



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 26, 2015**

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

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

**ADMINISTRATION:** Mrs. Karol Coffin, Superintendent of Schools (present); Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services(present); Mr. Edward Dunn, Contracted School Business Manager(present); Christine Vigneux, Principal BHS(present); Doug Daponde, Assistant Principal BHS(present); Robert Kuhn, SRE Principal(present); Thomas Ruscio, JBMS Principal(present);

**BHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:** Michael DeBarge, Sienna Nielsen, Benjamin Stone

**VISITORS:** Robert Lachance Director of Building & Grounds; Ben Admussen, Data Admin; Phyllis DuComb, Nurse Leader; Eileen Farrington

### Minutes

- I. Call to order  
Superintendent Coffin called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.
  
- II. Reorganization of the School Committee
  - A. Election of officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary  
Motion: Dr. Knapp moved nominate Ms. Bogdanovich as Chair of the School Committee  
Second: Mr. Fritsch  
Vote: 2,3,0  
  
Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to nominate Mr. Fritsch as Chair of the School Committee.  
Second: Ms. French  
Vote: 4,1,0  
  
Discussion: Ms. Bogdanovich noted that Mr. Fritsch would have more time to dedicate to the position of chair than she would. Mr. Fritsch noted this would be the last year he would accept the position and that someone would need to learn the position.  
  
Motion: Mr. Fritsch moved nominate Ms. Bogdanovich as Vice-Chair of the School Committee  
Second: Ms. French  
Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Dr. Laughner questioned whether there is information available outlining the responsibilities for each position. Mr. Fritsch answered he would forward that information to Dr. Laughner.

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to nominate Ms. French as Secretary of the School Committee.

Second: Ms. French

Vote: 5,0,0

Motion: Mr. Fritsch moved to nominate Dr. Knapp as Secretary of the School Committee.

Second: Ms. French

Vote: no vote

Discussion: Dr. Knapp noted as Secretary there are not a lot of responsibilities and he would be fine passing the position on to someone else. Ms. French noted she would be fine with accepting the position.

B. Appointment of Subcommittee Members: (2 required)

1. Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for members.

Dr. Knapp and Dr. Laughner volunteered.

2. Personnel & Policy

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for members.

Ms. Bogdanovich and Dr. Laughner volunteered.

3. Property & Transportation

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for members.

Mr. Fritsch and Ms. French volunteered.

4. Finance & Budget

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for members.

Dr. Knapp and Dr. Laughner volunteered.

C. Appointment of liaisons to Advisory Committees (1 required)

1. Healthy & Safer Schools

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for liaisons.

Mr. Fritsch and Ms. Bogdanovich volunteered.

2. Jessica's Boundless Playground Committee

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for liaisons.

Ms. French Volunteered.

It was noted that the committee would be dissolved after the final invoice was paid.

3. Technology Advisory Committee

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for liaisons.

Dr. Laughner volunteered.

D. Appointment of member to the Collaborative for Educational Services Board of Directors

Mr. Fritsch requested a volunteer for member.

Dr. Knapp volunteered.

Ms. Bogdanovich noted the Collaborative meets every other month either in Northampton or Whately on a Wednesday evening. The Collaborative services the special needs for districts.

E. Appointment of Sick Bank Committee Members (2 members needed for teachers, 1 member needed for paras, secretaries, food service, custodians, single contract employees)

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for members.

Mr. Fritsch and Ms. Bogdanovich volunteered.

F. Appointment of Warrant Signatories.

Mr. Fritsch requested volunteers for signatories.

Dr. Laughner and Dr. Knapp volunteered.

III. Special awards and presentations

A. Phyllis DuComb, School Nurse Leader, Highlight

Ms. DuComb presented the school nurse highlights. She presented data collected by the school nurses from September through April of the school year.

