Minutes of School Committee Meeting 03/14/13

A special meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, March 14, 2013 at the Administration Building. Dr. Shea called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Dr. Shea, Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Fuller, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon, Mrs. Miller and Mr. Tarro. Mr. Guida and Ms. Moses were absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Dominguez led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Achievement Recognition

Mr. Messore recognized several achievements across the district.

Barrington High School senior Jack Liang is a winner in the 2012-2013 Siemens Awards for exceptional performance on the Advanced Placement exams in math and science and will receive a $2,000 college scholarship. Only one male and one female student in each of the 50 states are awarded this scholarship.

Governor Lincoln Chafee has proclaimed the week of March 3-9, 2013 as School Social Work Week in the State of Rhode Island, encouraging all state residents to recognize the importance of celebrating the vital role school social workers play in the lives of students and families.

The Barrington Middle School Mathcounts Team placed second in the state. Individual overall results at the state meet included: second-Jonny Zhang (6th grade); third overall and fourth in the head-to-head competition-William Yao (8th grade); fourth-Eliot Laidlaw (7th grade); twelfth-Wanqing Li (8th grade); fifteenth-Michael Lamontagne (7th grade); and twentieth-Haotian Lu (8th grade). With their top four finishes, Jonny, Will and Eliot will compete at the national level in Washington, D.C. in May. The other students who competed in the meet were: Conor McGartoll (7th grade), Annika Kelly (6th grade), Dennis Wei (8th grade) and Sam Yuan (6th grade).

The Barrington High School Lifesmarts team is the new state champion after competing in the annual Lifesmarts consumer competition at the State House on March 8. They will next compete in the nationals in Atlanta, GA.

The Barrington Girls Ice Hockey Team is Division II State Champions. This is the second straight state title for the Eagles. The Barrington High School Boys Ice Hockey Team will begin their Division I State Championship 3-game series on March 14.

The Barrington High School Jazz Ensemble finished second at the 45th Annual Berklee High School Jazz Festival, where more than 100 groups took part in the festival.

The Barrington Education Foundation awarded eight grants totaling $66,542 to Barrington Schools. The grants will fund a 3-D printer, art display board, new lighting and rigging equipment for the
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auditorium and video streaming equipment at Barrington High School; non-fiction print and e-
books for the school library collections at Hampden Meadows, Nayatt, Sowams and Primrose Hill
Schools; iPads and iPad document camera stands at Nayatt, Sowams and Primrose Hill Schools; a
kiln at Sowams School; and ukuleles at Primrose Hill School.

The Barrington High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) competed in the 35th
Annual State Leadership Conference and had 55 top five finishers throughout the conference,
including 18 first place finishers, 14 second place, 9 third place, 7 fourth place and 7 fifth place.
Competition categories ranged from accounting and business ethics to health care administration
and technology concepts.

Information and Proposals

Mrs. Dillon presented an update on instructional technology used throughout the district. The
presentation showcased the technology teachers are using to reinforce the curriculum taught in the
classroom as conversion continues to the Common Core State Standards. Mrs. Dillon highlighted
several examples of digital sources used for learning both in the classroom and at home including
LearnZillion, Bartleby, Sophia, snacktools, GoogleDocs, YouTube and the use of blogs. These
powerful digital tools are used to support students and can be accessed by all levels of learners.
Following discussion, Mrs. Dillon noted that additional devices would need to be purchased to
increase access in all classrooms. The presentation will be made available on the district website.

Joint Discussion on Budget with Committee on Appropriations

Mrs. Kathryn Cadigan called the Committee on Appropriations meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.
Present were Mrs. Kathryn Cadigan, Chair, Mr. Timothy Sweetser, Vice Chair, Mr. Geoffrey
Grove, Mr. Joel Hellmann and Mrs. Rosetta Narvaez.

Mrs. Cadigan proposed to move the meeting to executive session.

Mrs. Brody moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to adjourn the meeting with the
Committee on Appropriations at 7:34 p.m. and go into Executive Session pursuant to
R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for Collective Bargaining and Litigation with
NEAB. The motion passed 4-0 with Dr. Shea, Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez and Mr.
Fuller voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Dr. Shea reconvened the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Mrs. Cadigan opened the floor for questions from the Committee on Appropriations to the School
Committee relative to the school budget.

Mrs. Narvaez asked for an update on All Day Kindergarten and questioned the need for the
program. Mr. Messore reported that the School Committee had formed an All Day Kindergarten
Subcommittee and that the Subcommittee is expected to make a decision by the first week of May
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whether the program will be implemented or postponed. The current placeholder in the budget for the All Day Kindergarten program is $141,000. Mrs. Dillon noted that the feedback from teachers has been overwhelming, noting the insufficient time to cover the increased curriculum expectations of the Common Core State Standards. Following discussion, Mrs. Narvaez also questioned whether the subcommittee would be subjective in their decision making and if additional resources would be needed for special education students.

Mr. Hellmann questioned the FTE (full-time equivalent) teacher ratio per student as enrollment projections continue to decrease. Mr. Messore noted that the process of tracking enrollment and reduction in staff is an ongoing process. Mr. Tarro provided historical data on efficiency efforts in aligning teacher ratio per student, noting that since 2008 there has been a reduction of 15 FTEs. Mrs. Cadigan stated that programs should be optimized and not maintained, with less relevant programs phased out and new programs phased in. Mr. Messore provided examples of this process, noting mandates required.

Discussion ensued on the increased challenge to keep the town tax rate in line with resident expectations. Both committees agreed continued collaboration is important.

Mrs. Narvaez inquired as to the consideration of outside sources to fund the proposed technology needs, specifically the laptops for each student, in lieu of taxpayers shouldering the cost. Mr. Tarro provided examples of how the district is currently taking advantage of grants and collaborative purchasing options and stated the importance of planning and setting resources aside in preparation for the 2015 PARCC assessments. Mrs. Miller noted that the School Committee’s Technology Subcommittee will be using research based decisions to evaluate the proposed technology plan and that a minimum of 350 devices will be required for PARCC assessments. Discussion ensued on the possibility of shared resources across the state.

Mrs. Brody moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:12 p.m. and go into Executive Session pursuant to R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(1) for Personnel; Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for Collective Bargaining and Litigation with NEAB, United Steelworkers and BEST; and Section 42-46-5(a)(3) for discussion regarding school buildings security issues. The motion passed 4-0 with Dr. Shea, Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez and Mr. Fuller voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Brody moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 9:30 p.m. and to seal the minutes and report that no votes were taken. The motion passed 4-0 with Dr. Shea, Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez and Mr. Fuller voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Brody moved and Dr. Dominguez seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:31 p.m. The motion passed 4-0 with Dr. Shea, Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez and Mr. Fuller voting in the affirmative for the motion.