



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
June 10, 2014**

**LOCATION:** Swift River Elementary School Library  
**TIME:** 7:00 pm

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Mr. Richard Fritsch, Chair (present); Ms. Myndi Bogdanovich, Vice-Chair (present); Dr. Michael Knapp, Secretary (present); Ms. Clare Popowich, Member (present); Ms. Dawn French, Member (present)

**ADMINISTRATION:** Dr. Judith Houle, Superintendent of Schools (present); Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning (present); Dr. Robert Gazda, incoming Interim Superintendent (present); Mr. Edward Dunn, Contracted School Business Manager (present); Ms. Kristi Guzzo, Director of Student Support Services (present); Mr. Scott Karen, Director of Technology (present); Mr. Ben Admussen, Data Administrator (present); Mr. Thomas Ruscio, JBMS Principal (present); Ms. Paula Fitzgerald, CHCS Principal (present); Mr. Robert Kuhn, SRE Principal (present)

**BHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:** (not present)

**VISITORS:** Ms. Corrina Smith, Ms. Amanda Johnson, JBMS Music Teachers; Mr. Thomas Houle

### MINUTES

I. Call to order

Mr. Fritsch called the Regular School Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Special awards and presentations

A. Great East Music Festival Awards

Dr. Houle explained that the Great East Music Festival is primarily a competition for middle school students which allows for adjudication of performances and also offers a "clinic" after the performances to provide constructive feedback for the students. Ms. Smith and Ms. Johnson brought the awards/plaques won by the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders at this festival, and they described the great kudos given the students for having excelled in their performances. Dr. Houle expressed her appreciation to the teachers and congratulated the music students.

Mr. Fritsch presented a certificate of appreciation to Ms. Guzzo from the Belchertown Public Schools, congratulating her for her diligent work in getting all noncompliant issues rectified in the Department of Student Support Services, and on behalf of the School Committee, he wished her well in her new endeavors.

Mr. Fritsch presented a certificate of appreciation to Ms. Kathryn Petersen from the Belchertown Public Schools for her service to the School Committee as Non-Confidential Recording Secretary.

III. Update from BHS Student Advisory Council representatives  
None

IV. Public comment regarding items on the agenda  
None

V. Approval of minutes

A. May 5, 2014

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2014 Regular School Committee meeting, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-1 (abstention: Ms. French)

B. May 27, 2014

MOTION: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2014 Regular School Committee meeting, as presented. Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

VI. Reports and recommendations of the Superintendent

A. State testing for 2015: PARCC/MCAS

Dr. Houle provided handouts from the DESE with regard to the 2015 PARCC/MCAS choice. The state's DOE has requested that school districts make decisions regarding standardized testing for the 2014-2015 school year by June 30, 2014, and several options were presented. Dr. Houle and Mr. Admussen had also attended a conference which addressed this issue, and Mr. Admussen stated that among the many Superintendents who were present, very few plan to continue using MCAS. A discussion then ensued with members of the Senior Leadership Team and the School Committee. Since the Belchertown Public Schools curricula have been aligned with the Common Core State Standards, the general consensus was that it makes sense to use the PARCC tests since they are more closely aligned with these frameworks than is the MCAS. It was also noted that the DESE plans to discontinue using the MCAS after the 2016 administration and replace it with a different test, and the PARCC test is the only one currently available. It was agreed that there is little advantage in using a test that will be discontinued, and great advantage to start gaining experience with a test that will undoubtedly be used in the future, and to begin preparing for its implementation in terms of necessary technology. It was noted that there will be no change in funding to the district by switching over to PARCC for standardized testing, and it was also stated that there will be training available to staff in the form of videos and instructional booklets on how to conduct the testing.

MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to accept PARCC as the district's choice for standardized testing in 2015, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

COMMENT: Dr. Knapp commented that the tests should be created to inform instruction and be aligned with teaching standards.

**B. Review of Mid-Cycle Progress Reports: Coordinated Program Review**

Ms. Guzzo stated that she had previously notified the School Committee of 33 areas in which the Special Education Department had been found noncompliant, but that as of August, 2013, that number had been reduced to seven areas that were either not implemented or not fully implemented. Ms. Guzzo said that she, along with Team Leaders, other administrators and staff, worked through all the remaining noncompliant issues which resulted in a more positive review last November, with more work still left to do. On May 22, 2014, the DESE issued a review of the district's Mid-cycle Progress Reports, which noted that all corrective action has been fully implemented, and as required by state and federal regulations and laws, the district is now 100% compliant prior to the mandatory one-year deadline for identified noncompliance. The School Committee thanked Ms. Guzzo for her diligence in completing this important task.