- 3,200 students seen per month
- 61 sent home
- 95% returned to class

Ms. DuComb explained the different interventions done by school nurses on a daily basis. Dr. Knapp questioned the 3,200 student rate when our district has 2,500 students. Ms. DuComb noted that number covers any visit to the nurse's office. Ms. Bogdanovich questioned the heading "intentional". Ms. DuComb explained that would be if a student struck, bit, or scratched a staff member. Dr. Laughner questioned whether there are historic numbers available. Ms. DuComb responded this is only the second year the data system has been in effect. She notes there is a significant increase in behavioral visits over the last 10 years. Superintendent Coffin noted there is an added .5 nurse in the budget. Ms. DuComb mentioned that CHCS nurse saw 80 students in one day last week.

Ms. DuComb noted the School Department sent 5 people to the opiate conference. She went on to note that Belchertown had 3 accidental heroin deaths in 2014. She shared a presentation with the School Committee titled "Teen Alcohol Use Wires the Brain for Addiction". Ms. DuComb mentioned the district did questionnaires in school and the results would be available soon. Ms. Bogdanovich noted that education with regard to better decision making at a younger age would be

appropriate discussion.

Dr. Knapp asked Ms. DuComb what she thought of the DARE program. Ms. DuComb responded it is a good program but not enough. Dr. Laughner asked where the discussion should take place. Ms. Bogdanovich posed a possible round table discussion. Mr. Cameron noted his and Ms. DuComb's attendance at the Quabog Valley Substance Abuse discussions involved how to get more attendance and more involvement from school officials in the Valley.

Discussion went on to potential causes of addiction, who in the community should get involved in the discussion and what committee should add this to their agenda.

Dr. Knapp questioned Ms. DuComb with regard to the category reproductive and why that has a 0. Ms. DuComb noted that there does not seem to be any school nurse visits for this.

IV. Update from BHS Student Advisory Council representative, Ben Stone  
Ben Stone updated the School Committee on District activity.

- **CSS**; Nick Bannon from 22 News will visit to discuss weather
- **SRE**; 3 Grade will be visiting the Quabbin Reservoir and the Bird of Prey exhibit will be Thursday.
- **CHCS**; June 1-3 Safe Trailer, June 3 Step Up Day for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, June 3-4 Natures Classroom, June 4-5 DARE bowling, June 5 6<sup>th</sup> grade Showcase & Art Night
- **JBMS**; May 20<sup>th</sup> was the JBMS Talent Show for the After School Program, June 9 is Awards Night, June 11<sup>th</sup> Lake Compounce, and June 19 8<sup>th</sup> grade Aloha Dance.
- **BHS**; Music Awards tomorrow night, May 29 BHS Buddies Dance, May 31 Senior Prom at Boston Harbor, June 3 Senior Picnic, June 4 Senior Breakfast and Senior Awards, June 7 Graduation.

V. Public comment regarding items on the agenda  
There were no public comments regarding items on the agenda.

VI. Approval of minutes  
A. May 12, 2015 Minutes  
Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the May 12, 2015 minutes.  
Second: Ms. Bogdanovich  
Vote: 4,0,1 (Dr. Laughner abstained)

VII. Reports and recommendations of the Superintendent  
A. Recommendation for additional School Choice seats  
Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent for the additional School Choice seats.  
Second: Ms. French  
Vote: 5,0,0  
Discussion: Superintendent Coffin presented the recommendation for addition of 2 school choice seats, one in kindergarten and one in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. There were 27 applications. Superintendent Coffin noted that she checked with the school principals and it was agreed that the classes could absorb the additional students

with no negative impact. Dr. Laughner questioned what the class sizes are. Superintendent Coffin noted that kindergarten is 18 and 6<sup>th</sup> grade runs 22-23 students which is a little low for 6<sup>th</sup> grade and typical for kindergarten. Dr. Laughner questioned what the monetary addition or loss is for school choice seats. Mr. Dunn noted the district receives \$5,000 per school choice seat added and the loss runs about \$5,000 for students that leave the district. Mr. Dunn and Dr. Knapp also noted that the loss is more expensive for students that go to charter schools. The district currently has 92 at Pathfinder. Superintendent Coffin will check on the numbers that have left for school choice other than Pathfinder. Dr. Laughner questioned whether the school choice students have the seat until graduation? Superintendent Coffin responded that they do keep the seat until graduation.

