

January 27, 2010

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting on January 27, 2010 in the Middle School library. In attendance were: Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Gerardi-Voccio, Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Trivella and Mr. McNally. Also present were: Mrs. Muscente, Mr. Dionne, Mr. Yanku, Mrs. Sweet, Mrs. Berry and Mr. Ives, Chairperson of the Board of Finance. In the audience was Mrs. Hardell, representing the BEA.

1. The meeting was called to order by Ms. Gerardi-Voccio at 7:20 p.m.

2. Public Comments/Comments by Representatives of:

- a. BEA - no report
- b. Local 1303 - AFSCME - no report
- c. PTO - no report

3. Minutes of Board Meetings:

MOTION: (Johnson/Downs) to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2009 meeting with the changes requested by Mrs. Downs.

VOTE: Unanimous

4. Correspondence:

Included in Board packets were:

- a. Killingly High School - minutes of the Board of Education regular meeting on December 9, 2009 and special meetings on December 9, 2009 and January 6, 2010.
- b. Woodstock Academy minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting on December 15, 2009 and the agenda for January 20, 2010.
- c. A letter from Mrs. Stellitano notifying the members of the Board of Education of her retirement from her position as librarian at the Brooklyn Middle School.

MOTION: (Downs/Trivella) to accept Mrs. Stellitano's resignation with regret.

VOTE: Unanimous

5. Consent Agenda:

- a. Payment of Bills - a list of bills dated January 25, 2010 was included in Board packets.
- b. Extracurricular - no report
- c. Use of Facilities - no report
- d. Bus Driver Approval - no report
- e. Library Books - no report

MOTION: (Johnson/McNally) to approve the consent agenda.

VOTE: Unanimous

6. Administrative Reports:

a. Middle School Principal

Mr. Yanku's report included comments on the following topics:

High School Choice and Eighth Grade News - Letters were sent to the families of eighth graders asking them to indicate their choice of high school for next year. Responses were due by Friday, January 22nd.

Within the next few weeks we should hear which students have been accepted by Ellis Tech.

Plans for the eighth grade Washington, D.C. trip are set - information went home to families, deposits are being collected, and chaperones will be selected at a later date.

Other Information:

The second quarter marking period closed on Friday, January 22nd. Report cards for the second quarter will be issued Friday, January 29th.

Both the choral and band winter concerts were well attended and the performances were excellent. The hard work of our students was evident. Once again, Mrs. Dehls and Mr. Kelleher did a terrific job preparing our students to perform in front of an auditorium filled with families and friends.

Demonstrating concern through action has been a hallmark of our Student Council. Most recently, our Student Council organized the Giving Tree campaign and is now raising funds to help earthquake stricken Haiti. Student Council members made and sold wristbands and zipper pulls - monies collected will be donated to the Red Cross.

Scientific Research-based Interventions (SRBI) was the focus of our staff development day on January 19th.

Mrs. Downs requested information on the use of volunteers and specifically the security check on those who participated in the eighth grade Washington trip. The review of volunteers for this trip is at a higher level of concern; all volunteers who participate are parents of students involved in the trip; most of these volunteers have been providing volunteer service to the Brooklyn School for many years.

Ms. Gerardi-Voccio requested information on MyRTI Program - My Response to Intervention. Mr. Yanku and Mrs. Sweet commented on the professional development training provided by EastConn to some of our staff members on this data collection program and the need for all of our staff to learn to input data so that Brooklyn can implement the SRBI (Scientific Research-Based Interventions) as outlined in the state's initiative for monitoring student achievement.

Mr. Yanku and Mrs. Sweet also commented on the Atlas Rubicon Program which would be helpful in providing vertical and horizontal alignment of instruction when we have adequate data and suggested that this should be possible in three years.

6. Administrative Reports (continued):

b. Elementary School Principal

In Mr. Caruso's absence, Mrs. Berry noted that the following report was included in Board packets.

