

**DATE:** January 25, 2011  
**WHERE HELD:** Pashley

**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 7 others.

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

Reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Pericone moved and Mr. Farmer seconded the approval of the consent agenda, which included the minutes of the January 4, 2011 regular meeting of the Board of Education.

Motion carried 5-0

**Privilege of the Floor - none**

Elizabeth Herkenham arrived at 7:35 PM.

**Program Review – Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

Members of the Prevention Council presented their findings from the Youth Risk Behavior survey. Patty Kilgore, Director of Counseling Services for The Prevention Council, began by giving a brief overview of her experience. The Prevention Needs Assessment Survey was given to 100% of students in grades 6 and 8 through 12. It was designed to look at substance abuse, anti-social behavior and risk factors. Overall the good news revealed that BH-BL did very well on the survey and that youth are doing very well overall. Most categories have shown improvements within the student population. Both alcohol and tobacco use has fallen. Marijuana use is lower than 2000 with the exception of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade population. BH-BL is doing better than the 8-state norm at all levels. One of the protective factors is how well kids are connected to their families and we fared favorably in this category.

Some of the concerns identified in the survey include: 12<sup>th</sup> graders who are regularly drinking are doing so at higher than the national average, 35% of seniors are binge drinking (more than 5 drinks in a row), 8<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> graders are using marijuana at a higher level than in 2005, more than 50% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders gamble and by 12<sup>th</sup> grade 62% gamble which again is above the county & state level. Changes that happen to the brain when individuals are gambling are similar to changes that occur when drinking or using marijuana. Low commitment to school and lack of perceived risk of drug use are risk factors at almost all grade levels. It was suggested that we may want to look at the students who are not connected and try to identify the specific reasons. Parents are not expressing disapproval of risk behaviors such as substance abuse, fighting, and stealing. 70% of kids report drinking at home, but only 20% with parental permission. Research shows that parents play a very pivotal role in their children's behavior.

Next Patty went over some graphic comparisons to county and state level results and other trending data. More recently they have begun trending data for prescription and over the counter drug abuse. While numbers are low, use is increasing with the grade level.

Conclusions from the survey results are that BH-BL community is good place for children and families, but the transition years continue to be difficult for kids. Most kids don't drink but kids who do are likely to be binge drinkers. Youth need to hear consistent no-use messages at home, at school and in the community. There needs to be a better understanding of the risks associated with drug use.

When asked the question, what else can we do Patty responded that the best practice is a comprehensive K-12 prevention program that begins early and continues through all grade levels. She talked about an idea to endorse a school community coalition that forms an effective partnership with school, parents, and local business.

**Patre Kuziak arrived at the beginning of the Program Review.**

**Elizabeth Herkenham left the meeting immediately following the program review.**

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Mr. Pericone moved and Ms. Kuziak seconded the acceptance of the Financial Reports.

Motion carried 6-0

Mr. Pericone moved and Mr. Farmer seconded the approval of the temporary appointment of Amanda Cotrupi (extension) Grade 5 at Pashley, effective 1/31/11-6/30/11; Benjamin Jacaruso, Math teacher at the High School, effective 2/14/11-3/4/11; Stephanie Manuel (extension), Music teacher at Stevens, effective 4/15/11-5/18/11; Ashley Semerad, English teacher at the High School, effective 1/24/11-6/30/11; the approval of the extension of the leave of absence of Julie Benson, Grade 5 at Pashley, effective 1/31/11-6/30/11; & Cathy Mele, Music teacher at Stevens, effective 4/15/11-5/18/11; the approval of the following substitute teacher appointments: Elizabeth Allen, Christine Anderson, Channah Arunasalem, Allison Bowden, Brittany Brooks, Gladys Brown (RN), Lisa Crawford, Rachel Fishbein, Matthew Friedson, Stephanie Kisel, Christina Lupo, Joanne McCambridge, Ashley McChesney, Jessica Melnick, Stephanie Nolet, Kelsey Norberg, Beckie Nowak, Monica Prediletto, Jennifer Rodrigue, John Rose, Caitlin Ross, George Ryon, Sarah Smith, Anne Spaulding, James Verhagen, Andrew White, Brian Woods; the approval of the Spring Musical appointments: Ann Derrick, Vocal Coach; Carol Hobday, Producer; Karen Russell, Orchestra Director; Stephanie Andrejczak, Business Manager; Chris Lombardi, Stage Manager; Heather D'Arcy, Choreographer; Eric Shovah, Director.

Motion carried 6-0

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

Motion carried 6-0

Ms. Mertzluft moved and Mr. Farmer seconded the approval of the Option to Purchase for the Hostetter Building.

Motion carried 6-0

Ms. Mertzluft moved and Mr. Farmer seconded the approval of Non-Resident Tuition Rates for the 2011 Calendar Year.

Motion carried 6-0

Mr. Pericone moved and Ms. Kuziak seconded the approval of the Contract for Health & Welfare Services with the Saratoga Springs City School District.

Motion carried 6-0

Ms. Kuziak moved and Mr. Pericone seconded the approval of the Joint Program Agreement with Ballston Spa CSD for the Ice Hockey Team.

Motion carried 6-0

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

Motion carried 6-0

**Finance Committee Meeting**

James Maughan reported that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 27<sup>th</sup> and we will be going over the budget material in greater detail. We will also discuss the first public forum, including the format, questions, break-out groups, and mediation services.

**Legislative Task Force**

Lee-Ann talked about the Superintendent's legislative committee's lobbying discussion that she attended along with the Superintendent and Christy Multer. She and Jim Schultz previously reported out on this at the last Finance meeting. Lee-Ann reported that the group talked about tax cap proposals, green initiatives, consolidation of schools, and that if ever there was a time for reform of the Triborough Amendment, it is now.

Also discussed was how to be effective when meeting with our legislators. We need to have a good reputation, come prepared with good information, form good relationships and learn the process. It was suggested to invite elected officials to school events because it is more powerful than going to Albany. It provides an opportunity to promote positive news about the school.

Lee-Ann is seeing new faces at the legislative task force meeting and feels there is a need to better define the ground rules and purpose for the task force. There was a discussion among Board members about whether the Board of Education should take its own position on legislative matters and let the task force form its own position. It was agreed that the members will most likely not be in agreement, however the task force will serve a useful purpose to educate members and bring issues for discussion. Board members would like task force to be more independent from the Board.

## Open Meetings Webinar

Will Farmer went over information from an open meeting webinar provided by NYSSBA. Some of the highlights included: agendas are not required, nor is making them public prior to the meeting, however, posting of the meeting time and place is required. Minutes must be available within two weeks and do not need to be board approved. Minutes are only required to contain the votes for actions taken at the meeting and recording of how the board voted. They are part of the public record and need to be available as per FOIL laws. There is a new law requiring that the meeting room must be large enough to accommodate the crowd and a backup plan if an unanticipated large crowd attends the meeting. There was further discussion about the BH-BL building council meetings which are advisory committees who do not decide on policy and are not subject to Open Meeting Law requirements.

## Reports & Communications

- Patre Kuziak reached out to the Education Foundation and they have agreed to meet on March 9<sup>th</sup> with Board representatives. The purpose of the meeting was described as an opportunity to exchange ideas and talk about the purpose of grants.
- Rick Evans talked about funds being allocated for technology innovation based upon requests received from teachers. He reported that Christy Multer provided a link to a report on return on fiscal investment which rated BH-BL very high in productivity.
- Joe Pericone spoke with a resident who lives in the Hostetter neighborhood about the option to purchase Hostetter and she would like to be kept in the information loop. He met with custodial staff at the High School as part of his staff liaison role. They discussed three issues including the use of subs and how they are assigned, building security, and the scheduling of events at the High School. Joe along with other Board members received a letter about low light levels in certain areas of Stevens Elementary as a result of the District's efforts to reduce electricity costs. He reported that he had done some research on availability and cost of rental property in the area.
- Jackie St.Onge informed the Board that the bids for the second phase of the energy bond construction projects are on the street and will be opened at the end of February. Work will include the Stevens boiler replacement, window replacement at the High School and Charlton Heights, asbestos removal, and roofing. There will be alternate bids included in the event that pricing continues to come in favorably.
- Will Farmer asked Jackie St.Onge to give a brief overview of how retirement contributions for employers and employees are determined and how the new Tier 5 will impact our budget. She will provide information at the next finance committee meeting on Thursday. Will mentioned that Governor Cuomo has a website for his committee and we should take a look at it. He has finished the Policy review for the 5000 series.
- Lee-Ann shared copies of letters that were received from our troops in response to the Pashley donation of candy. She reported that Pashley physical education is on twitter. Lee-Ann Mertzlufft asked Pashley PTA members to become more involved in Board meetings, finance meeting and legislative matters.
- Jim Schultz is looking at background material on social media. He appreciated the response from Mr. Fisher and it has been shared with all Board members. His letter is available at the District office. The Schenectady County Superintendents met on Friday and the sole purpose was to look at shared services. Schenectady has a grant writer on staff and volunteered to write a feasibility study regarding Administrative Services and Support Services. Jim talked about each district offering a course and opening up slots for other districts to send students. Rick and Jim met with Dr. Bullock, President of SCCC to explore online opportunities. We received the \$30,000 grant check from Saratoga IDA. Suburban Council Athletic Directors are meeting to consolidate purchasing for interscholastic sports and they're looking to cut back the number of events. Jim attended a health insurance meeting with Amy Baluch regarding the impact of the Obama Health Care Act. He believes it will cost our district money as opposed to saving money. He commented on the program review and survey done by The Prevention Council. He supports the idea of forming a parent coalition.
- John Blowers discussed the recent NYSSBA bulletin and talked about a Q&A after the release of the Governor's proposal.

Ms. Kuziak moved and Mr. Farmer seconded a motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline St. Onge  
Clerk of the Board