

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
August 19, 2021

The regular meeting of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee was held in the school cafeteria. The following members, staff and others were present:

Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chairman	Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone	Anthony Steele, Asst. Superintendent/Principal
Mark J. Potter of Douglas	Michele Denise, Vocational Director
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton	Thomas Belland, Vocational Director
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale	Lorna Mangano, Business Manager
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon	Barbara Auger, Treasurer
Paul J. Braza of Milford	Skye Bomba, Assistant Principal
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury	Laura Campagna, Culinary Arts Instructor
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge	Jim Brochu, Director of Construction, Mgmt./Facilities
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton	Leah Cook, Student Representative
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge	Emma Conkey, Student Representative
David R. Bartlett of Upton	Bradley Lyon, Student Representative
	Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

Members Absent:
Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chairman

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Vice Chairman Finn. Mr. Finn informed the members that Mr. Hall was not present as he had given advanced notification that he would be away on vacation.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to waive reading of the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting of June 17, 2021 and to accept the minutes as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – B. Auger

3.1. The Treasurer's Report was presented dated June 30, 2021. The report reflected an ending balance of \$7,801,330.86 for Total Funds, including \$829,739.60 in Project Funds, and \$6,971,591.26 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve the June 30, 2021 Treasurer's Report as presented.

3.2. The Treasurer's Report was presented dated July 31, 2021. The report reflected an ending balance of \$8,199,831.65 for Total Funds, including \$722,631.87 in Project Funds, and \$7,477,199.78 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve the July 31, 2021 Treasurer's Report as presented. Mr. Yitts noticed that there was not a line item for Chapter 71 in the report. Mrs. Auger pointed out that Chapter 71 is only received twice a year, typically in the December/January and May/June time frames and therefore not in the July report.

3.3. On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell seconded by Mr. Koopman, the District School Committee unanimously voted on the reclassification of Student Activity Accounts authorizing the closure of certain Student Activity sub-accounts whose purpose has expired. The remaining balances will be reallocated to other Student Activity sub-accounts which have similar purposes.

Item 4. School Committee Fiscal Year 2022 Appointment

4.1. Recording Secretary (Term 8/19/21-6/30/22) - On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli seconded by Mrs. Mitchell and with acceptance of the candidate, the District School Committee unanimously voted to appoint Elise Bogdan as the Recording Secretary for the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee for a term office commencing August 19, 2021 and concluding on June 30, 2022.

Item 5. Staff Recognition - Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

5.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick recognized and thanked Thomas Belland, Vocational Director, for his commitment to BVT over the years. A dedicated member of the BVT school community with twenty-seven years of service in various positions. Mr. Belland will retire on August 31, 2021. Mr. Belland spoke to the Committee and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work at BVT, supported in the various positions held over the years.

5.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick introduced the new Assistant Principal Skye Bomba to the District School Committee and explained that before she started her current role with us this school year, she in fact joined us last year volunteering to participate in optional activities with passion and enthusiasm.

5.3. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the District School Committee that Chef Laura Campagna earned a nomination and a certificate of recognition from the Massachusetts Vocational Association New Teacher Award. Receiving the recognition exemplifies the talent and passion Ms. Campagna brings to our Culinary Arts program, we are glad that she is part of our team.

5.4. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the members that long term science instructor Ray Lehner, is the recipient of the MAVA 2021 Unsung Hero Award for overcoming obstacles during COVID. Mr. Lehner began his teaching role on January 30, 2000 serving as an excellent catalyst of high motivational integrated education for 21+ years.

Item 6. Comments by Student Representatives - Emma Conkey and Leah Cook

Student representatives Emma Conkey, Leah Cook, and Bradley Lyon provided an update on activities which included welcoming the freshman class of 2025 on August 19th with a complementary t-shirt giveaway and a tour of the school as well as organizing a group of volunteers to assist with Freshman Orientation on the 20th. They are planning for more traditional homecoming activities this fall. Dr. Fitzpatrick thanked the three students for their service.

Item 7. Business Manager - L. Mangano

7.1. Ms. Mangano provided a brief update on the FY21 Audit which is currently underway. The audit firm was on location at BVT the last week of July testing on-site internal

controls and compliance. They will be back on-site next Thursday and anticipate their report be completed by mid-October which would then be shared at the November meeting. There are some changes happening with some reporting regulations with fiduciary account reporting to be classified as special revenue accounts, and we are working with the auditors on that. Ms. Mangano is currently not aware of any audit adjustments. She anticipates having the DESE end of year reporting which is due October 1st. The next few months are heavy on the reporting side with state regulations.

7.2. Line Item Transfer:

7.2.a. Restructuring Safety Staffing - On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to transfer \$72,275 from available funds from the School Security Monitors account into the Principal Support Staff and Custodial Salaries accounts. This transfer is the results of enhancement to the District's school security. The restructuring allows for a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) in partnership with Upton Police, while repurposing some funds to Main Office support staff and Facilities. The expanded role of the SRO and the added positions provide more enhanced security while allowing for added responsibilities.

