

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
December 16, 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:

**In Person Attendance:**

Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chairman	Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury	Barbara Auger, Treasurer
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton	Anthony Steele, Asst. Superintendent/Principal
David R. Bartlett of Upton	Lorna Mangano, Business Manager
Paul J. Braza of Milford	Eddie Evans, Academic Curriculum Coordinator
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon	Kerry Baldwin, World Language Instructor
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge	Christopher Toulouse, World Language Instructor

**Zoom Attendance:**

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chairman	Michael Norton, Robotics Team Advisor
Mark J. Potter of Douglas	Leah Cook, Student Representative
	Emma Conkey, Student Representative
	Bradley Lyon, Student Representative
	Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

**Members Absent:**

Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone  
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton  
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge  
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale

**Item 1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chairman Hall. Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that Mr. Broderick and Mrs. Mitchell would not attend and that Mr. Ebbeling and Mr. Intinarelli might not participate. A Zoom link was made available in advance for members to join remotely.

**Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts**

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts seconded by Mr. Cray, it was unanimously voted to waive reading of the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting of November 18, 2021 and to accept the minutes as written.

**Item 3. Treasurer's Report – B. Auger**

3.1. The Treasurer's Report was presented dated November 30, 2021. The report reflected an ending balance of \$8,266,520.53 for Total Funds, including \$688,639.47 in Project Funds, and \$7,577,881.06 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was unanimously voted to approve the November 30, 2021 Treasurer's Report as presented.

**Item 4. Student Recognitions - Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick**

4.1. BVT's District 33A Leo Club was one of 13 U.S. Clubs to receive the Leo Excellence Award 2020-2021. The award recognizes clubs that have demonstrated superior performance in serving others, developing and executing creative fundraisers, exercising effective leadership, enhancing the club's public image, and completing administrative tasks. Student Council Representative Emma Conkey spoke on behalf of the LEO Club about their

initiatives and thanked the Committee for the additional recognition.

Item 5. Comments by Student Representatives - Emma Conkey, Leah Cook & Bradley Lyon

The Student Council Representatives provided an update on Council activities. First, the Holiday Drive is close to meeting its \$2,000 goal, which will benefit 16 families this year through shop coin wars, can donation efforts, and staff donations. Second, the Council partnered again with BVT alum Alyssa Banks founder of the Princess Foundation, a non-profit organization helping to wrap presents for the foundation to distribute to Boston Children's Hospital. Lastly, they are looking forward to next week's themed Holiday Spirit Week (Monday 12/20 – Comfy Day, Tuesday 12/21 – Holiday Hat Day, Wednesday 12/22 – Ugly Sweater Day, Thursday 12/23 – Anything But a Backpack).

Item 6. Academic Department Presentation - Kerry Baldwin & Christopher Toulouse

6.1. Mr. Evans introduced Mrs. Baldwin, World Language Team Leader, and Mr. Toulouse, World Language Instructor and French Club Advisor. Mr. Evans mentioned that the other department members are Yakaira Gonzalez and Rosario O'Neil. Mrs. Baldwin gave an overview of the curriculum from the novice level through advanced. She also highlighted an academic credentialing opportunity to be officially recognized by the state for demonstrating proficiency in English and another world language through the Seal of Biliteracy. To earn the Seal of Biliteracy, students must demonstrate high proficiency thresholds on both the ELA MCAS test and a state-approved exam to demonstrate knowledge of English and proficiency in another world language of the student's choice. BVT has chosen to administer the AAPPL (The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages). She also noted that the department is very involved in the school's extracurricular activities and events with students participating in the Multicultural Club and the Multicultural Festival. Lastly, Mr. Toulouse spoke about being an advisor to the French Club and introducing students to French. Vice-Chairman Finn was impressed with the opportunity for students to earn the Seal of Biliteracy, which Mrs. Baldwin noted has been available at BVT since 2019.

Item 7. Business Manager - L. Mangano

7.1. Ms. Mangano prepared and provided a Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District 2021-2022 monthly budget status report dated December 9, 2021. Consistent with long-term past practice, this budget will continue to be monitored for the remainder of the fiscal year.

