

A Retreat of the Brockton School Committee was held this morning in the Main Conference Room of the David E. Crosby Building, at 8:30 o'clock.

Present: Mayor Balzotti; Mr. Minichiello; Mr. Robinson; Mr. Donegan; Mrs. Joyce; Mr. Healy; Mr. Sullivan; Superintendent Kathleen Smith

Also

Present: Mr. Jerome, Mr. Thomas

Absent: Mr. Carpenter

Note: These minutes contain a summary of the meeting and list items that were under discussion. A copy of the agenda is attached.

Mayor Balzotti called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Mrs. Smith welcomed School Committee members and others, noting that this is her first retreat as the new Superintendent. She then deferred to Mr. Jerome to discuss the first two items of the Retreat agenda, under *School Committee Inquiries*:

Universal Pre-K and Kindergarten Age Roll Back.

Mr. Jerome discussed the following items and plans, re. the Barrett Russell School:

- Four Pre-K classrooms have been added;
- A plan exists for Pre-K and three and four year old children to be in a full-day program;
- Next year, one more Pre-K classroom will be added; there are 14 classrooms, already;
- Will have a Pre-K program housed at the school with 20 students; a total of 40, three and four year old students will be served in half-day sessions;
- There are two pilots: Gilmore and the Adult Learning Center (ALC); the ALC pilot is grant funded.

Mr. Jerome said that a group of Brockton Public Schools educators were sent to the Harvard Education School, and they meet once, monthly. Their philosophy is, ***“Get the kids as early as you can, and get them trained – they will be more successful in Grades 7 and 8.”***

Mr. Jerome said, *“Planning for next September needs to begin this September; Universal Pre-K is a two- to three-year goal.”*

The Superintendent said that Universal Pre-K touches on facility/space planning.

Mr. Minichiello encouraged that the School Committee meet by mid-year to seriously discuss facility issues.

Mr. Sullivan inquired about language barriers and transportation, and Mr. Jerome responded.

Hiring BPS Teachers and Staff re. Residency

As Mr. Carpenter, who was absent, submitted the above item, the topic was very briefly noted, and Committee members moved on. (*Please see p. 4 of minutes re “Proposed Policy Statement” re. qualified City residents as employees of BPS.*)

Mayor Balzotti expressed the importance of promptness in attending School Committee meetings.

School Security, All Levels/School Resource Officer (SRO)

The Superintendent and Messrs. Jerome and Thomas spoke to Committee members re. safety in the schools. In response to Mr. Minichiello’s suggestion to hold unannounced, periodic security wand checks in the schools, Mrs. Smith said she is interested to know what other systems find most effective.

Mr. Thomas stated that the one thing that keeps the building safe is the *tipping* given by the students. He said that he would look into purchasing more security wands.

Mr. Minichiello said that the community needs to hear that the School Department and School Committee are thinking of and planning for the safety and security of the schools. Mrs. Smith said she would place the topic on the next School Committee agenda for open discussion, and mentioned the planning of a future safety and security event for parents in the evening, at Brockton High School.

Mr. Donegan asked why the SRO’s are at the middle school level only, and Mr. Thomas explained that the grant provides no funding for them at the high school level. Mr. Donegan asked if the City could help, and the Mayor responded.

Mr. Thomas said that the School Police are trained as SRO’s. Three new officers have just finished training, and Lt. Mills has taken over the SRO’s.

Middle School Curriculum Alignment

Mr. Minichiello said that here needs to be **a)** more communication in K-8, a sharing of successes, and **b)** uniformity in all schools. Mr. Minichiello gave a hypothetical example of what he meant by uniformity, using math as his key concern, and asked if his child, who moved from one school to another in the system, would be in the same place in mathematics at the receiving school. Mr. Jerome responded, adding that

consistency is in the benchmarks. He said while conducting his school walkthroughs, the schools are doing the same thing.

Mrs. Smith said there is mapping for the curriculum. She also said that BPS needs a middle schools person, and she would like to implement an *academic council*.

Mr. Robinson suggested that idle-time minutes in the buildings should be collected and used for a one-hour academic meeting each month. Mr. Jerome described what currently occurs at the middle school level re. teachers meeting with the associate principal. He said that the administration will work at getting the principals and associate principals together.

The Superintendent suggested holding a “best practices day,” using the IT model for a Saturday meeting.

Bullying Policy

Superintendent Smith stated that changes to the BPS Bullying Policy will be made in accordance with the new amendments made available by the MASC. She said that there needs to be in place professional development for new teachers on this subject.

Mr. Jerome said that the police department has money for safety training, and John Snelgrove, Department Head of Guidance, Pre-K-8, and Mary Ellen Kirrane, Department Head of Wellness, Pre-K-8, will set up training at the middle school level. Part of the funding will be used for the second-step training. Daily, Mr. Snelgrove obtains the police log from the previous evening, and makes calls to those schools having students who were affected by various occurrences.

Breakfast in the Classroom

Mr. Jerome stated that a three-year, \$300,000 grant was approved to provide free universal breakfast to all students which will generate monies from Chartwells. The breakdown of the program is 60% breakfast in classroom, and 40% for the “*Grab and Go.*” A survey will poll teachers on working conditions, but Mr. Jerome felt that the BEA will likely take the lead and encourage the program. “*The extra money from this goes back to the schools,*” he said.

Student Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Mr. Jerome said that he has the results of the abovementioned survey for Grade 8, but not for Grade 5. The Brockton High School survey is completed through the Wellness Department.

Mayor Balzotti said that the City needs the data to put what is in the grants into action. *“The City,”* she said, *“gets contacted by the media regarding acts of violence, and they ask what the City is doing.”*

Mr. Robinson asked if the information collected is information that BPS doesn't use. He asked if the right questions are being asked. Both Mr. Robinson and Ms. Joyce requested the School Department share with Committee members the survey data.

Positive Behavioral Interventions

Committee members and the administration felt discussion on the abovementioned topic had been covered.

Proposed Policy Statement

Mr. Minichiello read the abovementioned statement re. City residents who would be considered for BPS employment, to Committee members. Mr. Jerome and the Superintendent agreed that the proposed policy could be made a BPS-SC policy. *(See attached proposal.)*

Mrs. Smith said that she would like to see some money spent on working with the BEA to encourage BPS students to return to work in the City. Mr. Jerome discussed the possibility of a *student loan forgiveness program*.

The remaining Retreat agenda as created by Superintendent Smith was discussed by the Superintendent and is as follows: *(Copies of handouts will be attached to the permanent record.)*

Building and Maintaining Effective Relationships with the School Committee

A. School Committee/Superintendent Professional Development

1. Interest-Based Bargaining (**IBB**) (Massachusetts Education Partnership)
2. Educator Evaluation Tool (Consultant, MASC, Labor Counsel – Murphy, Hesse, Toomey and Lehane, LLP)
3. Establish Annual Training Schedule (Open Meeting & Public Records Law, Ethics, Confidentiality Regulations, Negotiation Protocol, Special Education)
4. MASC Training
5. Other Recommendations for Professional Development

Note: *The Superintendent asked School Committee members to agree to bring in professionals, i.e., M.A.S.C. officials, legal counsel, etc., to conduct workshops on item #'s 1 – 4, above, and any additional items that Committee members wished to recommend. The School Committee agreed with Mrs. Smith, and is granting her request for Superintendent/SC Professional Development.*

B. *Meaningful Role for Members (SC/Superintendent)*

1. Hold monthly tours of schools, co-facilitated by principal, superintendent, SC
2. Host a coffee on a Saturday with SC at local coffee shop, sports field
3. Host a coffee on a Sunday at local churches
4. Other Recommendations

C. *Collaborate with SC Chair to Assign Subcommittee Work. Assign Central Office Administrators to Working Groups and Subcommittees*

1. Review Policy Manual
2. Weekly Meetings on Tuesday for SC Subcommittees

Note: The School Committee agreed to reserve non-School Committee meeting Tuesday evenings for Subcommittee work. They immediately posted September 10, 17 and 24, 2013 for potential Subcommittee meetings.

D. *Establish Group Norms and Protocols and Review Them Often (Check-list)*

1. Communication
2. Visiting schools/classrooms
3. Meeting with personnel, including communication with Central Office staff
4. Speaking with the Press (Communications Specialist)
5. Negotiations: Bargaining Protocols (Labor Counsel)
6. Ethics

Note: The Superintendent provided to School Committee members a "Protocol Check List" as per the M.A.S.C.

