

# Education Committee Meeting Minutes

## January 5, 2015

### **Members Present:**

Christy Knox  
Josh Wachtel  
Bill Adams  
Stacey Mackowiak  
Stephanie Bean  
Jill Figlozzi  
Christine Doktor

### **Agenda This Meeting:**

- Meeting with Superintendent Robert Putnam
- public comment (at end of meeting with Super Putnam)
- Review data collected from BTES families interviews
- Prepare for January 6, 2015 meeting of community

Dr. Putnam has three topics to discuss. His ideas to be implemented to aid Berkshire Trail students and families in their transition to attending Craneville next year, busing analysis for these families and the possibility of maintaining a preschool in Cummington after BTES closure.

First, a mention that Shawn Armacost has appointed a Transition team made of school committee members Pat Keith, Jesse Robertson-Dubois and Mike Hopper. In addition to this, Adjustment Counsellors and the Principals and Teachers of the interested schools will be engaged in varying degrees to aid with the transition process.

The possibilities for transitional aid include:

1. Tours of Craneville for parents
2. Open house at Craneville for parents
3. Meetings with parents
4. Mix kids from both school communities together with planned activities such as time at Camp Becket
5. Invite Craneville families to school events at BTES, such as Family First Friday or a PTO meeting
6. Buddy system to get kids communicating using pen pal and/or Facetime interaction

An audience member points out that the concern is over more than just Berkshire Trail students, but extends to the larger community. How can the fracturing of the community be helped as families send their children in many different directions, not just to Craneville?

Busing analysis has been done using a special software to ensure best possible routing. Travel times were reached by creating “express” bus runs, where buses pick up kids in Cummington and go straight to Dalton without stopping repeatedly along the way. Putnam states he wants to identify each student by grade level and communicate with all parents individually.

Keeping a CBRSD preschool in Cummington after BTES closure is fraught with issues. It will only be possible if the School Committee approves the funding in the upcoming budgeting process. Dr. Putnam stated he will bring to the Finance Subcommittee a request to fund a preschool teacher and one paraprofessional and believes that the cost will remain under \$100,000.00. He also points out that the BTES preschool hasn’t funded itself for years.

Both Wendy Provencher and Melissa Falkowski will be asked for info relating to costs, grants and application of funding. The preschool is funded through a revolving fund, so it can be a less than transparent process and their help will be needed. Clarifications will have to be made on the differences between funding an “Integrated” preschool vs. a regular fee-based public preschool, and what building/structural requirements must be met to house preschools.

Also, the question is asked regarding contents of the school. Who gets them? In general, the district owns them unless there are materials that teachers supplied on their own.

The discussion turns to the neglected roof at BTES. Dr. Putnam states that he has gone to Jason Dion, who claimed that he HAD performed maintenance on the BTES roof, contrary to what Jack Morse and Roger Gunn had determined after their examination of the roof. To clear this issue up, Christine Doktor asked to have sent to us 1.) copies of all records of maintenance and repairs on the roof since it was put on in 1991, 2.) a log of inspections stretching back as far, and 3.) a report of any emergency actions scheduled for the upcoming 6 months to address roof malfunctions in lieu of replacing the roof.

Christine mentioned also that she has been in contact with the CBRSD Attorney to discuss the lease agreement language and who will ultimately be responsible to fix the roof.

Final comments from Dr. Putnam relate to the Regional Agreement. As part of his Superintendent’s Entry Plan, he has included the “opening up” of the seven town regional agreement to discuss what portions of it are outdated and/or could be changed to better serve the towns of the district as they exist today as opposed to when the agreement was created. He mentions the Mass. Association of Regional School Districts as an organization that helps address revision of regional agreements.

**Next Meeting:** Jan. 12 at 7PM

**Agenda Next Meeting:**

- approve minutes of last meeting
- public comment
- review info/comments from Jan 6. Town gathering
- review other member reports
- next steps toward:
  1. short term goals
  2. long term goals
- new business