7.2. Donation Approvals: No new donations were received.

7.3. A Hague, Sahady & Co., P.C. representative presented the FY21 Audit Report. The Committee members had received two reports: the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District Basic Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 2021, and a Single Audit Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2021. The representatives reported that the audit came back with no findings or exceptions. The independent auditing firm was very complimentary of how the District handled its finances and records, reiterating that there were no findings in the FY21 financial audit. In conclusion, the District qualified as a low-risk auditee.

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

8.1. The Annual Staff Wellness Fair was held on December 8<sup>th</sup> at BVT. The theme for this successful event was reset, revive & thrive. Workshops included aromatherapy, volleyball, paint class, financial wellness, mental health resources, and more.

8.2. Tiered Focus Monitoring Audit: During the week of November 15, 2021, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE's) Office of Language Acquisition reviewed the school's English Language Education program to monitor compliance, which is done every six years. While DESE's Office of Public School Monitoring also conducted a review, which is done every three years, to monitor compliance with federal and state Special Education and Civil Rights regulations. There were no findings, and the reviewers complimented BVT as an exemplary school system.

8.3. Mr. Steele introduced a motion to approve the use of (up to) three remote learning days during the 2021-2022 school year. The remote days would be utilized at the discretion of the Superintendent-Director in lieu of school cancellations due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Mr. Steele explained a few of the benefits, such as continuous learning (for all students) with planned assignments, limiting the chance of school ending close to or on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and maximizing the facilities team's time to complete summer projects. On an initial motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Cray, there was a vote to approve the motion. However, Mr. Hanratty shared concerns, and a discussion ensued regarding the approval of the school calendar, the Juneteenth Holiday, and the pros and cons of remote learning days vs. snow days. There were considerations to amend the wording of the motion. However, on a second motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Cray, it was ultimately voted to approve the motion as written. The majority carried the motion with Mr. Hanratty, the only member not agreeing. The Committee requested that if these days are used, they want the attendance data to see if they were beneficial.

8.4. Out-of-State Trips:

8.4.a. Aviation Club: 04/06/22 - 04/13/22 (Kennedy Space Ctr. - Florida). The Committee was asked to authorize a vote to approve the request for an out-of-state field trip from April 6 to 13, 2022, for 28 students in the Aviation Club to visit aviation-themed attractions in Florida. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was voted to approve the out-of-state field trip. Ray Lehner, Aviation Club Advisor, thanked the Committee, noting that the students are looking forward to this trip.

8.4.b. Robotics Team: 01/20/22 - 01/25/22 (Revised Date) (Orlando, FL). The Committee was asked to authorize a vote to approve the request for an out-of-state field trip from January 20 to 25, 2022, to Orlando, Florida, for 40 students to participate in a Disney Youth Education program. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was voted to approve the out-of-state field trip request as presented. Michael Norton, Robotics Team Advisor, also thanked the Committee and noted that the students are looking forward to this trip.

Brief Recess for Policy Subcommittee – Admissions Plan Clarification

In advance of the meeting, it had previously been agreed upon that the meeting would pause for a brief recess. The recess allowed the Committee members who serve on BVT's Policy Subcommittee to attend the Policy Subcommittee meeting that evening to discuss a proposed amendment for the November 18, 2021, approved Admission Policy. Accordingly, the School

Committee Meeting paused at 7:35 p.m. It resumed at 7:45 p.m. with a quorum and its School Committee Members in attendance.

Item 9. Budget Subcommittee Report - G. Finn

9.1. Vice Chair Finn provided a Budget Subcommittee update. The Subcommittee met on November 18, 2021, where Ms. Mitchell agreed to serve as Chair and Mr. Finn as Vice-Chair. The December 9th meeting included the first review of salary, wage, and fringe benefits, instructional staffing patterns, and non-instructional staffing identified by FTE's. As well as the first review of administration (1000) and fixed charges (5000) functions. Mr. Finn reported increases to the FY23 benefits and insurance.

9.2. The Subcommittee met on December 16, 2021, to review all areas previously presented and develop any questions for further review.

Item 10. Superintendent-Director's Report - Michael F. Fitzpatrick

10.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick provided a preliminary report on the Annual Superintendent's Fundraiser Dinner. He mentioned that last year students and staff demonstrated adaptability that allowed for a smooth, safe, and professional presentation of the gourmet dinner following COVID-19 protocols. The goal is to do the same this year, with an anticipated date of March 17, 2022. The theme of this year's event is Ireland. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Yitts, it was voted and unanimously approved to have a one-day liquor license allowing alcohol to be served by staff.

