

DATE: October 12, 2010
WHERE HELD: Middle School

KIND OF MEETING: Regular
PRESIDING OFFICER: John Blowers

**MARGINAL
NOTATIONS**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Blowers
William Farmer
Elizabeth Herkenham
Patre Kuziak
James Maughan
Lee-Ann Mertzlufft
Joe Pericone

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jim Schultz, Jacqueline St.Onge, Christy Multer, and 8 others.

President John Blowers called the Board meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Herkenham moved and Ms. Kuziak seconded the approval of the consent agenda, which included the minutes of the September 21, 2010 regular meeting of the Board of Education and the authorization of tradebooks.

Motion carried 7-0

Privilege of the Floor – none

Board President John Blowers extended a welcome to our German exchange students and advisor on behalf of the Board. They were accompanied by BH-BL German teacher Kay Kramer who coordinates the program. This exchange program began in 1985 and is possibly the longest lasting program in New York State. For over 25 years a large number of students have participated in the exchange program and it has had an extremely important impact on their lives. It helps to provide a better intercultural understanding and global awareness. Appreciation was expressed to the Board of Education, BH-BL Administration and teachers for making it successful. On Wednesday the German students will be visiting New York City. Two of the students spoke and offered that their highlight was living with families and experiencing normal life and activities in this country. They also expressed appreciation for the amount of technology and support, variety of class offerings, and athletic choices offered through school. There were 64 students who applied to the program and they only can take 20. This speaks to the amount of student participation for the program.

ACTION ITEMS:

Ms. Kuziak moved and Mr. Farmer seconded the approval of the probationary appointment of Nicholas Amicucci, Special Education teacher at the High School & Teresa Bashant, ESL teacher at the High School, both effective 10/13/10; the approval of the leave of absence of Colleen Heiner, English teacher at the High School, effective 11/29/10-6/30/11 and Amy Durant, Math teacher at the High School, effective 11/22/10-3/7/11; the approval of the substitute teacher/nurse appointments of Mary Patricia Andriakos, Jennifer Bach, Brian Bee, Jennifer Birns, Danielle Brancato, Elizabeth Comstock, Lynsey Cross, Stephanie Deeb, Kelly Deskewicz, Clarissa, Douglass, Laura Fiato, Francesca Futia, Emily Gioia, Patience Gully, Amy Haskins, Jillian Holst, Benjamin Jacaruso, Helen Krause, Melinda Krowicki, Cheska Lorena, William Mau, Ridita Nizam, Patricia Pitucci, Nicole Provost, Eric Quinlan, Katherine Rice, Nicholas Ronca, Charles Siberman, James Simpson, Matthew Sitors, Denise Sleasman.

Motion carried 7-0

Ms. Kuziak moved and Mr. Farmer seconded the approval of the civil service personnel action as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

Motion carried 7-0

Ms. Herkenham moved and Ms. Mertzlufft seconded the acceptance of the 2009-10 Independent Audit Report.

Motion carried 7-0

Mr. Farmer moved and Ms. Herkenham seconded the approval of the recommendations from the Committee on Special Education.

Motion carried 7-0

NYSSBA Conference

Next week Board of Education members, Superintendent Jim Schultz, and Christy Multer will attend the annual NYSSBA Conference in New York City. Christy Multer and John Blowers will be presenters at one of the sessions. The Saturday session is a business session and presents an opportunity for Board members to express their opinion on the NYSSBA proposed bylaws and propositions. There may be a need for further discussion by Board members after reviewing NYSSBA's position. Jim Schultz discussed some logistics for the trip including expense reimbursement, accommodations, and driving arrangements. He reminded Board members to review the policy. Accommodations were made at a hotel in White Plains for half the price. It is further away, thus necessitating travel arrangements from hotel to conference. Lee-Ann Mertzlufft volunteered to drive her van.

Brobston Meeting

Elizabeth Herkenham did an outreach to Town Supervisors in our four towns regarding the upcoming meeting with Dennis Brobston of SEDC. She heard from Alan Grattidge and Patti Southworth and they are both planning to attend. She also extended the invitation to PTA for representation from their constituents. The meeting is scheduled for 6:30 PM on Oct 28th at the High School. The meeting will begin with an introduction to BH-BL and then Mr. Brobston will explain the role of SEDC and economic development efforts in the area. The meeting will follow-up with questions. Jim Schultz will extend an invitation to bargaining units.

Forum on November 16th

John Blowers discussed the format for the November 16th forum. There will be a panel discussion surrounding global influences and partnership opportunities impacting our region. Panelists will include George Seymour, James Maughan, and Mike Russo. There was a discussion about exploring a fourth panelist outside of the STEM area. Perhaps someone involved in a more creative area – arts, writing, etc. There was a suggestion to contact the Times Union because they have an education liaison. A suggestion was made to use the video from Opening Day with Rick Evan's trip to India and focus on 21st century skills. Next on the agenda would be Global Foundries followed by the panel discussion. There is a need to have some prepared questions for the panelists to address. An idea to have a follow-up survey or questionnaire available after the evening presentation was also discussed.

