

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
October 20, 2022**

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:

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chair  
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone  
Mark J. Potter of Douglas  
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton  
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale  
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon  
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury  
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chair  
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge  
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge  
David R. Bartlett of Upton

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director  
Anthony E. Steele, Asst. Superintendent/Principal  
Eddie Evans, Academic Curriculum Coordinator  
Lorna M. Mangano, Business Manager  
Bradley Lyon, Student Representative  
Ellie Poitras, Student Representative  
Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

Members Absent:

Paul J. Braza of Milford  
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chairman Hall. Dr. Fitzpatrick said he was notified in advance that Mr. Braza, Mrs. Mitchell, and Mr. Pilla would be unable to attend. A moment of silence was held in remembrance of Virginia M. (D'Alessandro) Stoddard, 94, of Milford, who died on October 12, 2022. Mrs. Stoddard worked as a secretary at BVT for many years before retiring in 1995.

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 September 15, 2022 and to accept the minutes as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – C. Pilla

3.1. With Mr. Pilla not in attendance, the Committee agreed to move the Treasurer's Report dated September 30, 2022, to the next School Committee meeting scheduled for November 17, 2022.

Item 4. Comments by Student Representatives - Bradley Lyon & Ellie Poitras

Bradley shared with Committee that at the last Student Council meeting, members participated in an energizer activity, created posters for Homecoming, and planned for Homecoming Week (October 17-22nd). Ellie shared that the week began with spirit-themed days and that she and Bradley had just come inside from setting up for the Spirit Fires. The week also included a Pep Rally Day and dance on Friday and athletic competitions on Saturday.

Item 5. Vocational Department Presentation - Dan Morin Location: HVAC & R Shop

5.1. The School Committee Members toured the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration shop. Vocational Instructor Joshua Dunton and Vocational Director Dr. Matthew Connors discussed and demonstrated the beneficial features of the newly renovated shop area that maximized its available space while incorporating new training equipment to enhance the vocational curriculum.

Item 6. Business Manager - L. Mangano

## 6.1. E &amp; D Certification:

The School Committee is in receipt of a certification letter from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR). The letter certified that the amount of excess and deficiency, or "E & D" as of July 1, 2022, for Blackstone Valley is \$801,641.00. According to Commonwealth guidelines, any unencumbered funds certified in excess of five percent of the operating budget and budgeted capital costs for the succeeding fiscal year must be applied to reduce the current fiscal year's assessment. For the District, this excess amount equals \$0.00. Dr. Fitzpatrick alerted School Committee members that the DOR certification confirmed that the District is some \$500,000 under the 5% threshold. E & D funds are attributable to BVT's aggressive and successful grant pursuits and numerous cost-saving techniques.

6.2. The School Committee was presented with Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District's FY24 Budget Subcommittee Meetings Timetable. The first meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. This meeting will include electing the Chair of the FY2024 Budget Subcommittee and verifying subsequent meeting dates.

## 6.3. Donation Approvals:

a. Ms. Mangano informed the Committee that as a thank you for applying for the 2022 Harbor Freight Tools for Schools Prize for Teaching Excellence, Jonathan Bram, Vocational Instructor in our Carpentry program, the District received a \$250.00 gift card. The gift card donation will be used to advance skilled trades by purchasing Harbor Freight tools for use in our Construction Technology program.

b. Ms. Mangano informed the Committee that the District received with appreciation a \$250.00 (cash) donation from Worcester Surfcasting Club, Inc. for the Practical Nursing program.

Item 7. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report - A. Steele

7.1. Mr. Evans presented the Committee with an MCAS report. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released the 2022 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results on September 29th, providing the state with its second overview of statewide learning since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest results were "mixed," said DESE, and state education officials said the learning loss that came about as a result of the pandemic and its shift towards remote schooling for more than two years is still showing up in standardized test results. That news wasn't good, shared Mr. Evans, and then he received the BVT student MCAS data which showed positive outcomes and significant student growth compared to state averages.

Mr. Evans explained the recent MCAS data reflects the scores of our current juniors (the Class of 2024), who took the MCAS exam as sophomores. This class began their BVT careers remotely during an ongoing pandemic, and due to an altered testing schedule, these students hadn't taken an MCAS since the 7th grade, and the results were impressive. For example, 79 percent of students in English Language Arts were in the Exceeding or Meeting Expectations category. In Mathematics, 75 percent of students were in the Exceeding or Meeting Expectations category. In Science (Biology and Physics combined), 72 percent of students were in the Exceeding or Meeting Expectations category. All were well above the reported state averages.

Mr. Evans remarked that the positive outcomes were no accident. Instead, he credits the improvements to hard-working students and dedicated teachers. Additionally, he thanked the School Committee for approving pandemic-related initiatives such as approving the six-tiered operational model to safely bring back as many students as possible to in-person learning. It allowed our school to move from tier to tier as needed, which empowered our families to plan with predictability regardless of tier status. And by design, it was meant to increase the rigor and expectations of our students to return to a pre-March 2020 system of grading and assessment and focus on "live instruction" utilizing a daily schedule of classes for both academics and shop.

7.2. The Academic Curriculum Night for parents of freshmen and juniors was held on September 28, 2022, and for parents of sophomores and seniors on October 12, 2022. Mr. Steele reported that both evenings were well-attended and ran smoothly.

7.3. Mr. Steele informed the members that this year's homecoming was a weeklong celebration (October 17th – 22nd) that included Homecoming Spirit Days: Monday - Adam Sandler, Tuesday - Neon, Wednesday – Pink Out for Breast Cancer Awareness, Thursday – Flannel, and Friday – Class Colors. In addition to a bonfire, a pep rally, a dance, and athletic competitions. Thanks to the support and assistance of the Student Council, National Honor Society, administration, facilitates, coaches, and staff volunteers, everything so far has ran smoothly.