7.3. Donation Approval – There were no donations to approve.

Item 8. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report - A. Steele

8.1. 2021-22 Return to School Plan – Mr. Steele informed the School Committee members we need to discuss and have public comment on our Return to School Plan with this Committee before submitting our plan to the Department of Education. BVT held a Community Meeting on the evening of Monday, August 16th via Zoom with parents, students, and staff to review BVT's COVID-19 Guidelines for the 2021-2022 school year, address questions, and solicit feedback from all stakeholders. Mr. Steele will present the collected feedback at the next School Committee meeting for the members' consideration, decision, and vote following a public forum on the topic. Mr. Steele explained and discussed key parts of the return plan which include a mask policy, vaccination policy, testing strategies for COVID, and strategies for maximizing available space without triggering a distance learning scenario. BVT is currently following the Department of Education's protocol that was issued to all schools on July 30th.

8.2. School Committee members were provided with a document titled, School Building Enhancement Summary List prepared and presented by Mr. Brochu. The document outlined the 2021 BVT building enhancements, projects, and preventative maintenance. A portion of the Painting & Design shop has undergone a significant renovation and Mr. Brochu hopes to have Committee members tour that space at a future meeting. Mr. Finn commented that he was impressed by the list of preventative maintenance completed by Mr. Brochu and the facilities team.

8.3. The School Committee members are in receipt of the updated new personnel listing, which outlines 21 instructional, administration/support staff appointee positions for the FY22 school year. The list recognizes open/recruiting, new roles, and rehires through a manner in

which BVT is able make modifications to maximize the talents of all its team members while staying within the budget.

8.4. 2021-22 School Year Student Handbooks were distributed at the meeting to School Committee members. The handbook was adopted and voted on May 20th and this distribution represents the published version.

8.5. School Committee members were presented with a SkillsUSA Nationals update in the form of a document that included a total medal count of 18 medals; 8 Gold, 2, Silver, 8 Bronze, a historical best for BVT. Mr. Steele explained that the national competitions were judged virtually this year and BVT students earning 8 gold medals was the best record in the country.

8.6. Mr. Steele informed the School Committee that BVT's Decennial Evaluation is taking place during the 2021-22 school year, this is our NEASC 10-year accreditation. BVT is preparing for this visit which is approximately 18 months away, but the entire process takes approximately a year and half of preparation. The Committee members will be presented with the schools mission, philosophy, and goals by the anticipated January 20th School Committee meeting for review and evaluation.

Item 9. BVT 2021-2022 Admissions Status Update - A. Steele and Michele Denise

9.1. Mr. Steele and Mrs. Denise presented an update on DESE's Admission Regulations. Mrs. Denise pointed out that vocational-technical education in Massachusetts is in demand. Resolutely, over the past two years, the DESE has directed an initiative focused on the admission policies of vocational schools. The underlying mission was to advance a set of regulations that would require vocational schools to develop and implement an admissions policy that is consistent with federal and state law and any relevant guidelines issued by the Massachusetts DESE and the U.S. Departments of Education. The members received a summary of DESE's changes in CVTE Admissions Regulations. Mrs. Denise explained and discussed the bulleted list which outlined what areas require a policy change as well as areas where BVT Admissions is already compliant. The handout also covered ongoing BVT initiatives; providing access to all 7th & 8th graders prior to DESE mandates, CTVE Admission Grant FY22 focusing on recruitment to special populations and data collection, and next steps for BVT's admission criteria.

9.2. Admissions Report – The members received a 2021 Admissions Status Report. As of August 19th the current enrollment status is 320 Freshmen, 317 Sophomores, 304 Juniors, and 299 Seniors. Mrs. Denise pointed out the total enrollment of 1240 students, represents 13 more students than 2020-2021. Final application numbers for the 2020-2021 admission season had 766 freshmen applicants, and 74 upperclassmen. Mrs. Denise mentioned that the next admissions season will be underway in the fall with Admissions Open House nights and recruitment to our two-year Drafting & Design program.

Item 10. Superintendent-Director's Report - M. Fitzpatrick

10.1. The members were provided with a School Committee Member Directory.

10.2. The members are in receipt of a notice to all interested parties for the delineation of FY22 subcommittees. The various subcommittees include: Budget, Negotiation, Policy, Insurance, Teacher Sick Leave Bank Advisory, Administration/Support Staff Sick Leave Bank Advisory, Fiscal Warrant Signers 2021 and 2022, Capital/Expansion, Facilities, and Chapter 70 Funding Study Group. Members were asked to review the delineation of subcommittees for FY22 and to verbally express their interest in serving on another committee or remain with the existing committee in which they currently serve. An updated document will be prepared for the next School Committee meeting. Mr. Finn encouraged member involvement.

10.3. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the members that he was a special guest on the new live John Eldridge Show broadcast on Monday, June 21st from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Blackstone's Local Access cable channel 8.

10.4. Correspondence Update:

10.4.a. The School Committee is in receipt of Dr. Fitzpatrick's Welcome Back Letter.

10.4.b. The School Committee is in receipt of the Stimulus Report Letters.

10.5. The members are in receipt of the FY22 Grant Listing as of August 5, 2021.

10.6. The members are in receipt of the School Committee table of organization, revised in July 2021 to reflect policy and administrative functions.

