

The Brimfield Board of Education held its Regular meeting on Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at 7 p.m. in the High School Library. Board President Updyke called the meeting to order with the following members present: Bell, Meyer, Snyder, and Graham. Johnson and Kappes joined remotely.

Snyder motioned and Meyer seconded to open the Limitation of Administrative Costs Waiver Hearing. Dave Hicke inquired if there will be any impact on the budget; Superintendent Shinall mentioned no this is a formality. Meyer then requested Shinall to explain the necessity of the hearing and related waiver. Shinall explained that this is a requirement when budgeted administrative costs exceed a 5% increase to previous year's costs. After Shinall detailed the process, Meyer inquired about the increase-percent and monetary; the response provided was 18 and around \$22k, respectively. Meyer motioned and Bell seconded to close the FY23 Budget Hearing. Motion carried

Bell motioned and Snyder seconded to Approve the Application for the Limitation of Administrative Costs Waiver . Roll Call: Johnson -yes, Bell - yes, Kappes - yes, Snyder - yes, Graham - yes, Meyer - no, Updyke - yes. Motion carried

The Board welcomed approximately 31 visitors.

Updyke welcomed comments from the community members.

- Holly Greer mentioned that she had sent an email to Teachers, Administrators, and the Board of Education explaining her disapproval of the [Wit & Wisdom] curriculum. She shared a few sentences from material that she found offensive. She also briefed the Board on family history to help support her reasoning to halt the curriculum. When 5 minutes had passed, Charlie Greer yielded his time so Holly could continue. Holly shared her research on the same curriculum being pulled in other schools and criticized the school for not sending this material home. Holly has been happy with the education provided until now; she plans on home-schooling unless the curriculum is stopped immediately.
- Lindsey Birkel requested to speak since she was out-of-district but pays tuition for her child to attend this District; the Board had no issues with this. Lindsey believes the students are asked to read graphic, disturbing sentences and to share their feelings on what was read; she voiced her displeasure. Lindsey loves the Teachers and the community but the curriculum is causing her to rethink continuance.
- Matt Gillespie voiced his disapproval of the inclusion groups meetings, specifically the group addressing LGBTQIA+. He explained why he is opposed; he is not advocating hate but wants to stop "sexual perversion". Meyer just learned of this and suggests the District halt these meetings as he does not believe this to be the place for such meetings.
- Heather Donnelly feels like her messages to the High School Counselor are being ignored.
- Fawn Kieser believes we opted out of implementing the sex education curriculum for a reason; she believes we need to listen to the majority, not the minority, concerning the "oversexualizing" issue. Fawn also believes that the opportunity exists to "opt out" of a curriculum.
- Meyer shared a time when his child was asked to remove a hat because it was offensive; he is disturbed by what he is hearing [regarding the Wit & Wisdom curriculum] as it seems like a double standard.
- A lengthy discussion then followed. Mrs. Albritton and Mrs. Loser then defended the curriculum. They shared that, although the curriculum was removed in a couple of Districts nationwide, the [Wit & Wisdom] curriculum is widely used throughout at least 48 states. Mrs. Albritton and Mrs. Loser believe some pieces of the curriculum are taken out of context; the curriculum is based on authentic literature

by award-winning authors. They added that there had to be an updated curriculum as there has not been a review nor implementation in at least 10 years! Snyder inquired what it would take to review a curriculum prior to implementation. Mrs. Loser mentioned that the curriculum in question had been reviewed and there are no regrets; it is a purposeful curriculum in standards. Mrs. Loser also mentioned that the philosophy of the entire passage is supposed to evoke emotion, not individual parts. A few members from the community feel like there is something better. Mrs. Albritton shared that other curriculums have been reviewed and the one chosen was the most highly recommended and regarded. She shared that while most other curriculums (relating to History) are one-sided; Wit & Wisdom is all-encompassing.

- Natalie Zeman believes that there is a great lesson to learn from the [questionable] material. She shared her positive experience with the curriculum; she believes the literature to be age appropriate. She shared why she is for assistance being provided to children/students struggling

- Ashley Catour applauded the positive results (she believes largely due to the new curriculum implementation) but finds it difficult to hear that her child is reading, what she believes to be, disturbing material. Ashley requested the Administration and Board to research the curriculum(s) further prior to implementation. Ashley believes that the goal exists to expand the current curriculum to lower grade levels and is against it.

- Dave Hicke is concerned (and believes the District should be also) about kids with impressionable minds; Dave believes that just because there are standards does not make the curriculum correct. Dave does not believe this is the place for LGBTQIA+ - related meetings.

- Marilyn Eberle thought that the curriculum material was great for the 5th graders and explained her reasoning. Regarding the LGBTQIA+ - related meeting, she believes that children/students are given too much leniency; they still need guidance (some applause from the community followed).

- Lindsey Birkel mentioned that she still has questions she wants followed up on and requested that the parents be part of the experience.

- Updyke mentioned that we need to rely on the educators and Administration for the curriculum; we all know that no curriculum is perfect. Reach out to your child's Teacher or Administrator with any concerns; they care very much.

- There was another curriculum-related discussion.

- Mrs. Albritton mentioned that, although we did not write the curriculum, we did implement it and there is no plan to change the curriculum; even substituting supplemental material would affect the fidelity of it.

- Bell mentioned that there are other curriculums and wishes for further review.

Snyder motioned and Bell seconded to approve the minutes from:

- October 19, 2022 Regular Meeting & Executive Session
- November 2, 2022 Special Meeting & Executive Session

Motion carried

Board President Updyke had nothing to report.

Superintendent Shinall reported on his board report. The Tax Levy will be presented for approval next month. There has been an increase in the EAV. The timeframe for notifications (due to inclement weather) was shared. There has been a slight increase in our insurance renewal. Meyer inquired about the status on the buses. Superintendent Shinall mentioned that we have not heard anything more. There have been supply chain issues; Farmington and East Peoria are not yet concerned about their buses being returned.

Mrs. Burdette Steele reported on her High School Report. The Board was briefed on the School Improvement day Agenda. She wants herself and the Counselor to speak to the students, individually, to discuss graduation requirements. Winter sports are beginning. She mentioned that the Grading Scale Committee met and there is parental interest in future committee meetings. Lastly, she mentioned the steps being taken to make this a conducive learning environment.

Mrs. Albritton reported on her Grade School Report. She shared enrollment information. Mrs. Gibbs will be publicly recognized on the local news channel next week Wednesday; she is the recipient of the \$1,000 One Class At A Time Grant! The Board was then briefed on the GS Softball Team recognition, BGS Veteran's Day ceremony (there were 136 check-ins!), 95% Group coaching/training, Christmas Basket requests, SIP day, PJs for Paws Giving Independence, and that BGS will be able to take a field trip to the Peoria Riverfront Museum. Mrs. Albritton highlighted several upcoming dates. Lastly, she provided sports updates.

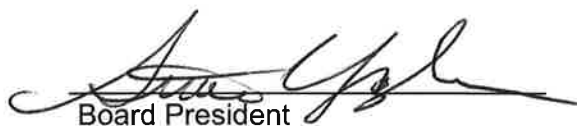
There was new business to discuss/approve.

Bell motioned and Snyder seconded to Approve the Tentative Levy for FY24. Superintendent Shinall stated that these are local funds Districts apply for. We will not be holding a Truth in Taxation hearing as we are not asking for more than what we are allowed. The levy is a large portion of our operating budget. There has been an increase to the EAV- a figure that is determined by the county's land assessor. Roll Call: Meyer - yes, Johnson -yes, Bell - yes, Kappes - yes, Snyder - yes, Graham - yes, Updyke - yes. Motion carried

Snyder motioned and Bell seconded to Approve the District Insurance Proposal. Superintendent Shinall mentioned that there has been an increase of \$3,934. Graham - yes, Meyer - yes, Johnson -yes, Bell - yes, Kappes - yes, Snyder - yes, Updyke - yes. Motion carried

Bell motioned and Snyder seconded to approve the Consent Calendar items. Roll Call: Snyder - yes, Graham - yes, Meyer - yes, Johnson -yes, Bell - yes, Kappes - yes, Updyke - yes. Motion carried

At 8:35 p.m., Meyer motioned and Bell seconded to adjourn the November 16, 2022 Regular board meeting of the Brimfield CUSD #309 Board of Education. Motion carried

  
Board President

  
Board Secretary