

Residency Task Force Meeting Minutes: February 7, 2019

Members Present:

Barbara Augugliaro	Melissa Frates	Joe Russo
Tina Aulabaugh	Marisa Gargano	Sharon Stephens
Chris DeBellis	Rebecca Hegenauer	Carmela Surace
Mary DeBellis	Connie Hussey	Tino Surace
Karen Dovi	Eric Larca	Alfred Wagner
John Frates	Wendy Lewis	

Also in attendance were Dr. Valerie Henning-Piedmonte, Superintendent
Ms. Michelle Gosh, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Art Holzmann , Residency Officer
Ms. Donna-Marie Morey, District Registrar
Ms. Sonia Mesika, President, Board of Education
Mr. Tony Olivo, Corporate Screening & Investigative Group, LLC
Mr. Jim Drohan, Attorney for BCSD

Members Absent:

Lisa Alfonzetti	William Finn	Debbie Mulvihill
Richard Anderson	Kelly Gronert	Ed Mulvihill
Cory Blad	Lisa Hofle	Tim Murphy
Joe Buonadonna	Jay Hogan	Mary Cay Nilsen
Jamie Callanan	Bryan Horn	Diane O'Brien
Peter Carey	Lila Horn	Heather Ostman
Jennifer Cormier	Allison Isola	Melissa Paddock
Francine Del Bono	Gina Kelly	Mitchel Pollak
Lorraine DeNichilo	Wendy Koehler	Kirsten Rusinko
Joelle DePaola	Clay Livingston	Lara Sullivan
Karen DiTaranto	Chris Lyons	Myra Vario
Alisa Ferrara	Curtis Maenza	Lori Wiltse
Ellen Finn	Gina Martin	

Also absent were

Ms. Theresa Cherry, Principal, C V Starr Intermediate
Mr. John Clark, Principal, H.H. Wells Middle School
Ms. Kerry Cunningham, Vice President, Board of Education
Ms. Nichole Horler, Principal, Brewster High School
Ms. Elizabeth Kennedy, Director of Pupil Services
Ms. Allison Smith, Attorney for BCSD
Ms. Mary E. Smith, Supervisor of Transportation
Ms. Leonor Volpe, Assistant Supervisor of Transportation
Ms. Robin Young, Co-Principal, Brewster High School
Mr. Frank Zamperlin, Principal, J.F.K. Elementary School

- All committee members were given an agenda and copies of all documents to be discussed.
- Mr. Arthur Holzmann opened the meeting at 6:30pm by introducing himself. He then outlined the meeting's topics for discussion which included the status of residency verifications and investigations.
- Mr. Holzmann provided updated residency verification numbers and "watch list" investigations completed, which shows progress in resolving a number of cases since the last meeting. He discussed the process in which we provide information to private investigators, which allows for database searches and covert surveillance, if necessary. Through these means, the outstanding "watch list" cases continue to be resolved.
- Mr. Holzmann explained the difference between Connecticut/New York border properties vs. New York/New York border properties, citing [NYS Education Law 3203](#). The Town Assessor's office provided the District with a listing of New York/New York border properties.
- Some of the questions asked by committee members:
 - Why are we not sending the names of the students not yet verified to our investigator? Mr. Olivo, private investigator, responded by stating that the District is working very diligently to investigate these families in a cost effective and timely manner. He further explained that surveillance is the most costly option, so it is more cost-effective to pursue database searches before proceeding to surveillance.
 - Why are we not reporting landlords that have illegal apartments to the Town and Village? Can someone live in a commercial residence? Dr. Henning-Piedmonte consulted with legal counsel on this matter, and it was indicated that communicating this information would violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) with regard to student confidentiality. Therefore, the District is unable to share this information with other agencies.
- Mr. Holzmann discussed the increase in disenrollments that occurred during the 2018 summer which may have been due to the residency verification program.
- Ms. Tina Aulabaugh asked how many families are there of the 235 outstanding students not verified. All students enrolled in the Brewster Central School District provided proof of residency upon initial registration, which may have occurred as far back as twelve years ago for a student in his/her senior year.
- Ms. Donna-Marie Morey, District Registrar, reviewed new processes and measures our District is taking to verify the residency of all students:
 - Reviewed guardianship and the need for families to complete our parental and custodial affidavit forms.

- Explained that we receive residency concerns (“tips”) through our school employees, residents, and anonymous alerts. Discussed the priority to investigate recent tips received vs the families on our watch list. Each investigation requires us to first look at the student’s file for information and attendance record and then contact the Transportation Department and other school personnel for more information. Steps need to be taken before a file is sent over to the private investigators.
 - A new form has recently been implemented. This form lists the residency documents that are missing at the time of the new student’s initial registration. (New York State Education Department [NYSED] regulations require that families provide sufficient documentation within three business days of the initial enrollment.) New families have three business days to provide documentation, and will be removed if documentation is not provided. There is a date written in the form by the Registrar indicating the student’s date of disenrollment if documentation is not provided by the date specified.
 - Private School Busing and Early Intervention applications are now processed through the District Registrar.
 - Introduced Barbara Augugliaro, JFK Secretary to Assistant Principal, Mr. John Conroy. Reviewed the Kindergarten open registration process for this year. Ms. Augugliaro and Ms. Morey will be the only point of contact for checking residency documentation for all Kindergarten registrations. Our new form for missing documentation will be used to prevent incomplete registrants from attending school in September.
 - Landlords are being contacted to verify residency of new students and changes of address.
 - Discussed letters sent out in September and December to families missing residency documents.
- A question was raised by the committee regarding the new houses being built that are on the New York/Connecticut border. Ms Morey, District Registrar, responded that we have contacts at each Tax Assessor’s office and we call them when we are unsure of a property’s assessment.
 - Mr. Olivo, investigator, stated that Brewster Central School District has been proactive with their residency concerns more than any other school district he is working with. He applauded District staff and the Task Force for their commitment to completing the residency verification program.
 - Mr. Holzmann reminded the Committee that the next Residency Task Force meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 27, 2019 at 6:30pm (BHS ILC).
 - The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.