10.7. Superintendent FY21 Goal Attainment Confirmation: Consistent with the Massachusetts model system for the evaluation of the Superintendent, the Board reviewed the documentation of attainments evidence provided. The Committee had previously received and provided feedback regarding the milestone status of the mutually agreed Superintendent's performance goals.

Following discussion and complementary remarks, the Committee confirmed approval of the successful completion for the eight goals put forward and aligned with state standards. To provide Committee members with an additional Superintendent evaluation instrument, each member completed a summary scorecard of ratings consistent with the state DESE rubric.

On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to approve the action for Dr. Fitzpatrick's FY21 Goal Attainment Confirmation as per his contract.

10.8. Members were provided with the FY21 Draft Annual Report for review. This document provided facts and figures of the operations of the school and District achievements that highlight the mission of BVT. Given this is not a final document, members were encouraged to provide feedback. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, the Committee voted in consensus to support the draft in concept to meet strict deadlines of District communities.

10.9. Summer Professional Development Update:

10.9.a. Dr. Fitzpatrick attended the M.A.S.S. Executive Institute from July 12, 2021 to July 15, 2021 as part of his professional development.

10.9.b. With assistance from several support staff, Dr. Fitzpatrick coordinated an off-campus leadership retreat from July 19, 2021 to July 21, 2021 in concert with BVT leadership team members.

10.10. Notification of Retirement:

10.10.a. The School Committee is in receipt of a notification of retirement from Cheryl Hanington, Dr. Fitzpatrick's Administrative Assistant, a dedicated member of the BVT family for nearly 33 years. Accepted with appreciation for service, members expressed that Mrs. Hanington has been an indispensable member of the support team, responding to members needs and that she will be missed.

10.11. Notification of Resignations:

10.11.a. The School Committee is in receipt of resignation from Ana Olivar, PN Instructor from the position of full-time faculty in the Practical Nursing program.

10.11.b. The School Committee is in receipt of resignation from Susan Rogers, as the Accounts Payable Clerk.

10.11.c. The School Committee is in receipt of resignation from John Collins, from the General Cafeteria position.

10.12. The School Committee is in receipt of the Freshman Newsletter, the Bridge.

10.13. The members are in receipt of the Parent Newsletter, the Link. Mr. Steele pointed out that included in the Fall 2021 issue is an insert titled, the Compass. The Compass is the School Counselors newsletter insert, which will be regularly included in future issues.

10.14. The members are in receipt of a copy of the 2021 Selected Massachusetts General Laws.

Item 11. New Business

11. Dr. Fitzpatrick spoke regarding involvement of the School Committee in three transparent public listening activities followed by three actions of the members to discuss and review the 2021-22 Return to School Plan, the Admissions Policy, and the Rescue Act funds use. Following the public forums, members will be prepared to make an informed decision in advancing plans while following required guidelines. In discussion, Mr. Steele explained the public forums will be held via Zoom in an organized and efficient structure designed to elicit constructive feedback while answering submitted questions. Mr. Steele assured members that they will receive statistical information as requested in advance of the next public forum and School Committee meeting for their consideration. All forum details will be available on the school website.

Item 12. Items for the Good of the Committee:

The monthly compilation of news clippings and correspondence packet was provided at the meeting for members to review individually.

Item 13. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on September 16, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. The delayed start time is to allow for a public forum to occur at 5:00 p.m., which will be held prior.

Item 14. Meeting Closure:

14.1. The meeting was declared closed by the Vice Chairman at 8:20 p.m. without a vote to adjourn.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

- Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of June 17, 2021
- Item 3.1. Treasurer’s Report dated June 30, 2021
- Item 3.2. Treasurer’s Report dated July 31, 2021
- Item 3.3. Suggested Motion, Reclassification of Student Activity Sub-Accounts list
- Item 4.1. Suggested Motion, BVVR Recording Secretary
- Item 7.2. Suggested Motion, transfer funds for restructuring safety/staffing
- Item 8.2. 2021 School Building Enhancement Summary List
- Item 8.3. FY22 Appointments/Update on New Personnel
- Item 8.4. Student Handbook
- Item 8.5. SkillsUSA Nationals Update
- Item 9.1. DESE Admissions Regulations Update/Equitable Access to Chapter 74 Programs
- Item 9.2. Admissions Status Report 2021
- Item 10.1. School Committee Member Directory
- Item 10.2. Delineation of FY21 Subcommittees
- Item 10.4.a. Dr. Fitzpatrick Welcome Back Letter
- Item 10.4.b. Stimulus Report
- Item 10.5. FY22 Grants to Date
- Item 10.6. Table of Organization
- Item 10.7. Suggested Motion, Superintendent-Director FY21 Goal Performance Attainment
- Item 10.8. FY21 Draft Annual Report
- Item 10.10.a. Notification of Retirement – Cheryl Hanington
- Item 10.11.a. Notification of Resignation – Ana Olivar
- Item 10.11.b. Notification of Resignation – Susan Rogers
- Item 10.11.c. Notification of Resignation – John Collins
- Item 12. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony Yitts, Secretary