Winter Concert - The BES Winter Concert was held on January 14th and our students under Mrs. O'Rourke's direction did a great job. We had a full house and everyone enjoyed the show.

SRBI Update - MyRTI training for all staff was held on January 5th. Brian Gerrity and Glen Lessig conducted the training and introduced the staff to the data system that we will be using as an integral part of our SRBI initiative.

The BES/BMS SRBI Committee met again on January 25th and we are continuing to discuss plans, share, and move ahead with this project.

The BES SRBI Committee is continuing to meet and has drafted a proposal for piloting a Student Intervention Team.

In addition, we recently completed our mid-year Benchmark Assessments (DIBELS and Everyday Math) and this data will be entered into MyRTI shortly.

Everyday Math Workshop - On January 19th our Staff Development Day was devoted to training on the use of the Everyday Math program. The Everyday Math program constitutes our core math instructional program and is used in all grades. This training was conducted at no cost by the company and was well received by the staff.

Audubon Society Programs - The Audubon Society Programs for Kindergarten through grade 4 have begun and have included a wide range of important science topics. Some of those topics covered to date or scheduled are: Kindergarten: Old Man Winter, and Going to Seed; Grade One: Plant Parts, and Signs of Spring (field trip); Grade Two: Don't Call It Dirt, and Worms – Nature's Plow; Grade Three: Rockin' Out, and Early American Farm Life (field trip); Grade Four: The Scientific Process, and Food Chains and Webs.

Winter Recess - Our students have participated in outdoor recess this winter and overall this initiative has been successful. Our students have enjoyed being outside in the snow, and the teachers feel that this has had a positive impact on our students' energy level, attitudes, and performance in the afternoon. Our thanks to the PTO for purchasing some flexible sleds for our students to use.

6. Administrative Reports (continued):

c. Assistant Principal

Mrs. Sweet's report included the following reports:

ERR Report - December 1, 2009- January 7, 2010 - (Time Period #4)

	Minor Infraction 1	Major Infraction 2	Academic, etc. 3	# Students 4
Grade 5	10	3	3	7
Grade 6	16	0	3	8
Grade 7	11	1	22	4
Grade 8	17	2	9	12
Totals	54	6	37	31

- 1 Recess, Lunch, One Class Period +/-
- 2 Full Day ERR
- 3 Make-up Work, Injury, Late to CMTs, etc.
- 4 Only student referred for Categories 1 and 2

The above table shows the fourth, 20 day period of ERR this year. Thirty-one students have been referred to the program for behavioral issues during this time period. Special Education students have not been separately noted in the above data. The table below shows year-to-date data.

Year-To-Date

	Minor Infraction 1	Major Infraction 2	Academic, etc. 3	# Students 4
8/31/09 – 9/28/09	16	3	31	16
9/29/09 – 10/28/09	37	9	56	27
10/29/09-11/30/09	41	8	52	35
12/1/09- 1/7/10	54	6	37	31

Winter Sports

Girls' Basketball - At the half way mark of the season, the girls are in 4th place with 3 win and 4 losses in the division and 4 wins and 8 losses in the overall league. They are continuing to practice diligently. Coach Lohbusch reports the season is progressing nicely. The next game is a home game against Eastford on 1/29/10.

Boys' Basketball- The boys' are also in 4th place with 3 wins and 4 losses in the division and 3 wins and 9 losses over all in the league. Coach Conroy is enjoying the season and says the boys are working hard. Their next game is Friday, 1/29/10, away, at Eastford.

Cheerleading- The cheerleaders continue to cheer at all home games and are practicing for competition. Coach Caron reports the girls are practicing their routines with enthusiasm and spirit.

Mrs. Sweet also commented on the HINI Flu Clinic on January 13th which was held at the Brooklyn Elementary School. Staff from the Northeast Department of Health and members Of the Brooklyn Elementary School were involved in immunizing over 200 students. Mrs. Sweet specifically mentioned Mrs. Brennan and Mrs. MacFarland, Brooklyn's school nurses for their involvement in the program.