7.4. The Committee was informed that BVT had won the Markham Award for winning the highest percentage of sporting contests among all statewide vocational technical systems. It is the 10th time in 15 years the school has won this award.

7.5. Mr. Steele provided the Committee with a handout titled Major Capital Projects List. The list of projects summarizes various needs the District must address to maintain the school facility, such as the final phase-roof replacement in the 100-wing and other high-priority matters. The list ranges from must-do projects to lower-priority non-urgent tasks based on other factors such as need, cost, and schedules. The listed projects will then be filtered into a more formal master plan which will further explain the scope of each project and achievability based on funding.

7.6. Mr. Steele informed the Committee that as of October 1, 2022, the enrollment headcount was 1,244 students attending BVT. While there is an ebb and flow to the enrollment data, students continue to be interested in attending BVT.

7.7. Mr. Steele informed the Committee that the Admissions cycle is underway for the next school with three one-hour virtual information sessions to give prospective new students and families an overview of BVT. The sessions were at 6:00 p.m. on October 13th and 18th and again on November 1st. We are also returning to our traditional in-person open house on Wednesday, November 16th, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The application portal opened on October 1st, and there are already 243 applicants.

Item 8. Superintendent-Director's Report - Michael F. Fitzpatrick

8.1. A proposed 2023 School Committee meeting calendar was provided to all members.

8.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that an FY23 Capital Skills Grant application had been submitted. The Capital Skills grant request is for significant grant funding.

8.3. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that District has received payment from the Maine School District (SAD 46) for a tour and visit that occurred during the prior school year. The tours of the facility are another source of revenue.

8.4. Presentations/Meetings:

a. Dr. Fitzpatrick participated in the NESDEC Fall Conference on September 29, 2022.

b. Dr. Fitzpatrick contributed to a NEASC Decennial Planning meeting held on campus on September 30, 2022.

c. Dr. Fitzpatrick served as a guest speaker during the MAVA Leadership Academy on October 5, 2022.

d. Dr. Fitzpatrick represented the school at the MSBA Superintendent's Roundtable held on October 12, 2022.

8.5. BVT is in receipt of financial donations supporting the school's passenger vans:

a. Homefield Credit Union – a donation in the amount of \$2,500.

b. UniBank – a donation in the amount of \$4,000.

c. Charles River Bank – a donation in the amount of \$1,000.

d. Milford Federal – a donation in the amount of \$1,000.

8.6. Notification of Resignation:

a. The notification was amended and reflected the intent to retire. The School Committee has received a retirement notification from Deborah Massey - Teacher Assistant Title I, who will retire on June 21, 2023.

8.7. New Partnerships Updates/Visits/Tours:

a. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Members that he and other members of the Admin Team met with the Advantage Truck Group on September 19, 2022 in Northampton, MA.

b. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Members that he met with Seven Hills ASPIRE! on

September 22, 2022.

c. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Members that he and other members of the Admin Team met representatives from Milton CAT on October 12, 2022 and discussed new equipment and a training opportunity with hoist simulators in the Construction Technology program.

Item 9. New Business

There was no new business to report. However, Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Members that printed copies of 2022 Annual Report were available at the meeting.

Item 10. 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 11. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on November 17, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 12. \*Executive Session Per MGL Chpt. 30A, Section 21(a) #3

On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Koopman, a roll call vote was taken to go into executive session at 7:50 p.m. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Hall – Yes	Mr. Broderick –Yes	Mr. Potter - Yes
Mr. Yitts – Yes	Mr. Intinarelli – Yes	Mr. Cray – Yes
Mr. Hanratty – Yes	Mr. Finn – Yes	Mr. Koopman – Yes
Mr. Ebbeling – Yes	Mr. Bartlett – Yes	

On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, a roll call vote was taken to come out of executive session at 8:00 p.m. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Hall – Yes	Mr. Broderick –Yes	Mr. Potter - Yes
Mr. Yitts – Yes	Mr. Intinarelli – Yes	Mr. Cray – Yes
Mr. Hanratty – Yes	Mr. Finn – Yes	Mr. Koopman – Yes
Mr. Ebbeling – Yes	Mr. Bartlett – Yes	

Item 13. Decide: Release Status of Exec. Session Minutes of September 15, 2022

On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to approve the release of the Executive Session Minutes of September 15, 2022. The roll call was as follows:

Item 14. Meeting Closure:

14.1. The meeting was declared closed by the chair at 8:01 p.m.

14.2. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Yitts, it was voted to adjourn at 8:01 p.m.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

- Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of September 15, 2022
- Item 3.1. Treasurer’s Report dated September 30, 2022
- Item 6.1. Excess & Deficiency Certification

- Item 6.2. Proposed FY24 Budget Subcommittee Meeting Dates
- Item 6.3.a. Harbor Freight Tools for Schools Gift Card Donation
- Item 6.4.b. Worcester Surfcasting Club, Inc. Cash Donation
- Item 8.1. Proposed 2023 School Committee Monthly Meeting Calendar
- Item 8.3. Maine School District (SAD 46) Payment for Tour/Visit
- Item 8.5.a. Homefield Credit Union van donation letter
- Item 8.5.b. UniBank van donation letter
- Item 8.5.c. Charles River Bank van donation letter
- Item 8.5.d. Milford Federal van donation letter
- Item 8.6.a. Notification of Resignation letter: Deborah Massey
- Item 10. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary