

## Residency Task Force Meeting Minutes: June 25, 2018

### **Members Present:**

Barbara Augugliaro	Melissa Frates	Connie Hussey
Jamie Callanan	John Frates	Gina Martin
Mary DeBellis	Marisa Gargano	Joe Russo
Lorraine DeNichilo	Kelly Gronert	Mary E. Smith
Karen DiTaranto	Rebecca Hegenauer	Sharon Stephens
Karen Dovi	Lila Horn	Lori Wiltse

Also in attendance were Dr. Valerie Henning-Piedmonte, Superintendent  
Ms. Denise Harrington-Cohen, Assistant Director of Business  
Mr. Joshua Loeffel, Assistant Director Pupil Personnel Svcs and McKinney-Vento Liaison  
Mr. John Clark, Principal, H.H. Wells Middle School  
Dr. Frank Zamperlin, Principal, J.F.K. Elementary School  
Ms. Kathy Keane, Secretary to Mr. Karlsson  
Ms. Donna Tarallo, Senior Clerk, Residency  
Ms. Kerry Cunningham, Trustee, Board of Education  
Ms. Diane O'Brien, Trustee, Board of Education  
Ms. Allison Smith, Attorney for BCSD

### **Members Absent:**

Lisa Alfonzetti	Ellen Finn	Curtis Maenza
Richard Anderson	William Finn	Debbie Mulvihill
Tina Aulabaugh	Lisa Hofle	Ed Mulvihill
Joe Buonadonna	Jay Hogan	Tim Murphy
Peter Carey	Bryan Horn	Heather Ostman
Jennifer Cormier	Allison Isola	Kirsten Rusinko
Chris DeBellis	Gina Kelly	Carmela Surace
Samantha DeBellis	Eric Larca	Tino Surace
Francine Del Bono	Wendy Lewis	Myra Vario
Joelle DePaola	Clay Livingston	Leonor Volpe
Alisa Ferrara	Chris Lyons	Alfred Wagner

Also absent were Mr. Victor Karlsson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations  
Ms. Elizabeth Kennedy, Director of Pupil  
Ms. Nichole Horler, Principal, Brewster High School  
Dr. Robin Young, Co-Principal, Brewster High School  
Ms. Theresa Cherry, Interim Principal, C.V. Starr Intermediate School  
Ms. Karen Kellogg, Assistant Principal, C.V. Starr Intermediate School  
Ms. Donna-Marie Morey, District Registrar  
Mr. Jim Drohan, Attorney for BCSD  
Mr. Tony Olivo, Corporate Screening & Group, LLC

- All committee members were given an agenda and copies of all documents to be discussed.

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- Ms. Harrington-Cohen opened the meeting at 6:33 pm by having all members introduce themselves. She then outlined the meeting's topics for discussion including the status of residency investigations, the re-registration proposal and the anonymous alert system.
- Ms. Harrington-Cohen provided the residency investigation statistics as of the April 24 Board of Education Meeting:
  - Inquiries 21 families
  - Affirmative Determinations 2 families
  - Negative Determinations 4 families
  - Pending Investigations 15 families
- The committee was informed that the District Registrar, Donna-Marie Morey, was working very closely with our private investigator on these cases. One of the members inquired as to the cost of using a private investigator and was advised of an estimate of 100-\$200 per hour.
- Ms. Harrington-Cohen explained that the District was in the process of finalizing the list of acceptable documents to be used in the re-registration process. Upon asking whether or not the re-registration form and the list of acceptable documents had been approved by the Board of Education, the committee was advised that the re-registration proposal and documents were on the June 26th Board of Education agenda.
- Upon Board approval, re-registration would begin on Monday, July 2nd in the District Office board room. Families can sign up for an appointment online through **youcanbook.me**. Re-registration will be from 8:00 am - 8:00 pm Monday through Thursday and 8:00 am - 3:00 on Friday. The goal is to have the process run as smoothly as possible, while being diligent in reviewing all residency documentation. Only original documents will be accepted. The registrar will download the documents directly to each student's portal file. For those living with other family members, a Third Party Affidavit must also be presented. This form has been revised/updated from the version used during this past school year. Renters will be required to bring their lease agreement or a rent receipt and a Landlord Affidavit certifying the family's address.
- A question/circumstance was raised by the committee regarding a child living with a grandparent rather than a parent. Ms. Smith, attorney for the District, stated that the grandparent must complete the Third Party Affidavit in addition to providing custodial/guardianship documentation.
- Ms. Smith also advised that state regulations allow for either sworn or unsworn documents to be acceptable. Notaries only verify signatures, not the information. It is a crime to falsify a business document.
- Homeowners must present a minimum of two documents at the time of re-registration. The District can check the tax records for homeowners, which would be considered a third proof of residency.

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- Ms. Harrington-Cohen advised the committee that the District was adding a field in the student portal to “flag” a student/family who is leasing/renting. This will appear in reports and allow for follow-up regarding expiration dates. A sample of the **youcanbook.me** page was then displayed on the screen. The committee was advised that families with multiple children can re-register all students during the course of one appointment. They were also reassured that enough time slots would be made available. A falsification statement has been added to all residency/registration forms indicating the District’s right to pursue legal action in cases of fraud, in addition to, the right to recover tuition if a student is not entitled to attend Brewster schools.
- The subject of the Anonymous Alerts system’s use for residency issues was raised. Ms. Smith advised the group that anyone can use the system.
- Discussion ensued regarding the disenrollment of students whose families did not respond to any communications regarding residency and re-registration. This is illegal. Should this situation arise in Brewster, the District plans to take the following actions:
  - Send a letter, via courier and registered mail, to those families that do not re-register;
  - Refer to the Residency Officer and schedule a residency hearing; and,
  - If the family does not respond/appear, seek the services of a private investigator.
- Some of the questions asked by the committee members:
  - How does the District manage residency for foster children?
    - The Department of Social Services determines residency for these students. There is a different process which is followed, as well as, distinct regulations which are adhered to.
  - Does Brewster plan to make phone calls, home visits, etc. to families whose residency is called into question, but which do not fall into the category of McKinney-Vento?
    - Phone calls can be made, but a home visit could be viewed as intrusive. The District may choose to send a private investigator in cases of questionable residency.
  - What about families that list many children in the home with different last names?
    - The District can flag these families and investigate further. This can also apply to multiple families in a household with the same last name.
  - Many families receive their bills electronically, specifically mortgages. Is this acceptable?
    - Yes, printouts of digital documents will be acceptable.
  - Who will be registering the families and how much will this cost?
    - The District will have 10-month and 12-month employees conducting the re-registrations and will be paid their hourly rate. We do not have a

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number at this time, but we plan to make the cost known at the August 21st Board of Education meeting.

- During the investigation process, is the District required to prove where a family resides if it is found that they do not live in Brewster?
  - Ms. Smith advised that showing a family does not live in the Brewster Central School District goes hand in hand with determining another address.
- Was any thought given to starting re-registration a week later given the fact that the Board of Education has not yet approved the information nor have any notices been sent home?
  - It is necessary to begin sooner, rather than later, so as to provide as many days/appointments as possible to the families. Re-registration will continue through the start of the new school year, concluding on September 28. Appointment times will be from 4:00 pm - 8:00/9:00 pm. One member did applaud the District for putting this together so quickly.
- Ms. Mary Smith, BCSD Transportation department and a member of the Patterson Town Board, advised the committee that if there is a concern regarding the appearance of too many families living at one address, they can contact the town code enforcement officer.
- Before closing the meeting, Ms. Harrington-Cohen provided some final information:
  - The re-registration plan, including documents, is scheduled to be discussed/approved and the Board of Education meeting on June 26th.
  - Information will be sent out to the parents, both electronically and via postal mail, by June 29th.
  - Re-registration will begin on July 2nd.
  - A parent information meeting will be held on July 3rd prior to the Board of Education meeting.
- The task force meeting ended at 7:26pm.