

**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BEVERLY, MASSACHUSETTS**

September 13, 2006

A regular meeting of the Beverly School Committee was held on Wednesday, September 13, 2006, in the City Council Chambers, Beverly City Hall, Beverly, MA.

Members Present: Ms. Brusil, Mr. Manzi, Mr. Manzo, Ms. Decker, Mayor Scanlon, Ms. Cesa, and Mr. Latter.

Also in Attendance: Dr. James Hayes, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Marie Galinski, Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Joan Liporto, Director of Finance & Operations  
Christopher Bougas, Student Representative

President Brusil called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Manzo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Recognitions – Such Other Matters (Kudos, Congratulations)**

Dr. Hayes and Ms. Brusil introduced and welcomed our two new elementary school principals: Jennifer Flewelling, Principal at North Beverly Elementary School and Susan Snyder, Principal at Hannah Elementary School.

**Open Forum for Citizen Input into Non-Agenda-Related Items**

Kristin Smith, a resident of Beverly came before the Committee to ask if they would reconsider her request to enroll her daughter in kindergarten even though she had missed the age-specific enrollment cut off date by 13 days. Ms. Smith explained that her daughter had attended a Montessori School last year and that she felt that her daughter was more than ready to attend kindergarten. Ms. Smith stated that she felt that the school department should screen children on an individual basis. Ms. Brusil explained that the policy is the child needs to be 5 by August 31<sup>st</sup> of that school year. Dr. Hayes pointed out that research shows you should not start children early, if anything you should wait. Ms. Cesa explained that while she could certainly understand the financial hardship the school district has to chose a date and stick with it. After discussion Ms. Brusil stated that while she understands Ms. Smith's position the Committee has to look at the District as a whole and consequently unable to grant her request. She was encouraged to speak with Dr. Galinski about our public preschool program that has space available.

**Opportunity for Citizen Input into Agenda-Related Items**

None

**Records of Meetings**

A motion was made by Mr. Latter and seconded by Ms. Cesa to approve the minutes of the regular school committee meeting held on August 30, 2006 with two corrections. **So voted.**

**Report from Student Representative**

Chris Bougas reported that Beverly High School football team defeated Lynn English last Saturday, 41 to 12, at Endicott Stadium and the girl's field hockey team, for the first time in fifteen years, had beaten Danvers. The fall play is in its beginning stages. There is confusion about the new food policy.

**Communications:**

- Crossing Guards – People are pleased that there are more in place.
- Bus Stop – Dane and Hale Streets, the concern is that it is a very busy intersection and would be better if the stop was a little further down the road.
- No Pets on School Property – Comments from Cove School parents.
- Consolidation Committee.
- Positive comments about the reinstatement of five crossing guard locations.
- Feedback on MCAS, specifically, Ayers Ryal Side,
- Designer Selection Evaluation Committee, which includes Ms. Brusil and Dr. Hayes, will be in action shortly. The responses to the RFQ are due tomorrow. The Mayor acknowledged that they could receive anywhere from a dozen to two dozen responses.
- Positive feed back about the opening of school at Briscoe.
- Boy's varsity soccer team beat Danvers.
- Bus routes – Question from parents as to where they could find bus route information.
- Briscoe parents as well as students are very happy with the building and the start of the school year.
- Centerville parents have expressed concerns over late buses.

- Parent call regarding elementary instrument fee. They feel it is a burden because they had to pay in full up front; if the student does not complete the program they will lose their money.
- Building rental fee – complaint that it is too much money.
- Study hall at the high school; large, loud, and chaotic.
- Clarification – The money for the crossing guard did not come from the school budget, it is being funded through the City.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

#### **Overnight Field Trip Proposal – France**

Ms. Chernyak, French Teacher at Beverly High School and Janet Preston, Trip Coordinator, came before the Committee seeking approval of the overnight field trip to Albertville, France. Ms. Decker stated she would not participate in the discussion or vote because her daughter was going on the trip. Ms. Preston reported that they will be leaving on April 11, 2006 and returning April 28, 2006. Ms. Chernyak and Ms. Preston reviewed the schedule of events that they have planned for the students. The students will be living with host families and attending school with their French host. On their return trip they will stop in Paris for four days. They stated that the cost of the trip is between \$1,600 and \$1,800/per student, which includes all transportation, meals, and museums in Paris. A maximum of 18 students and 3 chaperones (including Dr. Scuzzarella) will participate in the exchange trip.