**C. Appointment of School Attendance Officer for 2014-2015 school year**

Dr. Houle recommended that the School Committee appoint Officer Jason Krol, School Resource Officer, to the position of School Attendance Officer for the 2014-2015 school year. Officer Krol has been licensed by the DESE since 2010 for this role and he has served the district in this capacity since that time, working well with administrators, parents and students on matters related to compulsory school attendance.

**MOTION:** Dr. Knapp moved to reappoint Officer Jason Krol as School Attendance Officer for 2014-2015 school year, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** 5-0-0, approved unanimously

**COMMENT:** Dr. Knapp asked if this position was one which required an annual appointment, and Dr. Houle confirmed that this is the case.

**D. Memorandum of Agreement, Unit A, Teachers: Article 8, Section 8.09, paragraph A**

Dr. Houle stated that this MOA for Unit A, with regard to changes in language, had been approved by the School Committee in Executive Session and now requires a vote in Open Session. The MOA has been signed by the Superintendent and BTA President, and will require a signature by the School Committee Chair upon approval.

**MOTION:** Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the Memorandum of Agreement, Unit A, Teachers: Article 8, Section 8.09, paragraph A, as presented. Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** 5-0-0, approved unanimously

**COMMENT:** Dr. Knapp asked for clarification regarding the preparation periods for teachers, specific to Middle School, as listed in this paragraph of the MOA, and Dr. Houle provided that information.

The Chair signed the MOA, Unit A, Teachers: Article 8, Section 8.09, paragraph A.

**E. Notification of intent to hire a Summer Intern for the Office of Information Technology per M.G.L. c. 71, §67**

Dr. Houle presented her notification of intent to hire a Summer Intern for the Office of Information Technology, as required by M.G.L. c. 71, §67, which states that the district

cannot employ any person who is an immediate family member of the administrator of a school building without such notification. The chosen candidate for this student intern position is Mr. Zachary Kuhn, and he will be spending part of his time at Swift River Elementary School where his father, Mr. Robert Kuhn, serves as the principal. Dr. Houle noted that no action by the School Committee is needed as this is only a notification as required by law.

VII. Reports of subcommittees/representative to Collaborative for Educational Services

A. Collaborative for Educational Services (Ms. Bogdanovich)

None

B. Curriculum & Instruction (Dr. Knapp/Ms. French)

None

C. Healthy & Safer Schools Advisory Committee (Ms. Bogdanovich)

None

D. Jessica's Boundless Playground Committee (Ms. Popowich)

1. Next meeting: June 18, 2014

E. Personnel & Policy (Ms. Popowich/Ms. Bogdanovich)

1. Superintendent's Job Description

In a meeting held earlier this evening, Ms. Popowich reported that Dr. Houle reviewed the Superintendent's Job Description, relative to the reorganization in Central Office. She noted that a wording change was made in areas where the *Assistant Superintendent Director of Curriculum* and the *Special Education Director* are referenced, and because these positions have now been combined, it will be referred to as simply the *Assistant Superintendent*. Three clerical errors were duly noted in the document and will be corrected.

Ms. Popowich, Subcommittee Chair, recommended approval of the Superintendent's Job Description, as amended, and it was seconded by Ms. Bogdanovich. The vote was all in favor.

2. Policy JIA, JIA-R, JIA-E

In a meeting held earlier this evening, Ms. Popowich reported that Dr. Houle reviewed Policy JIA, JIA-R, JIA-E, relative to the reorganization in Central Office. She noted that changes have been made to JIA-R and JIA-E, as follows: paragraph 2 of JIA-R will now read: "The TREC shall be comprised of two (2) members: the Assistant Superintendent and the appropriate building administrator." The signature page of JIA-E (page 3) will now have two signature lines for a TREC "recommendation to Superintendent for approval".

Ms. Popowich, Subcommittee Chair, recommended approval of Policy JIA, JIA-R, JIA-E, as presented, and it was seconded by Ms. Bogdanovich. The vote was all in favor.