Principal Interviews

Rick Evans reported that the interview committee has identified eight candidates for the O'Rourke Middle School Principal position who will be interviewed over the next few days. Next the input from the committee will be used to determine if there are areas needing further exploration. Finalists will be selected for interviews with the Board of Education and the final decision will be made by the Superintendent after hearing the Board's perspective, committee perspectives, and conducting background checks.

Finance/Negotiations Meeting

James Maughan discussed the upcoming Finance/Negotiations meeting that will follow the interviews of candidates for Middle School Principal. The meeting will begin with a review of the current school budget including expenditures and revenues, current climate, and external and internal factors. It will be a discussion about Board priorities and basic strategy. There was a suggestion to have the one page summary of the context for last year's budget available for discussion purposes. The finance meeting will be followed by an executive session on negotiations.

Reports & Communications

- Lee-Ann Mertzlufft met with Jim Schultz and Bob Speck and put together a series of history for reporting. She sent out correspondence asking for our town officials to keep the communication lines open and let us know when politicians are in the area.
- Elizabeth Herkenham reported that K-12 Coordinator Bill Mc Quay asked her to help with an upcoming staff development day. There will be a presenter on Nanotechnology across the disciplines and the day will be complemented with presentations from some of our BH-BL teachers. Elizabeth has initiated several outreaches for distance learning and programs partnering with high schools.
- Joe Pericone, as staff liaison for the Board of Education, recently met with staff from the BH-BL Maintenance Department, Transportation Department and the Business Office. At the Maintenance Department discussions included the condition of some of the oldest vehicles and the number of roof leaks at the various school buildings in the District. While Joe was at the Transportation Department, the DOT inspector was there. They talked about the high passing rate for BH-BL and praised the job being done by our mechanics. Joe commented that buses are removed from service if there is even the smallest amount of rust present. Joe also met with staff from the Business Office where they discussed all of their varied duties and how staff is cross trained in order to cover all required duties with fewer staff. The common thread from meetings with staff was that they are willing to go the extra mile because it's BH-BL and they take a great deal of pride in what they do. He will continue meeting with other groups. Joe spoke with Kate Gurley about the new staff reception. He has been working with the financial modeling tool and has data from the last two school years.

- Patre Kuziak attended the Stevens PTA meeting where they were celebrating the students' reading activities over the summer. She expressed that this is a very strong PTA group and meetings are well attended.
- Jackie informed Board members that students in Charlton may be impacted by the closing of Route 67 between Maple Avenue and Peaceable Street over the next couple of weeks. Students and parents have been made aware of the road closing and potentially longer bus rides.
- Rick Evans met with grant writer Sue Lombardi. Using our previous model, staff members would write the grant and the grant writer would only help if there was a need. They are exploring a change in her role to have her actively seek partnerships in the area. She is currently working with SCCC on a large grant opportunity. Rick commented on the class size reports included in the Board packet and highlighted some specifics in the Middle School class size distributions. Assistant High School Principal Dan LeClaire provided some specific examples of class size issues, conflicts, and types of offerings at the high school level.
- Superintendent Jim Schultz was notified by Ray Callanan who is currently the head of IDA that a company is seeking to locate at the McCrea Hill site. They are looking for \$2.5M from IDA and Jim is concerned that the PILOT won't include BH-BL. Jim has asked Bob Van Vranken to attend on our behalf. Jim talked about a recent request to tour our schools from a Global Foundries' family looking to relocate in the area. He offered to host a tour for them, however the message is that we are not recruiting, rather introducing them to BH-BL. After the offer, he received a call from Global Foundries indicating that a consulting firm has been hired to arrange the school tours. Jim met with Teacher Association President Jason Lasky, Rick Evans, and K-12 Coordinator Lori Maloney to discuss RTTT scope of work and expectations. It is very different from the past in terms of national curriculum, assessments, and mandated goals. More information will be shared in the Board packet as it becomes available. The requirements are significant, including establishing a network team of three people to act as an intermediary step between school districts and the state. One of the initiatives, among many, is a measure of persistence which tracks the number of graduates in public education (colleges) and then establishes a target goal. It is flawed since there is no mechanism for tracking the number of graduates in private colleges.
- John Blowers discussed the meeting with representatives from the Teachers Association (TA) scheduled for Nov 8th. Most Board members are available to attend and they can expect up to ten TA members to attend per Jason Lasky. John mentioned that a neighborhood committee from the area around the Hostetter Building has expressed interest in attending a Board meeting to discuss the sale of the Hostetter building. John attended the BH-BL Homecoming event and commented on its' success. He expressed appreciation for the high level of Board activity at school and community events.

Ms. Herkenham moved and Mr. Pericone seconded a motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline St. Onge
Clerk of the Board