A motion was made by Mr. Latter and seconded by Ms. Cesa to approve the overnight field trip to France. **So voted.**

#### **2006 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

Dr. Hayes introduced Emily Rockwell, Coordinator of Child Welfare and Attendance, to speak to the Committee about the results of the Youth Risk Survey. This survey was given last spring to the entire student body at the high school. Ms. Rockwell, in her power point presentation, highlighted some of the results of the survey reporting on some of the areas of concern, including alcohol use, suicide, and sexual behavior. Ms. Rockwell answered a number of questions from the Committee Members who were surprised and concerned at the results of the survey. Ms. Rockwell extended an invitation to attend the upcoming Health Advisory Committee meeting with Mr. James Byrne, who had prepared the results of the survey.

#### **Food Safety Regulations**

Dr. Hayes reported that he, as well as members of the Committee, had received numerous questions regarding the new Food Safety Regulations. Dr. Hayes asked Martha Jo Fritz, Director of Food Services, to give the Committee a summary of what the new regulations mean for us. Ms. Fritz reported that there are three issues that have raised questions: Wellness Policy, Food Safety Policy, and the School Lunch Program. The Wellness policy addresses the nutritional quality of the food as well as portion sizes; Food Safety – is for the Food Services Program itself. Ms. Fritz said that they have to be licensed and have already scheduled Board of Health Inspections, which are posted in the schools.

Much of the confusion and questions for Ms. Fritz were about bringing food into the schools. Ms. Fritz explained that any food brought into the schools (during the day for classroom parties or to be sold) should be wrapped in the packing it came in from the grocery store. Ms. Fritz informed the Committee that the Food Service Dept. will prepare the food for classroom events (for a price) and any food stored in the kitchens had to come through an approved vendor.

#### **Ayers School**

Dr. Hayes addressed the committee with regards to the article in the newspaper on MCAS and how it relates to Ayers not making AYP. Dr. Hayes stated that while this is a concern it is something we were aware of a year ago. Dr. Hayes reported that Ayers has put in place a major curriculum initiative called Bay State Reading. It offers support for the principal as well as the teachers on how reading instruction is delivered in the classroom. Dr. Hayes reported that over the summer all of the Ayers teachers participated in a four day institute with Bay State Readers training. The school has also changed its schedule to reflect more time for literacy.

Dr. Hayes spoke about the importance of district-wide internal assessments. He acknowledged that Ayers has used a couple of internal assessments and that the results for Grade 2, were that the students are reading on or above grade level. Dr. Hayes stated that two other schools look like they may not make AYP; McKeown and North Beverly. However they were not on the list of schools in need of improvement because it was not a two year failure to meet the state guidelines for improvement.

Ms. Cesa expressed that it seems that a lot is being done for reading and she is worried not enough is being done for math. Dr. Hayes explained that reading does impact math achievement. Dr. Galinski said one of the main focal points is changing the structure of school and how instruction is delivered in the classroom.

Dr. Hayes commented on a letter sent home with every child by the Ayers' Principal. In that letter she talked about the MCAS results, the option of open enrollment, school improvement plan, etc.

Dr. Hayes then referenced a report from the Mass. Association of School Superintendents by Mass Partners for Public Schools. He agrees with the findings that there is a high failure rate with MCAS. Every two years there is a new target and it gets higher and higher. With every two year cycle more and more schools systems will be challenged. He commented on the desire to see value added assessment instead of assessment of a population that changes each year.

**Dedication of Briscoe Auditorium**

Dr. Hayes reported that as of now the Briscoe Middle School will dedicate the auditorium in honor of former teacher, Virginia Goding, during their first concert. The concert is scheduled for either the 12<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> of December. Dr. Hayes said he would let us know as soon as the information was available.

**Committee Reports**

**Standing Committee on Finance and Facilities: Paul Manzo, Chairperson**

The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 20, 2006 in the Memorial Building, Room 164 at 7:00 p.m.

**Standing Committee on Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Life: Annemarie Cesa, Chairperson**

Ms. Cesa reported that the Curriculum, Instruction and Student Life Committee had met on Wednesday, September 6, 2006. Ms. Debra O'Connor, Director of Pupil Personnel, spoke to the Committee about the Special Education Department and the many, many services they offer. Ms. Cesa stated that she was very impressed with the services that are provided by this Department to our children. She reported that the Special Education Department services approximately 1000 children (20% of the student population) and that they have been able to integrate some of these children into the regular education classrooms. In addition, last year they received \$1.1 million in Special Ed grants.

**New Business**

None

**Opportunity for Questions from the Press**

None

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Maria Decker  
Secretary