6. Administrative Reports (continued):

d. Director of Student Services

Mrs. Muscente commented on the special education enrollment in the various programs.

The total number of students presently participating in special education programs and services remains at 157 with 16 students in out-of-district placement, which includes students receiving special education services at our designated high schools.

Mrs. Muscente also commented on the state workshop on the CMT Program and indicated that the state's plan is to have student participation in this test electronically in the future.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT JANUARY (21) 2010

BES		BMS		KHS		WA		OUTPLACEMENT	
DEC.-09 GR./NO.	JAN.-10 GR./NO.	DEC.-09 GR./NO.	JAN.-10 GR./NO.	DEC.-09 GR./NO.	JAN.-10 GR./NO.	DEC.-09 GR./NO.	JAN.-10 GR./NO.	DEC.-09 GR./NO.	JAN.-10 GR./NO.
PK 16	PK 13	5 16	5 16	9 2	9 2	9 10©©	9 10©©	PK 0	PK 0
K 7	K 7	6 15	6 15	10 3	10 2	10 2	10 2	K 0	K 0
1 8	1 8	7 7	7 7	11 1	11 0	11 2©	11 2©	1 0	1 0
2 9	2 10	8 18	8 17	12 2	12 1	12 5©©	12 5©©	2 1	2 1
3 13	3 13							3 0	3 1
4 11	4 11							4 0	4 0
								5 1	5 1
								6 2	6 2
								7 1	7 1
								8 2	8 2
								9 1	9 1
								10 3	10 3(1 HT)
								11 2	11 3*
								12 0	12 0
								Ungraded 1	Ungraded 1
								Total: 14	Total: 16
Total: 64	Total: 62	Total: 56	Total: 55	Total: 8	Total: 5	Total: 19	Total: 19	Grand Total: 157 (January)	

* - State Agency Placements
 © - Capped at Woodstock Academy
 \$ - Over 50% (High School)
 DP - Diagnostic Placement
 H - Home (N/C)
 HT - Home Tutored
 (G) - Graduated

6. Administrative Reports (continued):

d. Superintendent's Report

Special Education Alternative Education Center - Mrs. Berry reviewed the description of the Alternative Learning Program which was discussed at last month's Board of Education meeting and commented on the staff for the program. Questions were raised about the staff coverage and supervision of students when program staff members are absent.

Union Contract Negotiations - Mrs. Berry commented on the schedule for negotiations. Members of the Board's committee for negotiations are: Mae Lyons; Valerie Downs and Joan Trivella.

After-School Program - Included in Board packets was the letter sent to parents concerning the after-school reading enrichment program. There were comments from Board members and the superintendent about the success of this program and Dr. Berry recommended that this program be part of the curriculum each year beginning in October and continuing until March.

Other Reports included:

- High School Selection by Grade Eight Students.
- Projected High School Enrollment for 2010-2011.
- State Grants and the Possibility of Cuts in State Aid for 2010-2011.
- BEA Contract and the Status of this Contract as of January 7, 2010 - as of this date, the contract is binding on the town of Brooklyn.
- Asset Assessment Committee - Mr. Kowolenko has been requested to participate on this town committee. A report of the school's projects for this committee's review was included in Board packets.

Also included in the superintendent's report were: the fiscal report as of January 25, 2010; and the enrollment report for January, 2010.

7. Public Comments:

Mr. Ives reported for the Board of Finance on the town's budget, the use of the stabilization funds in the federal stimulus package, and the need to work toward reducing the school budget by 10-15% in the 2010-2011 school year to address the financial problems facing Brooklyn.

Following a long discussion on budget problems and the impact on next year's budget, Board members decided to schedule a budget meeting on February 11th at 3:30 p.m. if this date is convenient with Mrs. Lyons and Mrs. Johnson. An alternate date was Tuesday, February 9th at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Ives left the meeting after his presentation.

8. Committee Reports:

a. **Budget** - The status of the budget was discussed earlier this evening (see reference to budget in the Superintendent's report).

b. **Policy** - Brooklyn Board of Education - Policy Committee Meeting - January 21, 2010

Meeting called to order at 2:40 p.m.

Attending: Louise Berry, Valerie Downs, Joan Trivella

Discussion was held on the role of the committee including assessing, amending and/or removing policies as needed to ensure that they are legal, clear, valid and useful.

The group determined that we will meet over the next few weeks to address the packet of policies needing immediate attention and will present them for the board's discussion/approval at the regular February BOE meeting. We will begin meeting monthly to address a few policies at a time until all the policies have been evaluated and, when necessary, improved. After the initial evaluation phase, the committee will meet at least semi-annually to address policy changes in a timely fashion.

Discussion was held regarding the limitations and flexibility the committee has regarding editing policies. Some policies are mandated by state/federal law. We subscribe to CABE's policy service which provides policy change recommendations based on changes in the law and best practices from around the state.

The format of our policies was discussed. While the format could be changed, it would require every current and future policy be reworked from the format provided by CABE to fit our internal format. It was decided that this would be too cumbersome to be effectively implemented.

The following policies were addressed or completed today. If a policy includes multiple extensions, all were addressed.

1212	3542
1312 – partial, revisit	6114
3542 –clarification requested	

The following policies will be reviewed at the next meeting. If a policy includes multiple extensions, all will be addressed.

1312	4152
3542	4252
4000	5145
4118	6141
4218	

8. Committee Reports (continued):

- b. Policy** - Brooklyn Board of Education - Policy Committee Meeting - January 21, 2010
(continued)

The committee would like to eventually receive the policies in electronic format for ease of review and modification.

In addition to the policies, opportunities were discussed to make their implementation more efficient and effective. These included modifying the handbook to include both the elementary and middle school information, the green cleaning policy, the outside food policy, the pet management policy and a calendar for the school year.

The next meeting was scheduled for January 28 at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

- c. Staff Services** - no report

- d. Education Planning** - Ms. Gerardi-Voccio reviewed the minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting on December 21st (see minutes below) and Mrs. Johnson raised the issue of School Within A School Program that she recommended the Board of Education review.

Following comments and questions about the School Within A School Program, Mrs. Johnson left the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Curriculum Committee Minutes - December 21, 2009 - 3:45p.m. BMS Library Media Center

In Attendance: Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio, Sheila. Johnson, John McNally, Denise Nault, Marla Rufo-Pellegrino, AlYanku, Sharon.Loughlin, Glen Lessig, Tom Caruso, Trish Dehls. **Absent:** Diane Wimmer

Recorders: T. Dehls

Call to Order: Jo Ann explained the Board of Education's streamlining of committee functions. The curriculum committee will now function as an Educational Planning Committee and will encompass issues in the areas of Technology, Curriculum, Special Education and Children First. The reports and minutes to share information will be presented and discussed from these different areas. Next meetings in 2010 have been scheduled for January 11, Feb 8, Mar. 8, April 12, May 10, June 14.

Acceptance of last month's minutes: Motion:Lessig/Second:Loughlin

Technology Committee Updates: no update

8. Committee Reports (continued):

d. Education Planning (continued)

Curriculum Committee Minutes - December 21, 2009 - 3:45p.m. BMS Library Media Center (continued)

EASTCONN Minutes~Sheila Johnson is the liaison to EASTCONN and reports there was a meeting on Tuesday, November 24, 2009, East Hampton, CT. Sheila Johnson attends meetings for the Brooklyn system and reports to Dr. Berry. There are currently 2 “shovel-ready” projects beginning developed at this time.

1. Training facility behind the Hampton building
2. Middle College

Sheila expressed that she filters through the information from these meetings for items that are relevant to the Brooklyn district and that she will send out the minutes of these meetings.