10.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick met with members of the Hopedale Foundation on November 29, 2021. The Foundation funds the Hopedale Foundation Trade Education Scholarships, which offers six scholarships to be awarded to graduating students who are Hopedale residents and plan on furthering their education prior to entering the workforce. They plan to increase the number of available scholarships in the next cycle.

10.3. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that he visited the Royal Family KIDS camp in Western Massachusetts on December 10, 2021. Accompanying him to the Retreat at Norwich Lake were Vocational Director Dr. Connors, Drafting & Design instructor Mr. Aukstikalnis, and 11 Drafting & Design students. The students had created multiple conceptual designs for a chapel using architectural drafting and design and computer-aided drafting. The camp representatives had visited BVT to view the chapel designs. They will eventually select one and build a chapel to help kids in need who attend this camp. The students were able to see the project site during the visit.

10.4. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that the Blackstone Corridor and the Lions Club are working on a project with our students to design and build a Lions Donation Dropbox to collect and recycle eyeglasses.

10.5. BVT Visitations/Tours:

10.5.a. Dr. Fitzpatrick met with UniBank Corporators and local business agents Kate Salmon and Denise Brookhouse on December 15, 2021, and gave them a campus tour.

10.6. New BVT Student Scholarship

10.6.a. The Committee was asked to authorize a vote to approve the Town Fair Tire

Foundation Toolship Scholarship. The Foundation proposes to offer (4) \$500 annual awards to students entering the workforce upon graduation. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Yitts, it was unanimously voted to approve the Town Fair Tire Scholarship.

10.7. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that the Milford Lions Club would offer two \$1000.00 scholarships to be awarded to Milford residents who are a member of the BVT Leo Club.

10.8. BVT continues to pursue awards through the Skills Capital Grant program.

10.9. The 2021-22 NESDEC Enrollment Report was provided. NESDEC forecasted a conservative projection of future Grade 9-12 enrollments at BVT. Every year BVT receives many applications from qualified students who cannot be admitted due to space. The districtwide Grade 8 total is forecasted to decline to 1,399 students over the next decade. However, BVT offers a broad spectrum of 21<sup>st</sup>-century programs attracting applicants.

#### Item 11. New Business

11.1. Mr. Hanratty introduced a proposed amendment for the State to the November 18, 2021, approved Admissions Plan Policy. The Policy Subcommittee's recommendation was to accept the amendment as presented to get through this school year and revisit next year. The amendment is to the number of days a student has been suspended or expelled and the application of points. Applications will consider student discipline in a binary method. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 day cumulative they will receive 0 points in the School Discipline Conduct category. Otherwise, full points (maximum 15) will be awarded to the applicant. It was voted to approve the proposed amendment as written, on a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Hanratty. The proposed amendment was accepted as written, the Admissions Plan is amended.

11.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick mentioned that he met with six Maine Career & Technical Education School Administration members earlier in the day (December 16th). They toured the school and had lunch in the Three Seasons Restaurant. The student-servers signed the menu and thanked them for visiting. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared a copy of the signed menu in the Items for the Good of the Committee and conveyed that the impressive lunch program was led by BVT's Culinary Arts staff and maître d' extraordinaire Sophia Yitts.

#### 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 January 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 14. Meeting Closure:

14.1. The meeting was declared closed by the chair at 8:10 p.m.

14.2. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Braza, it was voted to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of November 18, 2021

Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated November 30, 2021

Item 7.1. Monthly Budget Report Fiscal Year 2021-2022, dated December 9, 2021

Item 7.3. FY21 Single Audit Report - Hague, Sahady & Co., P.C. for year ended June 30, 2021

Item 8.3. Snow Day Proposal

Item 8.4.a. Out-of-State Field Trip Request: Aviation Club (Kennedy Space Ctr. 4/6/22-4/13/22)

Item 8.4.b. Out-of-State Field Trip Request: Robotics Team (Orlando, FL 1/20/22-1/25/22)

Item 10.6.a. Town Fair Tire Foundation Toolship Scholarship

Item 10.9. NESDEC 2021-22 Enrollment Projection Report

Item 12. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony Yitts, Secretary