

BMU BOARD MINUTES

Garvin Library or via Zoom

September 1, 2021

Present:

Board Members: Angeline Alley, Paul Hazel, Alison Ingerson, Kristen Murray, Allana Page, Kelsey Root-Winchester. Coco Huang, Student Rep

Administration: Emilie Knisley, Randy Gawel, Scott Blood, John Barone

Others: Tracy Puffer, Alex Nuti-de Biasi

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM by Angeline Alley, Board Chair. Those present were welcomed and introduced themselves.
- II. Motion by Paul Hazel, seconded by Judy Murray to approve the Board minutes of June 2, 2021. Motion voted on and approved unanimously. The Climate Survey and the Assessment will be on the October agenda.
- III. Principals' Report
 - A. Judy Murray: How are drop off and pick up going? Scott Blood: so far it has been running smoothly. Considering the situation, this is what we need to do. We are hoping to eventually go back to our former method of pick up/drop off.
 1. J. Murray: how long will masking continue? J. Barone: October 15th, as of now. Emilie Knisley: It will depend on recommendations of physicians and the Dept. of Health.
 2. J. Murray: Will the October 7th event be held? J. Barone: right now, we are planning to move forward with Academic Night and Parent/Teacher Conferences. We hope to have it in person, but if we are unable to do that, we will look at the possibility of doing something remote.
 - B. Paul Hazel: We have a large number of new staff. How has this gone? We have not seen a number of resignations to account for the new staff. S. Blood: Hiring went very well. We have a strong group of teachers/staff. There is a lot of optimism. J. Barone: for 7-12, we have brought on some highly qualified new staff members. We had to fill middle school math and science. It is getting harder and harder to fill certain positions. We saw fewer applicants this year for open positions. P. Hazel: we should discuss changes we might want to do for the coming year. J. Barone: initial interviews were done via Zoom. We were unable to bring in teachers for a demonstration lesson. We needed to do some demonstration lesson via Zoom. P. Hazel: could we publicize resumes of our new staff?
 - C. Kelsey Root-Winchester: If we have COVID and have to go remote, what is the remote learning plan for this year? S. Blood: We have put together remote learning plans in the event they are needed. Google classroom is being utilized by some of the upper grade teachers. We didn't put a lot of emphasis on preparing for remote learning, but the staff would be ready to shift if necessary.

1. K. Root-Winchester: how is the new food service going? J. Barone: We are seeing an increase in the number of students participating in our meals program. Grades 7-12 are eating in the cafeteria, and K-6 are eating in their classrooms. Angeline Alley: We hope to put the food service committee together again and then report back to the larger group. There is only one remaining person in the kitchen. We want to ask them how they are doing with the staff that they have.

IV. Improvement Plan

A. J. Murray: what enrichment opportunities are being provided for all the students? How are we providing for keeping the high achievers interested? J. Barone: Every day grades 7-12 have a 35-40 minute period for enrichment and intervention. Teachers are offering enrichment style classes. Some classes we are offering: SNHU intro to Sociology. Music Intro to Rock and Roll. SNHU Intro to Statistics, Advanced Spanish. We are trying to include Honors and college level classes. S. Blood: We are using MTSS to meet needs of all students in the classrooms. Hopefully we are expanding the elementary band program. We are hoping to offer lessons down to 3rd grade.

1.J. Murray: How is our improvement plan influenced by the SU? J. Barone: The current action plan was created pre-BMU being part of the SU. We are currently offering broadcast journalism. As we write our new 5-year action plan, we might want to partner with Oxbow to offer some distance learning opportunities. J. Murray: Are each of the schools building their own plans? E. Knisley: each school has its own improvement plan. J. Murray: would love to volunteer in this effort

B. K. Root-Winchester: How are we incorporating students, who may have been home-schooled last year? J. Barone: we are working on this through our EST team and putting Tier II services in place and working on proposals to submit to E. Knisley and R. Gawel through ESSER 2 funds, as these needs are identified.

1. K. Root-Winchester: Health program? J. Barone: Mrs. French is more available to work with elementary classes, teaching health classes. S. Blood: We are in baby steps mode right now. In conversations with Mrs. French and Mrs. Gandin, we look forward to adding more health and foreign language into the elementary grades.

C. Tracy Puffer: Will we be able to fund new positions when ESSER funds are gone? E. Knisley: some are shorter term positions, but we will be in conversation

D. Board members to be part of the Action Improvement Plan Development Process. Kristen Murray, Judy Murray, and Kelsey Root-Winchester each volunteered.

V. Correspondence—none

VI. VSBA Update: (Judy Murray) Regional meetings will be in September. If interested in attending, go to the website and register. The task force is meeting and talking about the weighting study. This is something for us to watch to see where their thinking is going. It is very important to our students and our schools. E. Knisley: On Wednesday, September 8th, folks can testify before the committee. J. Murray shared that she is unable to serve as BMU's rep to the VSBA Board again.

VII. Public Comments

A. Alex Nuti-de Biasi: Were ALICE trainings carried out last year, and how did students react to those? S. Blood: We didn't do as much with ALICE trainings last years as hoped. Younger students worked with story books and workbooks. In 2020 we were progressing quite well and preparing for a comprehensive ALICE drill. Each year all staff has to complete an online training. E. Knisley: BMU has had a pretty strong culture regarding school safety for the past 15-20 years. She feels that BMU is in a good spot and that people would know what to do if need be. Tracy Puffer: totally supports Supt. Knisley in what she's saying. BMU is definitely well prepared, given the situation they are in.

VIII. Executive Session

A. Motion by Paul Hazel, seconded by Kelsey Root-Winchester to move into Executive Session at 6:45 PM, pursuant to VSA 303, Sec 1(a) Contracts and Sec 7 Academic Records. Motion voted on and approved unanimously

B. The Board exited Executive Session at 7:05 PM

IX. Other Business

A. Food Service. A. Alley suggested an ad hoc food service committee, probably until December. She hopes Coco Huang will be on the committee. She wants to know how the food service staff are doing. Kristen Murray: wonders if there are any funds to supplement the number of workers? E. Knisley: thinks because we are serving more meals, we may be in a position to afford more workers. A. Alley: with a lot more students, who are eating, there has been good feedback. K. Root-Winchester: has a student with a gluten allergy. She was encouraged to email Paul Pellegrino and ask if the menus can accommodate this need. K. Murray, A. Ingerson, and Coco Huang will serve on the Food Service Committee. They will meet with Paul Pellegrino.

B. A. Ingerson: concerned that there is information on the BMU and OESU websites that is incorrect. A. Alley encouraged her to send information for BMU to S. Blood, J. Barone, and John Munson.

C. J. Murray: how does the Board feel about using the FaceBook Building Mutual Understanding page for sharing out information? We need a little more community information that may not be part of the BNN's mission. Tracy Puffer agrees. A. Alley: if you are sharing public information, that is a good place to share it. For instance: early releases, October 7th event. J. Barone: trying to find a person to manage the BNN, but no results yet. E. Knisley: maybe when developing the budget, a position should be put in place to handle BNN. K. Murray: could that be a shared OESU resource? A full-time employee? E. Knisley: the more ways we have to communicate is important. K. Murray: This is a good way to bring people in, increase tuition students. J. Murray: can I go forward sharing what I can get? Is this OK with the Board? A. Alley: yes, information that is coming from the school

D. K. Murray: what is the plan going forward for meeting? A. Alley: if we meet within the school, we will have to wear masks. Allana Ricker: students and teachers are wearing masks all day, and we should be able to do the same thing. E. Knisley: one of the things to consider is public participation. We might want to be mindful to still offer the remote option. We are limiting public and parent access right now. A. Alley: do we need to find a different venue? E. Knisley: We just need to be sure people are masked

in the building. Other schools are meeting with some members in person and some remote.

- X. Motion by Paul Hazel, seconded by Allana Page to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 PM. Motion voted on and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Perkins, Minutes Clerk

The minutes are in draft format and are unofficial until formally approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting.