac system and the construction of an elevator. Separate funds of \$60 million are available statewide from the MSBA for replacement of science labs.

The School Committee discussed pros and cons including: potentially losing placeholder for elevator if it’s included in a comprehensive SOI, receiving reimbursements for at least 50% of each approved statement of interest instead of the town paying for it as part of the 10-year capital

plan, the ability of the town to pay for a hvac system if approved, and a potential unexpected breakdown of the BHS hvac system. In response to the School Committee, Dr. Conti recommended keeping the projects separate. The elevator statement of interest will be recertified as priority one and a new statement of interest for the high school hvac system will be submitted in January as priority two. The district will also apply for funding for replacement of the BHS science labs. At the December meeting, Mr. Robinson will have the required language for submission to the MSBA. Moved by Mr. DeSimone and seconded by Mrs. Russo to recertify the Statement of Interest for the BHS elevator at the gym level; motion carried 4-0-0.

NEW BUSINESS

School Attendance Age – First Reading

The Superintendent reviewed a new school attendance age policy (JEB-1) in response to requests for a more defined age limitation requirement for students in K – grade 5. He also reviewed two proposed exceptions for the policy. This policy will be on the agenda for a second reading at the December 13 meeting.

School Calendars – First Reading

Draft school calendars for 2012-13 and 2013-14² were reviewed by Dr. Conti. The School Committee recommended adding a line on both calendars specifying the calendars are subject to change. As this is a first reading, the school committee will vote on this at the December 13 meeting.

Out-of-State Travel

Moved by Mr. DeSimone and seconded by Mr. Murphy to approve out-of-state travel for Molly Leary to Rhode Island on December 9; motion carried 4-0-0.

Mrs. Russo reported she'd attended the joint MASS/MASC conference last week. The Burlington school district was mentioned in the areas of student growth and Rtl. A new educator evaluation instrument has been developed. Dr. Conti noted that Massachusetts has requested a waiver for the No Child Left Behind Act.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

BEA president Diana Marcus stated that the MTA organization has offered to offer a free two-hour training on the educator evaluation instrument to Burlington teachers, principals, and administrators. Chairman Nelson requested that Ms. Marcus coordinate with the Superintendent on possible dates.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Nelson announced that the Committee had a need for executive session to approve minutes and to discuss contract negotiations because holding it in an open session would have a detrimental effect on the position of the public body. The School Committee will only return to public session for the purpose of adjournment. Moved by Mr. DeSimone and seconded by Mrs. Russo at 9:10 p.m. to go into executive session. Mr. Nelson, aye; Mr. Murphy, aye; Mr. DeSimone, aye; Mrs. Russo, aye. Motion carried 4-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. DeSimone and seconded by Mr. Murphy at 9:45 p.m. to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4-0-0.

² Draft School Calendars 2012-13 and 2013-14

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Gilbert
Recording Secretary

Date submitted: 12/13/11
Date approved: 12/13/11