There was discussion about the Arts Magnet School as a good option for students interested in the Arts. The tuition to the school is a benefit to the town.

A concern regarding the state budget and the impact on magnet schools was identified

- Dr. Diane Williams, who recently retired as the president of Quinebaug Valley Community Technical College, was the 2009 recipient of the Friend of EASTCONN Award.
- Magnet Schools made presentations: Tracy Goodell-Pelletier, ACT principal, ACT is up to three years. Showed video of classes and activities with “man-on-the-street” type interviews. Impressive. Gino LoRicco – QVMCHS principal, brought autistic young woman and her father to make a presentation, as well as a video. One of the more interesting points is that students must get an A or a B on their assignments or they required to redo the work. “If you put children in an environment with higher expectations for behavior and learning, students respond.” Gino LoRicco, QV Middle College High School principal. Showed hands on activities but some of them, like the water study of the Mashamoquet stream and Project O are currently being done by eighth graders at KIS and other schools. Also, digging a WWI trench for history. Some classes are dual, college students and middle college/high school students.
- Report that Head Start fared well at federal review. Also, Professional Learning Communities program that Head Start has is so successful the Educational Leadership magazine wants them to write an article for the magazine about it. Head Start has been awarded monies to expand to Stafford \$250,491.
- January the facilities committee will meet. They are expected to have shovel in the ground by June 30 on the two building projects currently scheduled. One is a conference center behind the existing EASTCONN building in Hampton. The other is a middle college building on the grounds of QVCTC.

8. Committee Reports (continued):

d. Education Planning (continued)

Curriculum Committee Minutes - December 21, 2009 - 3:45p.m. BMS Library Media Center (continued)

Children First/School Readiness: Jo Ann contacted Heather Larabee about coming to report at this committee and has not heard back from her.

Cost of Edline: Glen has done research on Edline. He informed the committee that Gradequick-which is currently in use is a part of Edline resources. There would be an increase of \$2,900.00 to our current costs for gradequick. The Edline enhancement would give 24hr access to grades for parents, provide homework information and give individual teachers their own webpage. The Pros that were identified: Immediate feedback for families and students. Concerns raised: Possibility of teacher “technology overload”, Infrastructure concerns, Parental overuse. Suggestions made:

- to survey the buildings regarding use, times and training needs;
- Technology Committee evaluate the needs of current online programs to streamline software;
- use BMS/BES websites- adding links to get information to parents;
- use some format to post exemplars of student work for parents to see;
- to investigate Google School and other free sites and open source software;
- use a mentor/mentee or pyramid structure for staff training in new technology;
- it was decided to revisit the issue in a future meeting.

Discussion of Sliding Fee Scale for pre-school: Ongoing discussion. Peg Muscente will be asked for more information. A reminder was made that the sliding scale is determined by social services and can't be set arbitrarily. Tom Caruso made a suggestion for a cost neutral pilot program that would apply a sliding scale for a 2nd half of the day program with the inclusion of at risk students at no cost. There will be more discussion.

Discussion of Homogenous/Heterogenous grouping: There is a current board policy in place regarding the issue of student groupings. The policy would need to be adjusted to provide the additional grouping flexibility to support student learning. Discussion followed around the current middle school model and the needs surrounding differentiation needs in the classroom. The BOE will be given this information.

Other discussions:

Discussion of Indicators of Excellence: A suggestion was made to create Indicators of Excellence and a school-wide “brag sheet” for celebrate student and school community successes or areas of needed improvement and attention. Discussion of BMS Algebra alignment with WA Algebra curriculum.