E. *Superintendent Communication with SC*

1. Weekly SC Informational Bulletin / Packet
2. Monthly individual meetings (breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee)
3. Other recommendations

Note: School Committee members agreed with the above documents and meetings suggested by the Superintendent. Mrs. Smith will have her executive administrative assistant contact members for individual meetings.

Creating Effective Team / School & Community Partnerships

A. *SC Meetings Reinforce that the District is a Vision/Mission-driven Organization Focused on Student Outcomes*

1. Begin SC meeting with a student leading the pledge and SC Chair reading the

district mission

2. Add student representative giving a report on BHS
3. Each Pre K-12 school assigned a meeting date for a public presentation, authenticating assessment of work in the schools
4. Calendar for SC by month throughout the year highlighting school improvement work in the district

Note: The School Committee agreed with the Superintendent's plan to provide outreach to all BPS levels, and "strengthen" the role of the student representative. The Communications Officer will coordinate, accordingly, which will include parent invitations.

B. Collaborate with City Officials to Support Public Education

1. Invitation for a State of the Schools Address at City Council Meeting after January 2014
2. Twenty-year (20) Facility Master Plan with Community
3. Quarterly Meetings with City Hall/ School Department Administration responsible for cash management and other financial responsibilities

Note: The Superintendent's Executive Director for Operations and School Administration, having School Committee approval, will begin replacement of modular classroom.

Superintendent's Transition (Entry Plan) (June 2013- January 2014)

A. Review BPS Strategic Goals 2012-2013

1. School Committee
2. Executive Team & District Administrators (August/September 2013)

B. BPS Strategic Goals (2013-2014)

C. Three Year Strategic Plan (July 2013-June 2016)

D. Budget & Priorities FY15

E. Goal Setting meeting by December 2013, review all DIP, SIP, MCAS, Other

The Superintendent Evaluation Process

A. Training for Model Process for Evaluation of Superintendent

1. Consultant with Labor Counsel
2. Training will focus on SC on SMART Goals
3. Hands-on workshop session

Note: Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair, agreed to contact the vendor previously used (SuperSystems) to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation and whether or not the process, which was agreeable to all Committee members, can be fitted to the new DESE evaluation tool. Mrs. Smith provided Committee members with a three-part enclosure re. the regulations on the evaluation of educators.

B. SC Responsibilities

C. Evidence and artifacts uploaded to an online electronic portfolio

D Considerations for evaluation of new superintendent

E. Explanation of impact of the Open Meeting & Public Records Laws

New Superintendent Induction Program

A. Program Goals & Objectives (Brochure)

B. Coach Jim Marini

Note: Superintendent Smith provided handouts which included a vitae of her "new superintendent coach," Mr. Jim Marini. She spoke briefly of her meetings with Mr. Marini and her appreciation for his guidance and expertise.

Proposed New Positions FY 14

A. Executive Director of Learning & Teaching, 6-8 (Re-establish)

B. Grants Administrator

C. District Web Support

Note: The Superintendent said that she would like to expand the Grants Administrator position. Mention was made by School Committee members of a once-discussed Development Officer position in the BPS. Mrs. Smith also discussed her desire to give additional support to the Communications Officer and the BPS Website. She spoke of having the category "Report Cards for Schools" on the site.

In addition to the abovementioned handouts, the Superintendent also distributed to School Committee members an abbreviated text on Robert's Rules of Order, as well as a document containing the basic elements of Robert's Rules. Mrs. Smith also offered a sample copy/draft which can be used by the recording secretary at School Committee meetings to gather specific information re. those wishing to address the Committee on the Hearing of Visitors portion of the meeting. If approved by the

Committee, this document/format will supersede the existing procedure listed in the BPS Procedures Manual.

Mayor Balzotti thanked the School Committee for their attendance and spoke of the ongoing 2013 Summerfest Program at Brockton High School. The Superintendent and a number of members planned to attend the event.

The Superintendent thanked her executive administrative assistants, Donna Migdal and Wanda Alves, as well as Barbara Souza, former Confidential Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and School Committee, for their assistance in organizing today's agenda and taking the minutes.

Adjournment

The Retreat adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD
Secretary/Superintendent of Schools

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