- F. Property & Transportation (Dr. Knapp/Mr. Fritsch)
  - 1. Next meeting: July 22, 2014, 6:30 pm
  
- G. Technology Advisory Committee (Mr. Fritsch)
  - 1. Report from June 4, 2014 meeting
    - Mr. Fritsch reported that cart-based computer systems are being switched to desk-based systems, since there is less chance of breakage/damage with fixed vs. mobile systems. He also stated that all classrooms are being updated with Dell projectors. The next meeting of this advisory committee is scheduled on October 1, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.
  
- VIII. New business
  - None
  
- IX. Unfinished business
  - A. MASC training
    - Ms. Bogdanovich stated that she had contacted Ms. Pat Correira and Mr. Michael Gilbert of the MASC with regard to training for the Belchertown School Committee, but she has not heard back from them as of yet. She noted that she had inquired about the possibility of hosting the training in our district as well as potentially scheduling one-on-one training.
  
- X. Correspondence
  - A. Agenda: June 10, 2014
  - B. Minutes: May 5, 2014 and May 27, 2014
  - C. Memorandum regarding PARCC and MCAS testing for 2015
  - D. Mid-Cycle Progress Report, Coordinated Program Review
  - E. Memorandum regarding the appointment of the School Attendance Officer for the 2014-2015 school year
  - F. Memorandum of Agreement: Unit A, Teachers, Article 8, Section 8.09, Paragraph A
  - G. Superintendent's Job Description
  - H. Policy JIA, JIA-R, JIA-E
  
- XI. Vote to enter into Executive Session under M.G.L., c. 30A, §21, Part (3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Unit A, Teachers, and Unit C, Custodians, as conducting said business in open session would have a detrimental effect on the School Committee's negotiating position. The Committee will return to open session.

Mr. Fritsch - yes  
 Ms. Bogdanovich – yes  
 Dr. Knapp – yes  
 Ms. Popowich – yes  
 Ms. French – yes

The School Committee entered into Executive Session at 7:46 p.m.

The Committee returned to Open Session at 8:45 p.m.

Mr. Fritsch announced that the Committee would not be taking any further action in Open Session.

MOTION: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to adjourn the Regular School Committee meeting at 8:46 p.m. Ms. French seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

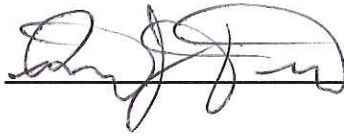
Respectfully submitted by,

*Kathryn A. Petersen*

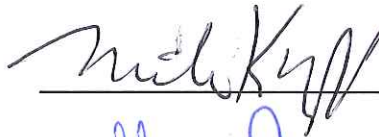
Kathryn A. Petersen  
Non-Confidential Recording Secretary to the School Committee



School Committee members' signatures:

 \_\_\_\_\_, Richard Fritsch, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_, Myndi Bogdanovich, Vice Chair

 \_\_\_\_\_, Michael Knapp, Secretary

 \_\_\_\_\_, Clare Popowich, Member

 \_\_\_\_\_, Dawn French, Member

*The mission of the Belchertown Public Schools is to ensure that every student meets with success every day. To that end, we pledge to ensure that we have rigorous, standards-based curriculum; instruction designed to meet the needs of diverse learners in every classroom; and access to the global learning community via state-of-the-art technology in schools that are communities of respect and civility for all.*

**2011-2015 Strategic Plan Goals (adopted by the Belchertown School Committee, 3/1/11):**

- Goal #1: To have guaranteed (standards-based and implemented by all), viable (doable and accessible to every student), seamless K-12 curriculum in every content area.
- Goal #2: To have rigorous (standards-based), relevant (grounded in 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills), differentiated instructional practices with the ability to access the global learning community via technology available to every learner.
- Goal #3: To implement a plan to ensure that our students understand the importance of acceptance, tolerance, and respect supported by all adults in the community.

The Belchertown School Committee conducts its business in open session pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21 of the Massachusetts General Laws. The public is welcome to comment only on items on the agenda for this meeting as noted above. If you wish to address the School Committee regarding an item not on the agenda for this meeting, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at 413.323.0423 or via email at [superintendent@belchertown.org](mailto:superintendent@belchertown.org) to determine the best way to address your concerns (see [School Committee Policy BEDH](#)).