- B. JBMS Out of State Field Trip Request to Lake Compounce in Bristol, CT  
Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the field trip request to Lake Compounce.

Second: Ms. French

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Mr. Ruscio spoke to the field trip request. This is an annual trip the JBMS students take.

- C. Personnel Updates (Appointments, Resignations, Retirements)

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to approve addition of Personnel Updates.

Second: Ms. Bogdanovich

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Superintendent Coffin noted this would keep the School Committee updated on personnel in the district.

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

- A. Collaborative for Educational Services (Ms. Bogdanovich)

Ms. Bogdanovich noted there will be a meeting tomorrow night.

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

Dr. Knapp noted nothing at this time.

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

Ms. Bogdanovich noted at the last meeting they discussed the playground access and recess at CHCS. She visited a couple of days during recess. They discussed adding signage regarding school use during the day and received town approval. Mr. Lachance noted the sign will read "Welcome to Jessica's Boundless Playground. Please be advised the playground will see increased use during 11:30 and 1:30 during school days." Dr. Knapp noted his concerns with regard to public access to students during the school day recess.

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

Mr. Fritsch noted that once the final invoice is paid the committee is scheduled to be dissolved.

- E. Personnel & Policy (Ms. Popowich/Ms. Bogdanovich)  
Ms. Bogdanovich noted there is nothing at this time.
- F. Property & Transportation (Dr. Knapp/Mr. Fritsch)  
Dr. Knapp noted there is nothing at this time.
- G. Finance & Budget Subcommittee (Dr. Knapp/Ms. French)  
Dr. Knapp noted there is nothing at this time. There is pending business with regard to athletic fees and the Town capital improvement budget.
- H. Technology Advisory Committee (Mr. Fritsch)  
Mr. Fritsch noted there is a meeting on June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### IX. New business

- A. Status and Approval to move forward on bid projects – Robert Lachance  
Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to authorize the School Committee to approve recommendations.  
Second: Dr. Laughner  
Vote: 5,0,0
  - 1. CO - Handicap Ramp  
Mr. Lachance presented the information. After bid the project is scheduled to start this summer and be done by the fall.
  - 2. JBMS - Roof Repairs, JB  
Mr. Lachance noted this money was approved at Town Meeting in the amount of \$37,000. Dr. Knapp questioned if this was scheduled for to be completed this summer, Mr. Lachance noted that it is scheduled for this summer.
  - 3. BHS - Chiller  
Mr. Lachance spoke to the BHS chiller replacement. There was an insurance payment of \$150,000. Bid open on Friday. Architect will have to send recommendation to the Superintendent. Dr. Knapp questioned whether this would also be completed this summer. Mr. Lachance noted this project will take 8-10 weeks from time of order. District will also receive \$4,000-\$5,000 in a National Grid rebate.
- B. Jessica's Boundless Playground Invoice – Robert Lachance  
Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve invoice #1141506 in the amount of \$49,495  
Second: Ms. French  
Vote: 5,0,0  
Mr. Lachance spoke to the invoice. Town Meeting approved the funds in the amount of \$49,000. A 24X24 pavilion is still to be built with tables to be installed. Mr. Lachance noted this is to provide shade for the area. Mr. Lachance explained the

Town pays the invoice and the School Dept. signs off on the invoice.

Dr. Knapp questioned how the pavilion would impact the recess area. Mr. Lachance noted it is meant to be to the left of the playground area and would not affect the field area of recess. Healthy and Safer School Subcommittee met to determine the signage for playground. It was approved by the Town as well. Dr. Knapp noted his concerns regarding public access and not enough space for recess fields. Ms. Bogdanovich noted the recess aides do let the public know that students will be using the playground and there are 2 aides on the playground and 3 on the field during recess. Ms. Bogdanovich noted the Healthy and Safer Schools Committee will discuss adding another aide. Mr. Lachance noted the school district will manage the playground according to contract. Dr. Laughner expressed concern with public access when a CORI is needed for any volunteer in the schools. Mr. Fritsch noted this would be a discussion for Healthy and Safer School Subcommittee.

C. Annual approval of CHCS Pool Cost Agreement – Ed Dunn

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the CHCS cost agreement.

Second: Ms. French

Vote: no vote

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to table item to the next meeting.

Second: Dr. Laughner

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Mr. Dunn presented the agreement. Pool is a joint venture between the town and the school. MSBA does not reimburse for the pool. Mr. Lachance reviews the contract and expenses and determines the percent to be paid by the Recreation Department. Ms. Bogdanovich questioned the 85% electricity paid by the school. Mr. Lachance and Mr. Dunn answered that is based on the total cost of electricity for the school. Cost of running the pool would be 15% of the total. Cost to be paid by Recreation Dept. is \$16,345.

D. School Messenger - Ben Admussen

Mr. Admussen spoke to the change to School Messenger from Blackboard Connect 5. This is just a different software and vendor. Blackboard Connect 5 had many dropped calls among other issues. School Messenger is the largest vendor for this type of software. Mr. Admussen checked with other districts using this software and heard favorable reports. Mr. Fritsch questioned whether we could let parents know how to establish all communication for the schools. Ms. French questioned if the new system will continue to utilize the same numbers and notifications. Mr. Admussen noted that text messages are limited to 160 characters no matter what program you use. Ms. French suggested a technology table at all open houses. Mr. Admussen also suggested Principal's give the information during open house speeches.

E. Volunteer Recognition Program Initiative

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to have the Personnel and Policy Committee take on the volunteer recognition initiative.

Second: Ms. French

Vote: 5,0,0

Discussion: Ms. Bogdanovich presented the initiative. She would like to have a form of recognition for PTO, Grandparent program, parent library volunteers, etc. perhaps a party or a volunteer of the year. Ms. French noted there is a National Volunteer Day. Mr. Fritsch noted the principals may be able to recommend volunteers for an award, one for each school. Dr. Knapp noted he would be uncomfortable picking just one for recognition. He asked that a committee come up with a proposal. Mr. Fritsch noted the proposal could be an acknowledgement party and should have outside funding. Dr. Laughner recommends deeper thinking about proposal. Dr. Knapp recommends Personnel and Policy look into this.

X. Unfinished business

Dr. Knapp noted the traffic study and the honors math is still unfinished.

Superintendent Coffin noted Innovative Data is doing the traffic study today and tomorrow. Superintendent Coffin also noted that the middle school and high school are looking into the honors math in grade 7. She will get back with the numbers of honors students for next year.

XI. Correspondence

A. May 26, 2015 Agenda

B. May 12, 2015, Minutes

C. JBMS Out of State Field Trip Request

D. Jessica's Boundless Playground Invoice

E. CHCS Pool Cost Agreement

F. Letter to all employees regarding CORIs (Information only)

XII. Adjourn

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to adjourn at 9:18 pm.

Second: Dr. Knapp

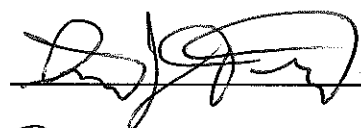
Vote: 5,0,0

Respectfully submitted by,

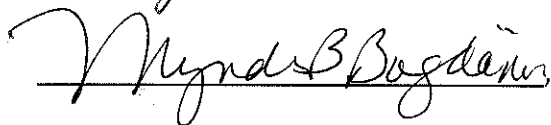
Ramona Griffin

Non-Confidential Recording Secretary to the School Committee

School Committee members' signatures:



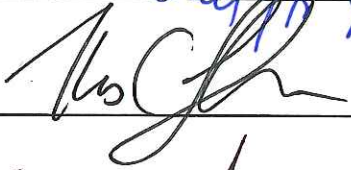
Richard Fritsch, Chair




Myndi Bogdanovich, Vice Chair



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

  
\_\_\_\_\_, Thomas Laughner, 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](#)).