Discussion CMT scores and areas of improvement and how we will do this: Tabled to a future meeting

Discussion of RTI and what is happening: Tabled to a future meeting

Adjournment: 5:05pm

8. Committee Reports (continued):

- e. **Information** - Mrs. Trivella commented on the need for more publicity to share with community members the school's Green Initiative Program, the Student's Fundraiser for the people in Haiti, and the value of the Brooklyn School and its programs to the Brooklyn community. Ideas suggested included a Brooklyn School Brag Sheet, an article on the number of students in band and chorus, and indicators of excellence.
- f. **High School Relations** - Ms. Gerardi-Voccio reported on the last meeting of the Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees:

In her report on this meeting, she reviewed issues from the minutes of the January 20th meeting of the Board of Trustees:

Student Council:

- Finals for the first semester were held January 21st & 22nd.
- Haitian Relief Effort is being planned.
- Third Annual Snow Ball was held on January 23rd.

Faculty:

- Visitors from China
- 40K smoking/tobacco grant
- Seven students went to the CT All State music Festival.
- HINI Clinic was held on January 15th.
- "Much Ado About Nothing" production was held on March 11th, 12th & 13th.

Headmaster Kim Caron:

- Upcoming budget
- \$91k increase in operation expenses, therefore an extremely tight budget.
- Framework for Advancement: Working on annual BOT orientation to refresh everyone on the roles and responsibility.
- Foundation is well underway.
- Project Tuition Initiative: a plan to look for recruiting private tuition students;
- Comprehensive enrollment management program;
- Leadership and department head restructuring and the special education study are underway.
- Building & grounds-sewer project is going forward and administrators are looking into a 40% reimbursement rate if the town owns the project. The cost of this project is approximately \$200,000.

Assistant Headmaster Al Cormier:

- Unified sports have expanded.
- Project Graduation Meeting - January 31, 2010.
- Open House, January 11, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. for current students and parents.

8. Committee Reports (continued):

f. High School Relations (continued)

Holly Singleton:

- Leadership Council-Administrators, program leaders and curriculum coordinators have met to reorganize their structure and long-term goals facilitated by UCONN.

John Grossman:

- Proceeds from the dodge ball tournament purchased a water buffalo for third world countries.
- Many other groups are active on campus such as Suicide Prevention, Gay/Straight Alliance, National Honor Society, Earth Week, Library Club, Ocean Bowl, Math Team, Drama Club, French Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society.

Academic Committee:

- Large number of Foreign languages on campus, would like to offer general level classes to encourage students at all levels to take a foreign language.

Building & Grounds:

- No projects will be funded for next year.

Policy Committee:

- Several policies are up for updating and the committee is working on the drafts.

Resource Development:

- The committee is working on a profile for the foundation members. They would like to contact sending towns to look for community members to serve and help raise funds.

- g. Recreation** - Mrs. Downs reviewed the report on the January 11, 2010 meeting of the Recreation Commission and commented specifically on: the upcoming events, the Riverside Park site, the establishment of a committee to review sites and explore grants, the status of the Plan of Conservation, and the budget for 2010-2011.

9. Old Business: none

10. New Business:

a. Contracts

Mrs. Berry informed Board members that there are labor contracts to be negotiated - school nurses, middle school principal and property services director.

10. New Business (continued):**b. Woodstock Academy Tuition - 2010-2011**

With the potential increase in tuition at W.A. for 2010-2011, Mrs. Berry recommended that the Board of Education ask the W.A. Board of Trustees to freeze their student tuition for the next year because of the financial hardship it will place on the sending towns.

MOTION: (Downs/McNally) to request that the W.A. Board of Trustees freeze their tuition at this year's level in order to prevent cuts in Brooklyn's 2010-2011 educational budget.

VOTE: Unanimous

11. Other:

Mrs. Downs raised the issue of rate of pay for teacher substitutes and compared the daily stipend to the pay of paraprofessional substitutes. Noting that the substitute teacher stipend is lower than in most towns in the area, Mr. Berry will check with the other towns in the area and place this issue on the Board's agenda for action at the February meeting.

12. Public Comments: none**13. Adjournment**

MOTION: (Trivella/McNally) to adjourn at 11:00 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:

Mrs. Valerie Downs, Secretary